

# Austin ISD School Consolidation Process

## Community Open House



**AUSTIN**  
Independent School District

2024-25

**Welcome! Please drop in the chat, how long you've been part of Austin ISD.**

**¡Bienvenidos! Escriban en el chat cuánto tiempo llevan siendo parte del Austin ISD.**



# Agenda

- Review meeting norms
- Review meeting purpose
- Presentation
- Breakout rooms (each will discuss both topics):
  - 1. Program Realignment
  - 2. Boundaries & Transfer Policies
- Complete feedback form
- Sign-up to participate in the school consolidations workshops the week of July 14



# Meeting Norms

- **Respect All Voices** - Allow one person to speak at a time. Avoid interrupting or dominating the conversation.
- **Use Inclusive Language** - Speak in ways that are welcoming to all members of the community. Avoid jargon or explain it when necessary.
- **Engage in Healthy Dialogue** - It's okay to disagree — do so with respect and without personal attacks.
- **Honor Time Limits** - Be mindful of others' time. Keep comments concise and on-topic to help the group stay within scheduled timeframes.



# Meeting Purpose

What today is:

- **Update** on where we are in the process:
  - Survey Results
  - Consolidation Tool (Data Rubric)
- **Discussion** on key topics:
  - Program Realignment
  - Transfer Policy & Boundaries

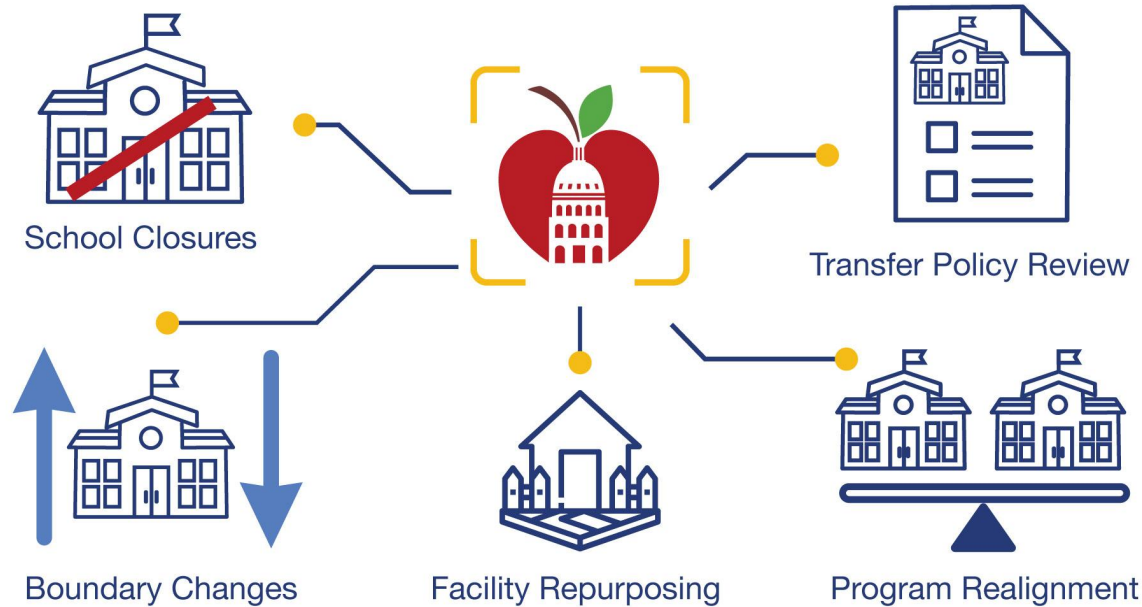
What today isn't:

- **Question & Answer Session**
  - Deeper discussion will occur in July workshops
  - Find additional feedback opportunities at [austinisd.org/consolidate](https://austinisd.org/consolidate)



# What are school consolidations?

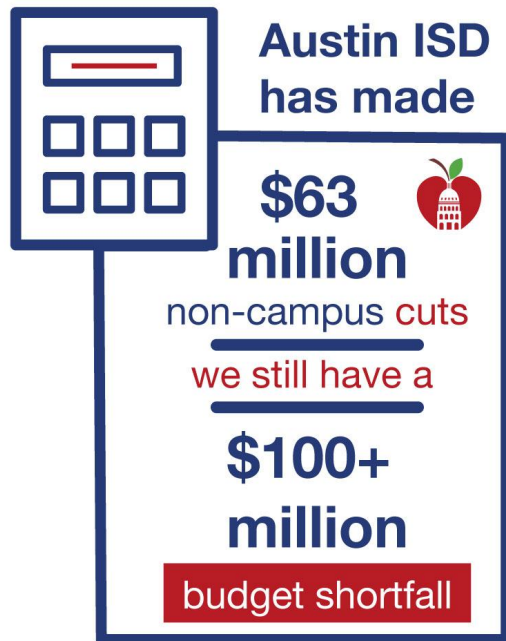
School consolidation means merging one or more campuses, which will entail:



*We're taking a comprehensive, districtwide approach that will evaluate all campuses.*



## Fewer, Better-Resourced Schools: A Smarter Alternative to Harmful Cuts



### Before considering harmful budget cuts like:



increasing  
class sizes



reducing teacher  
planning time



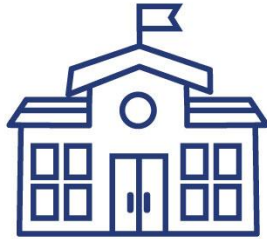
or cutting  
programs



We're choosing to  
have fewer,  
better-resourced schools



## How we got here:



**82%**  
Of Austin  
school children

attend one of  
**116**  
Austin ISD  
Schools

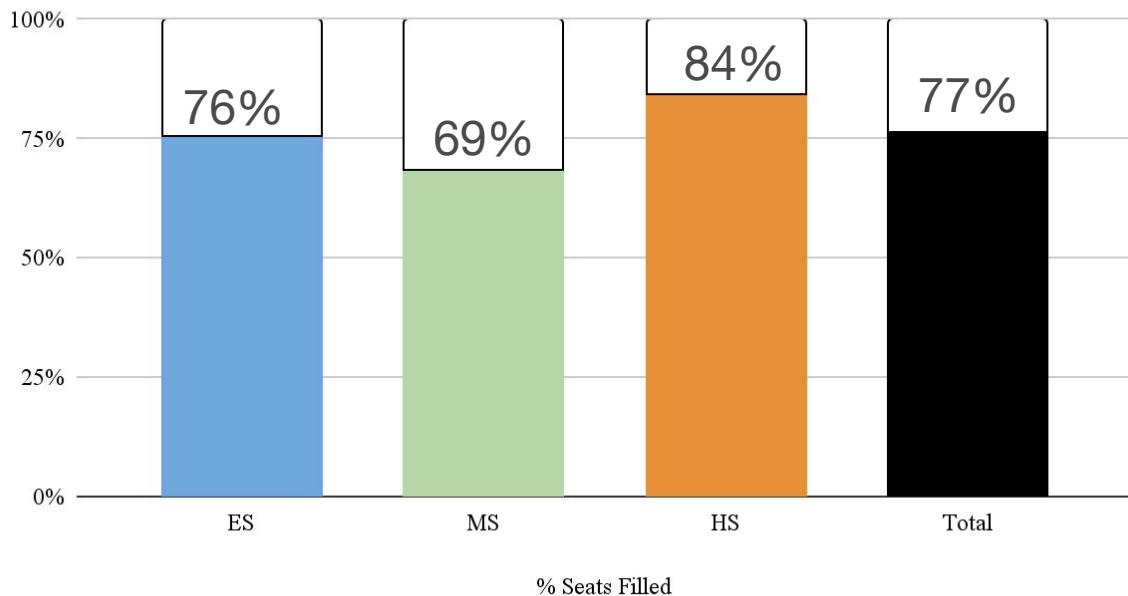
Austin ISD  
Student enrollment has  
decreased by more than  
**-10,000**  
over the last 10 years

Leaving us with  
**21,500**  
empty seats  
across the district





# District Utilization



Note: Ongoing capacity verification is impacting total available seats. This will be finalized by August 2025 with the final data rubric. Percentage based on projected SY25-26 enrollment

## Elementary

- Total Seats: 47,192
- Open Seats: 11,371

## Middle School

- Total Seats: 20,349
- Open Seats: 6,350

## High School

- Total Seats: 24,556
- Open Seats: 3,837

## Total

- Total Seats: 92,097
- Open Seats: 21,558



# Potential Benefits of Consolidation

## More opportunities for students

- Schools can offer more electives and specialized courses
- Students benefit from robust academic, arts and athletic options
- Improved access to after school and enrichment activities

## Robust Staffing

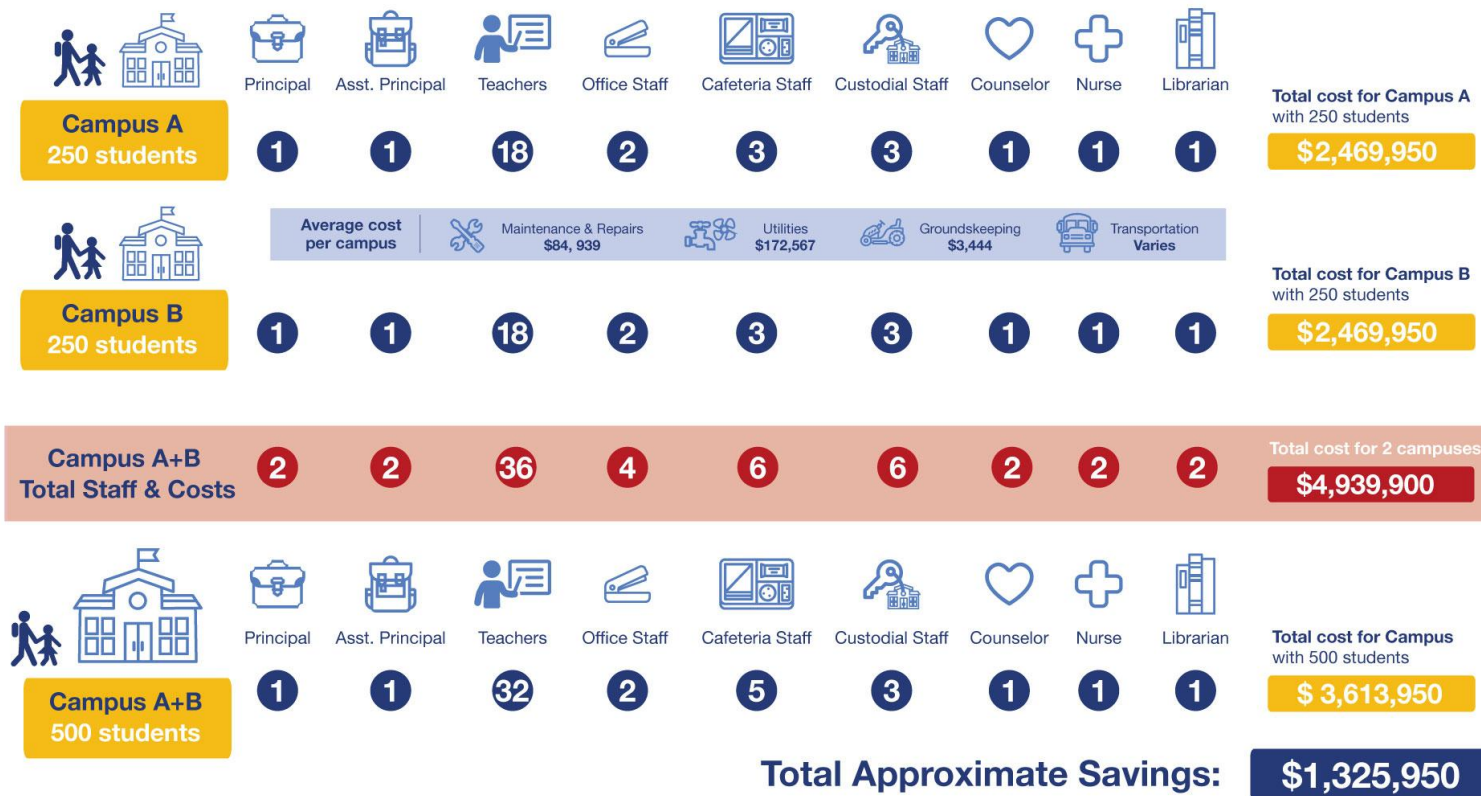
- Reduced teacher vacancies
- Reduced need to rely on uncertified teachers
- More staff to assist with duties such as device management, lunch, drop-off and dismissal duty, testing, tutoring, website & communications, etc.

## Improved Peer Learning & Diversity

- Greater opportunities for collaboration and peer learning
- A richer, more diverse school community



# Snapshot: How School Consolidations Save Money





# Tool Overview

## One Tool with Two Parts

### Part I



#### Data Rubric

(may include building utilization, cost per student, building condition, accountability, % EcoDis, etc.)

#### Output:

List of all schools sorted by rubric ranking

Schools are more  
than numbers.

### Part II



#### Contextual Analysis

What questions do we need to ask beyond the initial data?  
(may include programming, history, campus experience, transportation, etc.)  
Transition Plans (staffing, SPED, etc.)

#### Outcome:

The recommended Consolidation Package

*The 'Total Score' in Part I indicates the level of alignment between a school's building size, building quality, enrollment, and cost, weighted by the level of student need. The higher the 'Total Score' the more we need to investigate this campus for potential boundary changes, impacts of transfer policies, future bond projects, or school closure/consolidation.*

# School Consolidation Timeline

## Phase I

### Data Collection and Creation (April 14–June 11)

- **Gather Data**
- **Community Survey** to inform **board priorities** and transparent **consolidation tool**
- Begin **boundary and transfer policy evaluation**

## Phase II

### Analysis and Refinement (June 13–Oct. 8)

- June 25-26 - **Community Open Houses**. Discussion on programming, transfer policies and boundaries.
- **Community Workshops** - July 14–16. In-depth feedback on our decision-making process.
- **Aug 14 - School consolidation scoring and raw data published**
- **Begin developing scenarios** with central office and campus-level stakeholders.

## Phase III

### Finalization and Approval (Oct 9–Nov 20)

- **Oct 9 - Present draft plan outlining specific school consolidations, revised boundaries and transition plans**
- **Digital and in-person engagement** with affected school communities
- **Nov. 20 - Board vote** on final consolidation and transition plans

**School consolidations to go into effect beginning the 2026-27 school year**



# Board of Trustees' Values & Priorities

**Top Values & Priorities** *(in order of importance by trustee rank and overall frequency):*

- Acknowledge history and ensure burden of consolidations spread as equitably as possible
- Ensure decisions support long-term efficiency and realistic cost savings
- Consider programming — how can we maintain and even improve what is offered?
- Be empathetic and thorough in our transition planning, for staff and families
- Avoid TEA takeover
- Align feeder patterns & Vertical Teams

**Hopes:**

- This should be a comprehensive, transparent, systems approach that does not “bow to privilege”.
- This will be disruptive. “We can do hard things” if we provide the proper support.
- Be future-focused. Acknowledge the past and work together for a better, stronger Austin ISD.

# 2024-25 Austin ISD School Consolidation Survey

Key Takeaways

Dr. Jay Brown, Director of Research-Insight-Analytics



**AUSTIN**

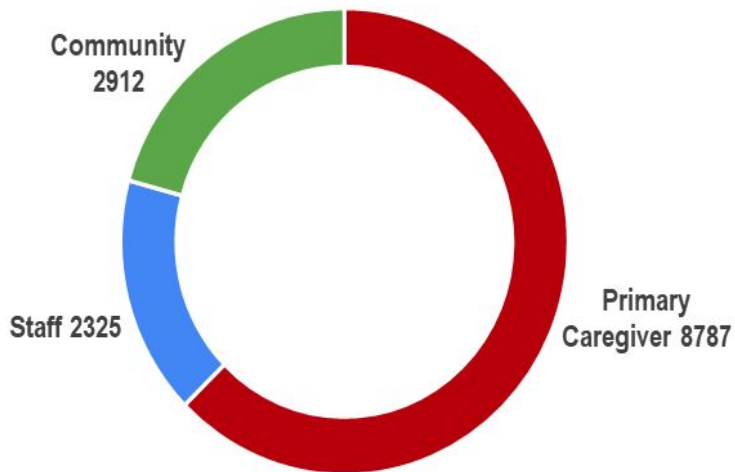
Independent School District

2024-25

# Survey Response

**14,024**

**TOTAL SURVEYS**



## Consolidation Survey Overview

- Survey response rate
- [Interactive Dashboard](#)
  - How to use the dashboard
  - What to look out for
- Key takeaways
  - Important factors
  - Top concerns and benefits
  - Shared burden of change
  - Travel time

**12.30%**

**PRIMARY CAREGIVER  
RESPONSE RATE**

**20.55%**

**STAFF  
RESPONSE RATE**



**RESET** data to 14,024 again when  
you want to view new options

Reset

Share

How to navigate

Importance of factors

Concerns and benefits

Burden of change

School size

Travel distance

Grandfathering and more

About the survey

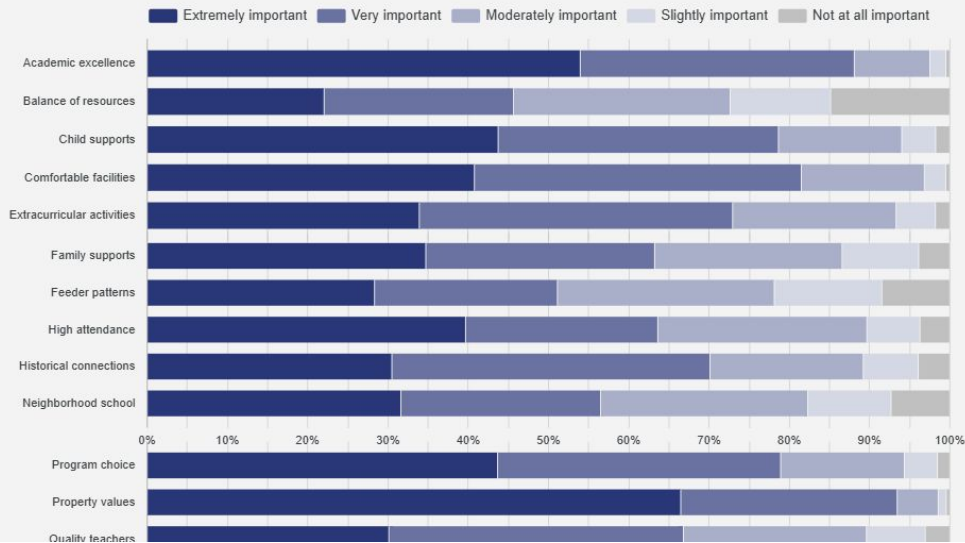
For more information, please visit the  
[Austin ISD Consolidation website](#)



## 2024-25 Austin ISD Consolidation Survey

We asked participants what they believe is important about the school experience. Participants responded to 20 factors (read more about factors on the "navigate" page). Responses range from extremely important to not at all important. Each bar is divided into sections that are proportional to how participants answered. The tint of blue showcases the level of importance. Darker blue shows a higher rating. The length of each section corresponds to the percent of participants who selected that answer. **Overall, each of the 20 factors show some level of importance to most participants.** Use filters to explore each factor and compare details in how answers shift across groups.

### IMPORTANCE OF FACTORS IN RELATION TO PARTICIPANT CAMPUS/LOCATION



This dashboard reflects  
the responses of  
**14,024**  
members of the Austin  
ISD community.

Throughout this report,  
you can use the  
dropdown boxes to  
select the groups you  
are most interested in  
reviewing.

PARTICIPANT

LEVEL

LOCATION

ECODIS

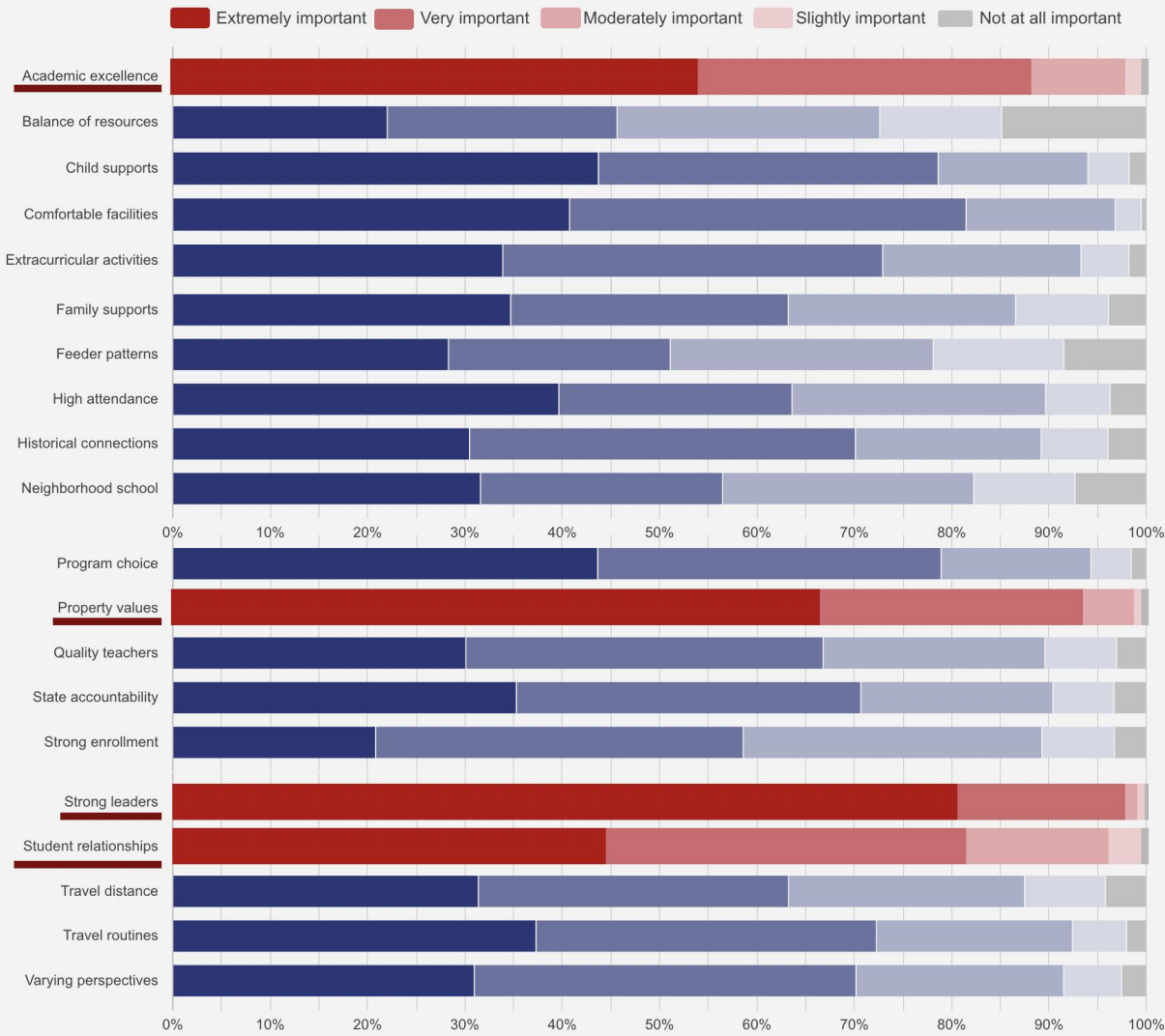
BOARD

For any graphs or  
images: hover, click on  
three dots, and select  
"Export" to save or print.

Select  
**FILTER  
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and watch  
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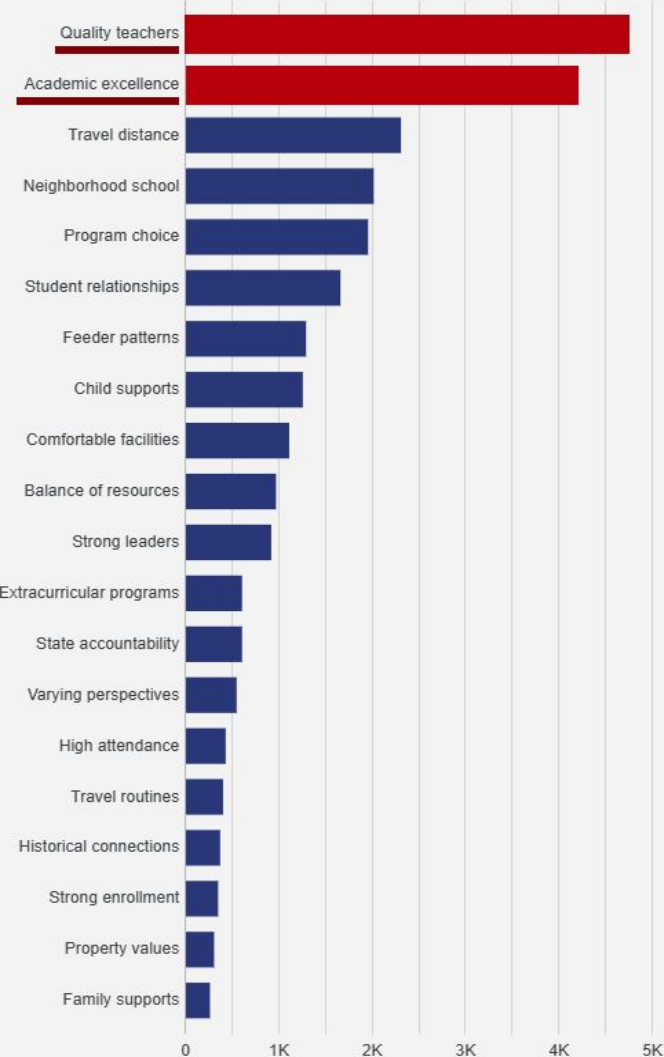
Toggle  
between  
**PAGES** to  
view different  
data



**Factors are items commonly considered in the consolidation process.**

**All factors were rated “extremely” or “very” important to the school experience by a majority of participants.**

**Factors with the highest levels of importance for all participant types are highlighted in red.**



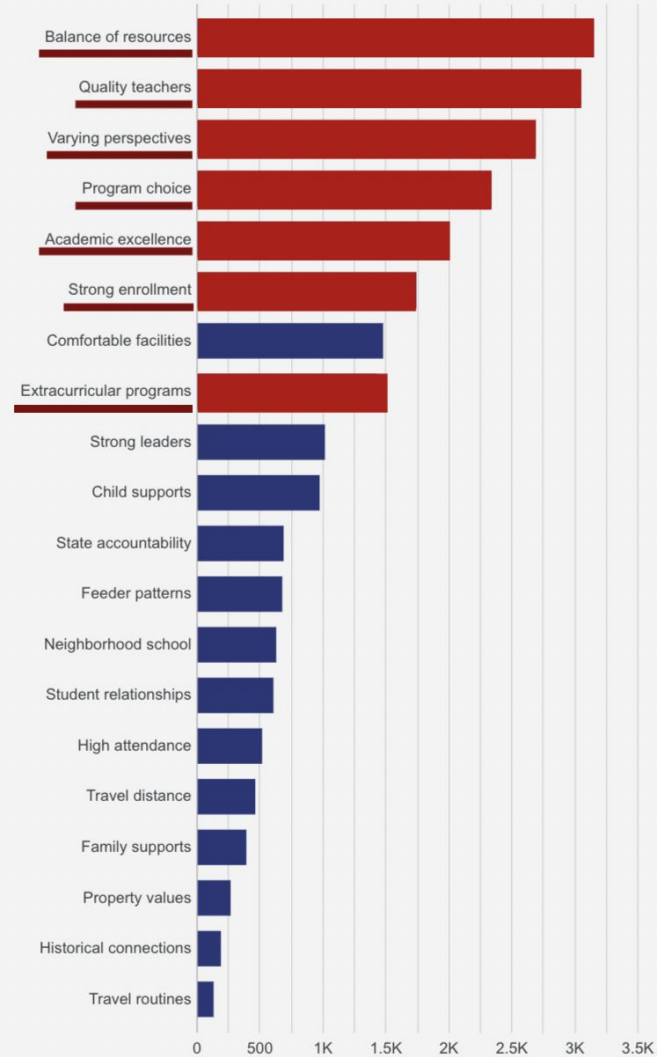
**Top 2 concerns in relation to consolidation were quality teachers and academic excellence.**

*These were consistently chosen across participant types.*



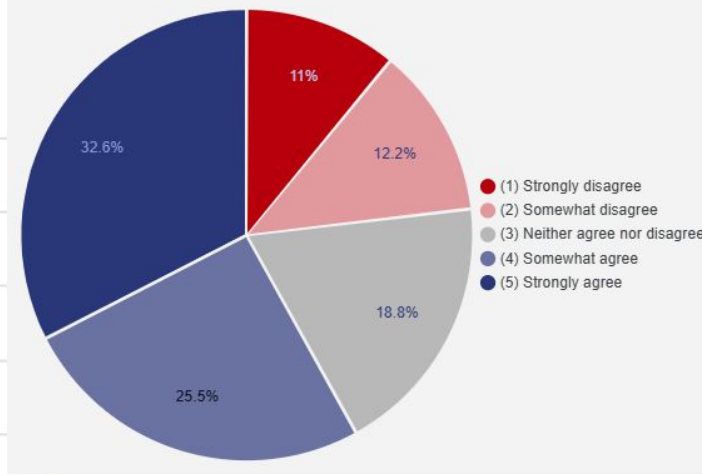
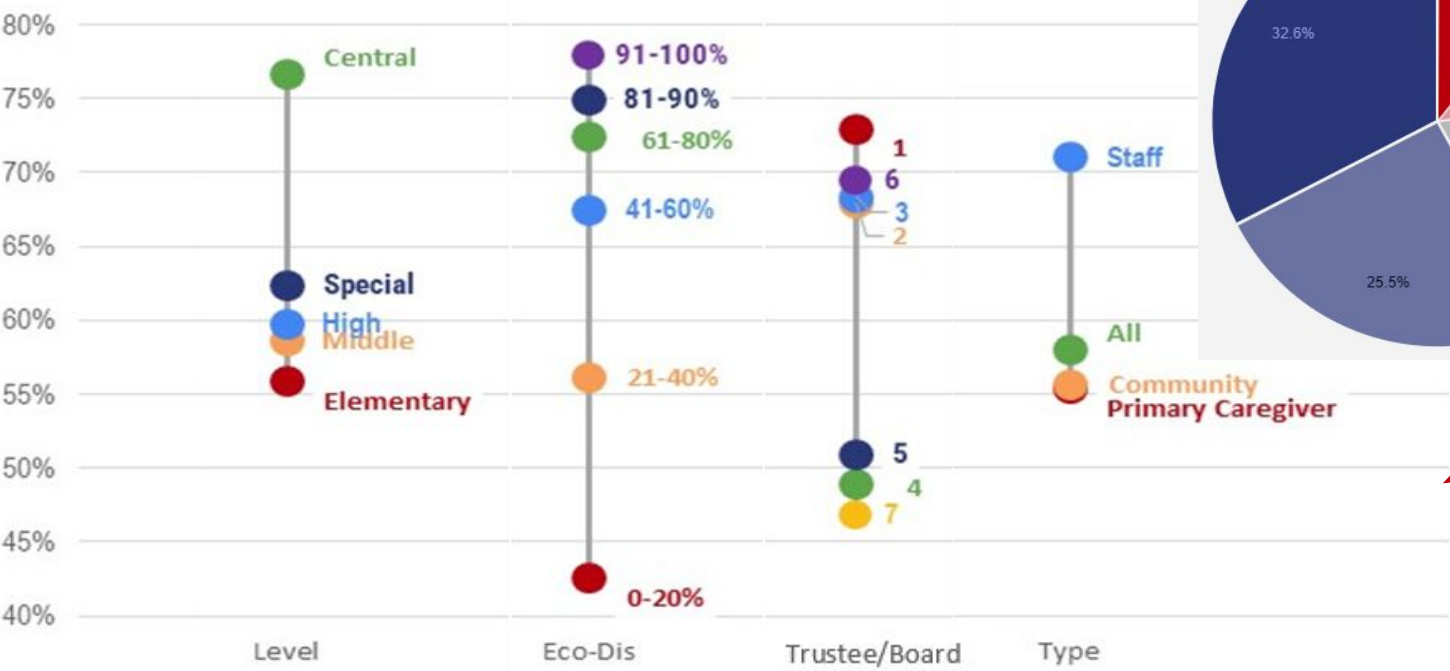
**Selections for top 2 potential benefits were more varied.**

*The most consistently chosen factors across participant types are highlighted in red.*



Across all responses (“All”) 58% of participants agree the burden of change should be shared equally amongst the district community. Answers range by filter information between 42-78%.

Percent agreement (somewhat and strongly agree) by participant filter types. Each vertical line shows a filter option from the pie chart in the dashboard. Each dot is a group in the filter option. Filters show variability in responses.

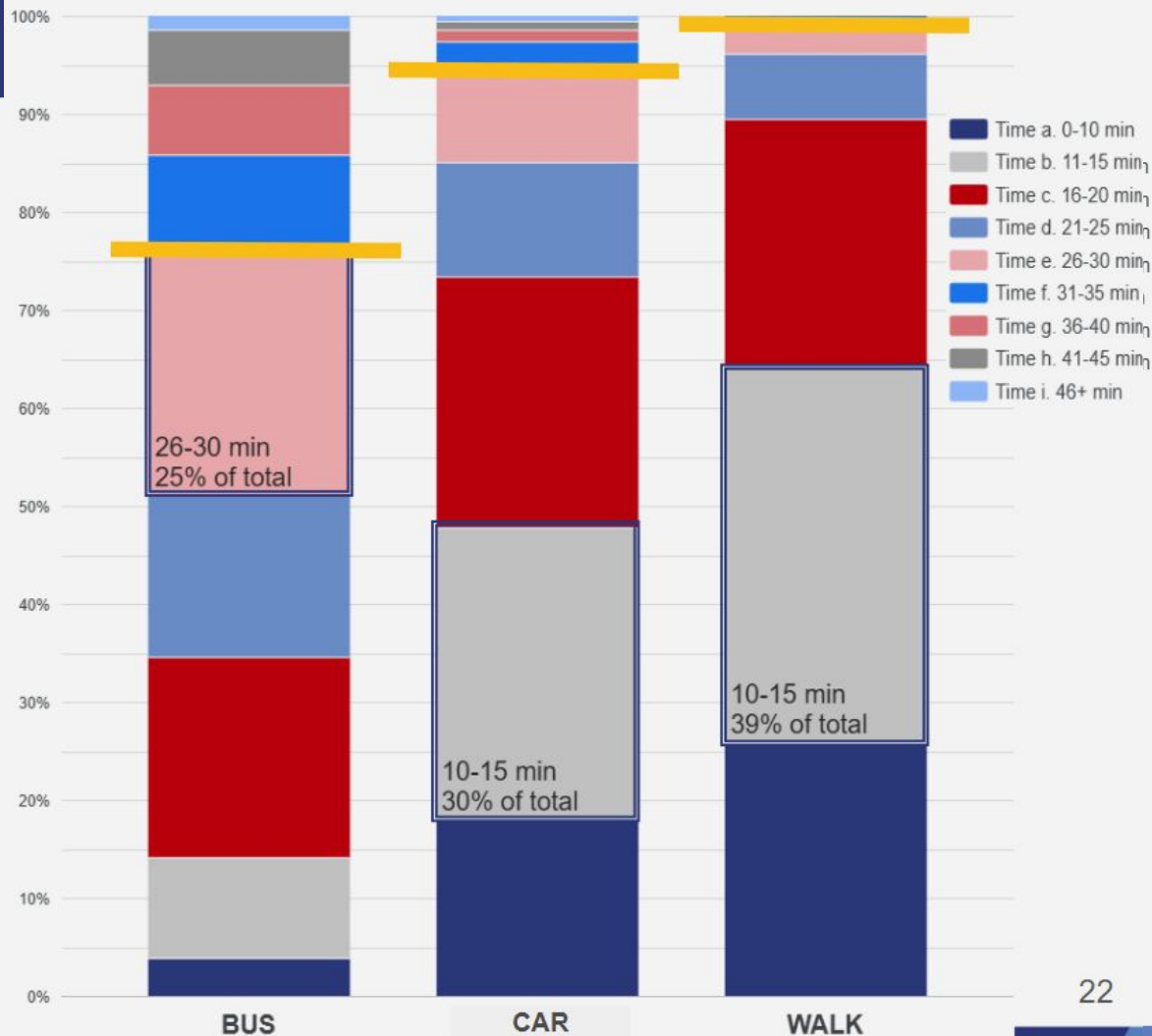




**Austin traffic is a concern. Participants think students should be able to travel in less than 30 minutes whether riding a bus, riding in a car, or walking to school (the yellow line).**

The most agreed upon times for each travel type are:

- Bus: 26-30 minutes
- Car: 10-15 minutes
- Walking: 10-15 minutes



# Data Rubric Overview

Dr. Raechel French, Director of Planning



**AUSTIN**  
Independent School District

2024-25



# Draft Data Rubric

*Who are we impacting?*

*How efficient is each campus  
(re: building & budget)?*

**How should  
Accountability  
affect our  
decisions?**

	<u>SRI</u> Factor (minus accountability)	Utilization %	FCA	ESA	Cost per Student	Building Score	Overall Score
School A	High Student Need = 0.7 ... = 0.8 ... = 0.9 Low Student Need = 1.0	1	1	3	5	10	10 x 0.7 = 7
School B	Demographic Data:	Building Operations Data:  What data is missing? How will these individually be weighted according to our values?					(Building Score x SRI Factor)
School C	Includes: EcoDis, Emergent Bilingual, Mobility, SPED, etc.						

Note: Data & Weights are subject to change based on board & community feedback 23





# Proposed Weighting of Data

<b>Utilization Rate</b>	How full or empty is the building?	<b>35%</b>
<b>Facility Condition</b>	Quality of the physical building	<b>25%</b>
<b>Educational Suitability</b>	Size and types of learning spaces	<b>5%</b>
<b>Cost per Student (Building &amp; Ops)</b>	Utilities, Contracted Services, Rentals	<b>25%</b>
<b>Cost per Student (Staffing &amp; Academics)</b>	Staff, Benefits, Supplies	<b>10%</b>

Opportunities for feedback on the Data Rubric will be available on the website and through in-person stakeholder workshops July 14–16.

*The 'Total Score' in Part I indicates the level of alignment between a school's building size, building quality, enrollment, and cost, weighted by the level of student need. The higher the 'Total Score' the more we need to investigate this campus for potential boundary changes, impacts of transfer policies, future bond projects, or school closure/consolidation.*





# Support & Resource Index

We are calculating a multiplier based on AISD's Support & Resource Index indicators. These indicators include Economic Disadvantage, Emergent Bilingualism, Special Education participation, High Mobility, 1st or 2nd year in US schools, and underserved student groups.

## Why are we including this?

- We want to acknowledge that other data points utilized in Data Rubric are impacted by historic and systemic inequities. This is one way our tool will correct for this (e.g. campuses with higher student need will have their score proportionally lowered).
  - **Proposed multipliers** range from 0.7 to 1, based on SRI indicators

## What will we look at in Part II of our tool?

- History of all campuses potentially impacted
- Existing student supports we need to consider



# Utilization Rate

The Utilization Rate tells us how full or empty a school building is by comparing current enrollment to operational capacity. Our optimal utilization rate for this tool is 80-95%

**Proposed Weight:** 35%

## Why are we including this?

- We have over 20,000 empty seats throughout the district - this will highlight where those are.
- At the same time, some campuses are over-crowded.
- Too low or too high signals misalignment between the building, programming, population, and/or transfers that we need to look at in Part II

## What will we look at in Part II of our tool?

- Enrollment patterns over time (previous and predicted)
- Drivers of space use: programming, community partners, district-wide services
- Reside population and the impact of transfer rates on utilization/enrollment



# Facility Condition

The Facility Condition Assessment (FCA) score indicates how much maintenance or improvement costs are needed over time (lower FCA score = higher costs). We are using 2021 assessment data but accounting for 2022 bond work for full or phased modernizations (e.g. estimating the score assuming work will be completed).

**Proposed Weight:** 25%

## **Why are we including this?**

- “Comfortable Facilities” was one of the top potential benefits from the Community Survey.
- We can avoid ongoing and future costs of facility maintenance and upgrades of buildings in poor condition if we prioritize these for consolidation.

## **What will we look at in Part II of our tool?**

- The schedule and status of 2022 bond work.
- What makes the FCA score high or low and how much work is needed to fix it?



# Educational Suitability

The Educational Suitability Assessment (ESA) score indicates how well a building's design supports AISD's vision for teaching and learning. We are using 2021 assessment data but accounting for 2022 bond work for full or phased modernizations (e.g. estimating the score assuming work will be completed).

**Proposed Weight:** 5%

## Why are we including this?

- A low ESA score may mean classrooms are undersized, missing space types, and/or other gaps with our Educational Specifications.

## What will we look at in Part II of our tool?

- The schedule and status of 2022 bond work.
- The specific drivers of ESA score (e.g. size of rooms, missing spaces, etc.)



# Cost per Student (Building & Operations)

Cost per Student (Building & Operations) breaks down how much we spend per student on contracted maintenance, furniture & equipment rentals, custodial supplies, technology & building consumables, land and construction related costs, and other contracted professional services. We calculate this based on SY23-24 actual spending and enrollment.

**Proposed Weight:** 25%

## **Why are we including this?**

- Allows us to break down spending on a per-student impact, highlighting which building closures could result in more cost savings.

## **What will we look at in Part II of our tool?**

- Any anomalies in spending for SY23-24



# Cost per Student (Staffing & Academic Support)

Cost per Student (Staffing & Academic Support) breaks down how much we spend per student on teacher salaries and benefits, reading and testing materials, library books, teaching training, etc. We calculate this based on budgeted amounts and enrollment for SY23-24. We are not including Title 1 funds or food service spending.

**Proposed Weight:** 10%

## **Why are we including this?**

- This data point will highlight potential efficiencies in spending and indicate which campuses require more analysis in Part II.

## **What will we look at in Part II of our tool?**

- Any anomalies in budget for SY23-24



# Feedback Form





# School Consolidation Workshops

Monday, July 14, 5:30–8:30 p.m.  
(Virtual)

Tuesday, July 15, 9 a.m.–noon (Virtual)

Tuesday, July 15, 5:30–8:30 p.m.  
(In-person)

Wednesday, July 16, noon–3 p.m.  
(In-person)





# Break Out Rooms

# Topic 1: Program Realignment Guiding Questions

As the district works to **re-align programming**, what are your reactions and thoughts?

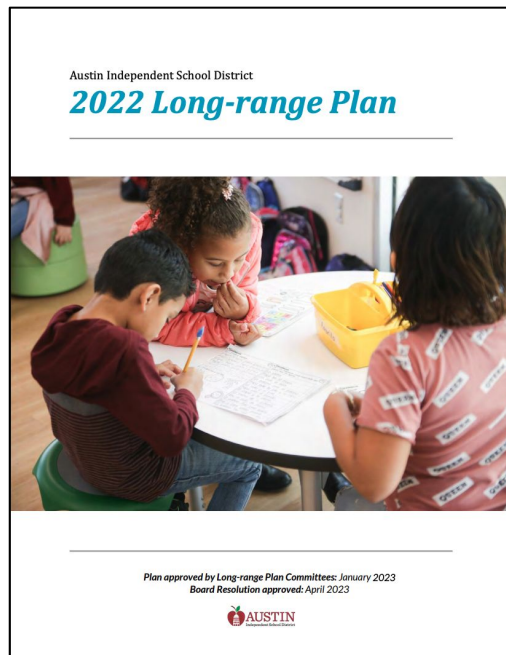
- What do we need to consider when making these decisions?
- What is most important to you about student experience that we should keep in mind?

# Topic 2: Transfers & Boundaries

**We will build on the work from the Equity Advisory Committee (EAC) and the Long Range Plan (LRP):**

1. Establish an Attendance Area Review Policy
2. Re-evaluate Enrollment Management Plan
3. Consider Alternate Placement Strategies
4. Analyze Student Transfer Data

[Summary of LRP Recommendations](#)



## Topic 2: Transfers & Boundaries

### The LRP Committee saw success as:

1. Increasing the number of schools within the optimal utilization range (85%-110%)
  - *During the LRP the committee recommended changing the optimal utilization range to 80%-95% which we will for this process*
2. Boundaries changes reducing split feeder patterns
  - [SY 24-25 Feeder Pattern Percents](#)
3. Reducing the use of portables

# Topic 2: Transfers & Boundaries Guiding Questions

Knowing that we are aiming to realign boundaries and evaluate our transfer policies as part of this process, what are your reactions and thoughts?

- What do we need to consider when making these decisions?
- What is most important to you about student experience that we should keep in mind?



# Feedback Form





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