

INSIDE, FIND 17 PAGES OF COVERAGE

NO. 2018 **EDUCATION FOCUS**

Leander ISD works to bolster safety practices

District advances bond projects

INSIDE 36

BY **ABBY BORA**



Students exit Glenn High School's secure front entry.

BY THE NUMBERS:

FUNDING SECURITY

LEANDER ISD'S \$454.4 MILLION BOND PACKAGE INCLUDED:

- 7% FOCUSED ON SAFETY**
- \$7.75 MILLION FOR HIGH SCHOOL AND ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL SECURE ENTRIES**
- \$9.87 MILLION FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL SECURE ENTRIES**

SOURCE: LEANDER ISD/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

CEDAR PARK LEANDER EDITION

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 6 | SEPT. 18-OCT. 15, 2018

CI COMMUNITYIMPACT.COM

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Now Open, Coming Soon & more

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Cedar Park shares H-E-B Center costs

EDUCATION
2018 FOCUS

- 21** DISTRICT DATA
Dive into info about Leander ISD
- 31** SCHOOL RATINGS
LISD's B grade accountability rating
- 33** FEATURE
Vista Ridge's INCubatoredu

LCRA could see changes following sunset review

BY **SALLY GRACE HOLTGRIEVE**

The Lower Colorado River Authority is in the midst of its first sunset review, which could result in the Texas Legislature mandating the entity make changes to its performance and mission.

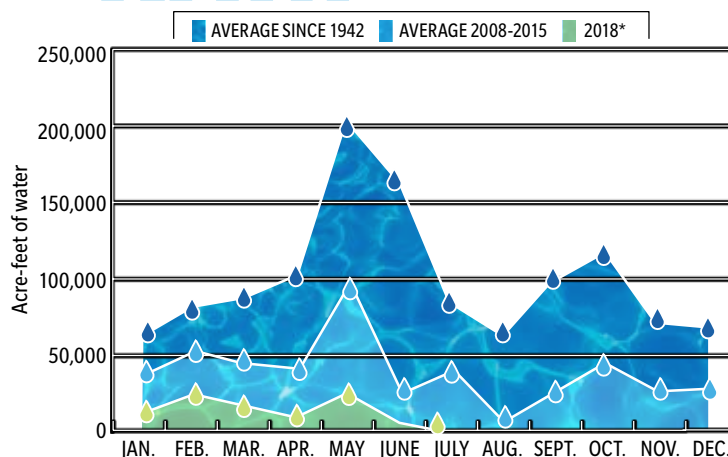
According to the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission, the sunset process involves assessing a state agency or program and making recommendations to the Texas Legislature.

Organizations such as nonprofit Central Texas Water Coalition see the sunset process as an opportunity to invoke change. The cities of Cedar Park and Leander, which both buy water from the LCRA, have both expressed support of

CONTINUED ON 48

NEEDING MORE RAIN

INFLOWS—rainwater flowing into the Highland Lakes from rivers and streams—are significantly down in 2018 when compared to historical rain levels.



SOURCE: LOWER COLORADO RIVER AUTHORITY/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

*AS OF JUNE 2018

41 DINING FEATURE
Bella Sera in Leander

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Local martial arts studios



DISTRICT DATA

COMPILED BY **ABBY BORA**

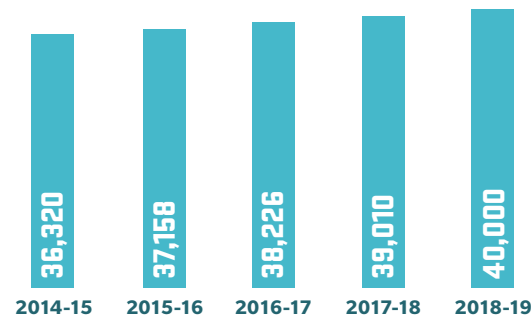
LEANDER ISD



With 40 elementary, middle and high schools plus two alternative schools, Leander ISD serves students across nearly 200 square miles. Students hail from nine municipalities, including Austin, Cedar Park, Georgetown, Jonestown, Lago Vista, Leander, Liberty Hill, Round Rock and Volente.

SOURCES: LEANDER ISD, POPULATION AND SURVEY ANALYSTS, TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

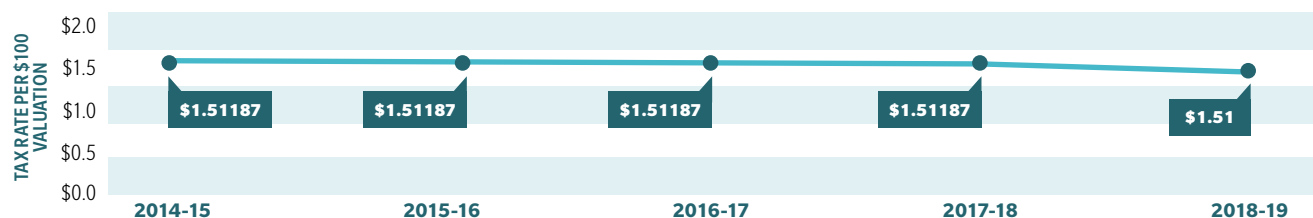
2018-19 ENROLLMENT



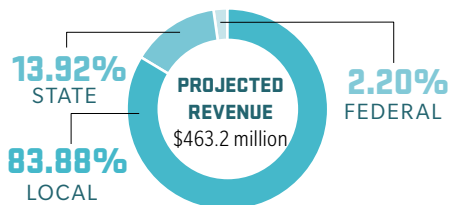
2018-19 SCHOOL CALENDAR

- OCT. 8-9** Staff development/student holiday
- NOV. 19-23** Fall break
- DEC. 3-7** STAAR testing (high school only)
- DEC. JAN. 24-4** Winter break
- JAN. 21** Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- FEB. 18** Presidents' Day
- MARCH 18-22** Spring break
- APRIL 9-12** STAAR testing
- APRIL 22** Bad weather makeup day
- MAY 6-17** STAAR testing
- MAY 27** Memorial Day
- MAY 31** Last day of school

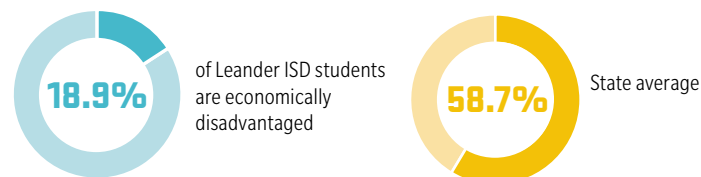
HISTORY OF TAX RATES



STATE VS. LOCAL 2018-19 FUNDING



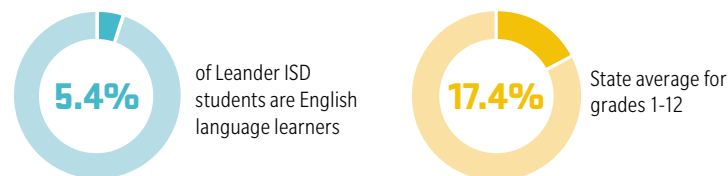
2017-18 ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED



2018-19 SALARY BREAKDOWN



2017-18 ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS



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LEANDER ISD

SCORES, RATINGS AND BOUNDARIES

The tables reveal results from the 2017-18 State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, or STAAR, exam. Results are organized by campus. The tables also identify the Texas Education Agency's 2017-18 accountability ratings for campuses as well as the overall district scores based on the TEA's new A-F accountability system. The STAAR scores shown are from only the spring 2018 administration of the test. However, the TEA ratings factor in additional administrations for fifth- and eighth-grade tests as well as end-of-course exams.

COMPILED BY COMMUNITY IMPACT STAFF

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	SCHOOLS	2017-18 accountability rating	2017-18 enrollment	2017-18 STAAR PASSING RESULTS BY GRADE									Feeder schools
				3rd		4th			5th				
				Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Writing	Reading	Math	Science		
★	State average	N/A	N/A	76%	77%	72%	78%	61%	78%	84%	75%	N/A	
1	Akin	MS	761	88%	88%	83%	89%	78%	89%	89%	85%	33	
2	Bagdad	MS	592	82%	75%	78%	74%	46%	73%	72%	61%	31	
3	Block House Creek	MS	626	88%	92%	96%	91%	75%	90%	94%	90%	33, 34	
4	Bush	MS	716	97%	97%	92%	96%	91%	96%	98%	96%	27	
5	Camacho	IR	781	80%	77%	66%	64%	54%	81%	76%	70%	31	
6	Cox	MS	574	93%	94%	79%	75%	72%	95%	98%	95%	30	
7	Cypress	MS	684	91%	81%	92%	88%	85%	91%	89%	82%	28	
8	Deer Creek	MS	687	97%	95%	91%	90%	87%	88%	88%	85%	28	
9	Faubion	MS	480	81%	83%	85%	72%	78%	83%	79%	78%	28, 30	
10	Giddens	MS	533	72%	62%	62%	61%	49%	77%	69%	58%	32, 33	
11	Grandview Hills	MS	479	86%	84%	78%	74%	72%	84%	88%	74%	29	
12	Knowles	MS	641	67%	61%	69%	76%	44%	74%	78%	69%	32	
13	Mason	MS	617	83%	79%	73%	69%	55%	79%	83%	63%	32	
14	Naumann	MS	469	90%	87%	80%	83%	62%	89%	91%	81%	28	
15	Parkside	MS	842	91%	91%	93%	88%	84%	95%	96%	91%	33	
16	Plain	MS	838	76%	63%	83%	75%	66%	76%	74%	69%	31, 34	
17	Pleasant Hill	MS	646	83%	78%	81%	69%	58%	78%	89%	72%	34	
18	Reagan	MS	863	90%	86%	90%	84%	78%	96%	95%	92%	30, 33	
19	Reed	MS	749	78%	60%	80%	76%	69%	79%	79%	73%	30	
20	River Place	MS	792	86%	80%	84%	80%	76%	90%	92%	83%	29	
21	River Ridge	MS	715	96%	97%	95%	89%	89%	98%	99%	96%	27	
22	Rutledge	MS	831	92%	90%	95%	89%	86%	96%	96%	95%	33	
23	Steiner Ranch	MS	543	92%	79%	94%	98%	84%	98%	99%	96%	27	
24	Westside	MS	574	89%	80%	89%	82%	78%	89%	93%	92%	28, 30	
25	Whitestone	MS	774	87%	76%	77%	73%	66%	87%	90%	90%	31	
26	Winkley	MS	684	90%	82%	91%	88%	77%	87%	92%	81%	32	

2017-18 ACCOUNTABILITY RATINGS KEY

Met Standard (MS): met performance targets

Met Alternative Standard (MAS): met performance targets for charter operators and alternative education campuses

Improvement Required (IR): did not meet one or more performance targets

2017-18 LEANDER ISD A-F ACCOUNTABILITY RATINGS

OVERALL **B**

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT **A**

SCHOOL PROGRESS **B**

CLOSING THE GAPS **B**

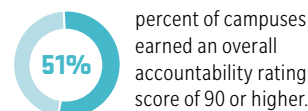
- A** Exemplary performance
- B** Recognized performance
- C** Acceptable performance
- D** In need of improvement
- F** Unacceptable performance

2017-18 DISTRICT PASSING SCORES

END-OF-COURSE—ALL STUDENTS

ENGLISH I	ENGLISH II	ALGEBRA I	BIOLOGY	U.S. HISTORY
81%	83%	91%	95%	96%

DISTRICT ANALYSIS



39 out of 40

campuses earned the Met Standard rating, not including alternative schools.

22 out of 40

schools earned at least one Texas Education Agency Distinction Designation.

2017-18 DISTRICT STAAR PASSING SCORES BY GRADE*

*INCLUDES SUMMER ADMINISTRATION OF TESTS

GRADE	READING	MATH
3	87%	82%
4	84%	81%
5	91%	94%
6	81%	91%
7	84%	83%
8	94%	96%

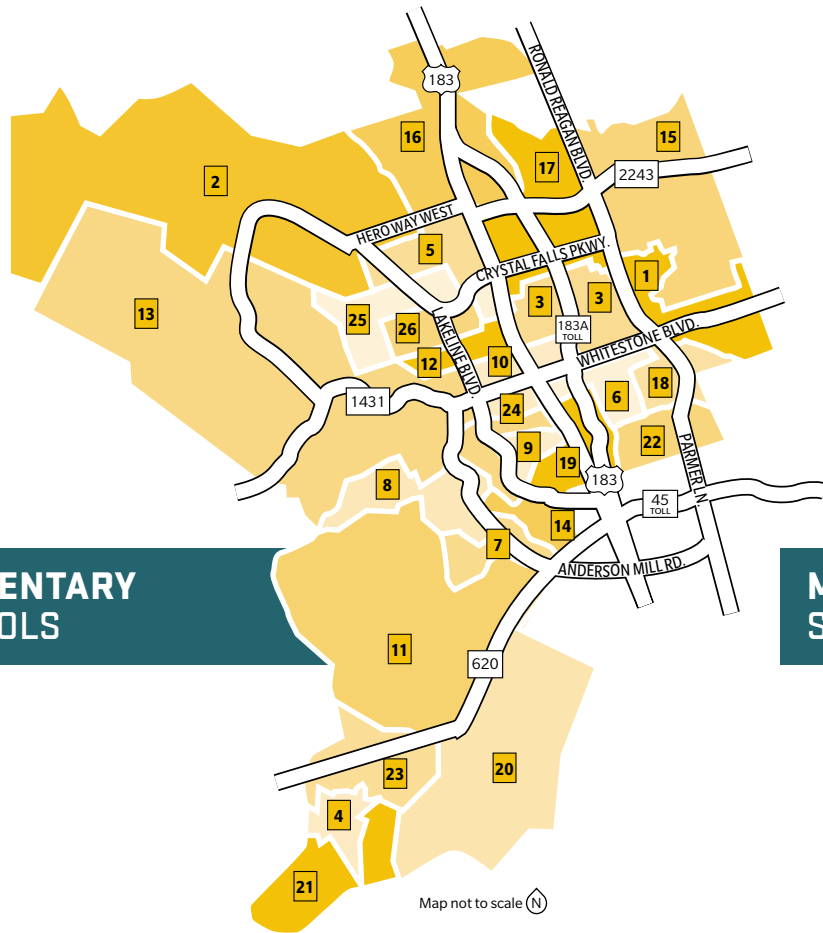
SOURCES: LEANDER ISD, TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY, TEXAS STUDENT ASSESSMENTS/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

MIDDLE SCHOOLS	SCHOOLS	2017-18 accountability rating	2017-18 enrollment	2017-18 STAAR PASSING RESULTS BY GRADE								Feeder schools	
				6th		7th			8th				
				Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Writing	Reading	Math	Science		Social studies
★	State average	N/A	N/A	66%	76%	72%	71%	67%	76%	78%	74%	64%	N/A
27	Canyon Ridge	MS	1,305	92%	98%	95%	94%	94%	97%	98%	98%	93%	39
28	Cedar Park	MS	1,357	91%	97%	89%	90%	85%	92%	92%	92%	81%	35
29	Four Points	MS	773	81%	91%	84%	80%	80%	93%	94%	93%	90%	39
30	Henry	MS	1,355	82%	94%	85%	85%	81%	90%	95%	90%	89%	35, 40
31	Leander	MS	1,024	66%	80%	72%	66%	67%	86%	95%	81%	74%	36, 37
32	Running Brushy	MS	1,246	73%	86%	77%	77%	71%	83%	88%	77%	74%	35, 37
33	Stiles	MS	1,286	88%	93%	91%	90%	91%	92%	93%	91%	89%	38, 40
34	Wiley	MS	1,023	73%	83%	79%	87%	78%	86%	91%	78%	69%	36, 38

HIGH SCHOOLS	SCHOOLS	2017-18 accountability rating	2017-18 enrollment	2017-18 STAAR PASSING RESULTS BY GRADE				
				End-of-course—all students				
				Algebra I	Biology	English I	English II	U.S. history
★	State average	N/A	N/A	83%	87%	60%	66%	92%
35	Cedar Park	MS	2,026	88%	96%	87%	89%	97%
36	Glenn	MS	1,137	75%	87%	63%	68%	92%
37	Leander	MS	2,197	87%	91%	76%	78%	95%
38	Rouse	MS	1,849	81%	96%	80%	81%	97%
39	Vandegrift	MS	2,579	92%	99%	93%	93%	99%
40	Vista Ridge	MS	2,326	93%	97%	84%	85%	96%

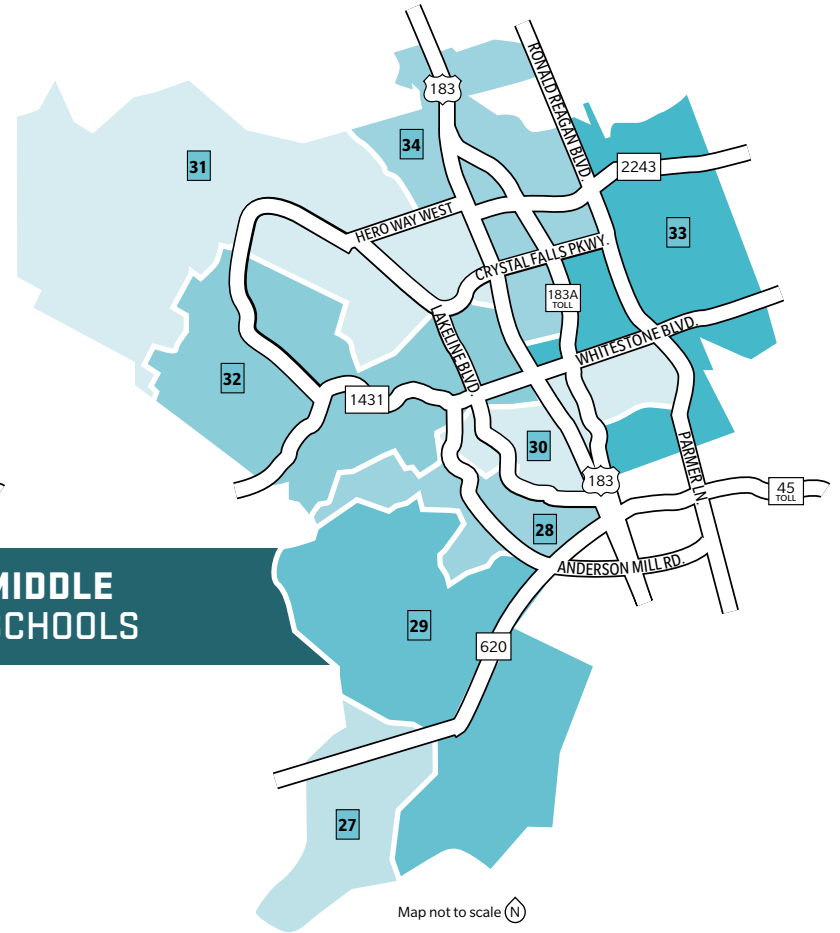
LEANDER ISD

2018-19 SCHOOL BOUNDARIES



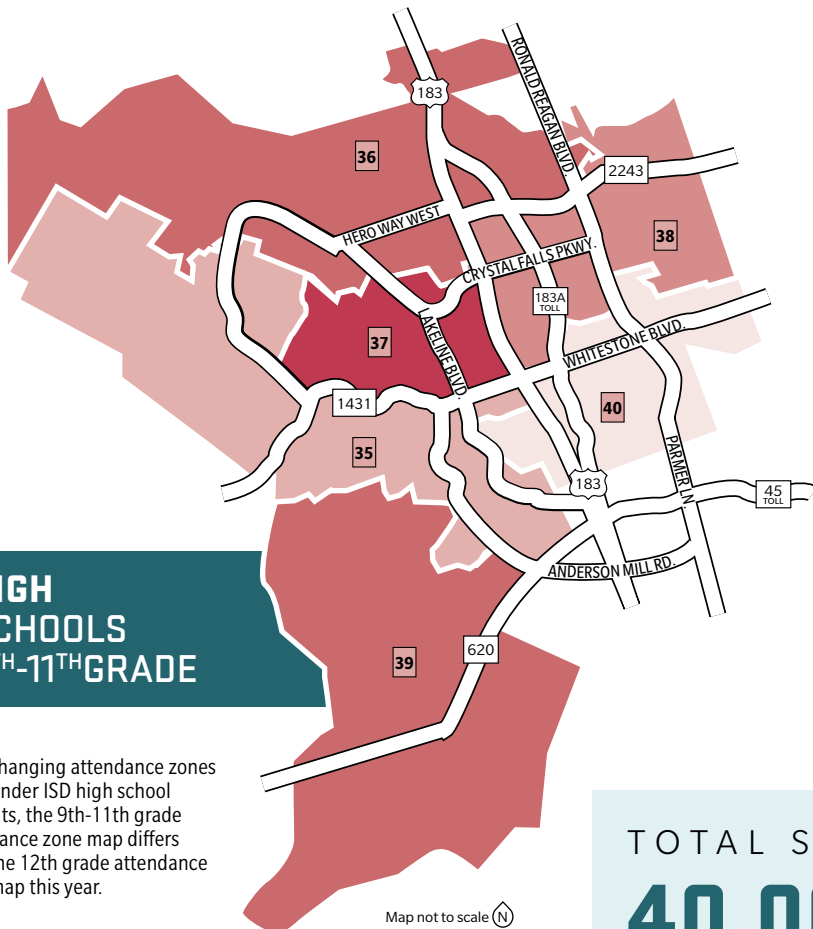
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Map not to scale (N)



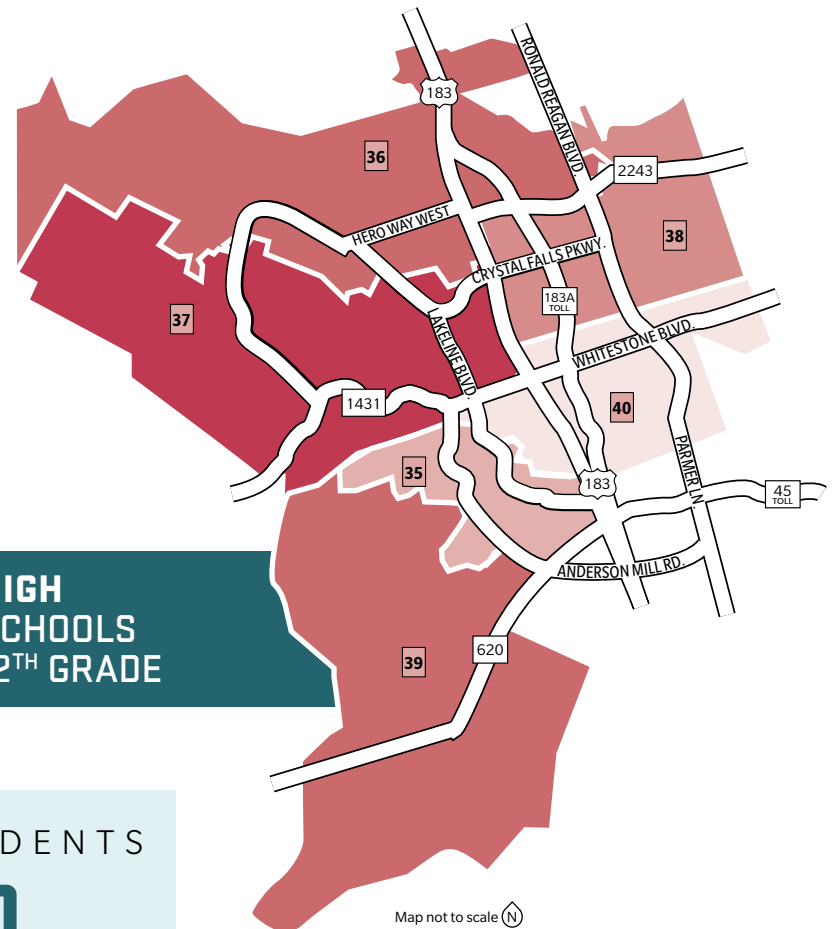
MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Map not to scale (N)



**HIGH SCHOOLS
9TH-11TH GRADE**

Map not to scale (N)



**HIGH SCHOOLS
12TH GRADE**

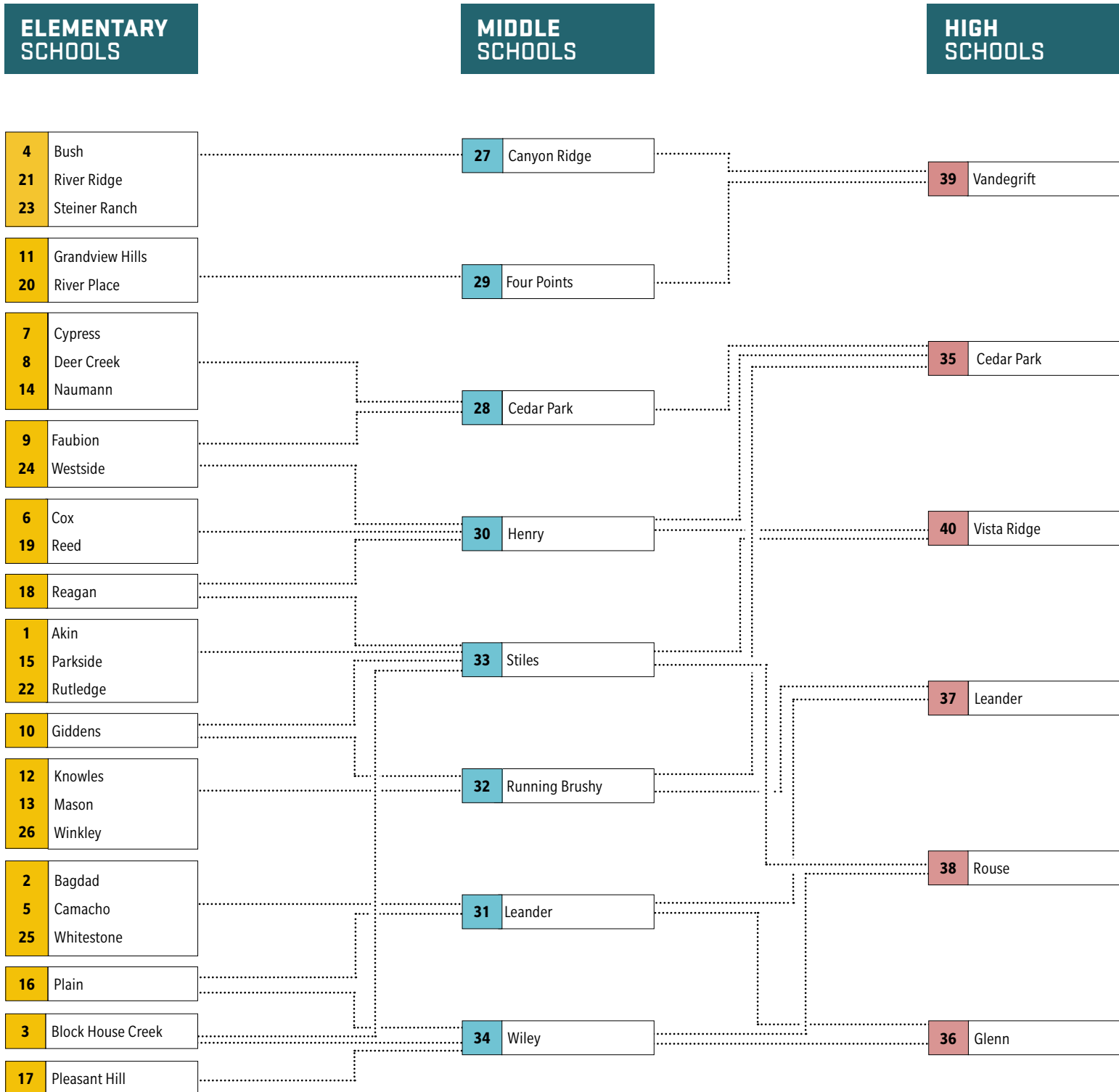
Map not to scale (N)

With changing attendance zones for Leander ISD high school students, the 9th-11th grade attendance zone map differs from the 12th grade attendance zone map this year.

TOTAL STUDENTS
40,000

LEANDER ISD

FEEDER PATTERN



Approx. \$477 million budget and \$1.51 property tax rate adopted by LISD board

BY **ABBY BORA**

Leander ISD's board of trustees approved a budget with around \$477.1 million in expenditures at a meeting Aug. 23.

The board also voted to approve a property tax rate of \$1.51 per \$100 valuation. The new tax rate—lower than last year's rate of \$1.51187—results in an estimated annual increase of \$237 for the average LISD homeowner due to home value appreciation during the past year, according to district documents.

This budget includes an approximate general operating budget of \$345 million, or \$8,676 per student, according to district documents. The operating budget includes items such as the cost of instruction, staff development, guidance and counseling services, extracurricular activities, and transportation.

According to district documents, LISD could bring in \$330.8 million in general fund revenue for the 2018-19 school

year, though the district anticipates \$345 million in proposed general fund expenditures. While the district is currently looking at a deficit of \$14.1 million, LISD Chief Financial Officer Lucas Janda said the district operates frugally and often ends the school year under budget. He said LISD could see \$12 million in savings throughout the school year, so the actual spending deficit for the year could be \$2.1 million.

"There is a projected deficit, but we work very, very hard to balance the budget when we have our final audit a year from now," LISD Superintendent Dan Troxell said. "That's what we do on a consistent basis."

According to the Texas Education Agency's 2016-17 finance summary, Leander ISD has a debt of \$42,007 per student. Meanwhile, the average debt in the state is \$16,995 per student.

Additional reporting by Caitlin Perrone.

BREAKING DOWN THE BUDGET AND TAX RATE

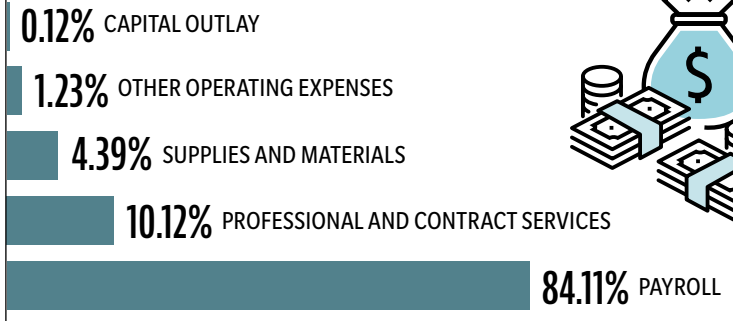


Leander ISD's budget is consolidated into three sections—the general operating fund, food service budget and debt service budget.

General operating fund	\$344,915,290
Food service budget	\$13,927,226
+ Debt service budget	\$118,218,551
TOTAL	\$477,061,067

LEANDER ISD'S GENERAL OPERATING FUND

Leander ISD's operating budget primarily includes payroll for staff, with professional and contract services and supplies and materials far behind.



SOURCE: LEANDER ISD, TEXAS COMPTROLLER OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER



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Students substitute tests, opt out of STAAR end-of-course exams

BY **ABBY BORA**

This spring thousands of Leander ISD middle and high school students opted out of taking the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness end-of-course tests, or STAAR EOC, in algebra I and English I.

STAAR EOCs are typically taken as a student is completing the subject either in middle or high school depending on when the student is enrolled in the course, according to Texas Education Agency documents. The large number of opt-outs in algebra I and English I occurred in part because PSAT scores from eighth- and ninth- graders were permitted to be used as substitute assessments for the STAAR EOC in 2017-18, said Brenda Cruz, LISD director of assessment and accountability.

Standardized test scores—such as those from the PSAT, SAT or ACT—that meet a certain threshold may be used as substitutes for the STAAR EOCs, as allowed by the Texas Administrative Code. Students are permitted to use substitute assessments for a variety of STAAR EOC subjects, including algebra, biology, English and U.S. history, according to the TEA.

“This is a great opportunity for kids to have [a] choice,” LISD spokesperson Corey Ryan said.

SUBSTITUTING SCORES

Parents or guardians of LISD students who earned qualifying scores on an alternate assessment were notified via email and provided with a form, according to district documents. The signed form and documentation of an eligible test score were required for the student not to

take the STAAR EOC, according to LISD documents.

Ultimately over 1,300 LISD middle and high school students chose not to take the algebra I STAAR EOC, substituting alternate test scores, and over 2,100 high school students opted out of the English I test, according to LISD documents.

Cruz said Leander ISD administers the PSAT starting in eighth grade. She said, for example, students could use eighth-grade PSAT scores as substitutes in ninth grade for the algebra I or English I STAAR EOC.

Students who take the regular STAAR EOC exam and earn a passing score may be placed in a number of categories, including approaches grade level, meets grade level and masters grade level, according to TEA documents.

The substitute test scores are not ranked this way, TEA spokesperson Ronnie Burchett said.

“A student who takes a substitute assessment in lieu of an EOC is scored no higher than meets grade level standard in the accountability system,” Burchett said.

INFLUENCE ON RATINGS

Burchett said taking a substitute assessment instead of the STAAR EOC tests could have a negative impact on accountability ratings, which are based on scores in three domains—student achievement, school progress and closing the gaps.

Cruz said the substitutions impacted LISD high schools' score in student achievement because the district thinks more students would have scored as masters grade level if

not for the substitutions.

“Substitute exams will continue to impact the school progress domain because the state cannot account for performance growth with substitute test users,” Cruz said. “For example, if a student used the substitute exam for Algebra I he or she could not show growth from the eighth-grade math score. This will continue to impact LISD accountability scores because the same issue will occur next year.”

OTHER POSSIBLE EFFECTS

While the STAAR EOC results could have some consequences for the school district, the direct effect on the students who opt out may be limited. Two local colleges say the STAAR EOC are not taken into consideration during the admission process.

“[At Concordia University] what we look at is whether or not they have a diploma,” said Jennielle Strother, who works in enrollment services at Concordia University Texas, a private university located in Austin. “From there, we do a holistic review, review the application and review GPA and board scores, so SAT [and] ACT scores.”

Jessica Vess, spokesperson for Austin Community College, said first-time college students are required to take the Texas Success Initiative before enrolling in classes.

However, students may be exempted from the Texas Success Initiative by providing qualifying reading, writing and math scores in the SAT, ACT, TAKS or two optional STAAR EOC assessments, English III and algebra II, according to ACC documents.

WHAT IS THE STAAR EOC?

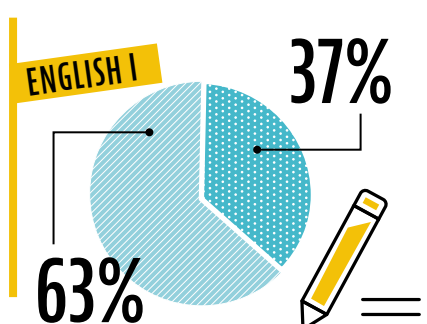
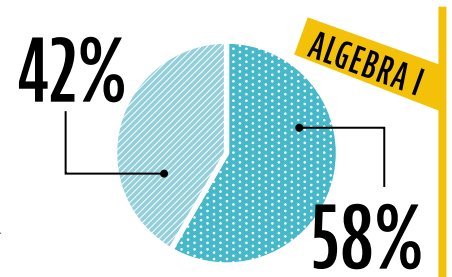
The State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness end-of-course exams test student knowledge as they complete a subject in school, and students must pass the following to graduate:

- ✓ ALGEBRA I
- ✓ ENGLISH I
- ✓ BIOLOGY
- ✓ ENGLISH II
- ✓ U.S. HISTORY

OPTING OUT

Students who earn a sufficient score on an alternate test, such as the PSAT, SAT or ACT, may substitute those results for the STAAR EOC.

LISD STUDENTS WHO SUBSTITUTED SCORES LISD STUDENTS WHO TOOK THE STAAR EOC

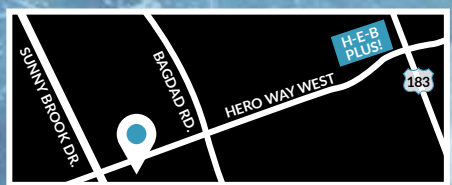


SOURCES: LEANDER ISD, TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY/ COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

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Camacho Elementary School received an Improvement Required rating in 2018, disqualifying Leander ISD from earning an A rating from the Texas Education Agency.

SCHOOL RATINGS

Texas Education Agency awards Leander ISD with B grade accountability rating

BY **ABBY BORA**

The Texas Education Agency released its 2018 accountability ratings Aug. 15, revealing that Leander ISD was given a B grade by the agency, which signifies “recognized performance,” according to TEA documents.

“We believe accountability is essential to ensuring our community [has] high-quality schools,” LISD Superintendent Dan Troxell said in a statement. “However, the simplification of a complex rating system to a single letter grade does not represent the charge of public education.”

Districts throughout Texas were assigned A, B, C, D and F ratings based on evaluations in three categories: student achievement; school progress; and closing the gaps, which measures performance differences in various racial, ethnic, special education and socioeconomic groups, according to the TEA’s website.

Campuses were rated in each domain as Met Standard, Improvement Required, Met Alternative standard or—in special cases—Not Rated, according to the website.

Camacho Elementary School in Leander received a rating of Improvement Required, but the remainder of LISD’s elementary, middle and high schools were awarded the Met Standard rating, according to school district documents.

According to TEA documents on the 2018 accountability ratings,

schools were given numerical scores in each domain.

Although cumulatively LISD earned a score of 99 points in closing the gaps, the TEA reduced the score to 89 points, according to TEA and LISD documents. Districts with campuses ranked Improvement Required are ineligible to receive A ratings in both the domain and overall, according to the documents. LISD’s scaled score across domains was 89 points, or a B grade, according to the TEA.

Under last year’s system, all LISD campuses met standard in the four former categories: student achievement, student progress, closing the performance gaps and postsecondary readiness.

Camacho’s Improvement Required ranking begins a required intervention process at the school.

“The district support plan includes additional coaching, school improvement funds for instructional resources, curriculum specialists for teacher support and data analysis to match students with the best solutions for their learning,” Troxell said.

He said LISD has staffed Camacho with another counselor and will have additional certified teachers for before- and after-school tutorials.

Public meetings will be held on-campus in September to discuss the campus’s performance objectives and to gain feedback on a targeted improvement plan, according to district documents.



Leander ISD teacher Dana Jones leads the INcubatoredu class at Vista Ridge High School in an empathy exercise.

INcubatoredu

BY ALBERT ALVARADO

Entrepreneurs teach business startup skills in LISD

Inside Dana Jones' classroom at Vista Ridge High School, teenagers swivel on chairs as they take part in an empathy exercise and talk about prospective consumers as part of the Vista Ridge INcubatoredu program.

INcubatoredu started at Vista Ridge during the 2017-18 school year and is currently in its first year at Vandegrift High School. The program aims to bring real world concepts to the classroom by inviting local entrepreneurs to teach business startup skills in Leander ISD schools and mentor the students in the program.

"We have six student teams that formed LLCs this summer and they're

opening bank accounts in their company name," Jones said. "It feels so good to have a student that when they get out of college and they want to do a startup, they already know how to file an LLC; they already have a bank account."

Students form teams and create business models for their products or mobile apps during the course of the school year. Each team is matched with a mentor and the teams present their business models in May to mentor volunteers in a competition similar to the television show "Shark Tank."

"I think if they can find something that they're passionate about and their passion drives their learning,

then they are going to learn on a much different level," Jones said. "It's going to mean a lot more to them and they're going to be a lot more motivated."

The program follows curriculum from some national business schools, and students gain insights from professionals such as patent lawyers, marketing professionals or chief financial officers from local businesses.

Jones said community involvement, whether by mentoring, volunteering or donating, is an important factor in helping the fledging program grow.

"That's everything to this program," Jones said. "It's not the room that makes the difference. It's these volunteers that come in and share their expertise and leadership."

Jones said the program is open to juniors and if teams successfully complete the INcubatoredu program, they will advance to the ACCEleratoredu, the second year of the program.

But for Vista Ridge teacher Stephan George, preparing INcubators begins a few years earlier. He teaches a freshman-level class that helps prepare students for the INcubatoredu program.

"Teaching the kids as freshmen is a good opportunity to start providing the program to them," he said. "The idea is to get them excited about the business world and growing up into it."

More importantly, Jones said the program teaches resolve, a trait that is needed in life outside the classroom.

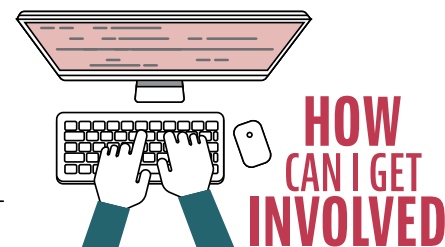
"When they have a block in the road, an entrepreneur has to think how to get over it or around it," Jones said. "They'll come to us and say 'Oh, there's somebody already doing it.' We'll say, 'How are you going to be a better achiever? You convince people why to buy your product instead of a competitor's.'"

Does the program help you be creative in a different way?

I think it allows us to be more creative than people who just walk around the school and don't have a sense of how a real business is run. I feel like we get a heads-up and it gives us a better understanding on how to run a business— how all of the components come together. How on the outside it might look easy, but on the inside it requires a lot of work.

- NICK POLOLAK, VISTA RIDGE SENIOR STUDENT

SOURCE: LEANDER ISD/ COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER



Vista Ridge's INcubator program is looking for mentors and volunteers from the business community. Here is where you can find more information:

- <https://sites.google.com/leanderisd.org/incubatoredu/home>
- facebook.com/incubator.vistaridge.7
- @IncubatorV on Twitter
- Email incubatoredu.vrhs@leanderisd.org

For more information on the Vandegrift INcubator program, email incubator.vrhs@leanderisd.org



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Kristen Huguley

BY ABBY BORA

Leander ISD Educational Excellence Foundation's new executive director looks to support students and teachers

The Leander ISD Educational Excellence Foundation gained a new executive director in July: Kristen Huguley.

Huguley formerly served as the executive director of Texas Humane Heroes after volunteering, working

as the adoption marketing manager, director of operations and assistant director of the organization.

Some of her other past experiences included serving as a marketing manager and account management.

What does LEEF provide to LISD and the surrounding community?

LEEF provides resources within the entire district that support innovation, enrichment and equity. We do so through our literacy, career- and college-readiness, and grant programs. The community benefits from the support provided to teachers and students, which enriches and strengthens our community, and we're a conduit for individuals and businesses to support the district.

Why were you interested in becoming LEEF's new executive director?

I've always loved school. I enjoyed going to class, learning from my teachers and fellow students and feeling a boost of confidence from accomplishing a task. [I] still do! I realized when we toured Glenn High School through [the Leander Chamber of Commerce's Leadership] Leander program last year that I felt at home in a school environment. I love the excitement, encouragement and energy that you feel on campus and the potential of limitless possibilities.

What are your responsibilities as the director of LEEF?

I'm responsible for leading the organization by executing our board of directors' strategy and vision, creating organizational and district awareness, developing community relationships, and ensuring our sustainability to support teachers and students within the district for years to come. As LISD continues grow[ing] we want to match it to continue to support the entire district.

How did your previous experience as the executive director of Texas Humane Heroes prepare you for your new role?

I learned valuable lessons in business, relationship development, operations and handling tough situations in my role at Texas Humane Heroes. At the core of any nonprofit or individual who wants to give back and make a difference in their community, it comes down to realizing your passion and finding an outlet for it. When you can match people, passion and organizations, you can change the world.

What are you most looking forward to as a part of LEEF in the upcoming year?

There are so many events and opportunities that I'm looking forward to, most specifically the MUDstacle. I've heard it's such a fun, interactive and engaging community event. If the energy and excitement matches my first district event experience, which was convocation, it will be amazing!

How can readers become involved in the organization?

Readers can become involved as volunteers, advocates or donors. We're always looking for event volunteers, and we're looking to develop a team of community members that can attend community events and share who we are and what we do. Readers can become advocates and share their love for LEEF with others as well as follow us on Facebook and Twitter to engage with and share our content. They can also host a book drive, and we have an Amazon Wish List on our website to share. Lastly,



Kristen Huguley started in her new role as the Leander ISD Educational Excellence Foundation's executive director in July.

Leander ISD Educational Excellence Foundation

512-570-0027

www.leeftx.org

LEEF offers resources to support the LISD community, including literacy programs, grants and college- and career-readiness initiatives.

becoming a monetary supporter helps students and teachers throughout the district.

What is one other thing readers should know about you?

I'm a hard-working, dedicated and passionate individual. I'm here to impact the entire district and enhance the important work that the foundation has done since 2007. Together, we can do more in LISD!

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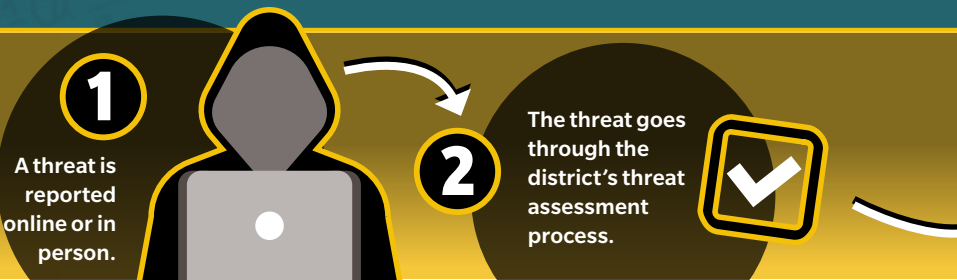
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EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

If there is a threat at a Leander ISD campus, the district is prepared to take fast action to ensure safety.



STANDARD RESPONSE PROTOCOL

The "I Love U Guys" Foundation's Standard Response Protocol is used by LISD and offers terminology for different types of emergency situations.

SOURCE: LEANDER ISD, "I LOVE U GUYS" FOUNDATION/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

LOCKOUT

"Get Inside. Lock outside doors."

- Used for situations when there are threats outside the building
- Everyone is brought indoors and business continues as usual
- Teachers lock outside doors, take attendance and increase situational awareness

LOCKDOWN

"Locks, lights, out of sight."

- Used for situations when there is a threat inside the building
- Students hide from sight, remain silent and do not open doors
- Teachers lock interior doors, turn off lights, hide from sight, stay silent, do not open doors and take attendance

EVACUATE

"To the announced location."

- Used when students and staff must be moved to a new location
- Students bring phones, leave other belongings and follow instructions
- Teachers lead the evacuation, take attendance and notify if there are absent, extra or hurt students

SHELTER

Hazard and safety strategy.

- Used in situations like a tornado
- Students evacuate to shelter area, seal the room and drop, cover and hold
- Teachers lead the strategy and take attendance

HOLD

"In your classroom. Clear the halls."

- Used when hallways must remain clear
- Students stay in the classroom until an "all clear" announcement
- Teachers close and lock classroom doors, take attendance and continue business as usual

CONTINUED FROM 1

As Leander ISD dives into the new school year, district personnel are working to improve emergency preparedness on campus.

Brad Mansfield, senior executive director of student services for LISD, said the district wants to ensure the training for emergency situations is consistent across schools.

"We found in talking with students across the district that not all of them knew what do in a lockdown," Mansfield said.

Seven percent of LISD's \$454.5 million, voter-approved bond package from last year is scheduled to be used for safety purposes over the next several years. The district's 2007 bond package included the construction of secure vestibules at all elementary schools, and now the 2017 package is set to fund vestibules at all high schools, alternative schools and middle schools where vestibules are currently not in place, according to district documents.

In addition to ramped-up training practices and security upgrades, the district's new director of security started in July to serve as a liaison between LISD and local first responder agencies, fostering relationships to better plan for emergency situations.

"The key is, you don't want to introduce yourself [to first responders] during the incident," said Russell Bundy, the new director. "You want to know these faces before."

SECURING CAMPUSES

Mansfield said in the upcoming year, the school community will see him and Bundy walking around school campuses assessing security, such as checking doors and where teachers are on duty. They will then provide feedback to the campus principal and work to create an action plan to implement the suggestions.

"The principal's got a big job. ... We're trying to make their job easier [by] checking on things to make sure the kids are safe," Mansfield said.

The state requires a safety and security audit every three years, and the next one must be submitted by all school districts to the Texas School Safety Center by Sept. 15, 2020, according to the center's website.

"[As] part of those safety audits, [Bundy] is going to start keeping a running checklist on some data of things that probably need to be considered for improvement, things like security cameras," Mansfield said.

He said the district is evaluating adding more security cameras to the high schools and middle schools.

LISD has also implemented a camera-and-buzzer entry system at some middle schools where secure front entries have not yet been installed. Under the system, visitors must look into a camera and push a button, then the receptionist buzzes them into the building, Mansfield said.

The camera-and-buzzer system is a temporary solution until secure vestibules are installed. With vestibules in place, visitors entering a

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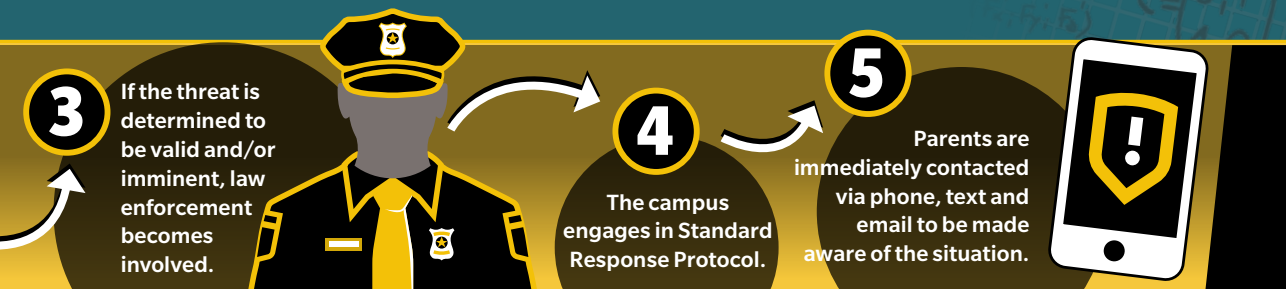
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“We want the public and parents to know what kids need to do in these drills. ...”
 —Brad Mansfield, senior executive director of student services for LISD

SOURCE: LEANDER ISD/COMMUNITY IMPACT NEWSPAPER

school must enter through the main office, where a receptionist must buzz them through a second round of doors. This differs from the camera-and-buzzer system where the receptionist buzzes visitors through the first and only set of doors.

The district’s 2017 bond includes approximately \$9.87 million for the construction of secure vestibules at the middle schools and around \$7.75 million for the same at the high schools and alternative schools, according to district documents. Additional bond funding is allocated for other safety purposes.

Corey Ryan, LISD’s chief communications officer, said the vestibules were under design and planning this past summer, and construction will take place next summer.

MAINTAINING A POLICE PRESENCE

LISD has had interlocal agreements with neighboring law-enforcement agencies for 20 years, according to district documents. The agreements provide the district with school resource officers—trained Cedar Park, Leander and Travis County Sheriff’s Office law-enforcement officers stationed on campus.

While the district directly works with those three agencies, there are several others that could respond to emergencies on campus, such as the Williamson County Sheriff’s Office and the Austin Police Department.

Bundy said his role includes working to build relationships with these

groups.

“You can have a critical incident happen at any of the schools, and you’ll have possibly all ... of those law-enforcement agencies show up,” Bundy said.

David Rodriguez is a school resource officer from the Cedar Park Police Department and said he works hand-in-hand with the district to address any issues related to drug use, theft, student fights and more.

He said he wants students to come to him or their own school resource officer about anything they hear or see that does not seem right or if something concerning has happened to them personally.

“We want them to come forward,” Rodriguez said. “If they’ve been assaulted or they’ve been threatened or they’ve had things stolen ... since we’re in the schools, it’s a lot easier for that communication to come to us direct[ly] ... and we can handle it right then and there.”

REPORTING A THREAT

When students feel threatened or become aware of issues such as bullying, dating violence or weapons on campus, they can reach out to an officer or other administrator or adult. Parents and children may also submit an anonymous report at www.anonymoualerts.com/leanderisd.

Mansfield said there is a threat-assessment system the district uses to determine how to handle each concern. If the threat is perceived

as imminent and/or valid, it will be directed to law-enforcement agencies, Bundy said.

Ryan said the district has an “insider process” to communicate with parents when there is a safety threat at a school. He said district administration works with the school’s area superintendent to use email, phone calls and text messages to communicate an imminent safety threat. Parents may also check the LISD alerts page as a central hub for up-to-date information, he said.

District counselors are the primary ones who monitor the alert page online for anonymous reports, Mansfield said. He said last year a counseling position was added to all LISD high schools.

Cedar Park resident and LISD parent Bethany Burnham told *Community Impact Newspaper* on Nextdoor.com that to improve safety at schools, she wants more mental health resources for students. She said children need preventive treatment and education such as stress-reduction techniques and mindfulness.

“I don’t want metal detectors or armed guards,” Burnham said. “I want more mental health information for the general population of students.”

PRACTICING WITH DRILLS

To standardize training across campuses this year, LISD is screening videos on emergency drills to teachers, staff and secondary students, Mansfield said. In previous years, assistant

principals would provide the information to their campuses, which could result in inconsistent training between schools, he said.

“We want the public and parents to know what kids need to do in these drills so they can talk to them at home about it as well,” Mansfield said.

He said students and teachers need to be prepared for different safety protocols, such as an evacuation or sheltering for a tornado.

Rodriguez said the Cedar Park Police Department would like to implement active shooter drills for students, but the district has not been receptive to the request.

However, LISD does practice lockdown drills, which involve locking classroom doors, turning off all lights, covering windows and hiding, he said.

“[Lockdown drills are] all fine and dandy, but there’s not anything after that,” Rodriguez said, such as evacuating the building if possible or fighting against a threat that enters a room.

Ryan said that LISD feels the Standard Response Protocol—which was developed by the “I Love U Guys” Foundation and includes the emergency responses lockdown, lockout, evacuate and shelter—is adequate at this time.

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