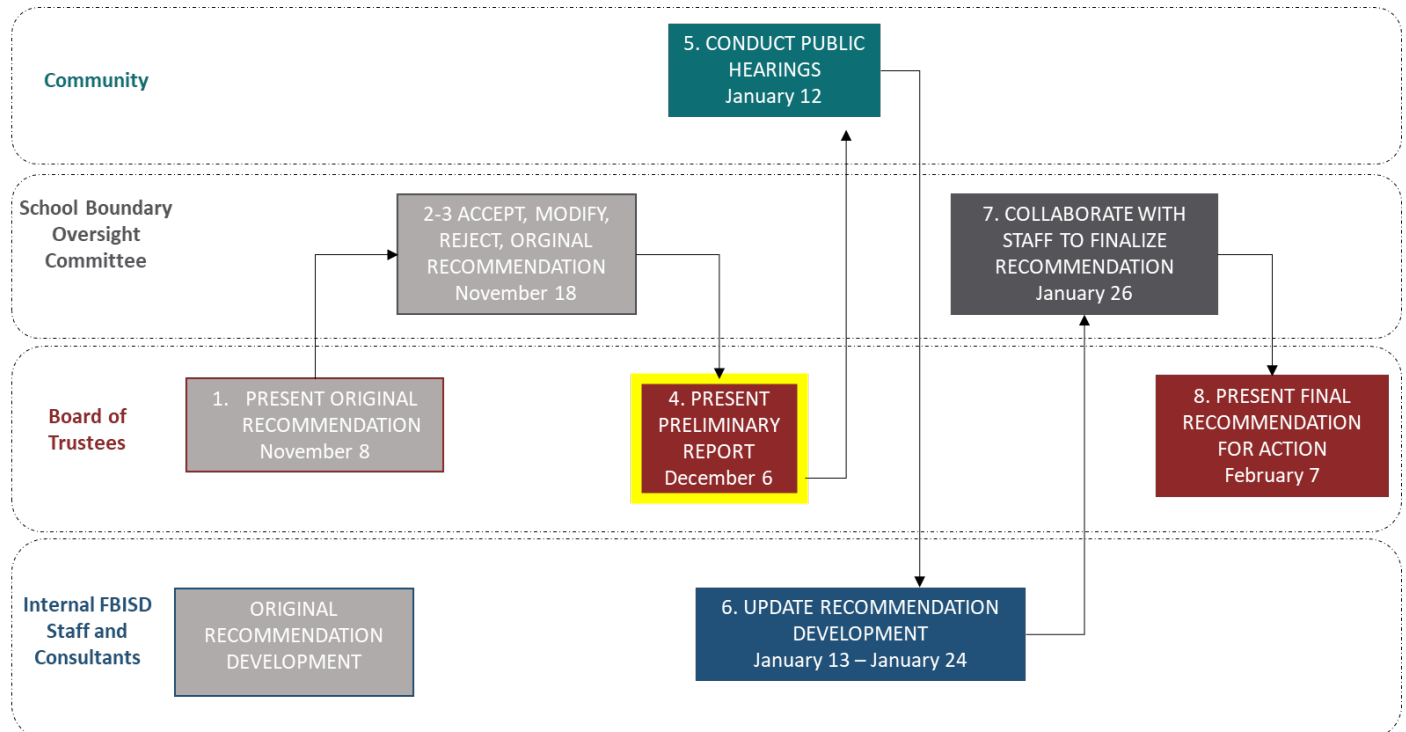


Preliminary Report for Sonal Bhuchar Elementary

The Administration is providing an update to the Board for the attendance boundary process for the opening of Sonal Bhuchar Elementary School.

Current Timeline

- Cooperative Strategies and Staff developed the Original Recommendation.
- Staff presented to the Board the Original Recommendation for Sonal Bhuchar Elementary school on Monday, November 8, 2021.
- Staff facilitated a School Boundary Oversight Committee Meeting to have the committee accept, modify, or reject the Original Recommendation and develop a Proposed Recommendation.



Proposed Recommendation Development Meeting Overview

The School Boundary Oversight Committee (SBOC) of the Fort Bend Independent School District, consisting of members from each of the eleven feeder patterns, convened for a meeting on Thursday, November 18, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. through the Teams online platform.

Purpose:

The SBOC will analyze and verify the Original Recommendations and adhere to guidelines in Board policy. The committee may accept, modify, or reject the Original Recommendations with staff assistance. Finally, staff will create the Preliminary Report with the Proposed Recommendations.

Member Commitments:

The members of the SBOC will serve with a student-centered approach and operate through a District-wide lens and not from their own interest. Each SBOC member must agree to uphold the SBOC Member Commitment. Agreement to uphold the Member Commitment is required of committee members. The SBOC Member Commitment includes four pillars. Each committee member will:

- Be an active participant in committee meetings and public hearings.
- Carefully and thoughtfully review the data provided to the committee.
- Attend scheduled meetings.
- Remain objective, considering the needs and history of the communities impacted, but prioritizing the District-wide needs of all FBISD students.

Attendance:

- Committee members present: 40 members invited, 25 in attendance
- Meeting was recorded; absent members were given opportunity to review recording and submit feedback
- Five members from Student Leadership 101
- Scott Leopold, Cooperative Strategies

Staff Facilitators:









- Dr. Kwabena Mensah, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Schools
- Tiffanie Thomas-Rodgers, Assistant Director, Collaborative Communities
- Jodi Rider, Policy Specialist, Collaborative Communities
- Mike Madden, Coordinator, Student Leadership





Agenda Overview:

- Introductions
- SBOC member commitments and meeting objectives
- Sonal Bhuchar Original Recommendation
- Decision Principle Review
- Decision Principle Rating
- Decision Principle Question/Comment Recording
- Cooperative Strategies & Staff Question and Answer
- Proposed Recommendation Ratings
- Next Steps
- ThoughtExchange Feedback
- Adjournment

Decision Principle Ratings

In breakout rooms, members were given the opportunity to silently review and then rate each Decision Principle. Members entered an “A” if they agreed with the assigned color, a “B” if they were hesitant or did not agree with the assigned color but could support the rating, or a “C” if they did not agree with the assigned color and could not support the rating. Cooperative Strategies has rated the Original Recommendation for Sonal Bhuchar as green for each Decision Principle.

Policy Parameter		Bhuchar Boundary Creation
Community Integrity	Consider student safety; provide students equitable access.	
	Maintain the feeder pattern concept.	
	Assign entire neighborhoods to the same school by utilizing natural and manmade boundaries where practical, incorporating safe walking distances, and supporting the neighborhood school concept.	
Growth Projections	Balance utilization among campuses while considering future growth.	
	Consider balancing the efficient use of existing facilities and equity of academic programs that minimize reliance on portable classrooms.	
	Consider the unique needs of student populations based on current or future programming.	
	Consider boundaries that shall withstand time and minimize student moves to the greatest extent possible.	
	Consider financial impact that lessens future capital and operational costs.	

Bhuchar Boundary Creation	Aligns with Policy	
	Somewhat Aligns with Policy	
	Does not Align with Policy	

Directions:

Using the Chat, enter the number of the Decision Principle and one of the ratings below (i.e., 1A)

A – I agree with the assigned color

B – I am hesitant or do not agree with the assigned color, but can support

C – I do not agree with the assigned color and cannot support

Decision Principle Results

Rating	Decision Principle 1	Decision Principle 2	Decision Principle 3	Decision Principle 4	Decision Principle 5	Decision Principle 6	Decision Principle 7	Decision Principle 8	Totals
A	18	11	15	19	22	15	23	20	143
B	7	12	8	4	4	8	1	5	49
C	0	2	2	1	0	1	1	0	7

A – I agree with the assigned color

B – I am hesitant or do not agree with the assigned color, but can support

C – I do not agree with the assigned color and cannot support

Decision Principle Questions/Comments

SBOC members were given an opportunity to ask questions and provide comments for each decision Principle. Questions/comments were answered during the meeting. Staff is generating an FAQ of those questions to add to the District website.

Decision Principle 1 – Safely house students and provide all students equitable access to the curriculum, extracurricular opportunities, and professional staff.

- What is the plan to provide equitable access to extracurricular activities after school?
- The rebalancing certainly calibrates a safer (smaller) and balanced number of students at each campus. This should translate to less students trying out for an activity i.e. that sport or activity has limit on number of members, the lower population of students will mean a higher percentage of students have the opportunity make the team or organization.
- What programs are available at Commonwealth and what programs will be offered at Bhuchar?

Decision Principle 2 – Align student transitions within the District’s designated feeder patterns.

- What is considered “Healthy Utilization”?
- Was there an alternative proposal to consider to increase utilization at the campuses north of the area discussed?
- What are the new utilization rates for FCMS and FSMS with this proposal?

Decision Principle 3 – Assign entire neighborhoods to the same school(s). Where practical, major thoroughfares, creeks, drainage ditches, utility easements, and similar elements will be utilized as boundaries. Support the neighborhood school concept by combining geographically proximate neighborhoods or developments into school attendance boundaries.

- What rules are in place to create boundaries for under-utilization?
- Why the small carve out of the neighborhood south of University to CWE? At first, glance, seems to violate the principle of natural boundaries.
- Please define "walkable" in terms of distance as well as if the students will have to walk past commercial driveways or near ditches, sloped streets, or unpaved areas.
- How will a safe and walkable distance be determined?
- There are neighborhoods in the red area that are closer to ASE and neighborhoods in the purple that are closer to CWE. How do you determine which neighborhoods can walk to school and which should be bused?
- What is the current High School feeder pattern for Commonwealth? It appears it feeds primarily to Clements. The proposed addition of the new elementary seems like it will potentially cause future capacity issues for Elkins High Schools and unbalanced utilization of Clements. Please provide clarification of the projected utilization for the Middle Schools and High Schools with Bhuchar elementary.

Decision Principle 4 – Utilization should be balanced among campuses in order to avoid penalizing those schools that are experiencing growth.

- There are schools that remain low in their utilization rates, but no neighborhoods are feeding into them. Why are we not balancing CWE into CME and CBE?
- When new campuses are being built due to growth in area, what happens to campuses that are underutilized?

Decision Principle 5 – Efficient use of existing facilities as well as effective and equitable delivery of academic programs are equally important factors in attendance boundary design. Balanced student enrollment enables efficient use of facilities, avoids overutilization or underutilization, and minimizes reliance on portable classrooms.

- Were all of these new enrollment projections for Commonwealth and Sullivan (that have portables) include the capacity of those school with the portables or without them? In other words, are we now considering the portables as part of the permanent capacity of those schools? Will any of these school have their portable buildings removed as a result of the new boundaries?
- CWE will be properly balanced according to the estimates without splitting it up.
- There are schools that remain low in their utilization rates, but no neighborhoods are feeding into them. Why are we not balancing CWE into CME and CBE?
- How will academies be affected in balancing capacity and need?

Decision Principle 6 – Attention should be given to unique needs of student populations at a given campus that may not be reflected in numbers alone. Once attendance boundary decisions have been approved, if a concern arises that a student receiving special education, or 504 services needs may not be met as a result of the boundary change, the ARD or 504 committee shall meet to discuss the concern.

- How do you create smaller boundaries for students with special needs in a particular area? How do you identify those students without alienating them?
- We are not really changing the students that are attending Bhuchar, just moving them, so this should not be an issue. The district will make arrangements for these students at the new school.
- In regards to Bhuchar, I agree with principle 6 but do question whether this is a good district-wide principle to hold
- Not clear about quest 6. Each campus is capable of meeting every students needs enrolled 504 and /or bilingual concerns.
- Do any of the other listed schoolhouse specialty programs?
- Are GT students considered students with "unique programmatic needs"? Is the population of those kids taken into consideration when balancing schools?

Decision Principle 7 – Design boundaries shall withstand time and minimize the number of boundary adjustments for a cohort of students. To the extent possible, students in a given area should not be required to change schools because of a boundary change more than once at a given level (elementary, middle school, or high school).

- Are the outward utilizations based on PASA projections? The building of a new school should, by rule, eliminate portables at adjacent schools, the question should be was the school location (and choice to build) optimal and data provided to that effect
- There are neighborhoods here that have already experienced three elementary schools. Moving them to SBE means that there are ostensibly families with children at four different elementary schools over their course in school.
- Does this policy prevent more than one move per school level? Could a student potentially change feeder patterns once in elementary, then again in middle, and again in high school?

Decision Principle 8 – Recommendations shall consider financial impact lessening future capital and operational budget costs. The costs of portable classrooms, transportation, additional staffing requirements, and other costs related to attendance boundary options shall be considered.

- This principle seems larger than portables. What else is considered, and are there more important ways to calculate this?
- How much do portables cost?
- When we build new schools, it seems that for some, we do not build them big enough. Or, when constructing schools, why can't we construct them in such a manner that allows for expansion? Rather than portables.
- "When we build new schools, it seems that for some, we do not build them big enough. Or when constructing schools, why can't we construct them in such a manner that allows for expansion? Rather than portables." This is a great question but also likely more complex than at first glance. A neighborhood's needs change over time. I believe there was a time maybe 15-20 years ago that Colony Meadows and CBE and APE were overutilized and had portable, and now they are well below capacity.
- Portables are not the only cost to consider. Building new schools instead of rebalancing them to schools with low utilization rates is a costly and unavoidable choice.
- What would the future enrollment projections be without portable buildings? When we build new schools, it seems that for some, we do not build them big enough. Or, when constructing schools, why can't we construct them in such a manner that allows for expansion? Rather than portables.

Proposed Recommendation Support Ratings

SBOC Members rated their support of the Original Recommendation. The SBOC reached a consensus to support the recommendation as presented.

Enter your overall support rating of the Original Recommendation for Sonal Bhuchar Elementary.

- 1 – I accept the Original Recommendation as presented
- 2 – I accept the Original Recommendation but have hesitation
- 3 – I do not accept the Original Recommendation but will do nothing to impede the Original Recommendation
- 4 – I reject the Original Recommendation

Ratings	Totals
1	13
2	13
3	2
4	0

School Attendance Boundary Change Process Next Steps

05 Public Hearings

Staff will conduct 1-3 public hearings. Following a presentation of the Preliminary Report, staff will solicit comments, questions, and suggestions from community members. Notes will be made of all comments and suggestions to assist staff and the SBOC in making final recommendations.

06 Updated Recommendations

After the final public hearing, staff will consider public comments and may modify the Proposed Recommendations to develop the Updated Recommendations, if necessary, which will be provided to the Board.

07 Final Recommendations and Report

The SBOC and staff will review community input and the Updated Recommendations to develop and reach consensus on the Final Recommendations and Report. The Final Report will include a rationale, be consistent with the Decision Principles, and include evidence of community input consideration.

08 Final Report Presentation to the Board and Board Action

Staff will present the Final Report to the Board. The Board will take appropriate action on establishment of school attendance boundaries. Initial communication will be made by the Board President on behalf of the Board.

**Per Policy FC (Local)*

Step 5: Public Hearing – January 12

Step 6: Update Recommendation Development – January 13

Step 7: SBOC Meeting Finalize Recommendation– January 26

Step 8: Final Recommendation BOT Presentation – February 7

ThoughtExchange Results

What should be the most important Decision Principle(s) to consider when creating and adopting attendance zones for Sonal Bhuchar ES?

SBOC members chose Balanced Schools (Decision Principle 4) and Safety (Decision Principle 1) as the most important considerations when adopting attendance zones for Sonal Bhuchar ES.

