

100

DAY REPORT

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EANES
WESTLAKE
INNOVATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT

FORWARD

When my family and I decided to join Eanes ISD, it wasn't just a professional move. Susie and I have been fortunate to live and work in amazing places. But the opportunity to lead here, where students can thrive within a best-in-class institution, in a community that aligns with our values as educators and human beings, was an easy decision.

Eanes ISD is a brand known to all. We were able to open ourselves up to the energy of a place long admired for its natural beauty, spirit, and creativity. From its historic hills and arts scenes to its deeply rooted community traditions, this district lives and breathes high expectations and a passion for providing an unmatched experience to families. Simply put, Eanes is epic.

The early months have been filled with epic, meaningful moments. Here are just a few: watching backstage at the PAC as Elsa and Anna performed their Frozen solos; chasing chickens around at Forest Trail; seeing Hill Country Middle School Players rehearse; spending a morning at ATS; sitting in an Orchestra mashup at West Ridge; Bingo Night at Bridge Point; meeting Miller Peoples; high five arrivals at Cedar Creek; cheering on Coach Morgan's students for another World Robotics title; Barton Creek's 2nd grade rock n-roll musical; observing a historic Westlake girls basketball season like none other; Hyline practice experience; the warmth of families,

students, and world class staff who welcomed us to this community.

I take this role with a deep sense of gratitude for those who came before me, for the rich traditions and history of Eanes ISD, and for those who wish to compete now.

We are a beacon of education. Eanes ISD must navigate challenges to our environment with care and trust to continue to model the way for public education for the future. I believe our best days are ahead if we focus on shared missions that impact all children, reinforcing the foundation of our school community.

During my interview period with the School Board, I was asked what matters most? My answer was simple: do what is best for children. In this spirit I present this 100 Day Report.



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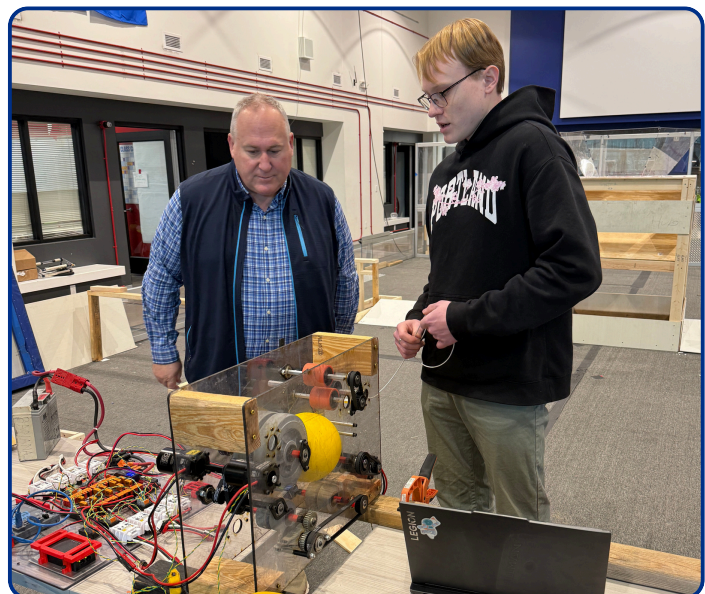
1 INTRODUCTION

Assess, Aspire, Achieve, A Journey of Listening and Learning

Eanes ISD is not just a school district in a small town on the outskirts of Austin; it is an experience, a way of life. The arts scene is unmatched; games under the lights raise the stakes; city life and lake life; ed tech scions and world class academics. These are the threads in the fabric of our shared identity.

Our schools are not merely educational institutions. They are the heartbeat of these communities, places we entrust. They are also our gathering spaces, stages, proving grounds, and innovation spaces. There is no gap between school and community; they are inextricably woven together.

This report reflects my first 100 days in Eanes ISD: Assess, Aspire, Achieve: A Journey of Listening and Learning. It is not a plan or a list of promises. It mirrors what students, staff, parents, and community members shared to me, and presents those voices with an assessment of our systems. It acknowledges strengths and opportunities. At its core, this report is about listening and mapping the course for our future based on what we've learned.



2 GATHERING INPUT

Before I began as Superintendent with Eanes ISD, I provided the Board with a detailed “entry plan,” which focused heavily on relationship building and connecting. The Achieve portions of this plan included the listening process associated with that effort was both structured and organic conversations. It will also be evident in the next steps portion of the report.

I began by saying “yes” to as many conversations as possible, meeting with community and regional leaders, parents, staff, and students. Anyone who reached out, we made time to meet. We talked in coffee shops, offices, parking lots, and on neighborhood walks. While organized data-gathering mattered (see below), these early conversations were a crucial part of listening.

Beginning January 5, I spent time in every building. With students, I listened to the language they used, and observed their interactions with adults. I asked about their learning and their experiences. I spent at least an hour with every head principal, assistant principal, and met all the faculties and all the parent partner groups. I met with all district leaders for several 1:1 sessions and group meetings. I toured buildings. I served lunch. I rode the bus. I visited the DOC, the shops, all of the arts facilities, and all of the athletic sites.



Using a modified situational leadership model, I began a dialogue with my team, the trustees, and others about priorities and capacity. With community leaders I asked two questions to gauge short-term issues and long-range aspirations. With partners, I asked one question: what could we do for them?

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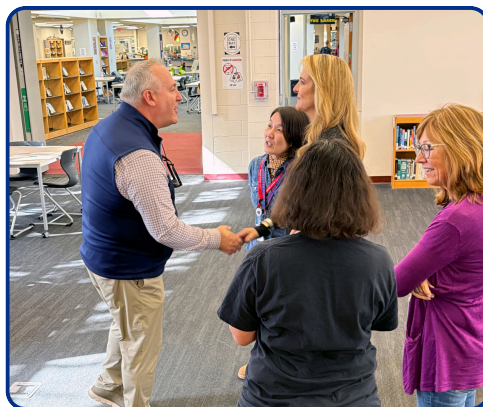
2 GATHERING INPUT, CONTINUED

With my leadership team, I assessed what their leadership looked like and how they did it. I asked a series of questions about action steps to become more coherent with fewer, better-aligned initiatives. We also reflected on cultural practices that could better support collaboration moving forward.

With faculty members, I sought clarity on themes about staff validation across all campuses. Staff feedback was remarkably consistent. I used open-ended prompts that invited opinions and ideas, rather than reactions to any of my thoughts.

Staff feedback was remarkably consistent.

- Faculty members affirmed the high quality of education here at Eanes, and acknowledged the pressures of the system out of their control by state and federal government change, as well as the constant media messaging about alternatives to public education.
- Leaders identified and candidly named limiting factors such as the need for clarity from politicians, fiscal actions by the state. They expressed excitement about deeper learning, a strategic direction, and noted that governance-related trust concerns existed now as in the past, but were not eroding the culture overall.
- Broader community feedback opportunities allowed me to glean the wants and needs of parents, and the possibilities with prospective partners.



3 BY THE NUMBERS

I collected more than 1,000 individual comments across 379 meetings, where several themes emerged:

“celebrate the arts” was frequently mentioned

“stop the drama” in governance was most common

“more career options” heard from students and their parents and partners

“balanced technology learning” mostly heard from some elementary parents

“more student voice” expressed by middle and high school students and staff

At each school, parent partners invited me to introduction meetings to listen and share.

- Parents asked for more transparency in special education practices and costs, as well as proactive, clear communication overall.
- Many celebrated our size, strong arts and athletics programs, and a tradition of academic excellence that led them here, or kept them here for their family.
- Some raised concerns about the overall approach to screen time for younger learners with technology.
- Some emphasized the need for relevance in preparing students for their next steps beyond the classroom, and supporting innovation.



- 1 State of the Schools event
- 2 State Championship Finals
- 5 Committee meetings
- 6 School Board meetings
- 7 Parent group meetings
- 28 Campus visits
- 36 Community engagements
- 56 Administrator meetings
- 80 Classroom visits
- 85 Staff meetings
- 111 Student activities
- 356 Points of contact

3 BY THE NUMBERS, CONTINUED

Alongside learning was a serious conversation about facility needs. I reviewed past work and district operations and committee data: enrollment trends, finances, staffing, assessment results, instructional alignment, and business functions.

The **Assess** portion of the listening tour confirmed much of what we heard in the listening phase:

- Strong systems in some areas, uneven in others.
- Some of our core administrative operations and functions require greater collaboration and focus on common goals.
- Articulation with transparency, a K-12 approach to instructional alignment (ensuring learning progressions within and across grades) needs a renewed focus.
- Repeatedly, a K-12 STEAM culture was observed and remarked about, yet there is little coherent communication about this culture of learning and its importance to meet high demand professions of the future.
- Financial opportunities need to go beyond speculations to become strategic work initiatives.
- Staffing and enrollment are not mutually exclusive, and there is also a need for some specialty roles within this unique system.
- Building for the future and enrollment are not mutually exclusive, and work beyond M&O bonds and specialty add-ons versus large-scale renovations and rebuild has strained the capacity of the district, and must be addressed.

Together, all of these inputs paint a compelling and exciting set of opportunities for more dialogue, narrowing our focus, and setting a course for their futures.



3 BY THE NUMBERS, CONTINUED

The *Aspire* portion of the listening tour was inspiring. The voices of our children were diverse. Middle and high school students told me repeatedly what they felt was fun and relevant. Boy Scouts and Future Cities teammates explained what excited them academically. Actors and musicians explained their passions for activities. Best Buddies expressed their love of involvement and a culture of belonging. They all want to be seen as leaders. The tech production leaders at WHS demand it. The Hyline and Football players exude it. The Color Guard (EVE), and the Special Olympians modeled it. The Eanes CARE Committee students led it. The Kindergarten classes I visited at Barton Creek modeled the way from the beginning.

4 themes emerged repeatedly, forming a foundation for what comes next.

THEME 1:
ACADEMIC CULTURE
OF LEADERS

THEME 2:
ARTS & ATHLETICS
AS PILLARS

THEME 3:
RELEVANT CAREER
PATHWAYS
& STUDENT CHOICE

THEME 4:
ATTENTION
& ALIGNMENT
OF LEARNING SPACES

4 ROADMAP TO THE FUTURE

We have an exciting future in Eanes ISD! We have much to look forward to for our students, staff and community.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Assess, Aspire, Achieve listening tour reinforced a key idea: it's time to listen more. Over the coming months the district will undergo an organic, efficient strategic planning process that is truly student-centered, with student participation, and a renewed focus on key missions for our future work. The School Board will hear the results by December, and launch the new strategic plan for 2027 and beyond. The all-call for participation is out, and the plan was kicked off April 8 at the State of the Schools event.

CAREER PATHWAYS

Parents and students asked for more options: more pathways into careers, civics, and technology. Students voiced a clear desire for greater influence in shaping school culture and decisions.

Leadership and staff reinforced these ideas. They emphasized deeper learning - project-based and experiential learning that connect content to real-world challenges. They also stressed strengthening the instructional and academic core: literacy, vertical alignment, and professional learning, ensuring a strong foundation that students can apply meaningfully.

STUDENT LEADER VOICE

Student Voice students shared that their perspectives can sometimes feel marginalized. School is their daily experience; they want an organized, ongoing way to influence the decisions that affect them. While there are elements of student voice already in place at Eanes, students want more than to be simply the object of adult decisions, they want an influential seat at the table.

While the district has a number of mechanisms for including student voice, such as the Superintendent's Student Advisory and prominent roles for student representation on the school board, the district should also consider how we can better include student voice and perspectives in decision making. We need to determine how we can empower students with decision-making authority, where appropriate.



4 ROADMAP TO THE FUTURE, CONTINUED

INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

This theme also includes the places where learning happens. While the Board recently advanced a long-awaited pool modernization using general funds, it must also consider broader facilities needs and how to fund them. Our campuses are beautiful, but they are aging and increasingly outpaced by modern school designs.

The Board and community have choices. One approach is to tackle projects incrementally over many years using expected funds. Renewing it would give voters the opportunity to invest in facilities that support future learning, sustainability, and community use for decades to come.

Ultimately, this is a community decision, but one that has the potential to shape Eanes ISD's future and help keep Eanes an attractive place for families. *The opportunity: expand learning and career pathways, elevate student voice, strengthen instructional foundations, and invest in our school facilities to bring our Learner Profile to life.*

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OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

- Build a culture of high trust for professional educators where we lead with communication in a proactive, candid dialogue of relationship-building.
- Improve instructional alignment and focus on high-yield strategies by reducing overload and aligning efforts across campuses.
- Strengthen some of our financial operations through forecasting systems that reliably support students and are shared openly.
- While special education is supported by dedicated, skilled staff and strong inclusion practices, opportunities exist to improve our model of services across several service areas.
- Enhance our governance approach with a Board that works together with role clarity and advocacy priorities.

CONCLUSION

The Entry Plan evidence, fueled by a tremendous amount of school community learning, offers a unique lens through which we can be hopeful, excited, and strategic about our future at Eanes ISD.

We have much to gain when we listen to the needs of children, and we provide voice to all of the owners of our schools. In the coming months, as we launch our roadmap to 2040 and beyond, we will continue to listen, learn, and set our students on the path to success!

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

