



Frequently Asked Questions – Updated Recommendation for RPHS feeder pattern

Community Meeting held May 29, 2018

Q: When would the new high school be scheduled for completion? When would the District draw boundary lines?

A: The administration is recommending that a bond include funding for a new high school, which would be planned to open in the 2024-25 school year. Projected enrollment in the area shows the need for a new high school in the 2024-25 school year.

Ideally, the District would like to establish boundaries 2-3 years before opening a new school. However, the lines can only be drawn after the precise location of a new campus is determined. As a part of defining new boundaries, we want to be mindful that we are not re-drawing boundaries too many times over the course of several years so that we can minimize disruption to students and families to the greatest extent possible.

Q: What schools could be affected by boundary changes related to the new high school?

A: It is possible that any high school that currently shares a boundary with Ridge Point High School could be affected by a boundary change, as there would not be enough students to fill two schools if we split RPHS. Staff anticipates that Hightower High School, Willowridge High School, and Elkins High School attendance boundaries could be impacted; therefore, the District will engage with each of these communities during the boundary planning process.

Q: Will students be able to “grandfather” with their siblings when boundary changes take effect?

A: Fort Bend ISD will follow Board Policy FC (Local) during the attendance boundary process. Our Board has been intentional to not disrupt students unnecessarily and to keep students progressing in a cohort when possible. Additionally, the Board wants to ensure students are not affected by multiple boundary changes.

Q: Where would the new high school be located?

A: The new high school is intended to relieve over-utilization at Ridge Point High School; however, the District has not yet purchased land for a new school, and it is not considered fiscally prudent to share information about real estate dealings until land is secured. Once purchased or determined, Fort Bend ISD will share information about the site.

Q: Will FBISD consider capping and closing enrollment at RPHS when it reaches 120 percent?

A: Fort Bend ISD projects that Ridge Point High School could reach 120 percent capacity in the 2020-21 school year. If this occurs sooner, FBISD would take immediate action.

Our standard protocol has been to cap enrollment and temporarily divert new enrollment to another nearby campus. We have done this in multiple schools where we have had growth and in cases where schools have not yet been constructed to balance enrollment. Our goal is to get ahead of this and prevent overutilization from occurring.

Q: How will FBISD manage the growing student population at Ridge Point High School?

A: Fort Bend ISD understands that RPHS is large right now. To address projected growth, portable buildings will be added for the 2018-19 school year. We will also scale staffing and provide additional resources as needed.

Additionally, we will work with the Child Nutrition Department to implement new strategies that will give students ample time to purchase and enjoy meals. We will also work with the campus and District leaders to ensure that parking areas are managed.

We know that some students will want to participate in courses at the new CTE center, and that will create additional capacity.

Q: Why did capacity numbers change at RPHS?

A: Staff has continued to research to determine how capacity was calculated prior to 2014, but we believe the increased capacity over time is partly because areas of the building were only constructed as a shell until the 2014-15 school year. Campus staff who were present when the school opened have confirmed that several classrooms were not fully built-out upon opening.

In the 2014 school year, the Board adopted policy about how we are monitoring and addressing growth, and we are following this policy as we monitor enrollment during the annual student enrollment review.

Q: How will Fort Bend ISD ensure student safety in portable buildings and with the growing student population?

A: To address growing student populations, the District will work with leaders to provide additional staffing such as counselors, hall monitors, and other positions. Additionally, Fort Bend ISD is currently working with a safety advisory committee that is meeting to discuss other security measures that could be implemented at schools throughout the District. For those that include portable buildings, this could include fencing so that portable buildings are more secure. Keeping students safe in and out of the building is our highest priority and our most important responsibility.

Q: How will flexible scheduling work?

A: While flexible scheduling could provide choice for students, it will not provide relief to overcrowding of schools and therefore was removed from the recommendation to address overutilization at RPHS.

We will continue efforts to design and pilot flexible scheduling, which some high schools in other areas are doing successfully. We will work with students, parents, and staff to determine where and to what degree we will pilot flexible scheduling to expand choice opportunities for students.

Q: Why is a 9th grade center not an option?

A: This was not a popular option because our comprehensive high school environment provides opportunities for students who are involved in fine arts, athletics, and other UIL activities. Additionally, in FBISD, this is not seen as desirable as there are a number of middle school students who take advanced-level courses in middle school for high school credit, and it would be difficult to matriculate

through the advanced level courses once in high school without significant shuffling from the 9th grade center to the high school.

Q: How can the District justify the expense of a new high school when MHS and WHS are under-utilized?

A: In the last five years, we have invested time and resources to ensure that every student in Fort Bend ISD – at every school – is well served.

We believe in using every one of our schools to full capacity because this provides a more robust learning environment for **all** students. We are dedicated to implementing innovative instructional programming that expands choice opportunities for students and improves student outcomes. We are confident that students in all of our schools are learning and that they are doing better than students were doing five years ago. We are going to continue improving our systems and process to keep students in all of our schools moving forward.