

Potential Middle School Consolidation FAQs

What renovation opportunities are available at existing facilities?

Renovation construction priorities were established early in the Bond 2021 process. They are, in order:

1. **Security and Life Safety** – secured front-entry vestibules
2. **Building Envelope** – roof, windows, doors, and masonry
3. **Learning Environment** – common areas, classrooms, and collaboration spaces
4. **Systems and Components** – HVAC, plumbing, etc.
5. **Campus Capacity** – adding capacity where needed to eliminate portables

Bond dollars will be allocated to complete as many priorities as possible at each site. Safety and security updates will be the highest priority, particularly as none of the potentially consolidating campuses have secure entry vestibules allowing campus administration to tightly control site access.

Next up would be addressing building envelope issues, ensuring wind and water are not able to penetrate the building. After that, renovation efforts would focus on improvements to the learning environment in alignment with the TEA Facility Standards.

Given the extensive site deficiencies discovered at our aging campuses, not all items will be resolved with the budget available.

What construction opportunities are available by consolidating campuses at a new middle school?

Constructing a new campus ensures that every space in the building meets modern code requirements, is ADA accessible, and conforms to TEA's 2021 School Facilities Standards. Many of these items that cannot be accomplished at our current sites.

Safety will be prioritized, with all students inside the building walls and portables eliminated. Fire lanes will meet current standards, the campuses will be fully sprinkled, and exterior learning spaces will be fenced and secured.

Core classroom spaces will be approximately 900 square feet, as opposed to the 700 square feet or less common in our older buildings. Labs, athletics, and performing arts spaces will all meet the larger TEA requirements for new construction as well.

Creating a new facility also allows for the inclusion of modern resources, including collaboration areas and opportunities for specialized learning programs, which didn't exist at the time the original campuses were constructed. New construction is the only way to address all of the original construction priorities within the available budget.

What is the ideal student enrollment for middle schools?

While there is much research regarding class size, there is not much available regarding total student enrollment. US News & World Report recently completed an analysis of schools to determine their [Texas middle school rankings](#). Schools were assessed on their shares of students who were proficient or above proficient in their mathematics and reading/language arts state assessments. Half of the formula assessed the scores themselves and the other half incorporated the test results in the context of socioeconomic demographics.

The top 25 schools' student enrollments vary widely, ranging from 426 to 2,084. When considering only traditional public schools, the average enrollment is 1,243. Click for a [summary of the top Texas middle schools](#).

What is the projected size of consolidated campuses in the 2027-2028 school year?

North Side Consolidated Middle - 1,011 students
Paschal Consolidated Middle - 1,433 students
Polytechnic Consolidated Middle - 1,093 students

Would consolidation create additional opportunities for students?

Currently, Fort Worth ISD operates several small campuses, which results in fewer opportunities for students. With a smaller student body, there are times when specialty courses do not have enough interest to support a section offering or schools are required to share a teacher with another campus. By creating a larger, combined student body, all students within the pyramid will have access to the same opportunities for electives and advanced core content areas.

Pyramid specific course opportunities:

- **North Side Pyramid:** Only students at J. P. Elder have access to the Mariachi program. Kirkpatrick students often transfer to Elder in order to participate.
- **Paschal Pyramid:** Only McLean offers a theater program for students. This leaves Daggett students at a disadvantage upon entry to high school.
- **Polytechnic Pyramid:** Students at Morningside do not have access to Show Choir or Spanish Heritage. Additionally, only students at William James are able to participate in English I, which counts towards the high school credit requirement.

How do we preserve opportunities for athletics participation at a larger campus?

Every year, athletics participation rates fluctuate across all levels and sports. As a large district, we annually adjust teams and competition schedules to ensure maximum participation for our student athletes. The key is that we have options and opportunities to be creative with schedules to keep student athletes on teams.

Multiple teams at a campus are created for football, volleyball, and basketball, based on student interest. These additional teams are then accommodated in the Fort Worth ISD competition schedules. This existing process could also apply to create multiple teams in soccer, track, and cross country where needed.

While scheduling practices can sometimes be a challenge, campus coaching staff are flexible and creative with scheduling to ensure maximum facility utilization. In some cases, sharing gyms and fields may require both morning and afternoon practice times. This occurs throughout the district at all levels when participation rates are high.

Ultimately, providing student athletes with opportunities to participate is the core focus of the Athletics Department. District staff will monitor participation rates and ensure adequate coaching personnel, while also providing guidance to assist the campus with maximizing facilities.

Middle School Sports Opportunities:

- **Football:** The pyramid high school head football coach is responsible for locating games; thus, creating a schedule for the feeder middle school that encompasses multiple teams. The Athletics Department will examine options for adding divisions within the district that will allow us to have campus teams in two different divisions. We can also look outside of Fort Worth ISD for opportunities to compete.
- **Basketball & Volleyball:** Middle schools often field a “B” team for basketball and volleyball, increasing competition throughout the district. We would follow the same structure when adding a “C” team where student participation is high.
- **Track & Cross Country:** For larger schools, a single campus can list two teams in the scheduled meets each week, traveling together so no coach is split for any competition.
- **Soccer:** Soccer requires a larger number of athletes to create a full team roster. As with other sports, we can still create multiple teams to add opportunities for additional players where student participation is high.

What are the student safety considerations at a consolidated campus, particularly for younger learners at a large school?

New construction must adhere to the 2021 TEA Facility Standards and modern code requirements, ensuring that new campuses will be among the safest in the District. With secure entry vestibules, completely fenced outdoor learning spaces, and fully accessible learning environments for students with disabilities, the campuses would offer security features not possible at existing facilities within the available budget.

During the design process, architects will also seek stakeholder feedback through design charrettes. This will allow for community specific concerns to be addressed, such as ensuring separation points to limit interaction between grade levels.

Additionally, combining all middle grades in a single campus minimizes transition points for students and builds a more cohesive school community. By consolidating, students are able to get to know their pyramid peers before the final transition to high school. This consistency allows students to establish relationships early on, mimicking the long-standing communities of elementary school, and lessening the stress of the high school transition.

How would consolidation at a larger campus impact student drop-off, pick-up, and transportation?

Consolidation options at all three sites will feature on-site queuing, lessening street traffic and increasing student safety. Feasibility studies also showed options to separate car riders and bus traffic, further reducing traffic and safety concerns.

Consolidating campuses will require additional routes as more students will become eligible for transportation. Several of these additions will be offset by reallocation of 3 morning routes and 2 afternoon routes from the consolidated Wedgwood campuses. Additionally, the Transportation department is conducting a routing study and restructuring several positions to increase operational efficiency for the coming year.

Potential Consolidation Site	Additional Morning Routes	Additional Afternoon Routes
J. P. Elder Middle	2	2
McLean Middle	1	1
William James Middle	3	3
Morningside Middle	4	5

How would we preserve existing history and build community at a consolidated campus?

Our existing schools have decades of history and a unique culture at their respective sites, which is something to consider with any consolidation. Should campuses merge into a new facility, a primary focus will be creating a welcoming, unified campus community at the new site that honors the history and experiences of its members.

In order to ensure any potential transition is as seamless as possible, systems and processes will be implemented to support the success of all students and staff. Opportunities exist to merge the traditions of the campuses and create new memories together, enhancing the experience for all. Stakeholder groups would be identified to ensure that this is done in a thoughtful way, incorporating the voices of students, staff, and the community.

What factors could be considered in selecting a consolidation site in the Polytechnic pyramid?

Consolidation Site Consideration	William James MS	Morningside MS
Original Construction	1926	1954
Historic Designation or Overlay	No	Yes, original structure
2023-2024 Enrollment	771 students	430 students
Decline from Peak Enrollment	13.9% decline from 895 students 2018-19	37.9% decline from 692 students 2018-19
Projected Construction Cost	\$73.4 million	\$67.4 million
Projected Facility Size	154,000 square feet	145,000 square feet
Projected Campus Maximum Capacity	1,522 students	1,400 students
Projected Campus Utilization Capacity	1,217 students	1,130 students
Additional Bus Routes Required	3 morning routes 3 afternoon routes	4 morning routes 5 afternoon routes
Unique Features	Construction includes new athletic field	Construction would impact local park

How are other Dallas-Fort Worth school districts responding to declining enrollment?

Irving ISD: [Boundary Adjustments and Campus Closure](#)

“After carefully evaluating enrollment trends, building capacity, financial impact of underutilization and current age of facilities, the difficult decision has been made to implement attendance boundary changes for the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 school years.”

Plano ISD: [Long-Range Facility Planning and Potential Closures](#)

“PISD officials are looking to restructure or consolidate schools largely due to declining enrollment. The district’s enrollment has consistently declined since its peak at 55,700 in 2012, and it currently stands at 47,800 students.”

Richardson ISD: [Project RightSize Consolidation Plan and Campus Closures](#)

“On March 21, RISD trustees voted to approve Project RightSize proposals that will consolidate and repurpose five elementary campuses.”

KIPP Texas Public Schools: [KIPP Destiny Elementary and Middle Recommended for Closure](#)

“Due to a confluence of factors similar to what other state districts are facing, including persistent declining enrollment, we regretfully will recommend to the KIPP Texas Board of Directors that KIPP Destiny Elementary and KIPP Destiny Middle Schools close at the end of the 2023-2024 school year.”