



Community Dialogue

REPORT

Released September 2025

Community Dialogue Report Executive Summary

Introduction

Coppell ISD continues to face important decisions about the future of its schools, programs, and resources. To ensure that these decisions reflect the voices and values of the community, the district hosted a series of Community Dialogue sessions across five campuses during August and September 2025. These sessions were designed to give families, staff, and community members an opportunity to share their perspectives, ask questions, and provide feedback on the elementary planning process, budget realities, and long-term vision for CISD.

Over the course of the dialogues, more than 600 community members participated in person, hundreds of staff members engaged in dedicated staff sessions, and 2,356 survey responses were submitted online. The level of participation demonstrates both the challenges we face and the deep commitment of Coppell ISD families and staff to preserving the excellence, equity, and community spirit that define our schools.

The following report summarizes the themes and trends that emerged from this engagement process. It is organized by the key questions posed during the dialogues and includes a synthesis of survey responses, table discussions, and written comments. This report is intended to reflect the collective voice of our community—not as a final set of decisions, but as an essential guide for the Board of Trustees and district leadership as they navigate the next steps in planning for the future of CISD.

Community Dialogue Sessions, Format and Engagement

Coppell ISD has worked to ensure broad and meaningful community engagement throughout this process. More than 600 community members participated in five in-person sessions, while staff provided valuable input through five dedicated staff sessions. In addition, the district received 2,356 responses to the six qr code questions, reflecting a strong cross-section of perspectives from families, staff, and community members.

This level of participation demonstrates both the high level of interest and investment from stakeholders and the district's commitment to transparency, feedback and listening as we navigate important decisions for the future of CISD schools.

Budget Information

CISD shared an [update](#) on budget and enrollment information at each of the 5 staff and 5 community sessions. Based on the stakeholder discussion and feedback received, the following topics arose and were addressed in the FAQ for the question - "What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?"

- 1) Use of Funds, Timing, and Accountability
- 2) How Much Do Closures Actually Save?
- 3) Alternatives to Closures (Revenue + Cost)
- 4) State Policy, Recapture, and Vouchers
- 5) Enrollment Assumptions, Forecasting, and Feeder Balance
- 6) Campus-Level Transparency & Comparisons
- 7) Disposition of Facilities (Closed or Repurposed)
- 8) Community & Property Value Impacts
- 9) Staffing, Class Size, and Program Protection
- 10) Housing, City Planning, and Market Forces
- 11) Communication Cadence and Decision Timeline

Stakeholders accept that CISD faces a serious structural gap, but they want proof of due diligence: school-by-school numbers, realistic long-term modeling (including vouchers), and a balanced plan that pairs smart savings with credible revenue growth. They also want decisions that protect walkable neighborhood schools, staff stability, and core programs, with transparent timelines and concrete plans for any closed or repurposed facilities.

Trend Analysis: What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?

Neighborhood Schools & Community Identity

Families consistently view neighborhood schools as the heart of Coppell, fostering walkability, culture, and stability. Vacant schools raise concerns about optics, branding, and the community's image.

Traffic, Safety & Accessibility

Safety concerns and traffic congestion are recurring priorities. Families fear that closing walkable schools will push more students into car lines and buses, increasing congestion and creating unsafe conditions. Feedback highlighted that neighborhood-centric campuses help mitigate citywide traffic flow challenges, while some campuses are equipped to handle higher volumes.

Property Values & Community Appeal

Parents stress that closures could lower property values and diminish Coppell's appeal for new families. Concerns were raised that rapid or large-scale closures (such as three in a single year) create instability that deters families from moving into the district.

Enrollment, Demographics & Future Growth

Community members believe enrollment decline is cyclical, tied to housing turnover, and will rebound as younger families move in. There is support for expanding open enrollment as a proactive measure, alongside considering new developments in planning.

Teacher & Program Quality

Protecting specialized programs (special education, DLI, ESL) and retaining experienced teachers remain essential. Parents voiced strong concern that large-scale or repeated closures will scatter strong staff teams, reduce stability, and undermine CISD's competitive advantage.

Reputation & Long-Term Vision

Stakeholders are deeply concerned about the district's image if closures outpace growth or are not clearly justified. Feedback emphasized that decisions should balance fiscal realities with academic ratings, programmatic strengths, and the broader vision for CISD as a destination district.

Takeaway: Families and staff want CISD's elementary planning to extend beyond cost savings, carefully weighing community identity, safety, property values, and academic quality. They emphasized that closures risk damaging Coppel's reputation and ability to attract new families. Stakeholders want a transparent, fact-based process that balances fiscal realities with long-term stability, growth, and community pride.

Trend Analysis: What guiding principles would ensure planning reflects our community's needs and strengths?

Program Quality, Choice & Continuity

Preserve CISD's hallmark breadth of programs (SPED, GT, IB, DLI, fine arts, STEM) and *prioritize programming over configuration* so every family can find a fit without diluting quality. Expand/market distinctive options (including lower-tech/classical models) to retain families who might otherwise choose charters/private.

Teacher & Staff Stability

Keep great educators by minimizing disruptive moves, keeping class sizes reasonable, and communicating placements early; staff longevity is foundational to culture, trust, and student outcomes.

Neighborhood Connectivity, Walkability & Community Identity

Protect walkable "neighborhood schools" that anchor civic life, strengthen safety, pride, and daily convenience.

Safety & Traffic Reality

Plan with real traffic flow, safe routes, and proximity to emergency services in mind; avoid

creating long bus rides for the youngest learners and compounding congestion at known bottlenecks.

Access

Ensure every campus maintains access to high-quality staff, programs, and resources—especially for special education and bilingual/LEP students.

Transparency, Two-Way Engagement & Trust

Share clear data, timelines, and criteria, and visibly show how community input shapes decisions; engage PTOs, community members, and all resident groups—not only current parents.

Fiscal Responsibility & Stewardship

Make long-horizon, data-driven choices that respect taxpayers: account for bond investments already made, avoid waste, and publish campus-level cost/benefit where possible.

Property Values & Civic Image

Acknowledge how schools influence the city's brand and nearby home values; avoid leaving prominent buildings vacant and plan repurposing to protect community perception.

Long-Term, Future-Ready Planning

Balance today's utilization with tomorrow's possibilities (housing turnover, new developments) so we don't revisit closures repeatedly or shed capacity we may soon need. Build flexible pathways to reopen/repurpose as conditions change.

High Expectations, Rigor & Balance

Reinforce a student-first culture that couples strong academics and meaningful learning expectations with balanced technology use to align with parent preferences and competitiveness.

Takeaway: The community asks CISD to protect excellent programs and the educators who deliver them; keep schools tightly connected to neighborhoods, safety, and civic life; be fiscally disciplined and transparent; and plan with a long view so Coppel remains a destination district without sacrificing identity or quality.

Trend Analysis: If you were to reimagine elementary school, what innovations would you include?

Lower-Tech, Higher-Touch Learning

The most consistent theme is dialing back daily device time in early grades—many families want “low-tech” or tech-purposeful classrooms (paper books, handwriting/cursive, note-taking) paired with explicit digital literacy later on. Several propose a tech-free or “reduced-tech” campus option to win back families who left for charter/classical models.

Choice Models to Attract and Retain Families

Stakeholders ask for a portfolio of campus identities, emphasizing that robust programming should be protected—and even expanded—over building configuration. The goal is “something for everyone,” with optional tracks that align to community values while preserving core CISD standards.

Experiential, Play-Rich, and Community-Connected Learning

Families want more outdoor classrooms, gardens, makerspaces, and partnerships that leverage nearby assets (library, parks, civic centers) for zero-cost field experiences. They also call for more recess, physical wellness, and social-emotional skill-building woven into the week.

Early Learning & On-ramps

Expand access to Pre-K (including paid options) located on elementary campuses to anchor families earlier and strengthen kindergarten readiness; pair with stronger outreach to local preschools and clearer “welcome” pathways.

Flexible Structures & Schedules

Ideas include school configurations, multi-age or skill-based groupings, and exploring calendar innovations where feasible. Several also suggest letting families express campus preference within CISD to match program fit.

Academics and Future-Ready Skills

Feedback spans stronger early literacy, math acceleration/extension, world languages, financial literacy, coding/AI literacy, and life-skills.

Teacher-Driven Design and Staffing Supports

Respondents want teachers centered in redesign and clear guardrails that keep class sizes workable so innovations succeed in practice.

Clear Communication & Usability

Alongside instructional changes, parents ask for simpler, more reliable portals and proactive marketing that shows what “modern CISD classrooms” really look like.

Takeaway: Families favor programmatic innovation over campus count—less screen time in early years, more hands-on and choice-driven pathways, stronger early-learning access, and flexible grade/schedule models. They want CISD to compete on experience, not just efficiency, by showcasing excellent teaching, walkable community connections, and transparent communication about what learning looks like day to day.

Trend Analysis: What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?

Transparency and Data Sharing

Families and staff consistently stressed the need for open, honest communication paired with accessible data to explain why decisions are being made. They want detailed information such as enrollment projections, budget line items, and rezoning maps so they can see the full picture and trust the process.

Timely and Consistent Updates

Stakeholders feel unsettled when communication comes too late in the process, giving the impression that decisions are predetermined. They want early and regular updates so they can plan for housing, childcare, and staffing needs with clarity and confidence.

Opportunities for Input and Engagement

Participants want meaningful ways to provide feedback and be heard before decisions are finalized. They called for town halls, surveys, forums, and ongoing dialogue, with a clear demonstration of how their input is shaping outcomes.

Support for Staff and Families During Transitions

Teachers and staff emphasized the importance of knowing how consolidations or closures will impact their jobs, assignments, and future roles. Families want reassurance that transitions will be supported with resources, counseling, and clear guidance to minimize disruption.

Security and Stability

Parents worry about the instability created by frequent school changes and want a commitment to preserving continuity where possible. They stressed that repeated disruptions not only harm trust but also undermine feelings of safety and belonging for children and staff.

Cultural and Community Connection

Stakeholders encouraged the district to build stronger relationships with diverse community groups and ensure that communication is culturally relevant and accessible.

Takeaway: Families and staff want clear, timely communication grounded in transparent data so they can trust the district's decisions and plan confidently for the future. They also seek authentic opportunities to engage, stability during transitions, and support that affirms community trust and belonging.



Lakeside
Community Dialogue
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Community Dialogue Meeting @ Lakeside

August 14: 3:30 pm with Staff; 5:30 pm with Community

On August 14, Coppell ISD hosted two Community Dialogue sessions at Lakeside Elementary—one for staff and one for community members. The purpose was to share budget realities, gather input on elementary planning, and identify guiding principles and innovative ideas for the district's future.

1. Budget Questions & Concerns

Participants expressed strong interest in **financial transparency**, seeking clear numbers on potential school closure savings, differences between projected and actual deficits, and the sustainability of budget strategies.

Other key concerns included:

- **Enrollment projection reliability** given past inaccuracies and demographic shifts.
- **Voucher program impacts** on enrollment and revenue.
- **Exploring alternatives** to closures, such as operational changes, bus fleet ownership, and open enrollment expansion.
- **Fate of closed facilities**, with a preference to keep them for district use rather than selling to charters.
- **Staff job security and class sizes** during restructuring.
- **Housing affordability** as a driver of enrollment trends.
- **Decision-making pace**, with some perceiving the process as rushed or predetermined.

2. Elementary Planning Considerations

Eight recurring priorities emerged:

1. **School Location & Accessibility** – Keep neighborhood, walkable schools and avoid long bus rides.
2. **Balanced Enrollment & Utilization** – Ensure equitable class sizes and capacity use.
3. **Program Placement** – Strategically locate special education, Pre-K, AIM, and enrichment programs.
4. **Academic Performance** – Weigh high-performing schools' results in closure decisions.

5. **Community & Culture** – Preserve campuses as neighborhood anchors with strong traditions.
6. **Operational Efficiency** – Factor in transportation costs, facility age, and bond commitments.
7. **Enrollment Retention** – Compete with charters through program quality and marketing.
8. **Long-Term Vision** – Plan for future demographic shifts and potential school reopenings.

3. Guiding Principles for Decision-Making

Community feedback emphasized:

- **Retaining quality teachers and leaders** as a cornerstone of success.
- **Maintaining community and family engagement** through active PTO/PTA and cultural events.
- **Walkability and accessibility** in school placement.
- **Program quality and diversity** (special education, gifted, IB, STEM, cultural enrichment).
- **Equity in class sizes and resources** across schools.
- **Transparency and authentic community input** in decisions.
- **Forward-thinking planning** based on demographic and housing trends.
- **Financial responsibility** while protecting quality.
- **Protecting property values** and the district's reputation.
- **Safety** in traffic patterns and proximity to services.

4. Innovative Ideas for Elementary Redesign

Themes included:

- **Hands-on and outdoor learning** with science labs, gardens, and flexible spaces.
- **Balanced technology use**—less screen time in early grades, purposeful integration in upper grades.
- **Personalized learning** through flexible, skill-based groupings.
- **Expanded programs and electives** including STEM, fine arts, dual language, and financial literacy.
- **Physical wellness integration** with recess innovation and wellness programs.

- **Year-round or flexible scheduling** and multi-age grade structures.

5. Communication & Support Needs

To feel informed and supported, families and staff requested:

- **Clear, frequent updates** in plain language, with decision rationales and accessible data.
- **Two-way engagement** beyond surveys—forums, Q&A sessions, and visible responsiveness.
- **Transition support** for students, staff, and families during changes.
- **Public access to metrics** through dashboards and visual tools.
- **Multiple communication channels** to reach diverse audiences.
- **Long-term stability** to avoid repeated restructuring.

Key Takeaway

Across all topics, stakeholders urged CISD to balance fiscal realities with community values—preserving strong teaching, neighborhood schools, and program quality—while making transparent, future-focused decisions. Schools were consistently framed as more than educational facilities; they are vital community anchors tied to identity, property values, and family choice.

Links to Specific Data:

[What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?](#)

[What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?](#)

[What guiding principles would ensure planning reflects our community's needs and strengths?](#)

[If you were to reimagine elementary school, what innovations would you include?](#)

[What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?](#)

[Elementary Campus Realignment FAQ](#)

What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?

1. Financial Clarity & Sustainability

Consistent Theme: Stakeholders want specific, transparent numbers about the budget, savings from closures, and the long-term impact.

- **Key Questions & Patterns:**

- How much money does closing each school save annually?
- Is the projected deficit realistic or conservative?
- What's the difference between proposed vs. realized deficits?
- How sustainable are these savings, or will this process repeat in future years?

- **Representative Concerns:**

“How much is expected to be saved by shutting down a single elementary school – specifically per school?”

“How do we avoid being back here every year needing to close another school?”

2. Enrollment Projections & Accuracy

Consistent Theme: Skepticism about enrollment forecast accuracy, especially given past errors.

- **Key Questions & Patterns:**

- Were projections skewed by COVID-era data?
- Will closures be needed again in 3–5 years?
- Are future demographic changes (e.g., housing turnover) factored in?

- **Representative Concerns:**

“2016 bond estimated attendance growth was VERY wrong, why trust current projections?”

“Are we going to reopen these schools in 10–15 years if enrollment rebounds?”

3. Voucher Program Impacts

Consistent Theme: Widespread uncertainty about how Texas vouchers will affect enrollment and funding.

- **Key Questions & Patterns:**

- What levels (elementary, middle, high) will be most impacted?
- Could vouchers accelerate declining enrollment?
- Is there revenue sharing or recapture implications?

- **Representative Concerns:**

“What is the impact of the new voucher programs? Is there revenue sharing with ISD?”

“What effect will TX vouchers have on CISD enrollment?”

4. Alternative Cost-Saving Measures

Consistent Theme: Desire for exploring options beyond closing schools.

- **Key Questions & Patterns:**
 - Reduce technology budget, pause renovations, restructure grade levels (e.g., K–6, 9th into high school).
 - Own bus fleet vs. contracted services.
 - Boost open enrollment to increase revenue.
- **Representative Concerns:**
 - “Why don’t we consider following Lewisville’s lead and purchase our own buses?”
 - “Open enrollment hasn’t been pursued yet – what are we doing to rezone?”

5. Use of Closed Buildings

Consistent Theme: Concern over what happens to facilities after closure.

- **Key Questions & Patterns:**
 - Will charters get first rights to purchase or lease?
 - Could they be repurposed for district use?
 - Long-term community impact of vacant buildings.
- **Representative Concerns:**
 - “What happens to the schools that are closed? If sold, do charter schools get first dibs?”
 - “Don’t lose the buildings to charters now if we might need them later.”

6. Impact on Staff & Class Sizes

Consistent Theme: Job security and classroom conditions are major considerations.

- **Key Questions & Patterns:**
 - Will class sizes increase?
 - Can we protect teacher salaries during budget cuts?
 - Will high-performing teachers be retained after closures?
- **Representative Concerns:**
 - “As long as we’re able to keep our jobs, then I am good.”
 - “Agree with keeping class sizes small and prioritizing teacher salaries.”

7. Housing Market & Demographic Shifts

Consistent Theme: Recognition that housing affordability affects enrollment.

- **Key Questions & Patterns:**
 - Will affordable housing be developed to attract young families?
 - What can the city/county do to stabilize housing costs?
- **Representative Concerns:**
 - “Housing will continue to go up – what can we do to accommodate families?”
 - “Are there plans to develop more affordable housing?”

8. Trust & Decision-Making Pace

Consistent Theme: Worry that the process feels rushed or predetermined.

- **Key Questions & Patterns:**
 - Is there a strategic plan beyond the immediate crisis?
 - Are closures being decided “too much, too fast”?
- **Representative Concerns:**
 - “Not trying to do too much too fast – I’ve been where multiple schools closed at once, it didn’t go well.”
 - “It seems clear we need to cut 2 schools, but my concern is that’s not enough.”

What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?

1. School Location, Geography & Accessibility

- **Most Frequent Theme:** The physical placement of schools — especially Lakeside’s position as the only elementary on the east side — is a major factor.
- **Key Concerns:**
 - Walkability and bike access for students.
 - Avoiding long bus rides for young children.
 - Traffic flow, congestion, and safety near campuses.
 - Proximity to neighborhoods and other schools to reduce commute times.
- **Representative Points:** “Lakeside is farthest from other elementaries,” “Walkable schools should remain open,” “Traffic flow patterns must be considered.”

2. Enrollment, Capacity & Utilization

- **Consistent Theme:** Decisions should account for actual and projected enrollment, class size equity, and capacity balancing.
- **Key Concerns:**
 - Reliability of projections to avoid closing a school only to need it later.

- Keeping utilization comfortable for support staff, lunch/recess, and programs.
 - Equity in rezoning to avoid overcrowding or underuse.
- **Representative Points:** “What if projections are wrong?” “Normalize utilization between schools,” “Rezoning to balance enrollments.”

3. Program & Service Needs

- **Consistent Theme:** Protecting and placing specialized programs strategically across the district.
- **Key Concerns:**
 - Special Education distribution and accessibility.
 - AIM, Pre-K, personalized learning, and enrichment programs.
 - Maintaining program continuity for students (minimize transitions).
- **Representative Points:** “Where is the greatest need for SPED?” “Keep programs in the same campus,” “Pre-K qualifications and expansion.”

4. Academic Performance & Reputation

- **Consistent Theme:** Performance data, especially Lakeside’s strong results, should be weighed alongside non-academic factors.
- **Key Concerns:**
 - STAAR scores, student growth, attendance rates.
 - School ratings and district/national recognition.
 - Impact on CISD’s reputation if high-performing schools close.
- **Representative Points:** “Lakeside ranked #1 in Dallas County,” “Keep high-performing schools open,” “Reputation matters for property values.”

5. Community & Cultural Impact

- **Consistent Theme:** Schools are seen as community anchors, with deep history and relationships.
- **Key Concerns:**
 - Teacher/staff retention and low turnover.
 - PTO/PTA involvement and volunteer engagement.
 - Maintaining traditions, culture, and neighborhood-school identity.
- **Representative Points:** “Culture and community matter,” “Many families have been here for generations,” “Preserve neighborhood anchors.”

6. Financial & Operational Considerations

- **Consistent Theme:** Cost-effectiveness should be part of the equation, but not the sole driver.
- **Key Concerns:**
 - Transportation and bussing costs if schools close.
 - Facility age, renovation investments, and bond commitments.
 - Avoiding vacant buildings becoming eyesores or being used by charters.
- **Representative Points:** “What happens to closed buildings?” “Keep facilities for future use,” “Efficient use of resources.”

7. Competition & Enrollment Retention

- **Consistent Theme:** Charter and private schools are a growing concern for enrollment loss.
- **Key Concerns:**
 - Understanding why families choose alternatives.
 - Adjusting curriculum/programs to compete.
 - Marketing open enrollment strategically.
- **Representative Points:** “Why are we losing to charters?” “Change curriculum to compete,” “Market to nearby apartments and neighborhoods.”

8. Long-Term Planning & Growth Forecasting

- **Consistent Theme:** Look beyond current numbers to anticipate demographic shifts.
- **Key Concerns:**
 - Housing turnover bringing in young families.
 - New developments (e.g., Blackberry Farms) affecting attendance zones.
 - Potential future need to reopen closed schools.
- **Representative Points:** “Forecast for aging population turnover,” “Plan for potential enrollment rebound,” “Consider growth areas.”

What guiding principles would ensure planning reflects our community’s needs and strengths?

Key Themes & Trends

1. Strong Teacher and Staff Retention

- **Consistent Theme:** Respondents repeatedly cited keeping high-quality, experienced teachers and leaders as a top priority.
- **Why It Matters:** Teacher longevity builds trust, preserves campus culture, and supports student success.
- **Representative Comments:** “Teacher retention,” “Keep the best of the best,” “Strong leader,” “Longevity of staff.”

2. Community & Family Involvement

- **Consistent Theme:** Maintaining deep ties between schools, parents, and neighborhoods is seen as essential.
- **Why It Matters:** Engagement builds school pride, supports events/traditions, and strengthens advocacy during changes.
- **Representative Comments:** “PTO involvement,” “Cultural night, carnival, Longhorn Stampede,” “Neighborhood anchor.”

3. School Location, Walkability & Accessibility

- **Consistent Theme:** Families value neighborhood schools within walking/biking distance.
- **Why It Matters:** Reduces transportation costs, increases safety, strengthens the neighborhood-school identity.
- **Representative Comments:** “Walkable,” “Avoid lengthy bus rides,” “Proximity to other campuses,” “Traffic flow patterns.”

4. Program Quality & Diversity

- **Consistent Theme:** Maintain and expand strong academic and enrichment programs (special education, gifted, IB, STEM, cultural).
- **Why It Matters:** Helps CISD remain competitive with charters/private schools and meet diverse student needs.
- **Representative Comments:** “Programs don’t disappear,” “Special needs supports,” “Diversity,” “IB-type choices.”

5. Equitable Class Sizes & Resources

- **Consistent Theme:** Fair student-teacher ratios and consistent program quality across campuses.
- **Why It Matters:** Avoids disparities in educational experience and maintains parent satisfaction.
- **Representative Comments:** “Equitable class sizes,” “Ratio 16–18,” “Resources across socioeconomic areas.”

6. Transparency & Community Voice

- **Consistent Theme:** Decisions should be informed by open data sharing and genuine stakeholder input.
- **Why It Matters:** Builds trust and reduces community pushback during difficult changes.
- **Representative Comments:** “Transparency,” “Involve parents early,” “Listen before deciding,” “Full rubric for closure decisions.”

7. Forward-Thinking & Long-Term Planning

- **Consistent Theme:** Consider demographic cycles, housing trends, and future growth—not just current enrollment dips.
- **Why It Matters:** Prevents short-term decisions that create future capacity or facility challenges.
- **Representative Comments:** “Forward thinking,” “Housing turnover will bring young families,” “Avoid closing only to reopen later.”

8. Financial Responsibility

- **Consistent Theme:** Make fiscally sound choices while preserving quality.
- **Why It Matters:** Maintains district stability and protects property values while minimizing waste.

- **Representative Comments:** “Fiscal sustainability,” “Minimize costs,” “Protect taxpayer investment.”

9. Protecting Property Values & Community Image

- **Consistent Theme:** School closures can impact real estate desirability and city reputation.
- **Why It Matters:** High-performing, visible schools attract families and maintain Coppell’s prestige.
- **Representative Comments:** “Quality schools impact property ownership,” “Avoid abandoned look,” “Anchor for community.”

10. Safety Considerations

- **Consistent Theme:** Traffic flow, proximity to emergency services, and secure facilities.
- **Why It Matters:** Safety is a top parental concern influencing school choice and satisfaction.
- **Representative Comments:** “Safe walking routes,” “Traffic congestion,” “Fire station proximity concerns.”

Summary Insight

The strongest guiding principles emerging from this feedback are:

- **Keep great teachers** and maintain **community-centered, walkable schools**.
- Protect **program quality and diversity** while ensuring **fairness and equity** across campuses.
- **Engage openly with the community** and plan with **long-term vision** grounded in both fiscal responsibility and future demographic realities.
- Recognize that **schools are more than educational buildings** — they are anchors of community identity, property value, and family decision-making.

If you were to reimagine elementary school, what innovations would you include?

Key Themes & Trends

1. Hands-On, Project-Based, and Outdoor Learning

Why It Matters: Parents and staff want more experiential learning opportunities through science labs, manipulatives, gardens, and outdoor classrooms. These approaches are seen as essential for engagement, creativity, and applied knowledge.

Representative Comments:

- “Science lab... flex areas... two playgrounds.”
- “More outdoor time (gardening, learning through play) also less technology.”

2. Balanced Use of Technology

Why It Matters: There is strong concern about excessive screen time in younger grades. Families want a balanced approach—reducing early technology use while thoughtfully integrating tools like AI in upper grades.

Representative Comments:

- “Less technology, more applied knowledge.”
- “Include AI, but do not over emphasize it. Physical interaction is important, so it needs to be a blend.”

3. Personalized & Flexible Grouping

Why It Matters: Many respondents called for grouping students by skill or growth rather than age, reflecting interest in Montessori-style and standards-based learning. This approach is seen as better supporting student growth and differentiation.

Representative Comments:

- “Standards-based groupings... less technology, science labs, hands on...”
- “Get rid of grade levels, group kids placed on achievement...”

4. Vertical Integration & Holistic Design

Why It Matters: Families value continuity and flexibility. Suggestions included vertical alignment with future teachers, K–6 models, multi-age groupings, year-round calendars, and alternative scheduling. These are viewed as ways to strengthen transitions and improve learning flow.

Representative Comments:

- “Vertical alignment so students will know who their future teachers are.”
- “Add 6th grade to elementary school... year round schooling possibilities.”

5. Expanded Program Variety & Electives

Why It Matters: Parents want more access to enriching opportunities—STEM, fine arts, dual language, financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and electives that prepare students for the future. Expanded programs are seen as a way to keep CISD competitive and appealing.

Representative Comments:

- “Adds AI, rigorous math, competition... creative and challenging work.”
- “More fine arts such as orchestra.”
- “More elective options... curricula that teach read/write/money skills.”

6. Outdoor, Play-Based, and Physical Activity Integration

Why It Matters: Families emphasized the importance of play, physical wellness, and natural learning environments. Integrating movement and health supports student development and creates more well-rounded learners.

Representative Comments:

- “Mystery science... outdoors... building healthy habits through recess.”
- “Curriculum that emphasizes physical activity and promoted overall health and wellness.”

7. Increased Language Diversity

Why It Matters: Parents strongly expressed a desire for expanded dual language and bilingual programs across all schools, not just select campuses. Families see language diversity as both a cultural and academic strength.

Representative Comments:

- “Access to multiple languages for all schools...”
- “Dual languages being taught... bilingual options.”

Overall Trend Statement

When asked to reimagine elementary schools, parents and staff emphasized a strong desire for a balanced, whole-child approach—one that blends hands-on, project-based learning with reduced technology reliance, expands choice and flexibility in grouping and scheduling, and offers a broader array of programs and electives including fine arts, STEM, and dual language. Respondents consistently highlighted the importance of smaller class sizes, more play and outdoor learning, and greater teacher support, all aimed at fostering student engagement, wellness, and long-term readiness.

What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?

Key Themes & Trends

1. Transparency & Clear Communication

- **Frequent Updates:** Many requested regular, predictable updates—ideally weekly or monthly—especially on budgets, timelines, and decisions.
- **Plain Language:** Participants stressed the need for honest, jargon-free explanations ("black and white"), replacing vague terms like "reconfigure" with direct ones like "close."
- **Decision Rationale:** There's a strong desire to understand the *why* behind decisions, with requests for data, criteria (rubrics), and the decision-making process to be shared openly.

2. Engagement & Two-Way Dialogue

- **Interactive Opportunities:** Rather than surveys alone, respondents want forums where they can ask questions, provide feedback, and see how their input is considered.
- **Voice & Visibility:** Many noted a lack of trust when decisions feel pre-determined. They seek genuine involvement, not perfunctory input.

3. Support During Transitions

- **Planning & Logistics:** Families and staff want clear, early timelines and plans for transitions—school closures, staff relocations, transportation, and support for families and staff (e.g., moving assistance, bus routes).
- **Job Security & Staff Fairness:** Staff need reassurance on how reductions or relocations will be handled (e.g., seniority, qualifications), and fair support if changes occur.

4. Data Access & Accountability

- **Open Access to Metrics:** Stakeholders want access to the same enrollment, budget, and performance data the district uses—via dashboards or portals.
- **Visual Tools:** Requests included infographics, heat maps, side-by-side comparisons, and scoring breakdowns to make data understandable.
- **Transparency Post-Decision:** People want clarity on what will happen to buildings or zones after decisions are made, and updates on long-term strategy.

5. Communication Channels

- **Multiple Platforms:** Suggestions include dedicated web pages, the CISD app, newsletters, email, and even social platforms like Facebook.
- **Early Outreach:** Especially for new/potential families—they want to be “in the loop” before making choices or receiving assignments.

6. Avoiding Fatigue & Building Trust

- **Consolidated Processes:** Stakeholders urged that restructuring not be repeated annually—it’s draining and stressful for students and families.
- **Accountability:** Several voiced feeling like changes are performed for optics. They want authentic, trust-building actions—not just talking points.



Cottonwood Creek
Community Dialogue

REPORT

Released September 2025

Community Dialogue Meeting @ Cottonwood Creek

August 18: 3:30 pm with Staff; 5:30 pm with Community

On August 18, Coppell ISD hosted two Community Dialogue sessions at Cottonwood Creek Elementary—one for staff and one for community members. The purpose was to share budget realities, gather input on elementary planning, and identify guiding principles and innovative ideas for the district's future.

Overall Summary of Budget Concerns

Community feedback around Coppell ISD's budget challenges reveals both financial anxieties and deep emotional ties to schools, staff, and neighborhood identity. While stakeholders understand that fiscal realities require hard choices, they want to ensure decisions are transparent, future-focused, and grounded in what makes Coppell unique.

Key Takeaways

1. Budget Questions & Concerns

- **Closures & Reputation:** Families worry that closing strong schools could harm Coppell ISD's reputation, rankings, and trust, questioning whether savings justify the risk.
- **Staff Security:** Teachers and staff want clarity on job security, reassignments, and raises, emphasizing stability as key to retention.
- **Budget Transparency:** Stakeholders want more detail on how the budget shifted so quickly, including line-item data and realistic projections.
- **Enrollment & Demographics:** Families view enrollment declines as temporary and tied to housing; they suggest expanding open enrollment to offset trends.
- **State Funding & Advocacy:** Recapture ("Robin Hood") is a major frustration, with calls for stronger advocacy in Austin.
- **Future-Proofing Decisions:** Concerns were raised about what happens if enrollment rebounds or projections prove wrong.
- **Alternative Savings:** Suggestions included cutting technology refresh cycles, reducing admin costs, and learning from past closures.
- **Communication & Timeliness:** Above all, families and staff want timely, clear updates about how decisions affect them.

2. Elementary Planning Considerations

- **Neighborhood Schools & Community Identity:** Neighborhood schools are seen as the heart of Coppell, fostering safety, walkability, and culture.

- **Traffic, Safety & Commute Times:** Families stress the importance of avoiding longer commutes and increased congestion.
- **Real Estate & Property Values:** Concerns about property values declining and closed schools attracting charters.
- **Enrollment & Demographics:** Belief that declines are cyclical, with suggestions for expanded open enrollment.
- **Teacher & Program Quality:** Protecting staff stability and specialized programs is viewed as essential.

3. Guiding Principles for Decision-Making

- **Teacher & Staff Retention:** Staff longevity and stability build trust and sustain excellence.
- **Neighborhood Schools & Identity:** Schools act as hubs for community connection and tradition.
- **Transparency & Trust:** Families want honest, consistent communication with visible use of their input.
- **Student-Centered Decisions:** Place student well-being, learning, and safety first.
- **Safety & Accessibility:** Ensure safe routes, walkability, and manageable traffic.
- **Values & Long-Term Efficiency:** Honor Coppell ISD traditions while making fiscally responsible decisions.

4. Innovative Ideas for Elementary Redesign

- **Early Childhood Access:** Expand Pre-K and childcare to support academics and staff retention.
- **Traditional/Classical Models:** Interest in “return to basics” approaches (cursive, handwriting, Singapore math).
- **Technology Balance:** Reduce screen time for young learners while adding AI literacy in later grades.
- **Schedules & Configurations:** Explore year-round calendars, 4-day weeks, and shifting grade levels.
- **Teacher Support:** Keep class sizes small, provide aides/paras, and boost pay to retain staff.
- **Student-Centered Innovation:** More hands-on learning, life skills, languages, and STEAM opportunities.

5. Communication & Support Needs

- **Transparency in Decision-Making:** Clear, honest explanations with access to real data.
- **Timeliness & Urgency:** Families want updates early enough to plan for housing, jobs, and childcare.
- **Job Security & Reassurance:** Teachers need clarity on reassignments and roles to protect morale.
- **Opportunities for Input:** Stakeholders want assurance their feedback is shaping outcomes.
- **Clarity on Outcomes:** Requests for rezoning maps, transition details, and long-term impacts.

Takeaway: Across all questions, the strongest themes are protecting neighborhood schools, ensuring staff stability, communicating with transparency, and planning for both fiscal realities and long-term community identity. Stakeholders want CISD to approach budget planning with transparency, compassion, and foresight—balancing fiscal responsibility with protecting the district’s reputation, staff stability, and community identity.

Links to Specific Data:

[What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?](#)

[What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?](#)

[What guiding principles would ensure planning reflects our community’s needs and strengths?](#)

[If you were to reimagine elementary school, what innovations would you include?](#)

[What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?](#)

[Elementary Campus Realignment FAQ](#)

What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?

1. Concerns About School Closures and Rankings

- Many participants are worried that closing a highly ranked campus could negatively impact Coppell ISD’s reputation and rankings (Niche, Great Schools).
- Some questioned why certain schools were built or excluded from closure discussions given declining enrollment.

- There is concern about whether closures would save enough to offset the deficit versus the potential harm to reputation and community trust.

Trend: Parents and staff see school closures as both a financial and identity/reputation issue.

2. Personal Impact and Job Security

- Multiple questions focused on employment stability, such as who will keep jobs, how consolidations will affect teaching positions, and whether “singleton” teachers will be reassigned.
- Concerns about raises, state-mandated salary increases, and insurance costs also surfaced.

Trend: Staff want clear, early answers about how decisions affect their livelihood and job security.

3. Budget Transparency and Timeline

- Strong interest in understanding why the district went from a small surplus to a large deficit so quickly (2022–2023 highlighted as a turning point).
- Requests for a line-item breakdown: operating costs by campus, reserves, technology refresh cycles, athletics vs. academics, and administrative vs. teaching staff.
- Questions about whether projections are conservative, realistic, or worst-case.

Trend: Stakeholders want more detailed budget data and reassurance that projections are accurate and transparent.

4. Enrollment Trends and Projections

- Many asked how enrollment is being projected and why families may be choosing alternatives.
- Suggestions included open enrollment expansion, working with the City to attract families, and addressing concerns about curriculum/technology balance.
- Questions surfaced about the impact of vouchers and how many CISD-eligible students attend elsewhere.

Trend: Families want proactive strategies to attract and retain students, not just reactive closures.

5. State Funding & “Robin Hood” (Recapture)

- Strong frustration with sending money away while not receiving help in return.
- Several asked whether CISD could seek reprieve or relief from the state.
- Some want the district to push harder with legislators for additional allotments and policy changes.

Trend: State funding inequities and recapture remain a major frustration, with a desire for more advocacy.

6. Future-Oriented “What If” Scenarios

- Concerns about what happens if enrollment rebounds (another “boom”) or projections prove inaccurate.
- Questions about whether the district would reopen schools or how quickly adjustments could be reversed.
- Curiosity about long-term sustainability — not just balancing next year’s budget.

Trend: Stakeholders want assurance that decisions are future-proof and adaptable.

7. Constructive Ideas for Savings

- Suggestions included delaying technology refreshes, reducing administrative salary growth, optimizing utilities/transportation, and insurance restructuring.
- Some suggested analyzing lessons from past closures (e.g., Pinkerton) to inform decisions.

Trend: Community members are offering practical cost-saving alternatives they want considered before closures.

8. Urgency and Communication

- Multiple responses emphasized the need for swift, clear communication:
 - “I just want to know how I will be affected as soon as possible.”
 - “I don’t like what you shared, but I understand the info.”
- There is a sense of compressed timelines and a need for balance between speed and accuracy.

Trend: Stakeholders expect timely, transparent updates to reduce uncertainty and anxiety.

Summary:

The strongest themes are concern over closures and reputation, job security, and transparency in budget details. Families and staff want more explanation of projections and options, assurances that enrollment strategies are in play, and evidence that the district is advocating against state funding inequities. They also want to know that the district is considering alternative cost-saving measures beyond closures and that decisions will be adaptable to future changes.

What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?**1. Neighborhood Schools as the Heart of the Community**

Consistent Theme: Neighborhood schools are seen as the heart of Coppell, fostering safety, walkability, and strong community identity that families fear would be lost if campuses consolidate.

Key Concerns:

- Walkability and bike access to neighborhood schools, especially for young learners.
- Preserving the community culture, traditions, and spirit that neighborhood schools foster.
- Safety concerns tied to longer bus rides and increased traffic if schools consolidate.
- Potential loss of families if students are reassigned away from their neighborhood campuses.

Representative Points:

- “Cottonwood Creek is the heart of our neighborhood.”
- “Closing a walkable school will push families to leave Coppell ISD.”
- “Community identity and school spirit cannot be replaced if students are scattered.”

2. Traffic, Safety, and Commute Times

Consistent Theme: Families consistently emphasized that traffic congestion, student safety, and longer commutes must be central considerations in any school consolidation decision.

Key Concerns:

- Increased congestion on Denton Tap and major roads if schools close.

- Longer and more complicated commutes for families.
- Safety of students crossing busy roads or spending more time on buses.

Representative Points:

- “Traffic patterns and safety must be considered in this decision.”
- “Denton Tap is already too congested; consolidating would make it worse.”
- “Young children should not have long bus rides just to get to school.”

3. Real Estate and Property Values

Consistent Theme: Community members emphasized that closing neighborhood schools could negatively impact property values, deter new families from moving to Coppell, and raise concerns about the future use of vacated campuses.

Key Concerns:

- Impact of closing schools on home values in Coppell neighborhoods.
- Risk that neighborhood schools closing will deter new families from moving in.
- Concerns about what happens to closed campuses — whether they'll sit vacant or be repurposed by charters.

Representative Points:

- “Closing schools will devalue homes.”
- “Young families move here for neighborhood schools — if they close, they won't come.”
- “We don't want our schools taken over by charters.”

4. Enrollment and Demographics

Consistent Theme: Community members believe current enrollment declines are temporary and tied to housing and economic cycles, with expectations of future rebound and suggestions to expand open enrollment as a short-term strategy.

Key Concerns:

- Current decline is tied to economics (housing prices, delayed turnover, COVID homeschooling) rather than demand for CISD.
- Expectation that enrollment will rebound once housing stabilizes and younger families return.
- Calls to expand open enrollment to offset declining numbers.

Representative Points:

- “Enrollment is cyclical — this downturn will not last forever.”
- “We need to expand open enrollment like Grapevine and Frisco.”
- “Why did we open Canyon Ranch if enrollment was already dropping?”

5. Teacher and Program Quality

Consistent Theme: Protecting the quality of teaching and specialized programs is seen as essential, with concerns that consolidation could harm teacher retention, increase class sizes, and scatter critical services.

Key Concerns:

- Retaining high-quality teachers and staff through stability.
- Concerns that consolidation will cause higher class sizes and lower teacher retention.
- Preserving specialized programs, such as special education, at schools like Cottonwood Creek.

Representative Points:

- “Cottonwood Creek’s staff is one of its greatest strengths.”
- “We don’t want to lose our amazing teachers because of larger classes.”
- “Closing schools will scatter specialized programs and staff.”

What guiding principles would ensure planning reflects our community’s needs and strengths?

Key Themes & Trends

1. Teacher & Staff Retention and Stability

Consistent Theme:

Respondents emphasized the importance of keeping experienced teachers and leaders, as staff longevity directly shapes the culture and quality of each school.

Why It Matters:

High teacher and leader retention builds trust, sustains positive culture, and strengthens student success. When staff feel supported and stable, families and communities are more likely to remain engaged.

Representative Comments:

- “Teacher retention.”
- “Keep the best of the best.”
- “Maxing out student/teacher ratios is deeply hurting students & teachers.”
- “Strong leader,” “Longevity of staff.”

2. Neighborhood Schools & Community Identity

Consistent Theme:

The neighborhood school model is viewed as a cornerstone of Coppell ISD’s community identity, with schools acting as hubs for family connection and tradition.

Why It Matters:

Neighborhood schools create a family-like environment, promote walkability, and sustain the close-knit culture that attracts families to Coppell. Removing or consolidating schools risks eroding this sense of belonging and weakening neighborhoods.

Representative Comments:

- “The neighborhood school is critical — it creates a strong sense of community.”
- “Cottonwood Creek is a neighborhood that revolves around the school.”
- “Walk to School Wednesdays invite families to connect with teachers.”
- “CCE students are easy to pick out at secondary level schools — their foundation is strong.”

3. Transparency, Communication, and Trust

Consistent Theme:

Families expressed the need for open, consistent communication from district leadership, ensuring all stakeholders are included in the decision-making process.

Why It Matters:

Clear communication builds trust and confidence in district decisions. Families want transparency in how data is being used and reassurance that community feedback is genuinely shaping outcomes.

Representative Comments:

- “Transparency and communication amongst ALL stakeholders.”
- “Clear communication and transparency.”
- “Honesty, consistency, forward-thinking.”

4. Access

Consistent Theme:

Access is highlighted as critical guiding principles, with concern for preserving Coppell ISD and protecting student populations.

Why It Matters:

Decisions should ensure fairness across programs, support for special education and low-income students, and protection of the cultures in CISD that are seen as one of Coppell's strengths.

Representative Comments:

- "One of Coppell's strengths is its diversity."
- "Don't disrupt the neediest learners (special ed)."

5. Student-Centered Decisions**Consistent Theme:**

Parents and staff emphasized that all decisions should prioritize what is best for children — from safety and learning conditions to long-term stability.

Why It Matters:

Focusing on student well-being and educational excellence ensures that any changes strengthen, rather than disrupt, children's development and family experience.

Representative Comments:

- "Think kids first — the decision should match what kids need most."
- "Ensure long-term viability — look 3–5 years ahead."
- "Balance between sports and academic programs."

6. Safety, Traffic & Accessibility**Consistent Theme:**

Safe routes to schools and minimizing traffic congestion were major priorities, especially for young children and neighborhoods separated by major roads.

Why It Matters:

Walkability and safe access are seen as essential to protecting children and preserving the family-friendly nature of Coppell neighborhoods. Transportation and traffic concerns play a significant role in community trust.

Representative Comments:

- “How will kids get to school? Is there a safe option for walking and biking?”
- “CCE is geographically separated from other schools by major roads.”
- “Traffic and accessibility must be considered.”

7. Coppel ISD Values, Traditions & Long-Term Efficiency

Consistent Theme:

Families stressed the importance of honoring Coppel ISD’s traditions, culture, and identity while making fiscally responsible and efficient decisions.

Why It Matters:

Protecting the district’s long-standing reputation for excellence and community connection ensures stability and avoids repeated cycles of closures or reorganizations.

Representative Comments:

- “Ensure CUSD values are maintained.”
- “Long-standing traditions like seniors returning to CCE.”
- “Good schools and good communities feed each other.”

Overall Takeaway: Coppel ISD families want guiding principles that prioritize staff retention, neighborhood identity, safety, and transparency, while ensuring student needs and long-term stability are at the heart of every decision.

If you were to reimagine elementary school, what innovations would you include?

Consistent Themes

Community feedback clustered around several broad themes: expanding early childhood access, rethinking grade configurations and schedules, prioritizing teacher support, balancing technology with traditional approaches, and adding choice/innovation programs.

Key Themes and Why They Matter

1. Early Childhood & Preschool Access

- **Why It Matters:** Many families expressed strong support for universal or expanded Pre-K (including staff daycare or tuition-based options). Parents see early childhood education as both an academic foundation and a recruitment/retention strategy for teachers and families.

- **Representative Comments:**

- “Pre-K at the campuses they feed into.”
- “If Coppell had a discounted daycare for teachers, it would keep great teachers here.”
- “Adding Pre-K for all would attract new families.”

2. Traditional/Classical Education Models

- **Why It Matters:** A notable number of comments called for a “return to basics” — less reliance on technology, more handwriting, cursive, reading, Singapore math, and classical instruction. Parents see this as a way to differentiate CISD from charters/private schools that are drawing families away.

- **Representative Comments:**

- “Make one or more schools classical.”
- “CCE leans traditional focused!”
- “Kids can’t sign their names in cursive, read a clock, or know multiplication tables.”

3. Technology Balance & AI Integration

- **Why It Matters:** Parents and staff want a balanced approach — less screen time for younger learners, but more purposeful integration (especially in upper grades, including AI literacy). Concerns include cost, overuse, and child development.

- **Representative Comments:**

- “No iPads in Pre-K and Kinder — let them be kids.”
- “Could we save money by going back to books?”
- “Introduce AI in grades 4 and 5.”

4. Grade Configurations, Schedules & Flexibility

- **Why It Matters:** Ideas included moving 6th grade back to elementary, adopting year-round calendars, exploring 4-day weeks, and offering flexible day/evening schedules. These reflect desires for family-friendly options, academic alignment, and cost savings.

- **Representative Comments:**

- “Elementary should go through 6th grade.”
- “A 4-day week would give teachers more time to plan.”
- “Year-round school reduces the summer slide.”

5. Teacher & Staff Support

- **Why It Matters:** Strong emphasis was placed on keeping class sizes low, ensuring teacher aides/paras in early grades, providing planning time, and boosting pay to retain quality teachers.
- **Representative Comments:**
 - “Kinder teachers need paras.”
 - “Co-teaching with two certified teachers per class.”
 - “Better pay for paras to ensure quality.”

6. Student-Centered Innovation

- **Why It Matters:** Respondents suggested grouping students by ability, expanding hands-on learning, life skills, and electives like foreign languages, fine arts, and STEAM. Parents want elementary schools to be engaging, relevant, and community-driven.
- **Representative Comments:**
 - “Group kids by ability, not age.”
 - “Add Spanish as a special.”
 - “Students need more hands-on learning and life skills.”

Overall Trend

The community envisions a reimagined elementary system that is both innovative and traditional: offering Pre-K and flexible schedules, while emphasizing neighborhood culture, strong teacher support, and balanced approaches to technology. There is also significant interest in choice models (classical, Montessori, low-tech campuses) to attract and retain families.

What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?

Key Themes & Trends

1. Transparency in Decision-Making

- Families and staff want honesty about school closures and clear explanations of *why* decisions are being made.
- Requests include access to data, criteria, and plain language (not euphemisms).

2. Timeliness and Urgency

- Stakeholders want updates as soon as possible to plan for housing, jobs, and childcare.
- Delays create anxiety and erode trust in the process.

3. Job Security and Staff Reassurance

- Teachers and staff need clarity on job roles, reassignments, and timelines.
- Uncertainty risks damaging morale and retention.

4. Opportunities for Input and Engagement

- Families and staff value forums where they can ask questions and be heard.
- They want assurance their input matters—not just a formality.

5. Clarity on Outcomes and Next Steps

- Requests include transition details: rezoning maps, staffing shifts, program continuity, and use of closed campuses.
- Transparency about long-term impacts (property values, community identity) is expected.



Mockingbird
Community Dialogue

REPORT

Released September 2025

Community Dialogue Meeting @ Mockingbird

August 20: 3:30 pm with Staff; 5:30 pm with Community

On August 20, Coppell ISD hosted two Community Dialogue sessions at Mockingbird Elementary—one for staff and one for community members. The purpose was to share budget realities, gather input on elementary planning, and identify guiding principles and innovative ideas for the district's future.

Overall Summary of Budget Concerns

Community input around Coppell ISD's budget challenges reflects both financial worries and the strong emotional connections families and staff have to their schools, teachers, and neighborhood identity. While stakeholders recognize that difficult financial realities demand action, they are clear in wanting decisions that are transparent, forward-looking, and aligned with the values and strengths that make Coppell a unique and desirable community.

Key Takeaways

1. What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?

- **Transparency & Understanding of Budget Drivers**
 - Many want clarity on the deficit's true causes (enrollment, pandemic, management).
 - Requests for year-to-year breakdowns and whether closures meaningfully fix the deficit.
- **Staffing & Job Security**
 - Concerns over whether jobs will be preserved for teachers, principals, and support staff.
 - Questions about reassignment fairness and whether attrition alone is enough.
- **Equity & Fairness Across Schools**
 - Families want campus-level cost data.
 - Concern about comparing smaller schools unfairly to larger campuses.
- **Special Programs & Student Services**
 - Strong emphasis on protecting special education and intervention programs.
 - Fears that closures could disrupt vulnerable learners.
- **Broader Fiscal Strategies**

- Suggestions for sponsorships, VATRE, reallocating funds from athletics/admin.
- Calls to benchmark against other successful districts.
- **Community Confidence & Long-Term Outlook**
 - Families want financial stability projections, marketing strategies, and reassurance CISD will remain competitive.

2. What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?

- **Neighborhood & Walkability**
 - Schools in walkable, community-centered locations must be prioritized.
 - Closing them risks home values and Coppell's "small-town" identity.
- **Special Programs & Student Needs**
 - Structured Learning, AIM, Dyslexia programs must remain intact.
 - Parents stressed the difficulty of moving vulnerable learners.
- **Facilities, Investments & Long-Term Use**
 - Don't close schools with recent bond investments or renovations.
 - Families want clear plans for closed campuses, not vacant buildings.
- **Teacher Retention & Campus Culture**
 - Families value stable principals and beloved teachers.
 - Concerns that consolidation could drive staff away.
- **Curriculum & Academic Quality**
 - Calls for less technology reliance, stronger math/reading foundations.
 - Families want CISD to better highlight academic strengths.
- **Community Confidence & Stability**
 - Avoid repeated cycles of closures/rezoning.
 - Ensure decisions last 3–5 years and build long-term trust.

3. What guiding principles would ensure planning reflects our community's needs and strengths?

- **Neighborhood Identity & Walkability**
 - Neighborhood schools are central to Coppell's character and real estate values.
- **Community Engagement & Tradition**
 - Families want traditions and community events preserved to keep CISD's family-centered identity strong.
- **Specialized Programs & Student Needs**
 - Protect programs for special education and enrichment.
 - Disruption risks hurting students with the highest needs.

- **Teacher Retention & Campus Stability**
 - Families view staff longevity and leadership stability as critical.
- **Academic Quality & Class Size**
 - Parents want small class sizes and high instructional quality maintained.
- **Facilities, Investments & Long-Term Planning**
 - Decisions should weigh bond spending, building condition, and location.
- **Transparency, Communication & Trust**
 - Families demand clear, open updates and assurance that feedback is valued.

4. If you were to reimagine elementary school, what innovations would you include?

- **Balanced Technology & Hands-On Learning**
 - Limit screen time; emphasize handwriting, problem solving, and tactile learning.
- **Smaller Class Sizes & Teacher Support**
 - Calls for paras, co-teaching, and reduced class sizes to improve outcomes.
- **Outdoor & Real-World Learning**
 - Emphasis on outdoor classrooms, field trips, and life skills.
- **Structural & Scheduling Innovations**
 - Interest in 4-day weeks, year-round calendars, and shifting 6th grade back to elementary.
- **Expanded Early Childhood Programs**
 - Strong demand for Pre-K and daycare to attract families and retain staff.
- **Broader Programs & Life Skills**
 - Desire for electives like Spanish, fine arts, coding, and financial literacy.
- **Character & Whole-Child Education**
 - Calls for more emphasis on values, discipline, and resilience.

5. What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?

- **Transparency in Decision-Making**

Clear criteria and rationale for decisions.

 - Avoid vague terms like “configuration”—call closures what they are.
 - Clear criteria and rationale for decisions.
- **Timeliness & Consistent Updates**
 - Frequent, proactive communication (emails, website, meetings).

- Short timelines preferred to reduce uncertainty.
- **Job Security & Staff Reassurance**
 - Clarity on teacher/support staff reassignments.
 - Need for staff teams to stay intact where possible.
- **Communication & Engagement**
 - Outreach to diverse families, translation where needed.
 - Community events and forums to reach less “plugged in” families.
- **Clarity on Outcomes & Transition Plans**
 - Rezoning maps, feeder patterns, staffing details, and facility reuse plans.
 - Clear transition planning to maintain stability for families and staff.

Takeaway: Across all questions, the strongest themes are protecting neighborhood schools, ensuring staff stability, communicating with transparency, and planning for both fiscal realities and long-term community identity. Stakeholders want CISD to approach budget planning with transparency, compassion, and foresight—balancing fiscal responsibility with protecting the district’s reputation, staff stability, and community identity.

Links to Specific Data:

[What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?](#)

[What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?](#)

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[What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?](#)

[Elementary Campus Realignment FAQ](#)

What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?

1. Transparency & Understanding of Budget Drivers

- Many community members asked for clarity on the root causes of the deficit—whether tied to enrollment, pandemic impacts, or long-term financial management.

- Specific calls included explanations of year-to-year declines (especially 2020–2022) and the role of enrollment loss.
- Questions also focused on whether closing schools alone can resolve the deficit, or if structural changes are needed.

Trend: There is a strong demand for clarity around the true causes of the deficit, with families questioning whether enrollment loss, pandemic impacts, or long-term management decisions are most responsible, and whether school closures alone will meaningfully solve the issue.

2. Staffing & Job Security

- A strong concern centered around how closures will affect teachers, principals, and support staff.
- Many asked if positions—particularly in Music, Art, PE, STEAM, and intervention services—would be preserved.
- Questions also raised how staff would be reassigned (experience, salary, seniority) and whether attrition would be enough to avoid layoffs.

Trend: Teachers, principals, and support staff expressed deep concern about job security, with many wanting assurances that roles in art, music, PE, STEAM, and intervention services will be preserved and that reassignment decisions will be handled fairly and transparently.

3. Equity & Fairness Across Schools

- Families questioned whether some schools have disproportionately high operating costs.
- Concerns surfaced about fairness in comparing smaller “footprint” campuses to larger ones.
- Requests were made for campus-level budget data to better understand differences.

Trend: Families are questioning whether financial comparisons across campuses are fair, especially for smaller neighborhood schools, and are asking for campus-level cost data to ensure decisions are equitable and based on clear, consistent metrics.

4. Special Programs & Student Services

- Multiple concerns highlighted the future of special education and intervention services if campuses close.

- Families emphasized the need to protect specialized programs like Structured Learning, Achieving Independence and Momentum, and course offerings at secondary schools.
- Questions about whether low-enrollment classes (like electives at secondary) might be eliminated were also common.

Trend: Community members emphasized the importance of protecting specialized programs and intervention services, raising concerns that closures or cost-cutting could disrupt support for vulnerable learners or eliminate low-enrollment but valuable course offerings.

5. Broader Fiscal Strategies

- Several questions asked whether CISD could explore additional revenue streams such as corporate sponsorships, donations, fees, or another VATRE (Voter-Approved Tax Ratification Election).
- Comparisons to other districts (Southlake, Highland Park) suggested a desire to benchmark strategies and innovations.
- Some suggested reallocating funds from other areas (athletics, central office) to protect classrooms.

Trend: There is a clear push for the district to explore broader solutions beyond cuts—such as pursuing additional revenue streams, advocating for state funding, and benchmarking against other districts—rather than relying solely on closures and attrition.

6. Community Confidence & Long-Term Outlook

- Families want clear projections about how long the district can sustain deficits and when financial stability will be achieved if closures occur.
- Concerns were raised about CISD's ability to remain attractive to new families and competitive against charters, private schools, and neighboring districts.
- The desire for proactive marketing and stronger city/district collaboration emerged as a recurring theme.

Trend: Families want assurance that CISD remains attractive to new families and competitive against charters and neighboring districts, with requests for long-term financial projections, marketing strategies, and city-district collaboration to rebuild trust and stability.

Overall Trend:

The strongest threads running through community input are job security for staff, protection of specialized programs, fairness in school comparisons, and clarity on whether closures will truly solve the financial challenge. Families want to see data-driven transparency, long-term planning, and community confidence-building strategies beyond immediate cost-cutting.

What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?**1. Neighborhood & Walkability****Consistent Theme:**

Families place high value on neighborhood schools that are walkable, community-centered, and tied to local identity.

Key Concerns:

- Closing schools with high numbers of walkers would disrupt family routines and traffic patterns.
- Parents worry that neighborhood school closures would reduce property values and community appeal.
- Proximity to middle schools is viewed as a strength that supports convenience and family cohesion.

Representative Points:

- “Cottonwood Creek has many walkers—closing it would hurt the neighborhood and traffic patterns.”
- “Mockingbird is next to a middle school; it makes drop-off easy for families.”
- “Closing schools in walkable neighborhoods would negatively impact home values.”

2. Special Programs & Student Needs**Consistent Theme:**

Families want CISD to prioritize the needs of special education and specialized program learners when making campus decisions.

Key Concerns:

- Structured Learning, AIM, Dyslexia, and Special Education classes are already at capacity; closures risk disruption.
- Students in these programs may struggle to adapt if moved across campuses.

- Growth in special education numbers must be factored into long-term planning.

Representative Points:

- “Structured Learning has a waiting list and large classes—closures would make it worse.”
- “Mockingbird has Resource, Structured Learning, and AIM programs; moving those kids would be difficult.”
- “Consider all special programs before closing schools with high special education numbers.”

3. Facilities, Investments & Long-Term Use

Consistent Theme:

Families want CISD to weigh building condition, bond investments, and repurposing potential in decisions about closures.

Key Concerns:

- Recently refreshed schools should be prioritized to stay open.
- Bond money already invested in certain schools should be protected.
- If schools close, families want a clear plan for repurposing facilities rather than leaving them vacant.

Representative Points:

- “Mockingbird just had bond money spent—why close a refreshed campus?”
- “There should be a plan in place for use of closed facilities, complete with cost analysis.”
- “Don’t hand refreshed schools to charters through right of first refusal.”

4. Teacher Retention & Campus Culture

Consistent Theme:

Maintaining strong campus cultures and retaining high-quality teachers is seen as essential to student success.

Key Concerns:

- Larger class sizes from consolidation may lead to teacher attrition.
- Families value stability and fear losing beloved teachers and principals.
- Parents ask for transparency in how staff will be reassigned if closures occur.

Representative Points:

- “Cottonwood Creek’s staff is one of its greatest strengths.”
- “We don’t want to lose our amazing teachers because of larger classes.”
- “With two schools closing, how will teachers be shuffled? By experience? By salary?”

5. Curriculum & Academic Quality**Consistent Theme:**

Parents want to ensure CISD maintains rigorous, research-based instruction while balancing technology use.

Key Concerns:

- Concerns that overuse of iPads is pushing families to charters and private schools.
Calls to strengthen foundational reading and math curriculum.
- Desire for CISD to better communicate its academic strengths and differentiators to the community.

Representative Points:

- “I really like the idea of a campus with more traditional learning and less technology.”
- “What foundational reading and math curriculum will be used? Is it rigorous?”
- “How are we communicating to families about our amazing curriculum and staff compared to charters?”

6. Community Confidence & Stability**Consistent Theme:**

Families want decisions that strengthen trust and provide long-term stability, not repeated disruptions.

Key Concerns:

- Planning should consider demographic shifts, enrollment cycles, and affordability for younger families.
- Parents want boundary and facility decisions that will not need frequent revisiting.
- Concerns about leaving empty buildings in neighborhoods and the impact on community image.

Representative Points:

- “Don’t make a decision we’ll revisit again in a year—create boundaries that last.”
- “Closing a school in a neighborhood leaves an empty building and hurts property values.”
- “In Coppel, enrollment is cyclical—we shouldn’t overcorrect and regret closures later.”

What guiding principles would ensure planning reflects our community’s needs and strengths?

1. Neighborhood Identity & Walkability

Consistent Theme:

Families view neighborhood schools as anchors of community life, where walkability and proximity strengthen connections between children, parents, and neighbors.

Why It Matters:

Closing or relocating walkable schools would disrupt the “small-town” feel, increase traffic congestion, and diminish the desirability of neighborhoods where families value convenience and cohesion. The impact extends beyond schools to real estate values and the city’s overall identity.

Representative Points:

- “Keeping the ‘bedroom community’ feel to our small town is essential.”
- “Neighborhood schools, walkable and bikeable distances, not crossing major streets like Sandy Lake.”
- “MKB and East are a family — middle school siblings walk their younger siblings to school.”

2. Community Engagement & Tradition

Consistent Theme:

Mockingbird and other campuses are celebrated for deep traditions, family involvement, and signature events that bind the community together.

Why It Matters:

These traditions — from Rakesgiving to Reading Under the Stars — reinforce a legacy of multi-generational loyalty to CISD. Losing such community hubs risks eroding trust, diminishing parent engagement, and weakening the district’s reputation as a family-centered system.

Representative Points:

- “The CBAS principle of Community Engagement is important... and MKB shines in this area.”
- “Generational culture keeps families coming back; many parents who grew up here now send their own kids.”
- “Unity of the neighborhood/community would be disrupted by division of the school and children.”

3. Specialized Programs & Student Needs**Consistent Theme:**

Parents highlight the importance of preserving specialized learning environments such as Structured Learning (SL), AIM, SPED, and enrichment programs.

Why It Matters:

Mockingbird and Cottonwood Creek are noted for high concentrations of special education learners and staff expertise. Disrupting these programs would create challenges for vulnerable students, complicate transitions, and potentially damage CISD’s ability to serve diverse learning needs.

Representative Points:

- “Mockingbird has 2 Structured Learning classes and 1 AIM class with experienced teachers.”
- “MKB has the highest SPED population of any elementary — families choose the campus for these programs.”
- “Closing schools will scatter specialized programs and staff.”

4. Teacher Retention & Campus Stability**Consistent Theme:**

Strong staff, consistent leadership, and proximity to middle schools contribute to teacher retention and campus culture.

Why It Matters:

Teachers are more likely to stay when they can place their children nearby and when schools foster supportive, consistent environments. Larger class sizes or forced reassignments could drive away talent, weakening CISD’s academic foundation.

Representative Points:

- “Cottonwood Creek’s staff is one of its greatest strengths.”
- “Our leadership has only changed three times — consistency with leadership matters.”
- “East teachers with kids at MKB and vice versa stay because of the convenience and culture.”

5. Academic Quality & Class Size

Consistent Theme:

Families want to protect the small class sizes and high academic quality that distinguish CISD schools.

Why It Matters:

Smaller classes are tied to personalized learning, student confidence, and stronger teacher-student relationships. Concerns that consolidation will lead to larger classes raise fears of reduced quality of instruction and loss of CISD’s competitive edge.

Representative Points:

- “Maintaining class sizes is invaluable — it creates a greater sense of community within the class.”
- “We don’t want to lose our amazing teachers because of larger classes.”
- “It seems class sizes, quality of instruction, and support staff are being stripped just to keep schools open.”

6. Facilities, Investments & Long-Term Planning

Consistent Theme:

Parents want district leaders to weigh bond investments, building condition, and centrality when considering closures.

Why It Matters:

Recently upgraded or centrally located schools are seen as critical assets. Families fear closing these schools wastes taxpayer dollars and harms community infrastructure, while keeping peripheral or less connected campuses may make less long-term sense.

Representative Points:

- “Mockingbird just had bond money spent — why close a refreshed campus?”
- “Town Center and Mockingbird are central, accessible, and woven into daily life.”
- “Closing schools in neighborhoods has ripple effects on property values and community vitality.”

7. Transparency, Communication & Trust

Consistent Theme:

The community expects the district to actively listen, share clear rationale, and provide ongoing updates about decisions.

Why It Matters:

Parents express skepticism that their feedback will be considered. Without transparent engagement, the district risks eroding trust, heightening frustration, and deepening divisions.

Representative Points:

- “You are asking for a lot of feedback and my hope is that you actually read it and take it into account.”
- “Share planning goals, processes, and outcomes openly.”
- “Provide regular updates and invite feedback throughout implementation.”

If you were to reimagine elementary school, what innovations would you include?

1. Balanced Technology Use with More Hands-On Learning

Consistent Theme: Families want a return to tactile, experiential learning while still preparing students for a digital future.

Why It Matters: Many parents feel CISD’s reputation has suffered from being perceived as “too iPad focused.” Limiting screen time and emphasizing handwriting, problem solving, and hands-on experiences could help retain current families and attract those leaving for classical or private schools.

Representative Points:

- “Less technology, more hands on teaching, pencils in the hands of the student.”
- “Maybe don’t introduce iPads until 2nd grade—focus on handwriting and counting.”
- “Some parents leave for classical schools with less technology.”

2. Smaller Class Sizes and Stronger Teacher Support

Consistent Theme: Parents and staff consistently call for reduced class sizes, co-teaching, and additional aides or interventionists.

Why It Matters: Smaller classes and more support staff improve student achievement and reduce teacher burnout—both critical for CISD’s retention goals.

Representative Points:

- “Class sizes less than 20.”
- “Kinder teachers need paras.”
- “Co-teaching opportunities with two certified teachers per classroom.”

3. Outdoor, Play-Based, and Real-World Learning

Consistent Theme: Families want schools to emphasize play, outdoor spaces, and real-world applications.

Why It Matters: Play-based and experiential learning builds curiosity, collaboration, and life skills while addressing parent concerns about over-standardization.

Representative Points:

- “Outdoor learning spaces, more field trips, play-based activities.”
- “Real world applications like cooking, engineering, space exploration.”
- “Play-based kinder.”

4. Structural and Scheduling Innovations

Consistent Theme: Many responses suggest rethinking grade configurations and schedules to maximize efficiency and student development.

Why It Matters: Shifting to K–6, 4-day weeks, or year-round calendars could both save money and better serve families, while easing middle school overcrowding.

Representative Points:

- “Move 6th grade into elementary, 9th into middle.”
- “Reimagined elementary should have 4-day weeks.”
- “Year-round school—summer slide is real.”

5. Expanded Early Childhood Programs

Consistent Theme: Strong demand exists for universal or expanded Pre-K and even district-run daycare options.

Why It Matters: Offering affordable early childhood programs could retain teachers, attract young families, and establish CISD as a destination district

Representative Points:

- “Expand Pre-K.”
- “Daycare is so expensive—many would pay for it.”
- “Discounted daycare for teachers would help retention.”

6. Broader Program Options and Life Skills

Consistent Theme: Families want access to more electives, enrichment, and life-preparation courses.

Why It Matters: Programs like foreign language, fine arts, coding, and financial literacy enrich learning and help CISD differentiate from charter/private competitors.

Representative Points:

- “Add Spanish as another Special.”
- “Programs that teach critical thinking and social skills.”
- “More after school activities and leadership development.”

7. Character, Culture, and Whole-Child Education

Consistent Theme: A return to teaching character, discipline, and community values alongside academics.

Why It Matters: Families want children to be prepared for life—not just tests—through strong culture, discipline, and community engagement.

Representative Points:

- “Back to traditional education and character.”
- “More life skills, problem solving, reasoning.”
- “Structured programs that build responsibility and resilience.”

Overall Trend: The community envisions a model of elementary education that balances innovation with tradition—emphasizing smaller class sizes, hands-on learning, limited technology, expanded Pre-K, flexible schedules, and enriched electives. Families see this as the path to strengthening CISD’s reputation, keeping neighborhood schools vibrant, and attracting families who might otherwise leave for charters or private schools.

What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?

Trend 1: Transparency in Decision-Making

- Families and staff want clear criteria and data behind decisions.
- Concern that decisions may already be made without genuine input.
- Requests to avoid vague terms and communicate openly.

Trend 2: Timeliness and Consistent Updates

- Desire for frequent updates (daily/weekly emails, CISD website links).
- Families at potential closure schools want to know at *every step*.
- Clear, short timelines are preferred over extended uncertainty.

Trend 3: Job Security and Staff Reassurance

- Staff need early clarity about roles, reassignments, and team stability.
- Concerns for specialists and support staff, not just teachers.
- Fear that uncertainty could hurt morale and retention.

Trend 4: Communication & Engagement

- Requests for outreach to families from diverse backgrounds and languages.
- Desire for structured forums and face-to-face communication at schools.
- District should engage with less “plugged in” families at community events.

Trend 5: Clarity on Outcomes and Transition Plans

- Families want rezoning maps, feeder patterns, and staffing impacts explained.
- Concern about what happens to closed campuses (vacancy, repurpose, charters).
- Request for clear next steps immediately after decisions.



Austin
Community Dialogue
REPORT

Released September 2025

Community Dialogue Meeting @ Austin

August 22: 3:30 pm with Staff; 5:30 pm with Community

On August 22, Coppell ISD hosted two Community Dialogue sessions at Austin Elementary—one for staff and one for community members. The purpose was to share budget realities, gather input on elementary planning, and identify guiding principles and innovative ideas for the district's future.

Overall Summary of Budget Concerns

Community feedback on Coppell ISD's budget challenges highlights both financial uncertainty and the strong sense of pride and connection families and staff have to their schools. While there is broad recognition that difficult financial decisions must be made, stakeholders want these choices to be transparent, carefully planned for the long term, and rooted in the values that make Coppell ISD schools central to the community's identity and success.

Key Takeaways

1. What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?

Transparency & Understanding of Budget Drivers

- Many want clarity on the deficit's true causes (enrollment decline, pandemic impacts, or financial management).
- Requests for year-to-year breakdowns, especially 2020–2022, and whether closures alone will meaningfully fix the deficit.

Staffing & Job Security

- Concerns over whether jobs will be preserved for teachers, principals, and support staff.
- Questions about reassignment fairness (seniority, salary, experience) and whether attrition alone is sufficient to avoid layoffs.

Equity & Fairness Across Schools

- Families want campus-level cost data to understand comparisons.
- Concerns that smaller schools may be unfairly evaluated against larger campuses.

Special Programs & Student Services

- Strong emphasis on protecting special education, Structured Learning, AIM, Dyslexia, and intervention programs.
- Fears that closures could disrupt vulnerable learners and reduce low-enrollment but valuable course offerings.

Broader Fiscal Strategies

- Suggestions for revenue solutions such as corporate sponsorships, VATRE, solar savings, or leasing unused space.
- Calls to reallocate funds from athletics or administration and to benchmark against other successful districts.

Community Confidence & Long-Term Outlook

- Families want long-term financial projections, not just immediate savings.
- Concerns about CISD's ability to remain competitive with charters/private schools and requests for marketing strategies to attract and retain families.

2. What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?

Short-Term Savings vs. Long-Term Community Costs

- Concerns that closing central schools (Town Center, Mockingbird) weakens neighborhoods and property values.
- Criticism that investments in CHS9 are costly and duplicative compared to elementary needs.

Enrollment Projections & Future Growth

- Skepticism about the accuracy of demographic forecasts.
- Worries about over-closing schools and future overcrowding if enrollment rebounds.

Neighborhood Schools, Walkability & Affordability

- Emphasis on protecting walkable, affordable schools like Austin and Mockingbird.
- Fear of displacing Pinkerton families again, undermining trust and stability.

Special Programs & Class Size

- Need to protect Structured Learning, AIM, SPED, and Pre-K programs concentrated at certain campuses.
- Concern that larger classes will erode academic quality and teacher retention.

Consistency, Stability & Student Impact

- Families want permanent, stable solutions rather than annual closure debates.
- Repeated student moves risk emotional harm and push families toward charters/private schools.

State Policy & Alternative Solutions

- Calls for expanding open enrollment, Pre-K, and daycare to increase enrollment.
- Frustration with state recapture policies and requests for stronger advocacy.

3. What guiding principles would ensure planning reflects our community's needs and strengths?

Walkability, Safety & Accessibility

- Families value walkable campuses that reduce transportation costs and strengthen daily connections.
- Fire station proximity at Austin is viewed as a unique safety benefit.

Multi-Generational, Close-Knit Community

- Loyalty to neighborhood schools is rooted in generational ties and community culture.
- Closing these schools risks breaking trusted relationships and local pride.

Enrollment Strength & Affordability

- Affordable housing near Austin draws younger families and supports strong enrollment.
- Closing such schools could cut off CISD's natural growth pipeline.

Title I and Student Needs

- Austin's higher population of SPED and economically disadvantaged learners rely on existing staff and funding.
- Closing the school risks scattering supports and destabilizing vulnerable learners.

Community Stability & Long-Term Planning

- Families want permanent, long-term boundaries and solutions, not repeat closures.
- Fear of displacing Pinkerton families again was especially strong.

4. If you were to reimagine elementary school, what innovations would you include?

Technology Usage & Consistency

- Concerns about uneven or excessive iPad use across campuses.
- Requests for consistent, transparent guidelines on screen time and tech integration.

Low-Tech or Tech-Free Options

- Calls for designated low-tech classrooms or entire campuses.
- Belief that these options would help CISD compete with charters and private schools.

Enrichment & Choice Programs

- Interest in expanding STEAM, fine arts, language, robotics, and GT offerings.
- Families want innovation without sacrificing core academic quality.

Community Partnerships & Extended Use

- Suggestions for using campuses more broadly for after-school care, clubs, and community events.
- Staff-led programs seen as better than outsourcing to third-party vendors.

Academic Foundations

- Desire for consistency in core academics (spelling, handwriting, math/reading rigor).
- Requests for small homework assignments to build study habits and responsibility.

5. What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?

Transparency in Decision-Making

- Requests for side-by-side data comparing CHS9, central schools, and peripheral schools.
- Fear that decisions are predetermined and that vague terms erode trust.

Long-Term Context & Planning

- Calls for 5–10 year projections to avoid repeating closures.
- Concerns that enrollment trends, housing shifts, and city planning aren't fully factored in.

Engagement & Community Voice

- Families want meaningful influence, especially regarding central schools.
- Desire for brainstorming alternatives to closures, like repurposing CHS9.

Clarity & Timeliness of Decisions

- Need for early, clear timelines so families and staff can plan.
- Requests for written explanations of rezoning, staffing, and feeder patterns.

Job Security & Staff Support

- Teachers and staff want guarantees of placement and respect in the process.
- Concern that impersonal reassignment (like Google forms) hurts morale and trust.

Overall Takeaway:

Families and staff accept that CISD faces tough budget realities, but they want transparent, long-term, and equitable solutions that protect walkable neighborhood schools, preserve special programs, stabilize staffing, and offer clear alternatives to closures. Trust, communication, and consistent planning will be the foundation for keeping families in CISD.

Links to Specific Data:

[What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?](#)

[What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?](#)

[What guiding principles would ensure planning reflects our community's needs and strengths?](#)

[If you were to reimagine elementary school, what innovations would you include?](#)

[What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?](#)

[Elementary Campus Realignment FAQ](#)

What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?

1. Central vs. Peripheral Schools & CHS9 Costs

Trend Statement: Families are questioning whether the budget adequately weighs the unique value of central, walkable neighborhood schools (Town Center, Mockingbird) compared to peripheral campuses or costly facilities like CHS9.

- Concerns about hidden costs at CHS9 (busing, lost instructional time, duplicated services).
- Questions about the resale/repurposing value of CHS9 land compared to elementary campuses.
- Requests to consider long-term community impacts and property values when closing central schools.

2. Accuracy of Budget Data & Forecasts

Trend Statement: Stakeholders want assurance that projections and analyses are reliable, comprehensive, and not based on a single source.

- Questions about whether multiple companies are used for cost/enrollment projections.
- Calls for campus-level cost breakdowns and comparative heat maps of student population.
- Skepticism about whether closures alone will address the nearly \$10M deficit.

3. Staffing & Job Security

Trend Statement: Staff are most concerned about how closures will affect positions, assignments, and long-term job stability.

- Questions about whether all teachers and support staff will be guaranteed positions.
- Concerns about elimination of art, music, PE, STEAM, and intervention roles.
- Requests for clarity on how staff shuffling will be decided (seniority, salary, experience).

4. Special Programs & Student Services

Trend Statement: Families worry about how closures will impact vulnerable learners and specialized programming.

- Concerns about Structured Learning, AIM, Dyslexia, and Special Education programs that are already at capacity.
- Questions about whether these programs can transition without disruption.
- Fear that cutting or consolidating programs could diminish support for special populations.

5. Long-Term Enrollment & Growth Planning

Trend Statement: Many believe today's decline is temporary and want assurance that CISD is planning for future growth.

- Questions about whether buildings will be kept as "backup" if growth returns.
- Concerns that closing schools now could force expensive rebuilding later.
- Calls to expand open enrollment and study why families leave for charters/private schools.

6. Alternative Fiscal Strategies

Trend Statement: Community members want the district to explore broader solutions beyond closures and staff reductions.

- Suggestions: 4-day school weeks, leasing unused space, solar to reduce utilities, corporate sponsorships, expanding open enrollment, or another VATRE.
- Questions about state policies (recapture, vouchers, surplus budget) and CISD's advocacy role.
- Calls for reallocation of funds from athletics or central office to protect classrooms.

7. Transparency, Communication & Trust

Trend Statement: Families expect more accessible, detailed communication about budget realities and decision criteria.

- Requests for clearer explanations of why deficits grew so sharply after 2020.
- Desire for plain language rather than jargon or vague terms.
- Fears that decisions may already be predetermined, eroding trust in the process.

Overall Trend:

Families and staff accept that difficult budget decisions must be made, but they want data-driven, transparent processes that consider more than just short-term savings.

What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?

1. Short-Term Savings vs. Long-Term Community Costs

Consistent Theme: Many stakeholders fear the budget process emphasizes short-term financial savings while ignoring broader, long-term consequences for neighborhoods, families, and city planning.

Key Concerns:

- Closing central schools like Town Center or Mockingbird could leave empty buildings in neighborhoods, weakening community identity and property values.
- Investment in CHS9 is questioned due to high costs, duplication of services, and lack of walkability.
- Families worry closures now could create higher costs later if enrollment rebounds.

Representative Points:

- “Closing Town Center would leave a hollowed-out building in the middle of a neighborhood.”
- “The district continues to pour money into CHS9—a building that requires constant bussing.”
- “The budget prioritizes temporary savings while creating long-term costs for our community.”

2. Enrollment Projections & Future Growth

Consistent Theme: Parents and staff are skeptical of enrollment forecasts and want clearer assumptions and contingency plans.

Key Concerns:

- Projections may not account for cyclical or unexpected population growth.
- Risk of over-closing schools, leading to overcrowding later.
- Concerns about psychological effects on children transferring multiple times.

Representative Points:

- “Are we using a margin of error when predicting enrollment 10 years from now?”
- “Closing two elementary schools would put us at 99.6% capacity—too risky.”
- “Are we factoring in unforeseeable events like economic changes or rapid growth?”

3. Neighborhood Schools, Walkability & Affordability

Consistent Theme: Families emphasize the irreplaceable value of walkable, affordable neighborhood schools, particularly Austin, Cottonwood Creek, and Mockingbird.

Key Concerns:

- Austin is tied to affordable “starter homes” that draw young families into CISD.
- Walkability supports attendance, safety, and family routines.
- Repeatedly moving Pinkerton families (now at Austin) undermines trust and stability.

Representative Points:

- “Austin is surrounded by affordable homes where young families move in.”
- “My kids walk to school because my husband and I work.”
- “Do we really want to turn Pinkerton families away a second year in a row?”

4. Special Programs & Class Size

Consistent Theme: Families and staff want to ensure specialized programs and manageable class sizes remain a priority despite closures.

Key Concerns:

- Special Education, Structured Learning, AIM, and Pre-K programs are concentrated at specific campuses and could be disrupted.
- Larger class sizes would weaken CISD’s reputation and teacher retention.

Representative Points:

- “Austin has a high SPED population and Structured Learning program.”
- “Maintaining small class sizes is what keeps us an A-rated district.”
- “How will this impact 5th grade class sizes, which already have no cap?”

5. Consistency, Stability & Student Impact

Consistent Theme: Families want CISD to avoid repeated disruptions and provide stable, long-term solutions.

Key Concerns:

- Children potentially moving through 6–7 schools by 10th grade is viewed as highly destabilizing.
- Repeated closures erode trust and increase the risk of families leaving for charters/private schools.

Representative Points:

- “Some of our students could transfer through 7 schools before 10th grade.”
- “Please don’t make Pinkerton families move again.”
- “We do not want this situation every year—we need a permanent solution.”

6. State Policy & Alternative Solutions

Consistent Theme: Families are calling for broader strategies and equity considerations rather than relying solely on closures.

Key Concerns:

- Desire for expanded open enrollment, Pre-K, or repurposing unused space.
- Frustration with state funding/recapture policies and lack of advocacy.
- Ideas for revenue generation (before/after school programs, leasing space, solar savings).

Representative Points:

- “Have you considered expanding Pre-K or daycare in underutilized schools?”
- “Why aren’t we challenging state recapture or lobbying harder for funding?”
- “Could the district run its own after-school program for revenue?”

Key Trend::

The community’s feedback reflects deep concern that budget planning prioritizes short-term financial relief over long-term stability, equity, and community identity. Families are urging CISD to protect walkable, affordable neighborhood schools, preserve special programs and small class sizes, and develop solutions that anticipate future growth while exploring creative revenue alternatives beyond closures.

What guiding principles would ensure planning reflects our community’s needs and strengths?

1. Walkability, Safety, and Accessibility

Consistent Theme: Families deeply value the walkability of Austin Elementary and its location in a safe, accessible neighborhood.

Why It Matters: Walkability reduces transportation costs, supports attendance, and creates daily community connections. The fire station’s proximity adds a unique layer of safety and reassurance for families, particularly those with medically fragile children. Losing a walkable campus could push families to charters or private schools instead of commuting across busy streets.

Representative Points:

- “The majority of students walk or ride bikes to school.”
- “The fire station across the street gives medically fragile families peace of mind.”
- “Parents will not cross Sandy Lake; they’ll consider private or charter schools instead.”

2. Multi-Generational, Close-Knit Community

Consistent Theme: Austin is described as a multi-generational campus with a strong sense of community and family ties.

Why It Matters: Generational loyalty fosters long-term stability, pride, and engagement in the district. Families return to Coppell specifically for the culture and relationships at Austin, making it a neighborhood anchor. Closing it would damage that trust and sense of belonging.

Representative Points:

- “We are a multi-generational school—parents who went here now send their kids here.”
- “Our families are all in with Austin.”
- “The comradery among students and teachers is what makes Austin feel like family.”

3. Enrollment Strength and Affordability

Consistent Theme: Austin has the highest enrollment of the schools under consideration, situated in Coppell’s most affordable housing area.

Why It Matters: Affordable housing is one of the few ways young families can still enter Coppell ISD. Closing Austin risks cutting off future growth where it is most likely to occur and would displace the largest number of students, including many already impacted by Pinkerton’s closure.

Representative Points:

- “Austin has the highest enrollment of the five schools being considered.”
- “This is the most affordable neighborhood in Coppell where young families can buy homes.”
- “Pinkerton families were moved here—closing Austin would displace them twice.”

4. Title I and Student Needs

Consistent Theme: Austin serves a higher percentage of economically disadvantaged and special education learners, supported by Title I funding and experienced staff.

Why It Matters: The systems, programs, and staff expertise at Austin are tailored to meet diverse student needs. Closing the campus would scatter those supports and risk disrupting students who depend on them most.

Representative Points:

- “Austin is a Title I campus with high SPED and MTSS numbers.”
- “Many employees have been here 15+ years and know these students well.”
- “Closing Austin would mean losing critical supports for our most vulnerable learners.”

5. Community Stability and Long-Term Planning

Consistent Theme: Families want stability, not repeated closures or disruptions. They believe the district must prioritize long-term sustainability over short-term fixes.

Why It Matters: Multiple reassignments—especially for Pinkerton families—erode trust, cause emotional harm, and push families toward charters or private schools. Parents want permanent solutions that protect neighborhood schools and preserve Coppell’s “small-town” identity.

Representative Points:

- “Do not make Pinkerton families move again.”
- “We need permanent solutions, not revisiting this every year.”
- “Closing neighborhood schools risks long-term damage to community trust and housing values.”

Key Trend:

Austin Elementary is viewed as a cornerstone of Coppell ISD because of its walkability, affordability, generational ties, strong enrollment, and role as a Title I campus. Families fear that closing it would not only displace the most students, but also undermine community trust, weaken support for vulnerable learners, and push young families out of Coppell at the very time the district needs to attract them.

If you were to reimagine elementary school, what innovations would you include?

1. Technology Usage & Consistency

Consistent Theme: Families and staff are concerned about inconsistent and, in some cases, excessive use of technology across campuses.

Why It Matters: Perceptions that CISD relies too heavily on iPads—especially for younger learners—are driving families toward charter and private schools with low-tech or classical approaches. Consistency and transparency in how technology supports learning could strengthen trust and help retain families.

Representative Points:

- “Why does one campus do spelling tests, but another does not?”
- “Kids come home talking about apps and Bluey episodes instead of learning.”
- “Remove one-to-one iPads, or create clear guidelines on daily tech use.”

2. Demand for Low-Tech or Tech-Free Options

Consistent Theme: Many families want the district to create explicit low-tech or tech-free classroom or campus options.

Why It Matters: Offering a clear alternative could directly address parent concerns, differentiate CISD from charter competitors, and appeal to families who value traditional, pen-and-paper learning.

Representative Points:

- “Designating 1–2 campuses as tech-free with a traditional model.”
- “Remove iPads from K–2; bring them in only once a week.”
- “Low-tech school options would keep families in CISD.”

3. Innovation Through Enrichment & Choice Programs

Consistent Theme: Stakeholders want CISD to expand academic and enrichment opportunities, but with balance—innovation should not come at the expense of stability or core program quality.

Why It Matters: Specialized tracks such as STEAM, fine arts, or foreign language programs can attract and retain families, while providing choice without overextending resources.

Representative Points:

- “Add Spanish as another special, like music or PE.”
- “Create a fine arts or STEAM magnet.”

- “Introduce robotics, coding, and GT-specific programs at elementary.”

4. Community Partnerships & Extended Use of Schools

Consistent Theme: Schools are seen as community anchors, and many families want campuses used more broadly for enrichment, after-school care, and civic partnerships.

Why It Matters: Stronger ties with community organizations, expanded after-school programs, and increased transparency would maximize facilities, build goodwill, and add value for working families.

Representative Points:

- “Neighborhood integration: more partnerships with parks and civic groups.”
- “Open schools up after hours for tutoring, clubs, and adult classes.”
- “Staff-led after-school care instead of 3rd-party providers.”

5. Academic Foundations

Consistent Theme: Parents emphasize consistency in academics and foundational skills, with a focus on equitable opportunities across campuses.

Why It Matters: Ensuring all campuses deliver high-quality, comparable instruction (e.g., spelling, handwriting, homework, reading/math rigor) strengthens trust, combats perceptions of inequity, and better prepares students for secondary education.

Representative Points:

- “Why does one campus give spelling tests, but another does not?”
- “Introduce age-appropriate homework to build study habits.”
- “Keep class sizes small to protect academic quality and morale.”

Key Trend:

Families want CISD to balance innovation with stability: provide more consistent academic practices across campuses, offer clearly defined low-tech options, expand enrichment through magnets and after-school programs, and strengthen community ties. The perception of overreliance on technology is a key driver of enrollment loss, and addressing this issue could help restore trust and position CISD as a true “destination district.”

What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?

Trend 1: Transparency in Decision-Making

- Families and staff want clear side-by-side cost data (CHS9 vs. elementary vs. New Tech) and clarity on why some schools are prioritized over others.
- Concern that decisions may already be predetermined, undermining trust.
- Requests for plain, direct communication instead of vague terms like “configuration.”

Trend 2: Long-Term Context and Planning

- Stakeholders want projections for 5–10 years, not just short-term numbers, to avoid repeating closures.
- Concerns that enrollment, housing trends, and future city planning aren’t being fully factored into budget forecasts.
- Fear that short-term fixes (closures) may create long-term costs for neighborhoods and families.

Trend 3: Engagement and Community Voice

- Families want a meaningful role in decisions, especially regarding central schools that define Coppel’s identity.
- Requests for brainstorming on repurposing underused facilities like CHS9, instead of automatic closures.
- Concerns that community input is not weighted equally across campuses.

Trend 4: Clarity and Timeliness of Decisions

- Early communication is needed so staff and families can plan, rather than waiting in limbo.
- Requests for clear written descriptions of impacts, timelines, and next steps after decisions.
- Desire for final decisions before holiday breaks to minimize disruption and anxiety.

Trend 5: Job Security and Staff Support

- Teachers and staff need guarantees about job placement and clarity on whether assignments will be based on tenure, principal choice, or other factors.
- Requests for respectful, individualized placement conversations instead of impersonal forms.
- Concerns that repeated closures and uncertainty are damaging staff morale and retention.



Town Center
Community Dialogue
REPORT

Released September 2025

Community Dialogue Meeting @ Town Center

August 28: 3:30 pm with Staff; 5:30 pm with Community

On August 28, Coppell ISD hosted two Community Dialogue sessions at Town Center Elementary—one for staff and one for community members. The purpose was to share budget realities, gather input on elementary planning, and identify guiding principles and innovative ideas for the district's future.

Overall Summary of Budget Concerns

Community input on Coppell ISD's budget challenges reflects both deep financial uncertainty and a strong pride in neighborhood schools. While families and staff understand that tough choices must be made, they want decisions to be transparent, strategically planned for long-term stability, and guided by the values that make CISD a cornerstone of community identity and success.

Key Takeaways

1. What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?

Exploring All Revenue Options

- Calls for creative revenue streams: pay-to-ride buses, activity/athletic fees, solar energy, corporate sponsorships, leasing unused space, advertising.
- Fear that only cuts are being pursued instead of balancing with growth strategies.

Transparency & Use of Funds

- Frustration about why schools with recent bond investments are being considered for closure.
- Requests for campus-level financial transparency: per-student costs, savings from past closures, side-by-side comparisons.

Enrollment, Attendance & Community Impact

- Concerns that closing affordable, walkable schools (like Austin) will discourage new families.
- Desire to see heat maps of where students live, broken out by attendance type (CISD, open enrollment, charter/private).
- Worry that repeated closures erode stability and further damage enrollment.

Staff Security & Stability

- Questions about reassignment fairness: seniority vs. principal choice vs. district need.
- Fear of morale decline and teacher attrition if uncertainty continues.

State Funding & Policy Constraints

- Concern about state-level recapture, vouchers, and redistribution reducing local revenue.
- Frustration that rising property taxes don't translate into more CISD funding.
- Calls for stronger advocacy at the state legislature.

Community Engagement & Communication

- Desire for earlier decisions (before holidays) so families can plan.
- Calls for more town halls, focus groups, and transparent side-by-side comparisons.

Long-Term Planning vs. Short-Term Fixes

- Questions about long-term growth, neighborhood turnover, and enrollment rebounds.
- Calls for sustainable, permanent solutions to avoid annual closure cycles.

2. What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?

Walkability, Safety & Transportation

- Families value neighborhood schools that reduce traffic and allow students to walk or bike.
- Fear that bussing across major roads (Denton Tap, Sandy Lake, Parkway) adds risks.

Enrollment, Capacity & Feeder Patterns

- Stakeholders want closures considered within the context of feeder balance and growth.
- Closing high-enrollment schools like Austin risks displacing more children.

Programs, Staff & Community Continuity

- Families want stability in specialized programs (DLI, IB, Pre-K, Structured Learning).
- Low staff turnover and strong PTO cultures are seen as irreplaceable strengths.
- Concerns about how to preserve community continuity for 400+ displaced students.

Financial Stewardship & Bond Investments

- Frustration that schools with recent renovations (e.g., \$3.5M at TCE) are being considered for closure.
- Concern this erodes trust in bond elections and VATRE support.
- Fear that closures appear short-sighted and reactionary.

Community Identity & Property Values

- Neighborhood schools seen as anchors of Coppell's identity.
- Families fear that closures will drive them to charters/private schools.

Long-Term Strategy & Vision

- Families want CISD to show forward-looking leadership.
- Annual closure debates erode trust and drive families out.

3. What guiding principles would ensure planning reflects our community's needs and strengths?

Trust, Transparency & Staff Stability

- Staff want honest, predictable communication about reassignments and closures.
- Competitive salaries won't retain staff if trust and stability are lacking.

Communication & Community Inclusion

- Families want clear, timely information about closures and future building use.
- Transparency is critical to preventing misinformation and distrust.

Walkability, Safety & Neighborhood Impact

- Families place high value on schools that reduce traffic and foster daily connections.
- Fear that closures weaken community identity and property values.

Educational Quality & Program Continuity

- Concerns about protecting programs like IB, DLI, Pre-K, and Structured Learning.
- Families stress the importance of small class sizes for quality and retention.
- Continuity in program culture is tied directly to district reputation.

Long-Term Vision & Strategic Planning

- Families expect proactive, not reactive, planning.
- Fear that short-term closures will lead to expensive rebuilding if growth rebounds.
- Calls for innovation that sustains CISD as a “destination district.”

4. If you were to reimagine elementary school, what innovations would you include?

Reduced Technology Reliance (Especially in Lower Grades)

- Families believe excessive tech drives them to charters/private schools.
- Reducing early tech use could improve creativity, save costs, and retain families.

Expanded Choice & Program Innovation

- Families want innovative programs to compete with charters.
- Choice schools seen as a way to retain and attract students.

Hands-On & Play-Based Learning

- More recess, STEAM, field trips, and movement-friendly classrooms.
- Desire for flexible, project-based approaches over test-driven methods.

Stronger Community Partnerships & Marketing

- Families want CISD to actively market its strengths.
- Calls to counter misinformation about class sizes and tech reliance.

Expanded Enrollment Opportunities

- Calls for broader open enrollment across Coppell and beyond.
- Tuition-based Pre-K expansion, including 3-year-olds.

5. What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?

Transparency in Decision-Making

- Families want side-by-side comparisons (CHS9 vs. elementaries vs. New Tech).
- Requests for fact-based data to explain decisions.

Context & Long-Term Planning

- Calls for 5–10 year projections tied to demographics.
- Families want to know how today's closures affect future enrollment.

Engagement & Community Voice

- Families want genuine influence in decisions, especially for central schools.
- Requests for brainstorming alternatives (e.g., repurposing CHS9).

Clarity & Timeliness of Decisions

- Families want early, clear timelines before holidays.
- Requests for plain-language explanations of rezoning, staffing, feeder impacts.

Job Security & Staff Support

- Teachers and staff want guarantees of placement and fair treatment.
- Fear that uncertainty will hurt morale and increase attrition.

Student & Family Well-Being

- Concerns about peer groups splitting, walkability loss, and repeated closures.
- Recognition that closures carry emotional tolls on families and students.

Overall Takeaway:

Families and staff broadly accept that CISD faces serious budget challenges, but they want assurance that all revenue options have been explored before resorting to closures. Across the feedback, transparency, staff stability, and protection of neighborhood schools emerged as the strongest priorities, with repeated calls for clear data, early communication, and equitable treatment of campuses. Ultimately, the community is urging CISD to pair fiscal responsibility with long-term vision, so that decisions today preserve trust, stability, and Coppel's identity as a destination district.

Links to Specific Data:

[What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?](#)

[What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?](#)

[What guiding principles would ensure planning reflects our community's needs and strengths?](#)

[If you were to reimagine elementary school, what innovations would you include?](#)

[What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?](#)

[Elementary Campus Realignment FAQ](#)

What questions or concerns do you have about the budget information shared?

1: Exploring All Revenue Options

Trend Statement: Families and staff want assurance that CISD has fully explored every possible path to generate revenue before resorting to closures or cuts.

- Calls for pay-to-ride buses, activity fees, solar energy savings, sponsorships, advertising space, or facility leasing.
- Suggestions to expand open enrollment to nearby neighborhoods, cities, or across DFW.
- Questions about revenue potential from selling unused properties (Pinkerton, New Tech).
- Concerns that only expense cuts are being considered, rather than balancing cuts with creative revenue growth.

2: Transparency and Use of Funds

Trend Statement: There is frustration about how funds—especially bond dollars—are being used, and stakeholders want clearer, campus-level financial data.

- Confusion about why remodels occur on schools that may close (e.g., \$3.5M at Town Center).
- Requests for campus-level cost breakdowns, per-student costs, and clarity on savings from prior closures (e.g., Pinkerton).

- Calls to explain year-over-year deficit growth, including why CISD went from an \$80,000 surplus to a \$6M deficit in one year.
- Perception that communication feels selective or skewed, with more clarity needed on how bond, operating, and reserve funds differ.

3: Enrollment, Attendance & Community Impact

Trend Statement: Declining enrollment and attendance trends raise questions about CISD's assumptions and the long-term effects of closures on neighborhoods.

- Concerns that closing schools in affordable, walkable neighborhoods (like Austin) will deter new families from moving in.
- Questions about whether chronic absenteeism is being factored into budget planning.
- Requests to see heat maps of where students live, broken down by CISD, open-enrollment, and private/charter attendance.
- Fear that repeated closures create instability, harming enrollment further.

4: Staff Security & Stability

Trend Statement: Teachers and staff need clear answers about job security, reassignments, and long-term stability.

- Concerns about whether teachers/support staff will be guaranteed positions.
- Questions about reassignment processes—seniority vs. principal choice vs. district need.
- Requests for transparency about whether savings come from staff reductions or operations.
- Anxiety about morale, retention, and teacher attrition if uncertainty continues year after year.

5: State Funding & Policy Constraints

Trend Statement: Stakeholders recognize that state-level policies significantly constrain CISD, but want stronger advocacy and explanations.

- Questions about the impact of recapture, vouchers, and state funding rules.
- Frustration that property taxes rise while CISD revenue falls due to state redistribution.
- Calls for stronger lobbying at the legislative level and partnerships with local businesses to supplement revenue.

- Concerns that CISD is being forced to make harmful local cuts because of state policy design.

6: Community Engagement & Communication

Trend Statement: Families and staff want earlier, more accessible, and more candid communication about decisions and their impacts.

- Desire for clear, high-level summaries instead of long, hard-to-digest emails.
- Calls for transparency about what's predetermined vs. open for input.
- Requests for final decisions earlier (before holidays) to reduce uncertainty.
- Suggestions for town halls, focus groups, and visuals (e.g., campus comparisons, cost-per-student charts).

7: Long-Term Planning vs. Short-Term Fixes

Trend Statement: There is worry that closures solve only a portion of the deficit and ignore long-term needs for stability and growth.

- Concern that closing 1–2 schools won't solve a \$10M deficit.
- Questions about whether CISD is preparing for enrollment rebounds, future housing turnover, or unexpected growth.
- Requests for clarity on whether CHS9, with its duplication and high costs, is a better closure candidate than elementary schools.
- Calls for permanent, long-range solutions so families and staff aren't reliving this process year after year.

Overall Takeaway:

Families and staff broadly accept that CISD faces tough budget realities, but they want proof that every option has been explored, transparent financial data, guaranteed staff stability, and a long-term vision that balances revenue growth with cost savings. Without this, trust in the process is at risk.

What should CISD consider in the elementary planning process?

1: Walkability, Safety & Transportation

Consistent Theme: Families strongly value neighborhood schools that are walkable and safe, with proximity to civic resources. Closing them forces bussing, traffic congestion, and safety risks.

Key Concerns:

- Students would need buses or to cross major intersections, raising costs and risks.
- Traffic congestion near Denton Tap, Sandy Lake, Parkway, and the high school would worsen.
- Families fear neighborhood property values will decline without accessible schools.

Representative Points:

- “CCE is surrounded by neighborhoods, making it accessible for students to walk or bike.”
- “Moving all CCE students across Denton Tap would make traffic much worse.”
- “TCE is centrally located and does not require buses — that’s a cost savings.”

2: Enrollment, Capacity & Feeder Patterns

Consistent Theme: Stakeholders want closures considered in relation to feeder balance, current enrollment strength, and future growth capacity.

Key Concerns:

- Austin has high enrollment; closing it displaces more children than smaller campuses.
- Pinkerton families have already moved once; moving them again creates instability.
- Some campuses (Austin, Lakeside, Mockingbird) have bond-approved space for expansion, which should be leveraged rather than eliminated.

Representative Points:

- “Closing a school with higher enrollment risks disrupting more students.”
- “Is closing another school in the East feeder pattern the best choice?”
- “If growth returns, we’ll need expansion space already approved in the 2023 bond.”

3: Programs, Staff & Community Continuity

Consistent Theme: Families and staff emphasize the importance of program stability, teacher retention, and community identity when evaluating closures.

Key Concerns:

- Specialized programs (DLI, IB, Pre-K, Structured Learning) may not transition smoothly.
- Staff continuity and low turnover are seen as strengths that should be preserved.
- Families value principals and teachers who provide a personal, “family-like” culture.

Representative Points:

- “Ms. Perryman and the staff do not treat my children like numbers.”
- “If closures occur, how will you preserve continuity for more than 400 displaced students?”
- “TCE has low faculty turnover and strong PTO involvement that creates unique culture.”

4: Financial Stewardship & Bond Investments

Consistent Theme: Stakeholders are frustrated when schools with recent bond-funded renovations or upgrades are considered for closure.

Key Concerns:

- \$3.5M spent on TCE refresh and Pre-K bathrooms would feel wasted.
- Closing recently updated schools erodes trust in bond elections and future VATRE votes.
- Families question whether financial decisions are short-sighted and reactive.

Representative Points:

- “If TCE closes after a \$3.5M refresh, I would not vote for another bond.”
- “Should a school that just had millions invested be considered for closure?”
- “We need forward-thinking, not reactionary closures.”

5: Community Identity & Property Values

Consistent Theme: Neighborhood schools are seen as anchors for Coppel’s identity and real estate value. Closing them risks long-term erosion of community stability.

Key Concerns:

- Fear that home values near closed schools will drop.
- Concern that families will choose charter/private schools or move out of Coppel.

- Worry that closing civic-core schools undermines Coppell's "destination district" brand.

Representative Points:

- "CISD needs to stop treating kids like data points and start valuing human connection."
- "Closing Town Center would leave an empty building in the heart of the community."
- "If Austin closes, we'll move to Coppell Classical to keep walkability."

6: Long-Term Strategy & Vision

Consistent Theme: Parents want CISD to show proactive, forward-looking strategy instead of piecemeal closures.

Key Concerns:

- Repeated annual closures erode trust and drive families out.
- Lack of clear long-term plan for enrollment, facilities, and community needs.
- Requests for innovative solutions like K–6 models, open enrollment expansion, or partnerships.

Representative Points:

- "Rather than asking the community to prove value, the ISD needs to show vision."
- "If we close too many schools too quickly, will we just rebuild later at higher cost?"
- "Consider K–6 to alleviate middle school pressure and preserve elementary capacity."

Trend Summary:

Families want CISD to prioritize walkability, equity across feeders, continuity of programs/staff, and respect for recent bond investments before considering closures. They emphasize that closures impact not only finances, but also traffic, property values, enrollment stability, and Coppell's long-term identity as a destination district.

What guiding principles would ensure planning reflects our community's needs and strengths?

1: Trust, Transparency & Staff Stability

Consistent Theme: Teachers and staff want direct, consistent communication about changes, reassignments, and long-term planning. Trust is fragile and must be rebuilt.

Why It Matters: Even competitive salaries will not retain staff if they feel decisions are unpredictable or hidden. Stability and honest communication are essential to keeping high-quality educators in CISD.

Representative Points:

- “People will leave a job, even a well-paying job, if they can’t trust leadership.”
- “Please be direct about shuffling and stick to the plan.”
- “Teachers need to trust that the district will not pull the rug out from under them.”

2: Communication & Community Inclusion

Consistent Theme: Families and staff expect clear, timely information about closures, criteria, and future use of school buildings. They want to feel included in decision-making.

Why It Matters: Transparency builds trust and prevents misinformation. Without it, families may perceive decisions as predetermined or contradictory, which erodes community support.

Representative Points:

- “Transparency and consistent communication are essential to trust.”
- “Families deserve to know what is being considered, why, and how decisions will be made.”
- “If a building is closed, will it be repurposed, sold, or left empty?”

3: Walkability, Safety & Neighborhood Impact

Consistent Theme: Parents place high value on neighborhood schools that allow children to walk or bike safely and reduce traffic congestion. Proximity to fire and police adds security.

Why It Matters: Walkability lowers transportation costs, strengthens community ties, and directly influences families’ housing decisions. Closing these schools risks increasing traffic, safety concerns, and declining property values.

Representative Points:

- “CCE is surrounded by neighborhoods, making it easy for students to walk or bike.”
- “Austin’s location next to the fire station enhances safety and emergency response.”
- “Closing a neighborhood school weakens community identity and property values.”

4: Educational Quality & Program Continuity

Consistent Theme: Stakeholders stress the importance of protecting special programs (IB, DLI, Pre-K, Structured Learning) and maintaining small class sizes.

Why It Matters: Program stability and manageable class sizes are tied to CISD’s reputation and rankings. Disruptions can drive families toward private schools and charters.

Representative Points:

- “Programs like PAG thrive on consistency and relationships.”
- “Please consider how Pinkerton students will feel being moved again.”
- “Keeping class sizes small is key to educational quality and teacher retention.”

5: Long-Term Vision & Strategic Planning

Consistent Theme: Parents want CISD to show forward-thinking leadership, not reactive closures. They expect sustainable planning that attracts families and keeps Coppell a destination district.

Why It Matters: Without a clear long-term strategy, families may lose confidence in CISD’s stability and seek alternatives. Proactive planning can preserve enrollment and community pride.

Representative Points:

- “Rather than reacting to enrollment, bring innovative ideas to drive growth.”
- “Closing schools now could mean expensive rebuilding later if growth returns.”
- “Families moved to Coppell for its reputation—CISD must protect that brand.”

Key Trend::

The community is urging CISD to focus on trust, transparency, walkability, program stability, and long-term vision—warning that short-term closures without clear

communication and foresight risk eroding teacher morale, family loyalty, and Coppell's identity as a premier district.

If you were to reimagine elementary school, what innovations would you include?

1: Reduced Technology Reliance (Especially in Lower Grades)

Consistent Theme: Families are strongly opposed to iPads and heavy tech use in Pre-K through 2nd grade, preferring traditional, hands-on learning.

Why It Matters: Parents cite iPads as one of the main reasons families leave CISD for charter, private, or homeschool options. Reducing tech in early grades could retain current families, attract new ones, and save costs.

Representative Points:

- "No iPads until middle school please!!!"
- "Families moved to charters because of iPads—please get rid of them in lower grades."
- "Pre-K should not have iPads at all—this would save money and protect creativity."

2: Expanded Choice & Program Innovation

Consistent Theme: Parents want CISD to compete with charters by offering innovative or specialized programs such as Montessori, classical education, hybrid homeschool, IB, and STEAM.

Why It Matters: Choice programs keep families from leaving the district and can attract open-enrollment students, boosting revenue and preserving CISD's "destination district" reputation.

Representative Points:

- "An elementary Montessori program would be a great addition; many nearby districts already offer this."
- "Offer hybrid homeschool—Dallas ISD already does this, and it would bring homeschooling families back."
- "Choice elementaries with themes (STEM, fine arts, IB) would attract families inside and outside CISD."

3: Hands-On & Play-Based Learning

Consistent Theme: Families value outdoor learning, recess, free play, field trips, and experiential learning over screen-based or test-driven instruction.

Why It Matters: Research shows free play and movement support social, emotional, and cognitive growth. Families see this as a defining difference between charters/private schools and CISD.

Representative Points:

- “More recess!!! Free play is essential for kids’ development.”
- “More STEAM activities, outdoor classrooms, and hands-on lessons.”
- “Flexible classrooms, more movement-friendly spaces, and project-based activities.”

4: Stronger Community Partnerships & Marketing

Consistent Theme: Parents want CISD to highlight its strengths and actively compete with charters by involving civic leaders, local businesses, and alumni, while marketing what makes CISD unique.

Why It Matters: Many families do not know about CISD’s offerings (Pre-K, DLI, IB, small classes). Active outreach and partnerships would strengthen community trust and enrollment.

Representative Points:

- “Bring in civic personnel—police, firefighters—for student engagement.”
- “Market CISD’s lower class sizes and traditional teaching to Pre-K families who hear false information.”
- “Why not run a campaign: you don’t need a charter to get quality education in Coppell?”

5: Expanded Enrollment Opportunities

Consistent Theme: Stakeholders repeatedly call for broader open enrollment and tuition-based Pre-K expansion as ways to bring in more students and revenue.

Why It Matters: Open enrollment and Pre-K expansion can increase revenue without cutting programs, while also drawing more families into the CISD community.

Representative Points:

- “Expand open enrollment to more Coppell families currently zoned to CFBISD or LISD.”
- “Offer tuition-based Pre-K, including for 3-year-olds, to compete with private preschools.”
- “Use enrollment flexibility as a way to capture families on the fence between charters and CISD.”

Overall Trend:

Families want CISD to differentiate itself from charters by reducing tech in lower grades, expanding innovative programs like Montessori and hybrid models, emphasizing play-based learning, and marketing its strengths more effectively. At the same time, they see expanded open enrollment and Pre-K as immediate levers to stabilize and grow enrollment.

What do families and staff need from the district to feel informed and supported?

Trend 1: Transparency in Decision-Making

- Families and staff want clear, fact-based comparisons (CHS9 vs. elementary vs. New Tech).
- Concerns that decisions may already be predetermined without meaningful input.
- Desire for side-by-side data on costs, enrollment trends, and long-term implications.

Trend 2: Context and Long-Term Planning

- Requests to share not just current numbers but also 5–10 year projections tied to demographic shifts.
- Families want to see how today’s elementary numbers will affect middle and high school capacity later.
- Concerns that decisions are reactive rather than forward-thinking, risking repeated closures.

Trend 3: Engagement and Voice in the Process

- Stakeholders want meaningful input opportunities (focus groups, town halls, brainstorming for unused facilities).
- Families fear their voices don’t carry weight, especially at central schools with strong community identity.
- Perception that meetings are “check-the-box” rather than genuine opportunities for feedback.

Trend 4: Clarity, Communication, and Timeliness

- Desire for clear timelines and transparent explanations of *why* specific schools are under consideration.
- Requests for early decisions (before holidays) so families and staff can plan.
- Calls for more concise, centralized communication (emails, infographics, summaries after board meetings).

Trend 5: Staff Stability and Job Security

- Strong concerns from teachers and staff about placement, tenure rights, and whether jobs will be preserved.
- Requests for one-on-one placement meetings instead of impersonal Google forms.
- Staff want early clarity about reassignments, programs, and whether attrition will be enough to avoid layoffs.

Trend 6: Student and Family Well-Being

- Concerns about students losing peer groups, walkability, and neighborhood identity.
- Families emphasize the emotional toll of repeated closure threats (e.g., Austin Elementary twice in two years).
- Calls for clarity on rezoning maps, transportation routes, and support for transitions.



Frequently Asked

QUESTIONS

Released September 2025



Coppell ISD Elementary Campus Realignment FAQ

Q: How is Coppell ISD funded?

A: CISD funding comes from two main sources:

- Maintenance & Operations (M&O) – Funds daily operations such as salaries, utilities, safety, curriculum, transportation, and maintenance.
- Interest & Sinking (I&S) – Pays for voter-approved bond debt on items like new construction, renovations, technology infrastructure, buses, and equipment.

I&S funds cannot be used for salaries or day-to-day expenses. About 82% of the M&O budget is allocated to salaries.

Q: Why doesn't CISD benefit from rising property values?

A: School finance laws limit funding to a per-student formula. When local property tax revenue increases, state funding decreases to offset it. Any amount above the state-calculated entitlement is taken through recapture and sent to the state.

Q: What is causing the district's structural deficit?

A: Key factors include:

- Rising operational costs (142% increase in insurance, 34% in fuel, 21% in teacher starting salary, 8% in utilities)
- Declining enrollment, reducing funding by ~\$1.2M annually
- Minimal increases in the state funding formula since 2020
- Facilities and staffing built for higher student numbers than current enrollment

Q: Why are schools being considered for closure instead of rezoning or keeping them open?

A: The district is evaluating all options, including rezoning and open enrollment, to balance facility utilization and minimize disruption. The district is seeing declining enrollment in the elementary grades.

- Comfortable capacity: **6,430 seats**
- Current enrollment (Aug. 2025): **5,164 students** → **1,266 empty seats**
- Average annual change: +133 students/year (2015–2020) vs. -85 students/year (2020–2025)
- Post-COVID projections for 2028–2029 are **4,796 students**, down from pre-COVID projections of 6,151

Q: Why is the ratio of incoming kindergarteners to graduating seniors a concern?

A: Enrollment data shows:

- 2025 kindergarteners: **598**
- Seniors graduating in 2026: **1,092**

This gap means more students are leaving the system than entering, which impacts future funding and staffing.

Q: What has CISD done so far to address financial challenges?

A: **Revenue Increases:**

- Expanded revenue-driving courses
- Limited open enrollment
- Increased marketing
- Attendance Matters! campaign
- Corporate sponsorships & advertising
- Higher fees and ticket prices
- Pursued grant funding

Expense Reductions:

- Reduced 86 full-time positions through attrition
- Cut department and campus budgets
- Improved operational efficiencies
- Partnered with City of Coppell for SROs
- Consolidated campuses/programs

Combined, these actions saved **\$7.8M** and generated **\$1.4M** in additional revenue.

Q: What will new boundaries look like, and how will closures be managed?

A: District leadership will develop boundary proposals based on demographic data and community input. If closures occur, staff and students will move together where possible to preserve community and program continuity.

Q: Will staff lose their jobs due to closures, and how will decisions be made?

A: We aim to retain staff whenever possible. Classroom teachers will likely move with their students; other roles will be reassigned based on seniority, qualifications, and district needs.

Q: Has CISD considered expanding choice programs, tuition-based Pre-K, or attracting more out-of-district families?

A: Yes. The district is exploring options like enhanced school-of-choice models, targeted re-enrollment initiatives, and marketing to boost enrollment district-wide.

Q: What alternatives exist to closing schools?

A: We are assessing multiple solutions—such as expanding in-district enrollment, adjusting boundaries, adding electives or programs, and repurposing existing buildings for community or administrative use. The district has developed a multi-year balanced budget plan to address the financial challenges in a strategic and multi-pronged approach.

Q: How will transportation and traffic be impacted if schools close?

A: We're conducting detailed analyses of attendance patterns, bus routes, and walkability to ensure the transition is well-managed and accessible.

Q: What happens to a school building if a campus closes?

A: The district has launched a property planning committee that will look at the short and long-term usage of district property and facilities in alignment with district needs and fiscal responsibility. While the law states that if CISD sells a building that we must allow a charter school to make an offer, CISD does not have to accept the bid/offer.

Q: Will more information be shared, and how can the community stay informed?

A: Absolutely. We will maintain a centralized webpage of updates, upcoming meetings, and resources.

Q: How many families are choosing charter or private schools, and why?

A: The district is analyzing trends in student movement to better understand parent choices. The district conducts exit interviews with families that move to charter schools.

Q: Why are schools in specific geographic locations?

A: We must balance capacity, facility efficiency, and enrollment trends across the district. All options are being evaluated to maintain equity without disproportionately impacting neighborhoods.

Q: What criteria will determine final decisions?

A: Decisions will be informed by demographic projections, financial sustainability, enrollment data, equity, and long-term community health using the 7.1.1 Rubric developed by a team of parents, staff and community members and reviewed by the Community Efficiency Review Committee (CERC). The factors in the rubric and decision filter include Building Age and Condition, Building Capacity and Utilization, Utility and Operational Costs, Bus Routes and Transportation Costs, Current Enrollment Trends and Projected Enrollment, Natural Combinations of Attendance Zones, Neighborhood School, Geographic Proximity to Other Campuses/Buildings, Impact on Students and Staff, Core Values/Community Engagement Alignment, Special Programs, Disruptive Nature of Change, Potential Value of the Facility or Property, Future Planning, Solution Focused, Retention and Recruitment of Families, and Operational Implications.

Q: What is the timeline moving forward?

A:

Elementary Campus Planning/Boundary Realignment Timeline

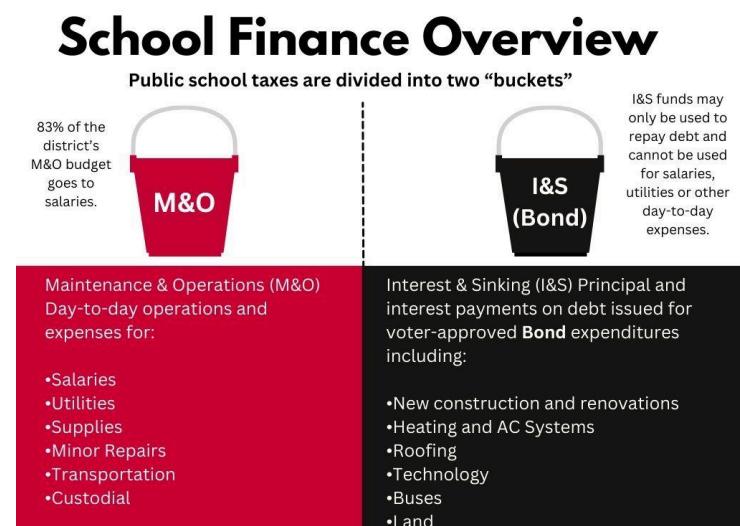
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|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Aug 14-28 | Community Input Meetings |
| September 4 | Enrollment Data to Zonda Demographics |
| September 22 | Board Workshop - Recommendation |
| Week of Sept 22 | Neighborhood Meetings |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| September 29 | Board Meeting |
| Week of Oct 6 | Board Workshop -Campus Planning and Boundary Realignment Board Action |

Q: Didn't CISD just pass a \$321 million bond? How is there a budget challenge when all of this money was approved in 2023?

A: Under Texas law, funds from voter-approved bonds may not be used for recurring operating costs like salaries, fuel or utility costs, and may only be used for capital costs like construction work or equipment with a useful life of more than one year.

Staff salaries and other school operating costs are funded through the Maintenance and Operations budget and cannot be paid with bond funds. Repayment of voter-approved bonds is the only legal use of funds generated through the debt-service budget.



Q: Can the district expand Open Enrollment to get more students and more funding?

A: CISD already offers enrollment to students that do not live in the CISD boundaries including those that live in the City of Coppell but are not zoned for CISD, in specific neighborhoods in Lewisville, and City of Coppell employees. CISD expanded the Open Enrollment areas to include the Hackberry Creek neighborhood and we will continue to look for ways to balance our available enrollment capacity with the staffing ratios.

Q: Is the district cutting administration staff and positions?

A: CISD is using employee attrition to strategically reduce payroll including administration and support staff. The district is also reducing district-level expenditures and staff. The district has reduced staff by 86 positions in the last two-years not impacting classroom instruction.

Q: How much is expected to be saved by closing a single elementary school?

A: The savings will come through staffing and building costs such as insurance, utilities, safety & security, custodial and maintenance. Closing a footprint elementary school will save approximately \$1.1-1.5 million depending on the continued building usage.

Q: Is the projected deficit realistic or conservative?

A: The projected deficit is a realistic estimate based upon current revenues and expenditures year-to-date, a projection of final tax revenues, a projection of the remaining payroll expenses for the year, and any funds encumbered for other anticipated expenses. It does not include all closing entries or audit adjustments that may impact the final results.

Q: What's the difference between proposed vs. realized deficits?

A: The proposed deficit is our forecast at the start of the budget year, based on the best available data about revenues, expenses, enrollment, and state funding formulas.

The realized deficit is the actual financial outcome after the year ends, reflecting final revenues, actual expenditures, and any adjustments made during the year.

Q: Is enrollment really down? Why?

A: Yes, CISD—like many districts in Texas—is experiencing declining enrollment. Factors include lower birth rates, rising housing costs, and increased competition from charter and private schools.

Q: Where are our school tax dollars going if not directly to schools?

A: CISD's local property tax dollars are partially recaptured by the State of Texas through the "Robin Hood" or recapture system. This means millions of dollars collected in Coppell are sent back to the state and redistributed, reducing what CISD keeps for classrooms.

School finance laws limit school district funding to a per student formula which results in a funding entitlement which varies based on student attendance. As a result, even if tax values grow in Coppell ISD, overall funding for our school district does not increase. As local tax revenue increases, state funding decreases. CISD does NOT benefit. Any money collected that exceeds what the state calculates as CISD's funding entitlement is "recaptured", or taken, by the state.

Q: What is the financial impact of closing a campus?

A: Closing a school saves on operating costs (staffing, utilities, maintenance) but buildings still require upkeep. Long-term use or sale of facilities is being considered, with careful attention to community impact.

Q: Will teachers or staff lose their jobs?

A: The district is committed to minimizing job losses. If positions are reduced, affected staff will receive priority consideration for openings elsewhere in CISD.

Q: Would CISD consider early retirement or staff buyouts?

A: Options such as voluntary retirement incentives will be reviewed as part of budget planning, though no final decisions have been made.

Q: Why are class sizes so different from campus to campus?

A: Enrollment varies by neighborhood, and staffing is tied to student numbers. CISD is working to balance class sizes more equitably across the district.

Q: Why turn away open enrollment students instead of hiring more teachers?

A: Open enrollment is limited by available staffing and classroom space. Adding teachers is tied to overall budget realities, not just demand. In order to hire a teacher, we will need at least 12 students for that grade from open enrollment in order to cover the cost.

Q: How will community voices be used in decision-making?

A: All feedback from dialogue sessions, surveys, and emails is being compiled and reviewed. Reports will be shared publicly after all sessions are complete.

Q: How do we ensure decisions aren't biased toward or against specific schools?

A: The process includes data from an external demographer, financial analysis, and community feedback. The district will make a recommendation/recommendations to the School Board for their final approval.

Q: How can you research and decide so quickly?

A: The timeline is compressed because the budget deficit requires timely action. However, the process is intentionally designed to include meaningful community input through dialogue sessions, surveys, and feedback reports. While we must act swiftly, we also want to be accurate in analyzing data and thoughtful in making decisions. This balance of urgency and care ensures that the community's voice is heard while the district responds responsibly to financial and enrollment challenges.

Q: When will final decisions be made?**A: Elementary Campus Planning/Boundary Realignment Timeline**

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Aug 14-28 | Community Input Meetings |
| September 4 | Enrollment Data to Zonda Demographics |
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Q: Why did it take nearly 10 years to decide on New Tech but only a few months for elementary schools?

A: New Tech had unique circumstances tied to its academic model and facility use. The budgetary current situation is different. The urgency of our budget decisions has changed due to immediate financial and enrollment challenges, which require faster action to ensure the district remains fiscally responsible. While the timeline is more compressed, we are still making space for community input to help guide the process.

Q: What happens to closed campuses?

A: The district has launched a property planning committee that will look at the short and long-term usage of district property and facilities in alignment with district needs and fiscal responsibility. While the law states that if CISD sells a building that we must allow a charter school to make an offer, CISD does not have to accept the bid/offer.

Q: Has traffic and walkability been studied for school closures?

A: Yes. Traffic, transportation, and safety are part of the planning criteria. Each scenario will be analyzed for neighborhood impact.

Q: How reliable is the demographer's data?

A: CISD partners with experienced demographic firms with proven track records across Texas districts. They use enrollment, housing, and census trends, but projections are regularly updated.

Q: Will closing schools affect academic programs?

A: Core programs will continue. Some programs (special education, pre-k, etc.) may relocate, but the district's commitment to strong academics remains unchanged.

Q: What about class sizes and use of technology?

A: The district is reviewing staffing ratios, and class sizes are part of the reconfiguration discussion. The district has developed a Technology Advisory Committee and recommendations from that committee will be shared once developed.

Q: Has CISD considered innovative models like multi-age programs or homeschool co-ops?

A: Yes. Innovative models are part of community brainstorming. Ideas like multi-age groupings, expanded Pre-K, and partnerships with homeschool families are being reviewed.

Q: Who makes the recommendations and who makes the decisions?

A: The district administration develops recommendations using community input, professional expertise, and research. These recommendations are then presented to the Coppell ISD Board of Trustees. The School Board ultimately has the authority to make decisions — they may accept, reject, or modify the district's recommendations before taking official action through a Board vote.

Q: Will past lists of schools considered for closure automatically determine this year's decisions?

A: No. Each year, all factors have been reviewed. The Coppell ISD Efficiency Review Committee (CERC) had a subcommittee run new data using the 7.1.1 Rubric using updated data including enrollment data, demographic studies, and facility conditions.

Q: Will school ratings (A–F accountability grades) affect closure decisions?

A: School ratings are not a factor in the original 7.1.1 Rubric and Decision Filter. Decisions are based on factors that arose from the community like enrollment, utilization, and financial considerations, not accountability labels.

Q: What about neighborhood schools that are the heart of their community?

A: We recognize that schools are more than buildings—they are hubs of community connection. Input from families about the role each school plays in its neighborhood is part of the process, and those voices are considered alongside enrollment and budget data.

Q: Will closing a school create overcrowding or lead to portable classrooms?

A: The district's goal is to balance enrollment and avoid overcapacity. If closures occur, boundary adjustments and long-term planning will ensure that schools remain within manageable enrollment levels.

Q: How will closing schools impact property values?

A: The district's priority is to maintain strong programming, safe facilities, and high academic standards, which are the most significant drivers of real estate desirability.

Q: What will happen to teachers, principals, and support staff if a school closes?

A: The district is committed to minimizing job losses. If positions are reduced, affected staff will receive priority consideration for openings elsewhere in CISD.

Q: Will retirements or moves affect how staff are reassigned?

A: Yes. Natural turnover (such as retirements or resignations) will be factored in, helping minimize the need for involuntary transfers.

Q: Why is the district hiring at central office while considering cuts at campuses?

A: Every role is evaluated when it comes open. While some central office positions address specific needs (such as compliance or safety), the priority remains protecting campus-based, student-facing positions whenever possible.

Q: Will new feeder patterns or rezoning be shared before decisions are finalized?

A: Yes. Draft boundary maps will be developed and shared with the community before finalizing any changes.

Q: Could rezoning move students from southern schools to northern schools instead of closing campuses?

A: Rezoning is one option under consideration. The district will evaluate all possibilities—including closures, rezoning, and program shifts—before making final decisions.

Q: Are factors being considered equitably, or are some weighted more heavily?

A: Multiple factors—enrollment, utilization, facility condition, proximity, and financial impact—are all considered. No single metric decides an outcome. Factors are weighted equally.

Q: Will the district share the data and logic behind decisions?

A: Yes. Comparative data on enrollment, utilization, and demographics for each campus will be made available so the community can see the rationale.

Q: Could the district sell closed campuses rather than leaving them vacant?

A: Yes. Options include selling, leasing, or repurposing buildings to avoid vacancy and preserve neighborhood value.

Q: Could CISD work with the City of Coppel to attract younger families (housing credits, incentives, etc.)?

A: The district is open to working with the City and local realtors on housing and community

initiatives. Enrollment trends are strongly tied to housing, and partnerships may help bring more young families into Coppell.

Q: Is Coppell ISD considering becoming a “legacy district” like Highland Park?

A: While there are no current plans, the district continues to evaluate different models to attract families, preserve long-term excellence and community identity.

Q: Why is CISD considering closing neighborhood schools like Town Center or Mockingbird instead of CHS9 or other campuses?

A: CISD is evaluating all options with a focus on enrollment, financial sustainability, and community impact. CHS9 was built with bond funds for high school growth, and closing this campus will not address declining elementary enrollment.

Q: Why not close schools on the periphery of Coppell, such as Lakeside or Cottonwood Creek, rather than central schools like Town Center or Mockingbird?

A: Proximity, enrollment patterns, special programs, and facility condition are all part of the decision-making process. No decisions have been made yet, and community input is being carefully considered.

Q: When will we know if we have a job and where we’ll be placed?

A: The goal is to communicate staffing timelines and plans as quickly as possible following Board action, so staff have clarity for the upcoming school year.

Q: How will reassignments be determined?

A: Teacher and staff reassignments will take into account certification, experience, program needs, and campus staffing levels. Board policy guides these decisions.

Q: How many campuses are closing for sure?

A: No final decision has been made. The Board will vote after reviewing all data, community input, and recommendations from administration.

Q: If a school closes, where will students be rezoned?

A: Proposed rezoning maps will be shared before the Board votes. Walkability, proximity, and neighborhood connections will be considered.

Q: If I am a teacher with children enrolled at my current campus, will my children be allowed to transfer with me?

A: As occurs every year, CISD will provide transfer opportunities so employees’ children can stay with their parent’s campus assignment.

Q: Has CISD considered a VATRE (Voter-Approved Tax Ratification Election)?

A: Yes. The district held a VATRE election in November 2024 which did not pass. The can call VATRE elections on the uniform November election dates following election timelines. A VATRE will not be called for November 2025.

Q: Why spend money on athletics, band, or central office positions while considering school closures?

A: The district is reviewing all spending areas. Athletics and fine arts programs are important to many families, but we recognize the need to balance priorities and protect classroom resources.

Q: Will class sizes increase if schools close?

A: No. Class sizes may shift as they do every year, but CISD will work to stay within state guidelines and maintain ratios that support effective instruction.

Q: How is walkability and central accessibility factored into the models?

A: Walkability and neighborhood access are considered alongside costs, enrollment, and facilities. We know families highly value safe walking and biking routes to school.

Q: Has CISD explored all revenue options, such as pay-to-ride buses, activity fees, solar panels, or corporate sponsorships?

A: The district is actively exploring multiple revenue-generating strategies. Options under review include pay-to-ride transportation, activity/program fees, facility rentals, expanded open enrollment, and additional sponsorships.

Q: Will there be another VATRE (Voter-Approval Tax Rate Election)?

A: The district is evaluating whether another VATRE should be proposed. Currently, CISD would only retain 40% of any money from a VATRE election and 60% would go to the state in recapture.

Q: Is CISD factoring in chronic absenteeism when projecting budgets?

A: Yes. Attendance directly impacts state funding, and chronic absenteeism at each campus is reviewed. Increasing daily attendance remains a key priority.

Q: Why not expand open enrollment further to increase revenue?

A: Limited open enrollment has already generated additional revenue. Expanding it is under consideration, but it must be balanced with capacity, staffing, and program quality.

Q: Why is bond money being used on schools that might close? Isn't that wasteful?

A: Bond funds are legally restricted to facility projects and cannot be used for salaries or operations. Improvements were scheduled prior to closure discussions. While it may appear contradictory, the district must use bond dollars as approved by voters for facilities, even while operational budgets face deficits.

Q: Where did the shift from an \$80,000 surplus to a \$6 million deficit occur?

A: The deficit reflects declining enrollment, increased recapture payments to the state, and rising operating costs (including salaries and insurance). These factors, combined, led to the deficit.

Q: How much does closing a school save, and is it mostly salaries or building operations?

A: The largest savings come from staffing reductions (administrators and support staff). Operational costs like utilities and maintenance provide additional, though smaller, savings.

Q: How do vouchers and state recapture affect CISD's budget?

A: Vouchers may further reduce enrollment and funding, particularly if families shift to private schools. The state's "recapture" system also requires CISD to send millions back to Austin each year, limiting the benefit of local property tax revenue.

Q: What percentage of local property taxes stay in CISD?

A: The answer to this question changes each year depending on tax rate compression by the

state and the district's funding entitlement for the year which is driven by the average daily attendance of the students enrolled. Due to tax rate compression, the district has retained over 80% of Maintenance & Operations tax collections for the past 2 years. One hundred percent (100%) of Interest & Sinking tax collections stay in the district to pay the principal and interest on the debt issued for bond projects.

Q: Why does communication sometimes feel confusing or delayed?

A: Budget and closure discussions evolve as new data becomes available. The district is working to provide clear, accessible updates.

Q: What can families and community members do to help?

A: Advocate for CISD at the state level, support district initiatives, encourage strong attendance and enrollment, and continue providing input at forums and through surveys.

Q: Has CISD explored every possible revenue option before considering closures?

A: Yes. The district has reviewed options such as pay-to-ride transportation, activity fees, facility leasing, corporate sponsorships, advertising, and expanded open enrollment. While some of these options provide supplemental revenue, they do not fully close the deficit.

Q: Why can't bond money be used to solve the deficit?

A: Bond funds are legally restricted to facility projects (renovations, safety upgrades, expansions) and cannot be redirected to cover operating expenses like salaries or classroom programs.

Q: Why are schools with higher enrollment, like Austin, being considered?

A: Every campus was evaluated using consistent criteria: enrollment, facility capacity, feeder pattern balance, and long-term cost projections. While Austin has strong numbers, the district must weigh enrollment across the entire system, including growth patterns and geographic balance.

Q: Why are so many East feeder schools considered for closure?

A: Enrollment in specific neighborhoods has declined significantly compared to other feeders. CISD must ensure balance to avoid long-term inequities. However, concerns about disproportionately impacting one feeder are being reviewed.

Q: How will the district ensure transparency in decision-making?

A: CISD will provide data comparisons (enrollment, cost per student, and facility investments) and publish clear criteria for evaluating campuses. Decisions will be communicated following the timeline, so families and staff can plan.

Q: Why do families feel decisions are already made?

A: We recognize the frustration. Feedback sessions are designed to shape decisions, not simply confirm them. Input from parents, staff, and community members is being integrated into long-term planning.

Q: How will students be supported through rezoning or closure transitions?

A: Families will receive rezoning maps, feeder patterns, and transportation information early. Transition support—such as peer group placement (to the extent possible), community welcome events, and counselor support—will be prioritized.

Q: Why aren't we talking about innovation instead of just closures?

A: We are. We are seeking input from all stakeholders about innovative options. The district is evaluating which choice programs could be piloted to help attract and retain families.

Q: How is CISD planning long-term so we don't repeat this every year?

A: The district has developed a multi-year balanced budget plan to address the financial challenges in a strategic and multi-pronged approach. CISD is mapping out revenue, expenses, and staffing over multiple years to ensure financial stability, not just year-to-year "band-aid" solutions. This includes building in buffers for enrollment fluctuations and inflationary costs. In addition to cost reductions, CISD is exploring new revenue sources such as tuition-based Pre-K, corporate sponsorships, facility leasing, and expanded open enrollment to create more sustainable income streams.

Q: Why is CISD considering school closures instead of cutting from administration or other areas?

A: CISD has already reduced expenses through attrition, program adjustments, and central office efficiencies. While additional administrative reductions are being reviewed, the largest portion of the district's budget is tied to staffing and facilities. School closures, though difficult, are one of the few options that provide meaningful, recurring savings to help balance the budget long term.

Q: How is CISD planning for long-term stability so this does not happen every year?

A: The district has developed a multi-year balanced budget plan that includes expense reductions, revenue strategies, and enrollment initiatives. This plan is designed to stabilize finances and prevent annual cycles of closures or short-term fixes.

Q: How is the district addressing community trust and transparency concerns?

A: CISD is committed to:

- Publishing survey and feedback results.
- Clearly explaining differences between bond funds, operating funds, and reserve funds.
- Hosting community meetings and publishing data (e.g., heat maps, per-student costs, feeder projections) so families can see the criteria behind decisions.

Q: Why not close only one school instead of two?

A: While every option is being carefully considered, multiple closures may be necessary to achieve long-term stability and avoid repeating this process year after year.

Q: How will feeder patterns and secondary schools be impacted?

A: CISD is carefully evaluating how elementary changes impact middle and high school enrollment. This includes reviewing middle school feeders and ensuring future growth is accounted for in secondary planning.

Q: How is CISD advocating for changes at the state level?

A: CISD continues to work with legislators to seek increases to the basic allotment, reform of recapture ("Robin Hood"), and protection against vouchers that could reduce funding. While state policy is outside CISD's control, the district will continue advocating for funding.