

CHAPTER 12: EDUCATION

Fort Worth's schools are striving to provide quality education for all students, and to produce a skilled workforce capable of filling high-paying jobs in local businesses. With the current demand for an educated workforce, Fort Worth is offering an increasingly wider variety of opportunities for education, both in the public and private realm.

The City of Fort Worth is served primarily by the Fort Worth Independent School District. Due to the geographic layout of Fort Worth, 14 additional independent school districts (ISDs) provide educational facilities and services to portions of the city. Private schools have also become a major provider of education for Fort Worth residents. In addition to primary and secondary schools, Fort Worth offers residents many opportunities for higher education, including the following: Tarrant County College, with four campuses and a Downtown facility; Texas Wesleyan University; Texas Christian University; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; and the University of North Texas Health Science Center.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND TRENDS

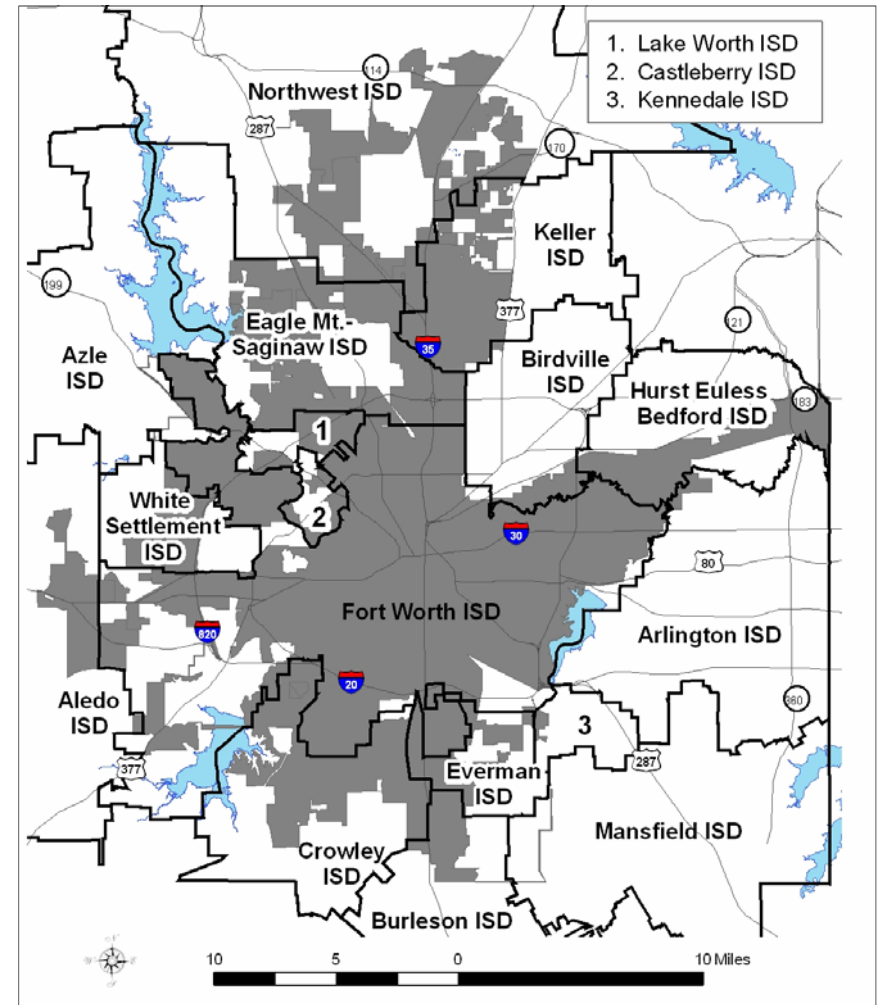
One of the most important issues facing school districts in Fort Worth is growth in student enrollment. Unlike private schools that have the option of limiting their enrollment, public schools must accommodate growth while continuing to nurture academic achievement for all students. As the primary provider of public education in the city, the Fort Worth ISD has recently completed a \$398 million bond program which was overwhelmingly supported by 88 percent of Fort Worth voters in 1999. New schools were built and improvements were made to all existing schools. This, plus the many options for public and private education, has enabled parents of the estimated 333,000 school-age children in Tarrant County to choose the school that best meets their child's educational needs. These choices have created a competitive environment for education between public and private schools.

The Fort Worth ISD serves slightly more than half (52 percent) of the city's land area, and based on Planning Department estimates, 65 percent of the city's school-aged population. The remainder of the city's land area falls within 14 additional ISDs, which are discussed on the following page. All of these ISDs seek to provide a physical environment that supports high levels of student achievement, promotes positive human relations and open communication, and celebrates the diverse multi-cultural nature of the Fort Worth.

Fort Worth ISD Enrollment

In 2004-2005, nearly 80,000 students were served by the Fort Worth ISD. Although the district's growth is less dramatic than that of its suburban counterparts, the Fort Worth ISD has been challenged in handling the annual change in employment and housing availability. The closing of Carswell Air Force Base in 1993 resulted in a decline of enrollment at Burton Hill Elementary from 526 to 385. When Carswell

School District Boundaries



The Fort Worth Independent School District serves 52 percent of the city's land area and 65 percent of the city's school-aged population. The remainder of the city's land area is within the jurisdictions of 14 other independent school districts. (Source: Planning Department, 2004.)

was changed to the Naval Air Station/Joint Reserve Base, enrollment began to climb. In addition, a highly mobile student population is challenging for facilities planners.

Fort Worth ISD's biggest enrollment jumps in recent years have been in areas where the Hispanic population has increased, like the City's Northside and the Southeast Polytechnic area. According to the Texas Education Agency's 2003-2004 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), the district's Hispanic enrollment constituted 52 percent, while the percentage of African American (28 percent) and white (18 percent) students continues to decline.

Fort Worth ISD has approximately 34,000 students who speak a language other than English. A total of 42 different languages are represented by these students. Limited-English-Proficient students are expected to transition into English within three to four years. For 2004-2005, Fort Worth ISD reports approximately 21,000 students classified as Limited English Proficient.

Other ISDs

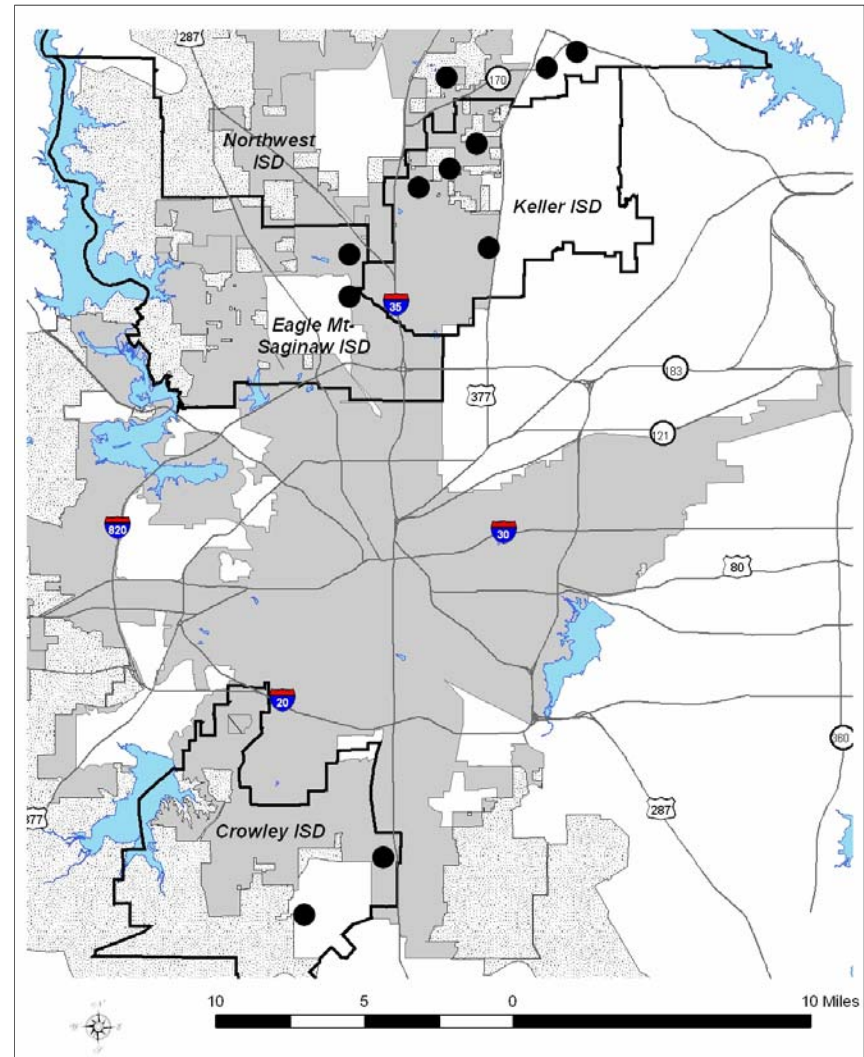
Although the Fort Worth Independent School District serves the majority of residents in the City, 14 additional independent school districts serve students on the periphery of the city limits: Arlington, Azle, Birdville, Burleson, Castleberry, Crowley, Eagle Mountain-Saginaw, Everman, Hurst-Euless-Bedford, Keller, Kennedale, Lake Worth, Northwest, and White Settlement. The portion of Fort Worth that is in the Arlington ISD contains a wastewater treatment plant and no residential uses.

Many school districts in suburban communities are facing issues of student growth. Arlington ISD has increased by almost 1,300 students, and Eagle-Mountain Saginaw ISD has seen a 21.5 percent growth in the last five years. Growth in north and northeast Fort Worth has created a challenge for Keller and Birdville ISDs as well.

Crowley ISD, the second largest school district in Fort Worth, has experienced growth related to the development occurring in southwest Fort Worth. Student population in Crowley schools has increased by approximately 32 percent in the last five years. Most students that attend Crowley schools live in southwest Fort Worth. Within the past five years, a ninth grade center and two elementary schools have been built. One new elementary school opened in August 2005, and another will open in the summer of 2006. Student population at the five elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school located within Fort Worth's city limits is 12,358, which represents 91 percent of Crowley ISD's total student population.

Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD, located in northwest Fort Worth, had 10,800 students in FY 2004-2005, approximately 51 percent of whom lived in Fort Worth. This student population is expected to double by 2011, largely due to the growth in north Fort Worth that has also affected Keller ISD and Birdville ISD. Also, because of the location of schools in Fort Worth's extraterritorial jurisdiction, it is anticipated that an increasingly higher percentage of Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD students will be Fort Worth residents. Capital improvements projected over the next seven years include four new elementary schools, two new middle schools, and one new high school.

New School Sites for Selected Independent School Districts



New schools developed under the Crowley ISD Bond Program, passed in 2002; the Keller ISD Rolling Bond Program bonds, passed in 2000; the Northwest ISD bonds, approved in 2001; and the Eagle Mt.-Saginaw ISD bond package, approved in 2002. (Sources: Crowley ISD, Keller ISD, Northwest ISD, and Eagle Mt.-Saginaw ISD, 2005.)

Keller ISD serves approximately 25,000 students in far north Fort Worth and eight other nearby cities. Approximately 55 percent of the students are Fort Worth residents. In 2005, Keller ISD had nine elementary schools, two intermediate, two middle and two high schools within Fort Worth city limits. In 2006, the Keller ISD will also open two new elementary schools along with a new intermediate and a new middle school in Fort Worth. Keller ISD also opened another elementary school in Colleyville in August 2005, as the last project of the 2000 approved bond package.

School Facilities

The Fort Worth ISD’s 1999 \$398 million school improvement bond package addressed fundamental and critical needs related to overcrowding, safety, and structural repairs. The bond package included \$121 million to fund construction of new elementary schools and sixth-grade centers to relieve overcrowding and to limit the size of elementary schools to 900 students or less.

With funds from the bond package, 10 new elementary schools have been built and improvements made to every campus in the district. A need exists for the City and the Fort Worth ISD to cooperatively address issues such as the building of new schools and expansion of existing schools. The City distributes large multifamily development proposals and subdivision plats for residential development to the appropriate ISDs for comment and assistance in planning for future growth.

Dolores Huerta and Seminary Hills Park Elementary schools opened in August 2004. Many schools have new classroom wings that include libraries, science labs and/or music rooms. Renovations include improved cafeterias, kitchens and libraries at many sites.

Community Partners

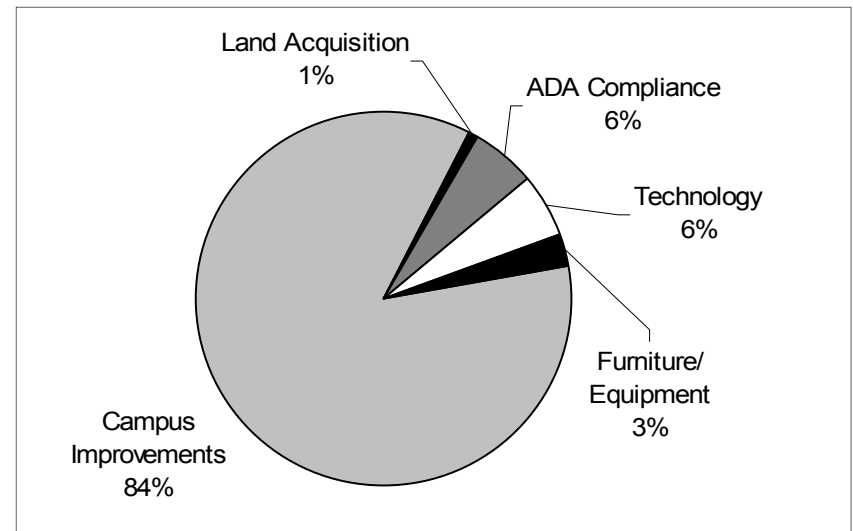
After 22 years the partnership effort in the FWISD continues to provide support and recognition to teachers and students. Today, more than 400 businesses, organizations, and churches are partnering with schools through the Adopt-A-School, and Vital Link student internships programs. Business volunteers mentor, tutor, provide incentives for academic improvement, serve as career day speakers, assist teachers and administrators, and put student interns to work in their businesses. In 2004-2005, over 340,000 hours were recorded by active parent volunteers who devoted time to help their children’s schools by assisting teachers and staff, joining booster clubs, sponsoring proms, chaperoning field trips and raising funds for supplies and equipment to enhance instructions. The business community has sponsored the Outstanding Teacher Recognition Dinner since 1984 and corporate sponsors recognize other teachers for exemplary work in their content areas. TEAM Fort Worth: A Mentoring Program, which was launched in the spring of 2003 with a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, is currently serving 18 schools, 584 students with 420 mentors. A new grant from the U.S. Department of Education, TEAM Fort Worth II, will allow service to 14 additional schools.

Fort Worth ISD Portable Buildings



In 1998, more than 20 percent of Fort Worth ISD students were taught in portable buildings. While the 1999 bond program has enabled the construction of 10 new elementary schools to alleviate overcrowding, portables are still used at many schools. (Sources: Fort Worth ISD, Planning Department, 2004.)

Allocation of Fort Worth Independent School District 1999 Bond Program



The Fort Worth ISD’s 1999 bond program provided \$398 million, primarily for campus improvements. (Source: Fort Worth ISD, 2005.)

Student Performance

Texas' accountability system for public schools is one of the nations most rigorous. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) uses the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) to rate schools based on a number of factors, including Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) scores, attendance rates, percentage of students completing an advance course, and dropout rates. In the spring of 2003, Texas public school students took the state's newest accountability test, TAKS, for the first time. The test's objective is to see how well students are learning the state's curriculum. Each year schools must increase scores on the TAKS to meet AEIS criteria for acceptable, recognized, and exemplary status. In 2003-2004, 70 percent of all students in a school had to pass all sections of the test to earn a rating of recognized, and 90 percent had to pass to earn exemplary status. In the 2003-2004 school year, 33 out of 115 rated schools in Fort Worth ISD earned an exemplary or recognized status. The percentage of Fort Worth ISD students taking Advanced Placement classes has increased from 13.9 percent in 2002 to 14.9 percent in 2003.

Dropout Rates

In November 2003, the Texas Education Agency reported that Fort Worth ISD had an annual (one-year) dropout rate of 1.7 percent in grades 7 through 12. The completion rate (grades 9 through 12), or four-year dropout rate was 12.7 percent. Within the four-year period, 12.3 percent of African Americans, 15.9 percent of Hispanics, and 0.3 percent of Whites left school without obtaining a diploma.

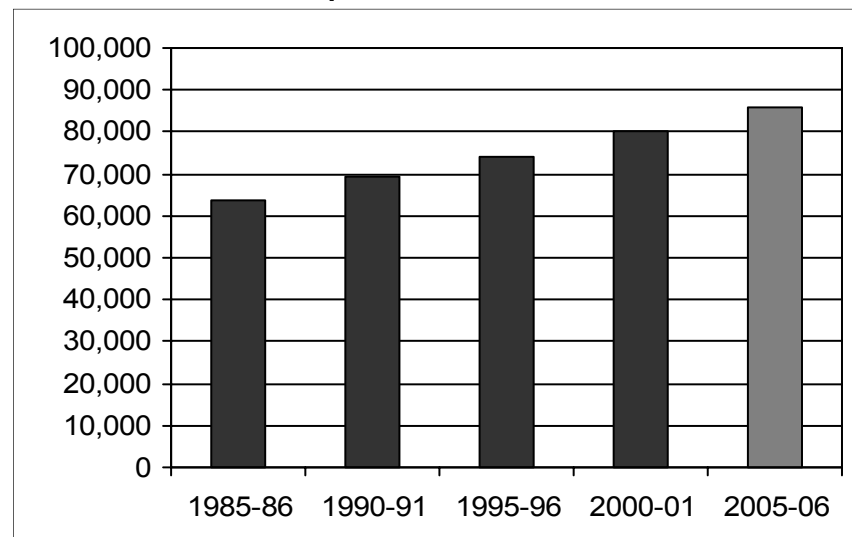
Several initiatives undertaken by the district show promise for stemming the dropout rate. A comprehensive truancy prevention program, in collaboration with the district attorney's office, provides assistance and support to parents and students who have a high number of absences. Consequences for failure to cooperate include a mandated visit to truancy court. Success High School offers students an opportunity to attend classes at night so they can work and still keep up with their studies. New Lives school provides special services for pregnant and parenting teens. Various programs such as Communities in Schools, Vital Link, Fort Worth After-School, 21st Century Grant Schools, and campus-based mentoring programs, also encourage students to stay in school.

The Fort Worth Chamber, the Fort Worth Hispanic Chamber and the Metropolitan Black Chamber of Commerce have joined forces in an annually based stay in school effort to address the drop out problem. A Stay-In-School summit focused on grassroots efforts to keep students in school and other strategies are being developed and implemented. They include a focused mentoring initiative for high schools, campus/community liaisons, a community awareness campaign, a community scholarship program and professional development for teachers.

Private Schools

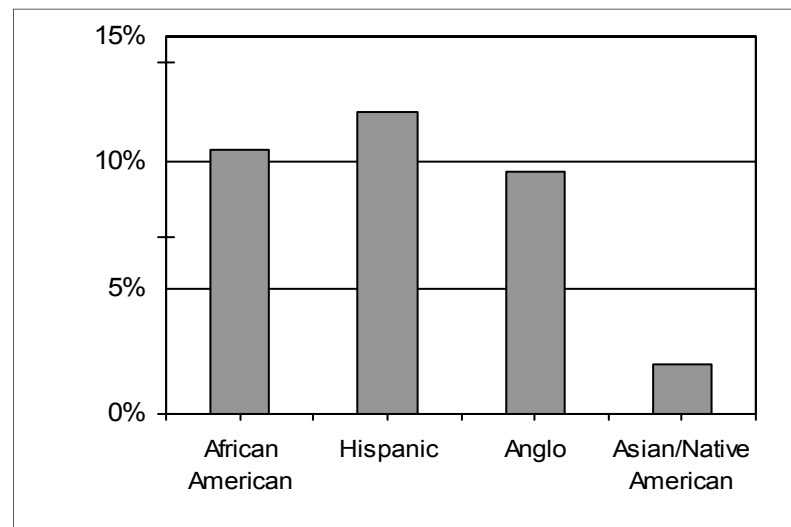
Many private schools are available to Fort Worth residents. Tarrant County has 70 private schools, including 38 in Fort Worth. Approximately 11,500 students are enrolled in private schools in Fort Worth. Fort Worth Country Day School in

Fort Worth Independent School District Enrollment



Student enrollment in Fort Worth has steadily increased, and is expected to continue growing. (Source: Fort Worth ISD, 2005.)

Fort Worth Independent School District Percentage of Students Who Dropped Out 2002-2003



Among the students dropping out of school in the Fort Worth ISD during 2002-2003, 12 percent were Hispanic students and 10.5 percent were African American. (Source: Fort Worth ISD, 2005.)

southwest Fort Worth has an enrollment of 1,100 students in grades kindergarten through twelve. Nolan Catholic High School, located in East Fort Worth has 1,050 students from grades seven to twelve. Trinity Valley School, and Temple Christian School, both offering all grade levels, have 940 and 875 students, respectively.

Universities and Colleges

Fort Worth offers many higher education opportunities. Texas Christian University, a private university located in southwest Fort Worth, has an enrollment of 8,632 students. Texas Wesleyan University, located in southeast Fort Worth, has over 2,700 students at its main campus. An additional 780 students attend the Texas Wesleyan University Law School in Downtown Fort Worth. Tarrant County College (TCC) has a facility in Downtown and two other campuses in Fort Worth: Northwest Campus, South Campus. Two additional campuses are located in Hurst (Northeast) and Arlington (Southeast). In addition to their standard Associates Programs, TCC offers a Continuing Education Program that offers opportunities for individuals to stay current on new developments in their present occupations or in new fields. Many Fort Worth residents also attend the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) and the University of North Texas in Denton, both state universities. UTA opened a satellite campus in the fall of 1999, the UTA/Fort Worth Riverbend Campus in Fort Worth. The new campus offers graduate courses in engineering and business at the UTA Automation and Robotics Research Institute in east Fort Worth. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, located on a 200-acre campus in south Fort Worth, has more than 3,500 students from across the nation.

The University of North Texas Health Science Center in west Fort Worth has 1,014 students. It is comprised of the Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine, the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, and the School of Public Health. The center's Institutes for Discovery conduct leading-edge research on select health issues, including vision, aging, cancer, heart disease, physical medicine, and public health.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives have been identified by the Fort Worth Independent School District to help improve educational quality, opportunities, and student achievement in Fort Worth:

Ensure that students perform at a level that will help schools attain recognized or exemplary status in the state and national accountability systems.

- Prepare students for success on the new TAKS, which includes language arts, math, science, and social studies.
- Increase the percentages of students being tested, as well as the mean district score on the ACT (American College Test) and/or SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) to meet or exceed state and national levels.
- Increase the percentage of students who score at or above the 50th percentile rank on national norm-reference tests to 50 percent or more.

Universities in Fort Worth



Texas Wesleyan University, located in southeast Fort Worth, has approximately 2,700 students at the main campus. An additional 700 students attend the Texas Wesleyan University Law School, which recently relocated from Irving to Downtown Fort Worth. (Sources: Texas Wesleyan University, Planning Department, 2005.)



Texas Christian University, a private university located in southwest Fort Worth offers quality higher education to over 8,000 students. (Sources: Texas Christian University, Planning Department, 2004.)

- Increase the number of students taking AP courses, taking AP examinations, and scoring a three (3) or higher on AP examinations.

Transition Limited-English-Proficient (LEP) students into English instruction.

- Assist LEP students to reach the advanced high level of English proficiency within four years, as assessed through Reading Proficiency Tests in English (RPTE) and reach non-LEP status within five years, as assessed through TAKS.

Increase attendance rates and decrease dropout rates to meet or exceed state standards.

- Increase participation in after-school programs each year through 2006.
- Increase the number of in-school programs for at-risk youth each year through 2006.

Improve school facilities.

- Develop and implement a plan for building, enhancing, and maintaining schools in order to accommodate the growing student population and ease overcrowding.
- Explore private/public partnerships that make maximum use of existing facilities.
- Retrofit facilities for accessibility for all Fort Worth students.

POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

The following current policy and recommended strategies will enable the City and the ISDs to implement the education goals and objectives:

Current Policy

- The City of Fort Worth and Fort Worth area school districts will maintain a working relationship to cooperatively address issues that affect both, such as land use and historic buildings.

Strategies

- When possible, school and City facilities will be shared to provide efficient access to services.
- Expand opportunities for continuing higher education.
- Ensure that the design of schools represents important community facilities for education and provides a creative, safe environment for students, taking into consideration the natural topography of sites, traffic flow, and needs of surrounding neighborhoods. Like their historic precedents, tomorrow's schools should be designed as future civic landmarks.
- Educate realtors and the public on the achievements of the Fort Worth Independent School District.

Polytechnic High School



One of the goals of the Fort Worth ISD is to improve and update older school facilities, such as Polytechnic High School in southeast Fort Worth. (Source: City of Fort Worth, 2001.)

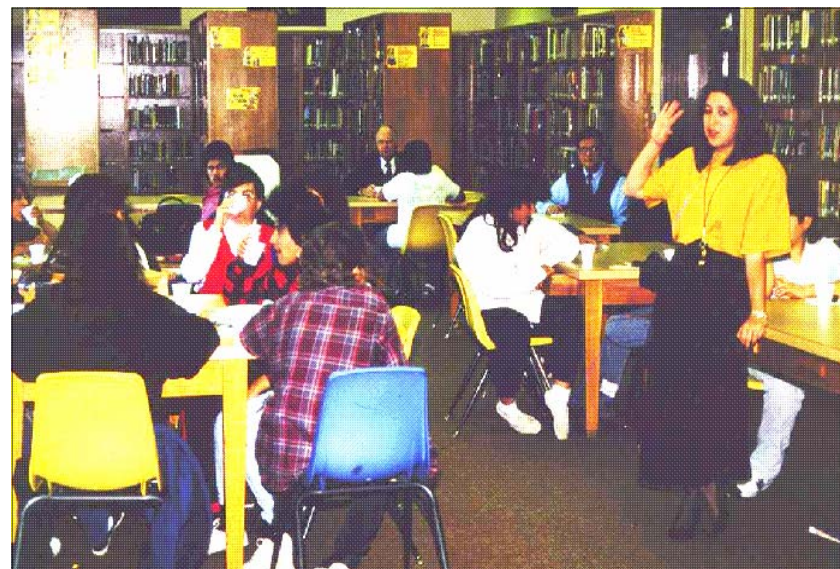
PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

- The Fort Worth ISD has begun many initiatives to improve education, particularly for elementary school children. The FWISD Reading Initiative is in its sixth year. In the spring of 2000, the percentage of students passing the TAAS reading portion increased across all grades. Eighty percent or more of third, fourth, fifth, and 10th grade students passed. The Math Specialist Program has helped to increase math scores from elementary schools participating in the program an average of 10 percent.
- Vital Link combines the efforts of Fort Worth schools and the business community to motivate students between the sixth and seventh grades. Internships help demonstrate how skills learned in school are used in a workplace, and how success in school can lead to success beyond the classroom.
- Adopt-A-School allows the opportunity for business leaders and other organizations to provide financial and volunteer support to individual schools.
- The Bilingual Initiative is designed to transition students from Spanish to English by the end of three years and reach non-LEP status within five years, as assessed through TAKS. Nearly half of the elementary schools that participate in this program are rated as Recognized.
- Head Start is a national program which provides comprehensive developmental services to low-income, pre-school children, and social services to their families. Specific services for children focus on education, socio-emotional development, physical and mental health, and nutrition. The cornerstone of the program is parent and community involvement.
- Texas Wesleyan University (TWU) has undertaken a seven-year \$33.5 million capital campaign. Proposed improvements include the renovation of existing buildings, the development of a university soccer field at the corner of Lancaster and South Collard, the addition of faculty and staff offices, student housing, classroom facilities, and a student center. TWU is an important anchor for the Polytechnic/Wesleyan Growth Center. The City is cooperating with TWU by upgrading surrounding infrastructure that helps support campus improvements.

Capital Improvement Projects

Capital improvement projects identified for the next 20 years are listed in Appendices D and E, with estimated costs, completion dates and potential funding sources. The list includes projects for Fort Worth ISD, Eagle Mountain-Saginaw ISD, Keller ISD, Crowley ISD, and Northwest ISD. Sixteen projects are identified, totaling over \$450 million. Of this total, nearly \$115 million is not funded.

Adopt-A-School Program



The Adopt-A-School program enhances education for Fort Worth youth by providing an opportunity for mentoring and other community support activities. (Source: *City of Fort Worth, 1998.*)

