



Alvin ISD 2018 Citizen's Advisory Committee

Meeting 4 Notes

Monday, April 16, 2018, 6:30 p.m.

Manvel Junior High School

1. Welcome & Agenda Review

Dr. Buck Gilcrease, Superintendent of Schools, opened the fourth committee meeting with reviewing the night's agenda and preparing the committee for the discussions ahead.

2. Results of Meeting 3

Dr. Gilcrease shared the results of the CAC exercise from meeting three, in which each table group presented its recommendation on how to address elementary, junior high and high school capacity needs, identifying the number of new schools and new school sites that would be needed in the next five years. Each committee member voted individually on their top two recommendations.

The results showed a consensus to keep the current school size model in place – 800-student elementary schools, 1,000-student junior high schools and 2,500-student high schools. The results also showed the most support for:

- two new elementary schools and two future elementary land sites
- two new junior high schools and two future junior high land sites
- one new high school

Q: Has it been discussed what you do if population decreases in areas?

A: As populations fluctuate, you're going to have open seats at different campuses from year to year. Students don't come to us in neat packages of 22, or one whole class, per grade. We wouldn't move or bus kids from a campus to another one just because there is capacity. These projections are very conservative. Demographers are confident that enrollment will certainly not be less than what is projected.

A discussion on non-campus facilities was introduced.

Q: Where do we do graduation?

A: We currently use NRG stadium for graduation.

Q: Does the district plan to move graduation back to the district stadium once that project is done?

A: That is a conversation we'll have to have with the community. There are pros and cons of both. If we do have it in the stadium, we do still incur costs.

Q: What about CTE? We are currently busing kids and that is lost instruction time. Is there plan to build a new CTE facility closer to other campuses?

A: Many CTE programs require costly spaces to build and we need to have the student demand for each program before making that investment. It would be very difficult to recreate programs at each high school.

Q: How long does it take students to get to the CTE campus?

A: About 20 minutes. We'll start having students start their day there in the morning and offer breakfast, and all the students are there for at least a double block.

Q: Could you add English and History courses there so kids don't have to go back to their high school?

A: ASSETS will be at this campus this coming year and it will allow us to see how that can work.

Q: Does the district need any non-campus facilities?

A: I believe we are in good shape regarding non-campus facilities.

Q: What about Ag? I have to drive from Manvel to Alvin HS for my daughter's goat.

A: There actually is a district ag facility in Manvel. Starting next year, we will now assign kids to an ag facility by their home address instead of high school.

Q: Do our high schools have CTE shops?

A: Each high school has some basic CTE classes. Then depending on a student's track, if it's not something offered at that campus, they have to move high schools or go to the CTE campus. We haven't replicated programs to this date. For example, Shadow Creek has a large health science program. Students who are interested in that program must attend Shadow Creek.

Comment: As a baseball parent I see the benefit to turf fields.

Comment: I'm hearing east side and west side. We need to be one Alvin ISD. Whatever we put forward, we have to be able to promote it as one package that benefits the kids. Our focus needs to be on seats. Voters understand the growth. Turf can be taken care of with maintenance and operations through the year.

Dr. Gilcrease:

It is common for fast growth school districts to experience their largest bonds at the end of their growth because they put off taking care of their existing schools. For that reason, we've been proactive to address needs at our campuses – at Alvin High School, for example –through a combination of Maintenance & Operations, fund balance and bond savings.

Q: What about technology?

A: We are in good shape. Technology is getting smaller and more cost effective. Our network is strong. We've made an investment in fiber optic, which has a 25-year return.

3. New Schools & Land

Timing?

Dr. Gilcrease presented an analysis of the needed timing for the committee's top project considerations (new schools and land determined in meeting three).

In analyzing the elementary school capacity by high school feeder pattern, enrollment projections demonstrate the need for a new elementary (#21) in the Manvel High School attendance zone to open in 2020 and for a new elementary (#22) in the Shadow Creek High School attendance zone to open in 2023.

The capacity rate of 95% is utilized as it allows for variances such as non-uniform student enrollment increases as well as special programs and populations that prevent classrooms from housing students at the standard student-to-teacher ratio.

Dr. Gilcrease noted that in reviewing the junior high projections you'll see that we are already past the time we need to be negotiating land for the next school. Enrollment projections demonstrate the need for a new junior high (#8) to open in 2020 and a second new junior high (#9) in 2023 in the Manvel and Shadow Creek High School attendance zones.

High School projections show that we exceed 95% capacity in 2019-20. With the design and construction schedule, a new high school could be opened 2021.

Q: With prototypes, does it take as long for design?

A: There can be some time savings, but yes, it still takes time to design to a new footprint and site. The foundation coordination with engineers is critical and unique to each school.

How much?

Dr. Gilcrease then reviewed the potential cost analysis of the new schools and land. He first explained what all is included in the cost of a new school. A bond must budget for a turnkey project cost, which includes land acquisition costs, construction costs, instruction and technology costs, site and utility costs, professional fees, furniture and equipment. For expansion and renovation projects, costs for temporary facilities are needed to house students during the construction phasing.

Q: What is TIS?

A: Traffic Impact Study

Q: What about TDLR?

A: Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation; this is for our compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act

Costs shown are all inclusive. They are “turnkey” and include everything to get the project up and running.

Q: How much was the last bond?

A: The CAC recommendation was about \$280 million. \$245 million was ultimately taken to the voters and the district addressed the rest out of fund balance.

Q: What’s the inflation escalation built into the estimates?

A: 5-8% each year

Q: Are we under contract for the junior high land?

A: We should be within the near future.

Q: What about existing infrastructure projects? Replacement schools?

A: Any projects to address existing campuses would be in addition to this total.

Comment: People want to know what it will cost them. We need to remember that there are more people and businesses than there were for the last bond and our property values are up. Even though this bond would be more, it would likely cost the same for homeowners.

What can we afford?

Dr. Gilcrease reviewed the components of the district’s tax rate. There are two different rates – the Maintenance and Operations and Interest and Sinking. The district’s current M&O tax rate is \$1.04 and I&S tax rate is \$0.41, for a total tax rate of \$1.45 per \$100 of taxable property value.

The I&S tax rate is used to pay for debt and is capped at 50 cents, meaning the district has a current capacity of 9 cents.

Dr. Gilcrease explained that there is another type of an election a public school district can have – a Tax Ratification Election, which is to increase the M&O tax rate and maximize state funding. The district could raise the M&O tax rate up to an additional 13 cents, and at the same time decrease the I&S tax rate by the same number of pennies. The overall tax rate would remain the same and taxpayers would pay the same. The State gives more funding for some of the M&O pennies than they do for I&S, matching Austin ISD's property wealth per student. The benefit is to take advantage of this additional state funding, potentially millions more a year that could be used for any purpose, including bond projects.

Q: For the total estimated amount of \$372 million, how much would you have to raise the tax rate?

A: Initial estimates show about 8.5 pennies as a worst-case scenario, assuming no growth after year three. We also don't sell all the bonds at once, so potentially the tax rate wouldn't increase all at once.

Q: How much have other fast growth school districts done in one bond election?

A: Clear Creek ISD’s last bond was approximately \$480 million.

Comment: I think we can do more than our last bond. If we need \$370 million just for growth, I think we will need closer to \$450 million with replacement schools.

Comment: We have to sell what we need.

4. Meeting Wrap-Up

Dr. Gilcrease wrapped up the committee meeting. Replacement schools will be discussed at that time and the committee will need to begin making decisions towards consensus. The next meeting is Monday, May 7 at 6:30 p.m. at Manvel Junior High School. The committee should save the date for a sixth meeting on Monday, May 21.