

Alvord ISD Family: I have some highlights for you from the December 7 school board meeting:

COVID-19 Update – we have no positive cases (students or staff) at this time.

Demographic Update – School District Strategies presented a demographic update, which will help us to project our enrollment for the next 10 years. I have attached a slide which shows low, moderate, and high enrollment scenarios for Alvord ISD through 2031. The demographer advised us to plan for the low enrollment projection for now, we can adjust in the future to moderate or high depending on our enrollment numbers. Our Kindergarten enrollment each year will be a key indicator.

We learned that although we are seeing some new homes being built, our population is also aging. We can expect on average about half a student (.59) for each new home that is built.

This report brings good news in my opinion, we are not expecting fast growth at this time. We are a small community and small school district. While an increase in enrollment in the future may be inevitable, we like being small and want to stay small. We will likely continue to limit the number of new student transfers we accept in the future to help limit our growth. Students who have older siblings already enrolled and children of employees will continue to be considered.

This report confirms that our plans to renovate the old middle school / old high school building to use to house two grade levels will help us reduce class sizes at the elementary campus. We want to get back to within the 15 students per teacher range at the elementary that we desire. If the district does grow at some point we may have to consider a bond issue to either add classrooms or to build a new school. In my opinion we don't want to consider a new bond issue unless we have no other options. Our current bond issue debt is paying for the new middle school and for additions to the elementary and high school campuses. This debt is scheduled to be paid off in 2029. Our goal is to delay another bond issue needed due to growth at least until the current debt is paid off. This report will help guide us as we make decisions moving forward as we work to keep class sizes small without a new bond issue.

FIRST Hearing and Report – I am pleased to announce we again received a Superior rating and a perfect score of 100 on the FIRST report.

The state's school financial accountability rating system, known as the School Financial Integrity Rating System of Texas (FIRST), ensures that Texas public schools are held accountable for the quality of their financial management practices and that they improve those practices. The system is designed to encourage Texas public schools to better manage their financial resources to provide the maximum allocation possible for direct instructional purposes.

The electronic version of the 2020-2021 Alvord ISD FIRST report can be seen at <https://tealprod.tea.state.tx.us/First/forms/District.aspx?year=2019&district=249901>

For more information about FIRST you can go to the website at

https://tea.texas.gov/Finance_and_Grants/Financial_Accountability/Financial_Integrity_Rating_System_of_Texas_FIRST

Employee Health Insurance – the board approved a resolution to discontinue offering TRS Active Care (Blue Cross / Blue Shield). This will allow us to continue offering Texas School Health and also to offer Aetna Insurance as options to our employees next year.

Atmos Energy Donation – the board approved a \$1,000 donation from Atmos Energy.

District of Innovation Renewal – it is time to renew our District of Innovation (DOI) plan. This process requires several steps; the board took the first step by approving a notice to the Texas Education Agency Commissioner of the districts intent to renew our DOI plan.

Randy Brown

Alvord ISD Superintendent