

During the school board workshop on February 13, Trustees discussed potential changes to several schools – programmatic changes, attendance zone changes and school repurposing. All of these involve elementary schools and are being considered to:

- Bring families back together in Kindergarten – 5th grade neighborhood schools
- Right-size schools to maximize facility use and efficiency
- Give more children access to high quality seats in A & B rated schools
- Expand Prekindergarten
- Expand Choice School options

Starting with some history

In 2018, for accountability purposes, ECISD’s Board of Trustees combined the attendance zones and reconfigured the grade-levels for Pease/Noel and Zavala/Travis elementary schools. This change meant Pease served the students in PreK – 2nd grades and Noel served the same students in 3rd – 5th grades, with the same arrangement for Zavala (PreK – 2nd) and Travis (3rd – 5th grades). Today, all four campuses are in good academic standing and the opportunity exists to bring these elementary families back together into one building.

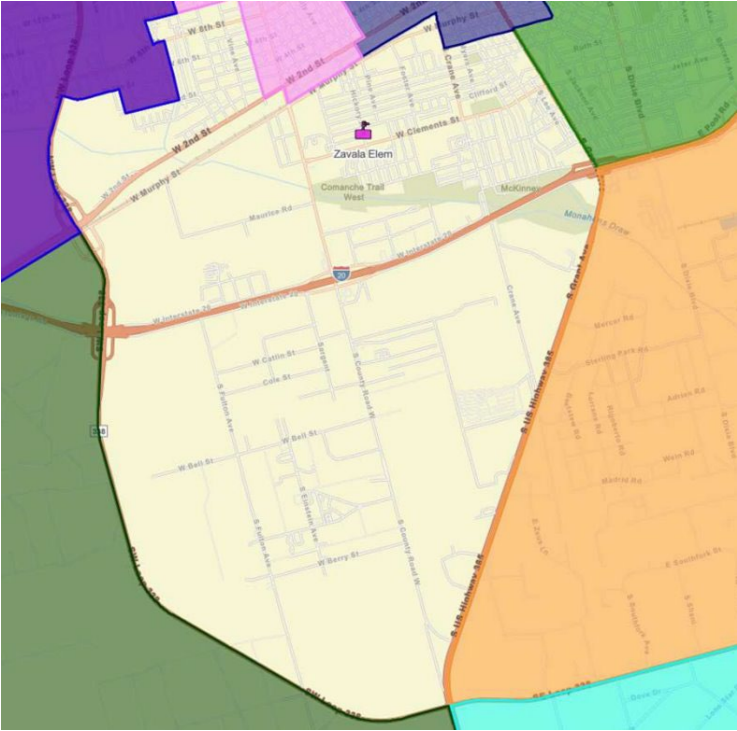
In studying this possibility, district leaders closely examined the impact on enrollment. This chart below gives a look at each of the four schools’ capacity and the PreK – 5th grade enrollment if the attendance zones return to what they were in 2017-18, before the schools were paired together.

2017-2018 Boundaries with 2023-2024 Enrollment		
School Name	Capacity	PK-5 Enrollment
Noel	756	529
Pease	802	701
Travis	746	180
Zavala	976	475

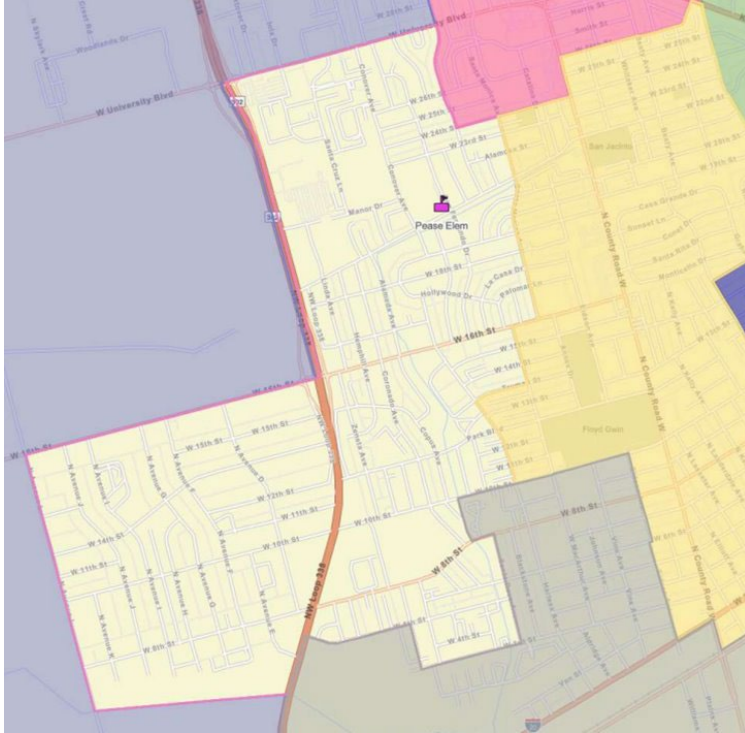
Based on these numbers, district leaders are recommending Noel, Pease and Zavala be reestablished as K – 5 neighborhood schools beginning with the 2024-25 school year. The recommendation includes moving current Travis Elementary students back to Zavala, where they likely attended school for PK – 2nd grade. Travis Elementary would be repurposed.

The repurposing of Travis would bring some cost savings to the school district, as eliminating utility and staff would save approximately \$566,000 next year. It is important to note, while positions would not exist at Travis, the people who work there now will have other spots in the district available to them if they choose.

This first map is the current attendance zone for the combined Zavala/Travis configuration. This would not change – all students living in this attendance zone would attend Zavala for PK-5th grade. Again, Travis Elementary would be repurposed.

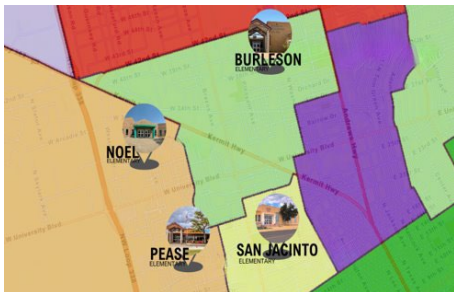


This next map is the attendance zone for Pease Elementary as it existed in 2017-18; it would return to this zone under the recommendations being made.



A new early education center at Burleson

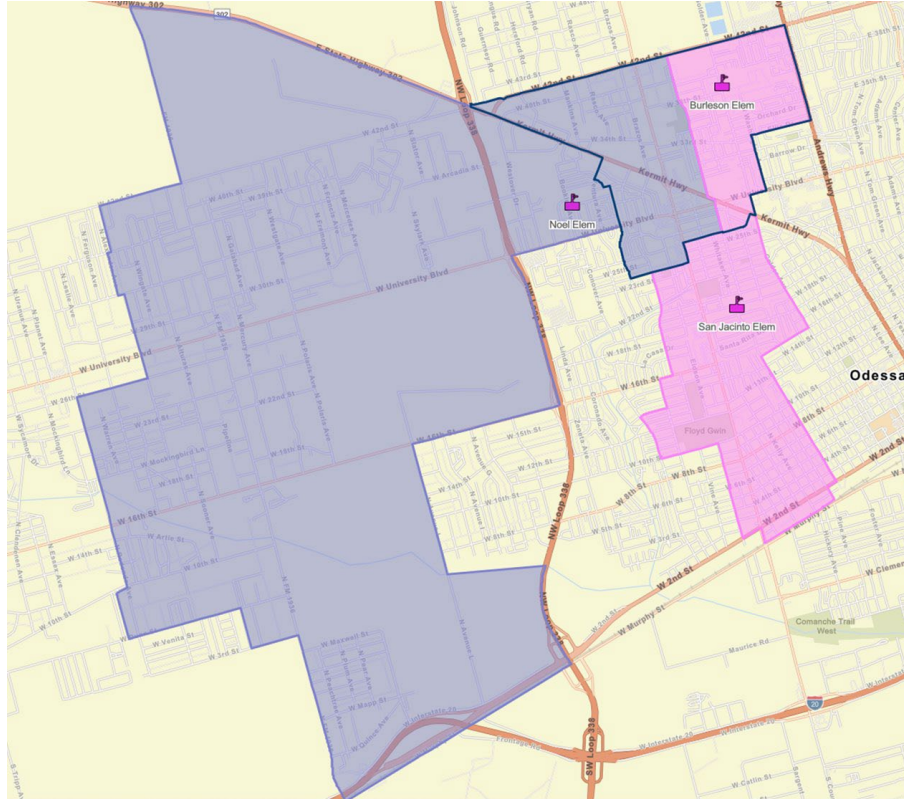
The next topic of discussion was Burleson Elementary. The school has been rated as ‘low performing’ for 5 of the last 7 years. In addition, Burleson’s enrollment has dropped from 541 to 370 over the past five years. District leaders are recommending that Burleson be repurposed to become an early education center (PreK) opening in August 2025. Students who are currently attending Burleson would be rezoned to attend either San Jacinto Elementary or Noel Elementary. Those two schools are rated an A and a B, respectively, by the Texas Education Agency, giving more students access to A & B rated schools.



School	Rating	Capacity	Enrollment	Approximate Seats Available
San Jacinto	A	710	369	341
Noel	B	756	529	227
Pease	B	802	701	101

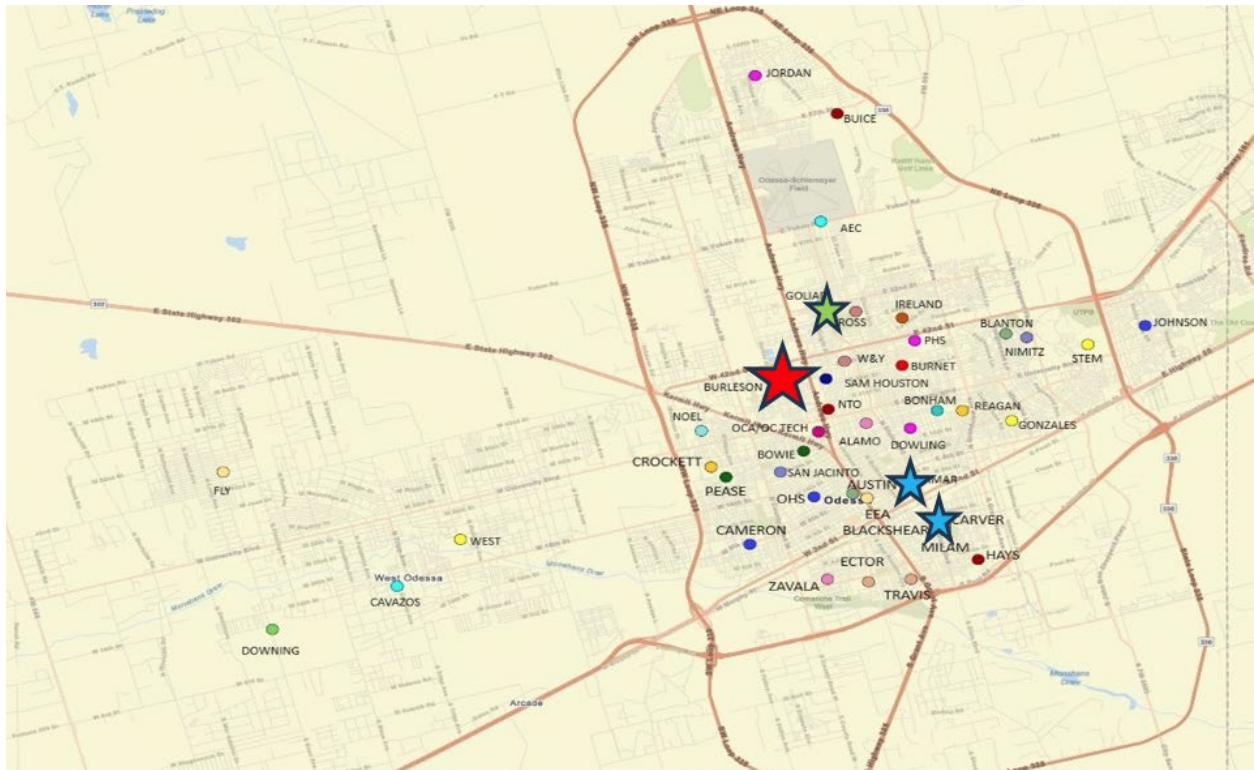
The boundary map above, left, shows the existing attendance zones for Burleson, Noel, San Jacinto, and Pease; the table shows the capacity and enrollment of the three schools (based on individual attendance zones as they existed in 2017-18 and would return to under these recommendations) adjacent to Burleson. You can see San Jacinto and Noel would have the most available space to welcome new students and help balance enrollment among the three. The students from Burleson would be reassigned beginning with the 2024-25 school year – the map below gives you a look at how Burleson’s

attendance zone may be split between San Jacinto and Noel. These would be new, expanded attendance zones for San Jacinto and Noel. Burlerson would open as an early education center (PreK) serving the north side of Odessa and Ector County one year later (2025-26).



There would be a one-year cost savings of more than \$690,000 of staff and utilities expenses with this change at Burlerson. As with Travis, while positions would not exist at Burlerson, the people who work there now will have other spots in the district available to them if they choose.

District leaders see a pressing need for a third early education center (PreK) and one that would more conveniently serve the north side of Odessa and Ector County. ECISD's two early education centers – Lamar and Carver – are near downtown and just off Murphy, respectively. They are the two blue stars in the map below and both are at enrollment capacity. The red star is Burlerson's location. In addition to providing more than 500 potential new PreK seats, it would help relieve overcrowded campuses, like Goliad, by providing dedicated PreK space.



Investments in PreK have paid big benefits for ECISD over the past several years. In 2020, the district's Kindergarten Readiness measure was 33%. After expanding the four-year-old PreK program to a full day and adding a half-day PreK program for three-year-olds, that number stands at 54% today. Data shows the children who attend PreK are more kindergarten-ready than those who do not and show great growth academically as they move into 1st grade and 2nd grade. A final piece to support this proposal is the availability of \$435,000 in grant funds to support the transition to an early education center (PreK).

Expanding Choice School options

Once Pease Elementary is reestablished as a K-5 campus, plans are in place to offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme at the school. Next year would be a year of planning and professional development for staff, then 2025-26 would be the launch year. This would create a complete feeder pattern for the ECISD's IB program from Pease (elementary) to Crockett (middle school launching in 2024-25) to Odessa High School.

Additionally, Gale Pond Alamo Elementary, will plan to switch its campus program from a STEAM focus to project-based learning by partnering with the New Tech Network. This switch would start with the kindergarten through 2nd graders at Alamo. ECISD has committed to implementing a New Tech Middle School when the new CTE Center is completed, and classroom space becomes available at New Tech Odessa's high school campus. This would complete a full New Tech project-based learning feeder pattern from Alamo (elementary) to New Tech Odessa (middle school and high school.) Again, any student in ECISD will be eligible to attend the Alamo and New Tech middle school programs through the Choice School application process.

Summarizing the discussion, the recommendations are for the Board of Trustees to:

- Establish a K-5 attendance boundary for Zavala Elementary that includes the previous Travis Elementary boundaries
- Establish a K-5 attendance boundary for Pease Elementary
- Establish a K-5 attendance boundary for Noel Elementary
- Expand the attendance boundary for San Jacinto Elementary
- Repurpose Burleson Elementary School into an early education center (PreK)

No specific action is required for Travis Elementary at this time. District leaders are exploring multiple opportunities to use the school to benefit the district and the community.

Parent meetings at all of these schools are being scheduled.

Dr. Muri asked Trustees to consider this Phase I of several to come as district leaders review school enrollment and attendance zones across the district with the goal of using all facilities efficiently.