



AISD FUTURE: 2017 BOND NEWSLETTER

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Austin ISD Family:

The summer was a period of learning and tremendous growth for the district as we prepared to welcome students back for the 2020-21 school year. Our top priority remains ensuring the health and safety of our school communities by implementing practices that prevent the spread of COVID-19.

AISD's Board of Trustees revised the school calendar, moving the first day of school to Sept. 8. It's been incredibly exciting to start school again and see our students, teachers, team members and families—virtually and otherwise. The district will continue to remain nimble as guidance may change. And, we remain committed to providing frequent and open communication. For the most up-to-date district plans, visit AustinISD.org/openforlearning.

COVID-19 AND MODERNIZED CAMPUSES

As face-to-face instruction resumes, we are practicing social distancing wearing masks and implementing robust cleaning procedures throughout the district. Our top priority is to maintain the health and safety of our school communities. AISD's Board of Trustees approved the allocation of \$13 million for personal protective equipment for the 2020-21 school year. This investment will help us provide masks, sanitizers and additional cleaning supplies to ensure all of our learning environments are clean and safe.

AISD has implemented stringent cleaning practices at all campuses. High-touch surfaces are sanitized multiple times per day. And, each campus is deep cleaned daily. These safety measures require additional work and care from all of our team members, especially our custodians. We thank them for all of their hard work to keep our school communities safe.



While all of our campuses can accommodate social distancing, our modernized campuses are especially well-equipped. The flexibility and multi-use nature of the spaces and furniture allow for more efficient use and the ability to adjust to circumstances such as COVID-19. To provide more room, movable and adjustable-height tables can easily be relocated to space out students. The furniture that will be used is designed to be easily disinfected. With flexible spaces and furniture, our modernized campuses allow teachers to customize their teaching areas to ensure students maintain social distancing. This is just one of many reasons why our goal is to modernize all of the campuses across the district during the coming years.

Today and every day, thank you for supporting our students as we create 21st-century learning spaces and reinvent the urban school experience! Thank you for your support as we move forward with our important bond work while prioritizing the health and safety of our team members, teachers, students, families and communities.

Follow the 2017 Bond progress at AISDFuture.com and share your bond stories on social media using #AISDFuture.

Matias Segura

Operations Officer

Larry Thom

Chief Business Officer

BOND UPDATES

NEWS FROM ACROSS THE DISTRICT

In response to COVID-19, AISD closed out the 2019-20 school year by celebrating three school groundbreakings virtually: Brentwood, Casis and Hill elementary schools. Each campus community marked the start of construction in unique ways during the virtual events, which involved participation from students. All three school principals turned dirt on-site to ceremoniously kick off construction of our newest modernizations. Rosedale School held a drive-by groundbreaking parade on Sept. 18 to celebrate the start of construction on the new campus located at the former Lucy Read Pre-K site. You can watch a recording of the groundbreakings on the [AISD Future blog](#).



This fall, AISD celebrates the opening of three modernized campuses. Grand opening ceremonies were held for Doss and Bear Creek elementary schools and a similar celebration will be held for Blazier 4-6 later this semester. Since students and faculty are not able to be together in large groups-person yet, these events will be held virtually. Please click the links below to view a recording of the events that have taken place so far.

- [**Doss Elementary School — Oct. 9**](#)
- [**Bear Creek Elementary School — Oct. 16**](#)
- **Blazier 4-6 — TBD**

The virtual events all include a video tour inside the new schools, remarks from AISD leadership and a ribbon cutting by each principal.

We are #AISDProud to provide 21st-century learning spaces to these communities as we work toward our long-term vision of modernizing every school and support facility. We're excited for the work that continues through the 2017 Bond Program to modernize spaces that will serve students across the district. Three additional modernized schools, **Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders**, **Murchison Middle School** and **Norman-Sims Elementary School**, are all on track to open at the beginning of the spring semester, further supporting our mission to prepare all students to graduate ready for college, career and life.

Follow the 2017 Bond progress at AISDFuture.com, which provides information about project-specific meetings and timelines, virtual celebrations, as well as interactive renderings that allow community members to tour the modernized schools virtually.



*Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders
Construction Progress*

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Bear Creek Elementary is AISD's first new school built through the 2017 Bond Program. Located in Southwest Austin, Bear Creek provides added capacity for the growing region and will offer innovative learning methods focused on collaboration, creativity and flexibility. It is home to approximately 522 students, but its core spaces (media center, fitness space and dining commons) are designed to support a master plan addition that will bring total student enrollment to nearly 700.



The building and site underscore AISD's commitment to sustainability to the greatest extent possible. The design works with the topography; a one-story building faces the street and includes all the public spaces, and a three-story academic building is incorporated into the slope of the site. Two enclosed bridges connect the one-story building to the middle level of the academic building, providing the framework for a courtyard. The courtyard includes a small amphitheater, "super-stairs" and a dry creek bed, all designed for outdoor learning opportunities. A unique feature of the design is the elevated outdoor classroom, which extends over the undisturbed land to the south, providing great views for the study of habitat.

The community room and media center are located near the entrance, allowing easy access for community groups and parent organizations to host meetings and events. Bear Creek's studios are organized into six learning neighborhoods, two per floor. The customized entrances incorporate information about local animals and habitats, with painted animal tracks that reappear in some of the public spaces. Each level also includes ample collaboration space and group study rooms that support a variety of learning styles.

MEET YOUR BOND TEAM

AUSTIN ISD BOND LEADERSHIP

The 2017 Bond Program would not be where it is today without our AISD leadership. Former Superintendent Dr. Paul Cruz and former Chief Business and Operations Officer Nicole Conley made great progress toward the district's goal to reinvent the urban school experience. With thoughtful direction from Cruz, Conley, our associate superintendents and executive directors, the 2017 Bond Program was passed by an overwhelming majority of Austin voters, and these modernization projects are well underway. We are grateful to Dr. Cruz and Nicole Conley for their district leadership.

This quarter, we are excited to spotlight our new superintendent and chief business officer, as well as our associate superintendents and executive directors who guide and develop our academic programs.

Dr. Stephanie Elizalde joins AISD as our new superintendent, coming most recently from Dallas ISD where she served as chief of schools for nine years. Throughout her career, Dr. Elizalde has served in a variety of positions including teacher, assistant principal, principal, director, executive director, assistant superintendent and deputy chief. With a focus on equity and excellence in education for all students, Dr. Elizalde has served in diverse school systems from small to large urban settings throughout Texas, including Southwest ISD, San Antonio ISD and Dallas ISD. We are thrilled to welcome her to the AISD Family!

Larry Throm has returned to Austin ISD as the new chief business officer. In his role, he oversees finance and operations for the district. During his 40-year career, Throm has worked in similar roles in six other districts, most notably in Austin under Superintendent Pat Forgione, and in the Dallas and Lubbock ISDs. Additionally, he previously worked for Austin-based school finance consultants Moak, Casey & Associates. We welcome him back to AISD and wish him great success!

Gilbert Hicks has served as associate superintendent of elementary schools at AISD for more than eight years. Hicks was formerly the principal at Overton, Oak Springs and Winn elementary schools, and assistant principal at LBJ Early College High School. Building on his success as an AISD teacher and campus administrator, his two decades of experience have led to dramatic increases in student achievement in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

Raul Moreno has overseen district academic efforts since 2018 in his role as associate superintendent of middle schools. Joining AISD in 2014, Moreno is the former principal of Paredes Middle School, and assistant principal of Travis and Johnston high schools and Webb Middle School. Moreno previously served as the executive director of Goose Creek Consolidated ISD, and he has served in many other education roles including executive director of assessment, research and evaluation, director of guidance and counseling and coordinator of college and career readiness.

Sheila Henry was named an executive director of high schools in 2018. She collaborates with administrators to find new and dynamic ways to enrich student learning at the high school level. She served as the principal of LBJ Early College High School for eight years, where she was honored as AISD Principal of the Year for High Schools in 2016. Prior to joining AISD, Henry was a principal and assistant principal in Palm Beach County, Florida.

Ty Davidson was named an executive director of high schools in 2020. He joined AISD's central leadership team as executive director of middle schools in 2018. He previously served as principal of Travis Early College High School, where the school earned five academic distinctive designations from Texas Education Agency. Davidson was nominated as AISD Principal of the Year in 2017. He has also worked as principal intern and academic director at Crockett High School.

DID YOU KNOW?

As part of the 2017 AISD Bond Program, modernized schools across the district will receive new flexible furniture. The furniture upgrades help create a connection between the building, students and teachers, while supporting differentiated learning activities.

A variety of flexible furniture types are incorporated into learning neighborhoods, dining commons and other multi-use spaces, allowing for more efficient use and the ability to easily adjust to inevitable curriculum shifts over time. Movable, stackable or adjustable-height tables are an example of flexible furniture. You can review [AISD's Education Specifications](#) to learn more about the furniture going into the new schools.

When a modernization project receives new furniture, AISD carefully reviews each piece of used campus furniture to determine if it is suitable for another campus with similar needs or if it should be collected and stored in the AISD warehouse. Items stored in the district's warehouse will eventually be donated, redistributed to another campus or sold in a surplus sale. All of the proceeds from these surplus sales go to the AISD general fund that supports students and schools.

Just this summer, AISD and the Doss Elementary School project team salvaged nearly 600 classroom furnishings from the existing swing space to be donated to an elementary school in need in Mexico. The AISD Warehouse team facilitated this donation at the end of June, and we are excited to see this furniture repurposed by the international school community.

If a piece of furniture is determined to be at the end of its life or no longer suitable for students, it is recycled or disposed of by approved district partners that must follow City of Austin waste disposal guidelines. As part of the district's sustainability efforts, AISD is proud to require a minimum of 75% waste diversion at AISD construction projects—above and beyond the City's 50% requirement. The district is also aligned with the City's Zero Waste goal to divert 90% of waste from landfills by 2040. To learn more about the AISD sustainability program, please visit AustinISD.org/sustainability.

We are #AISDProud to support environmental action and extend our efforts globally for students in need.



GET INVOLVED

AISD WELCOMES STUDENTS, FAMILIES, TEAM MEMBERS AND THE GREATER AUSTIN COMMUNITY TO BE INFORMED ABOUT AND ENGAGED IN THE BOND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS.

Learn about districtwide and campus-specific community meetings and sign up for [email](#) notifications by visiting AISDFuture.com.