

Agenda of Workshop Meeting

The Board of Trustees Abilene Independent School District

A Workshop Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Abilene Independent School District will be held Thursday, April 3, 2025, beginning at 5:00 PM in the Alta Vista Room, One AISD Center 241 Pine Street, Abilene, Texas 79601.

The subjects to be discussed or considered or upon which any formal action may be taken are listed below. Items do not have to be taken in the same order as shown on this meeting notice. Unless removed from the consent agenda, items identified within the consent agenda will be acted on at one time.

- I. Call to Order
 - A. Oral Communication from the Public
 - B. Board/Superintendent Announcements/Information
- II. Board Workshop Items
 - A. Budget Workshop
 - B. Group Medical Insurance Proposal
 - C. Curriculum Adoption
 - D. Special Ed Review
- III. Agenda for Regular Meeting April 7, 2025
 - A. Consent Agenda Items
 - I. Finance: Budget Amendments
 - II. Finance: February Financials
 - III. Approval of Minutes
 - IV. TASB Policy Update 124
 - V. Group Medical Insurance for 2026
 - VI. Adoption of Reading Language Arts Curriculum for Grades 6-8
 - VII. Job Order Contract for Commercial Fencing and Installation, Proposal 014, 24-25
 - VIII. Job Order Contract for Concrete Services, Proposal 013, 24-25
 - IX. Certification of Provision of Instructional Materials 2025-2026
 - X. Quarterly Investment Report
 - B. Reports
 - I. Student Nutrition Report
 - II. Curriculum and Instruction Update
 - C. Business Items Requiring Board Action
 - I. Month of the Military Child Proclamation
 - II. Renaming of Mann Middle School
 - III. Audit Services
- IV. Adjournment

Abilene Independent School District Board Document - Agenda Item II.A.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

Meeting Type: Workshop

Item Type: Presentation

Future Action Required: No

If Yes, Month: N/A

Subject: Budget Workshop – April 2025

Background Information: The attached presentation is the first in a series of Board workshops aimed at informing the Board as the FY 26 budget and tax rates are being prepared. This presentation focuses on the overall budget timeline, budget impacts around the state, critical factors for Abilene ISD, budget strategy and budget priority for Fiscal Year 2026.

Attached Supporting Documents: Presentation

Fiscal Implications: None

Administrative Recommendation: None

Contact Person: Jennifer Hinds





Budget Workshop

Jennifer Hinds
Executive Director of Finance



Objectives

- Budget Timeline
- Budgets Around The State
- Critical Factors for Budget
- Historical Views
 - Enrollment
 - Average Daily Attendance
 - Revenue
 - Expenditures
- Budget Strategy
- Budget Priorities
- Upcoming Workshops



Budget Timeline

ABILENE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 2025-26 BUDGET CALENDAR

| ACTIVITY | PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE | COMPLETION DATE | COMPLETION STATUS |
|---|---|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Discuss budget calendar and other budget items | Cabinet | January 2025 | Completed |
| Ongoing assessment of 2025-2026 staffing needs | Assoc. Superintendent for the Development of Human Resources | February - June, 2025 | Ongoing |
| Discuss budget calendar with Board | Executive Director of Finance | February 2025 (Workshop) | Completed |
| Prepare budget workbooks with non-payroll allocations based on 2024-25 1st semester attendance | Executive Director of Finance | March 2025 | Completed |
| 2025-26 budget workbooks will be accessible to budget managers electronically | Executive Director of Finance | April 2025 | Completed |
| Discuss attendance projections, revenue forecasts, overall financial condition and other budget items | Executive Director of Finance Cabinet/Executive Leadership Team | April 2025 Executive Team | Completed |
| Budget Collaboration Meetings with all Budget Owners | Executive Director of Finance, Associate Supt for Development of Human Resources, Associate Supt for Academic and Student Support | April - May 2025 | |
| Receive estimated 2025 tax rolls from Taylor and Jones county | Appraisal Districts | April 28, 2025 | |
| 2025-26 Budget Overview and preliminary budget discussion with Board | Executive Director of Finance | May 2025 (Workshop) | |
| Discuss preliminary revenue estimates and special needs with Board | Executive Director of Finance | June 2025 (Workshop) | |
| Discuss preliminary expenditure projections with Board | Executive Director of Finance | July 2025 (Workshop) | |



Budget Timeline

| | | |
|---|---|------------------------------------|
| Receive certified 2025 tax rolls from Taylor and Jones county | Appraisal Districts | July 25, 2025 |
| Calculation of rollback tax rate and other information for public notice | Executive Director of Finance Taylor County Appraisal District | July 25, 2025 |
| Approval of budget parameters to be used for budget workbook and set public meeting date to discuss budget and proposed tax rate (Recommendation: August 25, 2025)* | Board of Trustees | August 2025 (Workshop) |
| Final discussions of 2025-26 preliminary budget with Board | Executive Director of Finance | August 2025 (Workshop) |
| Vote on proposed tax rate that will be published in the notice | Board of Trustees | August 2025 (Regular Meeting) |
| Publish <i>NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX RATE</i> | Executive Director of Finance | August 15, 2025* |
| Post summary of proposed budget on district website | Executive Director of Finance | August 15, 2025* |
| Conduct public hearing on 2025-26 proposed budget and tax rate, adopt budget, adopt tax rate | Board of Trustees | August 25, 2025 (Special Meeting)* |

THIS CALENDAR COMPLIES WITH THE LAWS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PREPARATION AND APPROVAL OF THE 2025-2026 BUDGET. IT ALSO COMPLIES WITH ALL TRUTH-IN-TAXATION LAWS.

*Date Subject to Change

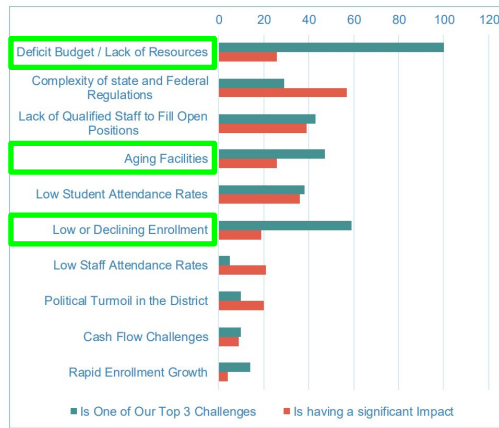


Budgets From Around the State

Source: TASBO Center for School Finance

Most Significant Challenges

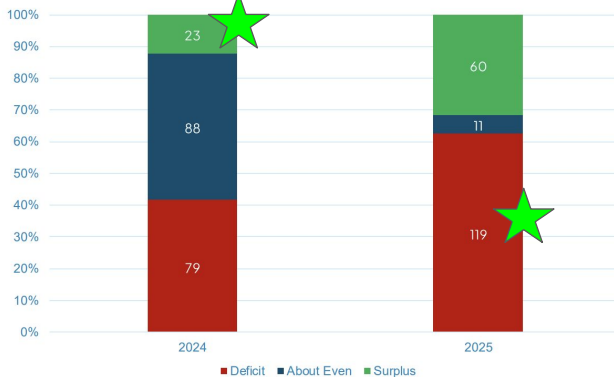
- Roughly 65% of respondents rated deficit budgets / lack of resources to be a significant challenge.
- Complexity of state and federal regulations has risen to rank second in the list. Roughly 44% of respondents ranked it as a significant challenge



Budgets From Around the State

Source: TASBO Center for School Finance

Deficit Budgets Continue



Roughly 42% of districts are reporting ending FY 2024 in a deficit. Nearly 63% think they will end FY 2025 in a deficit.

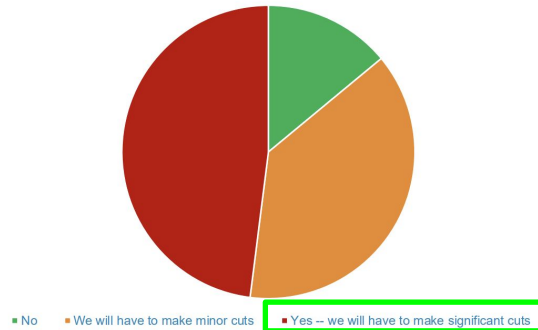


Budgets From Around the State

Source: TASBO Center for School Finance

Cuts Planned to Address Deficit Budgets

Planned Cuts for FY 2026

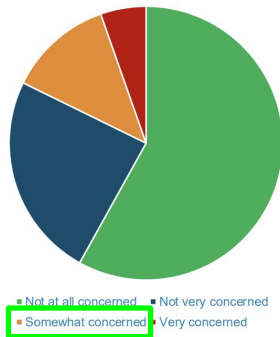


Budgets From Around the State

Source: TASBO Center for School Finance

Cash Flow: An Emerging Challenge?

Number of Districts



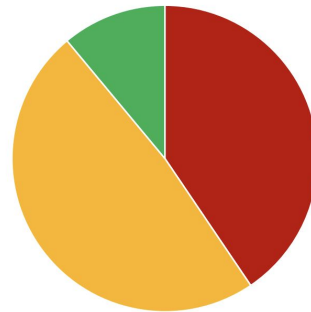
Nearly 18% of districts are somewhat or very concerned about cash flow this year.



Budgets From Around the State

Source: TASBO Center for School Finance

Plans for Salary Increases



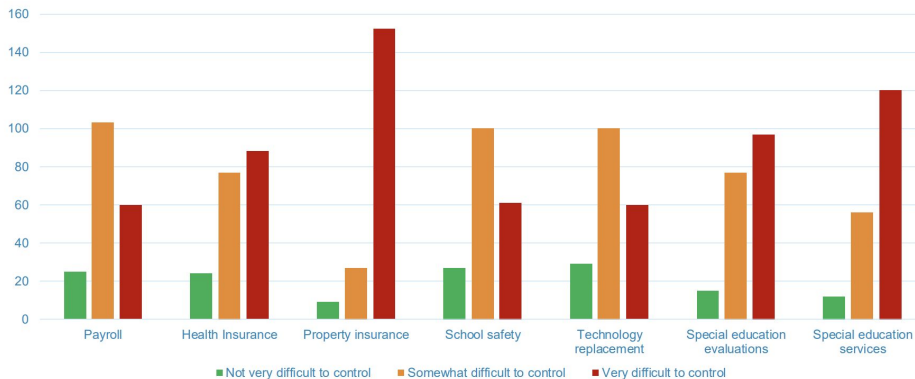
- No – I do not think we will be able to offer a pay increase
- Yes – but we will have to fund it out of other cuts
- Yes – we have sufficient resources to do this



Budgets From Around the State

Source: TASBO Center for School Finance

Hardest to Control Costs





Critical Factors Influencing the General Fund Budget



Enrollment & Attendance

Enrollment continues to decline. Attendance plays a key role in revenue projections.



Property Values & Tax Rates

As property values grow and tax rates are compressed, what does this mean for revenue?



Economy

Inflation, rising costs of utilities, and increased costs of insurance are just a few of the items putting strain on budgets.



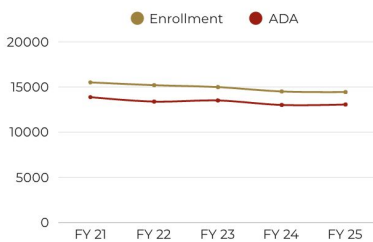
Texas Legislature

The 89th legislature is currently in session. What will change? Will we get new funding?

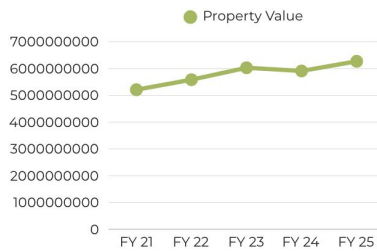


Critical Factors Influencing the General Fund Budget

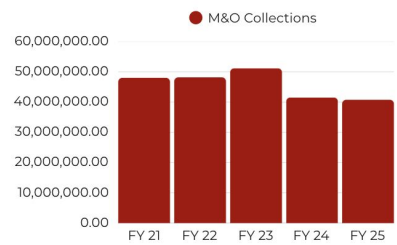
Enrollment & Average Daily Attendance



Certified Property Values



M&O Tax Collections

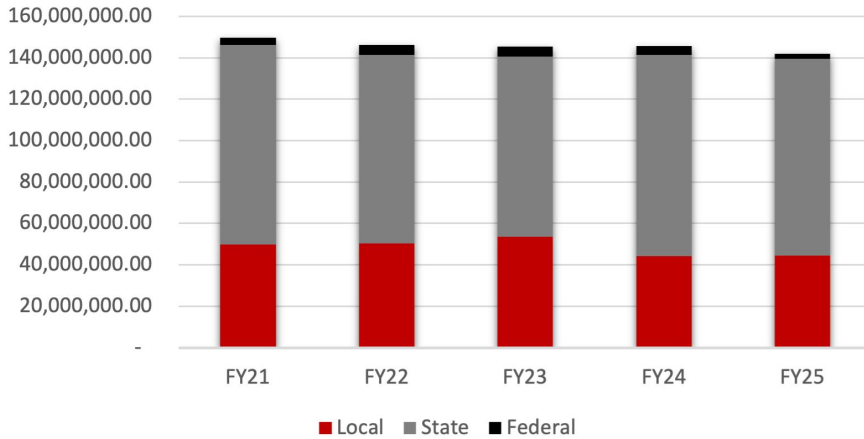


| | FY21 | FY22 | FY23 | FY24 | FY25 |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| M&O Rate | 0.9642 | 0.9249 | 0.8809 | 0.7135 | 0.6890 |
| I&S Rate | 0.3272 | 0.3535 | 0.3284 | 0.3191 | 0.3034 |
| Total Tax Rate | 1.2914 | 1.2784 | 1.2093 | 1.0326 | 0.9924 |



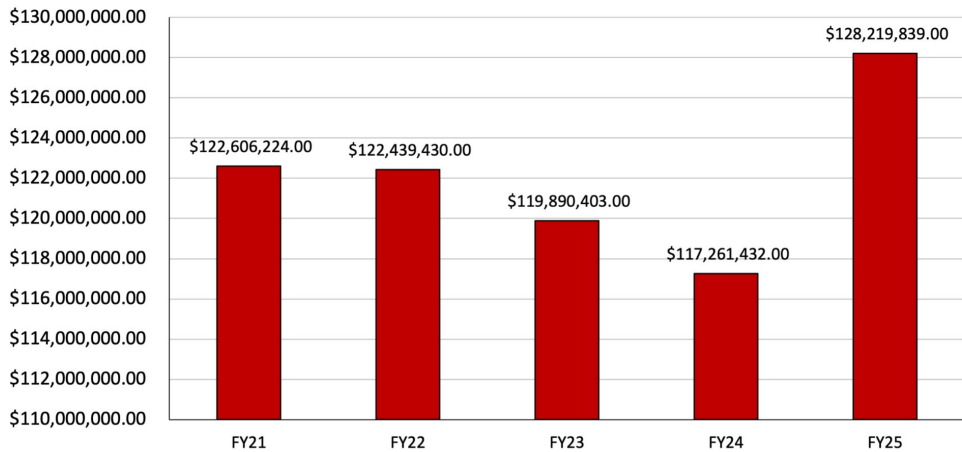
Critical Factors Influencing the General Fund Budget

Total General Fund Budgeted Revenue



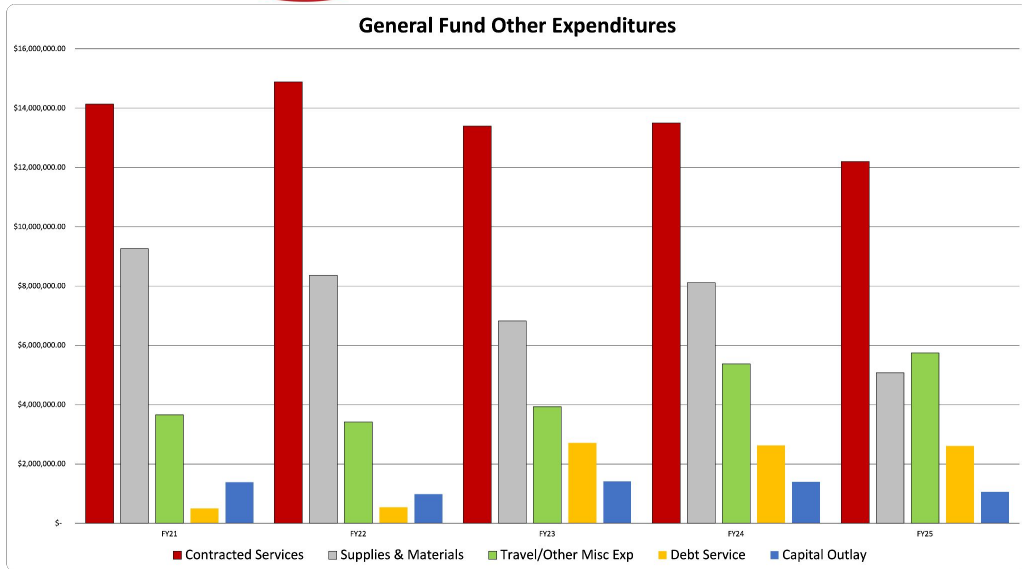
Critical Factors Influencing the General Fund Budget

Total General Fund Budgeted Payroll





Critical Factors Influencing the General Fund Budget



BUDGET STRATEGY RETURN ON INVESTMENT-5 KEY STEPS



1 Identify the Core Need

What is the fundamental student need we are trying to improve?

For which students and schools are we focusing on?



2 Consider a Broad Range of Strategies

What are the specific strategies we are already using?

What else could we do?



3 Articulate a Theory of Action

What specific actions does this strategy require?

What is the expected outcome(s) for how many targeted students at which schools?



4 Determine Cost and Investigate Sustainability

What is the full cost now and over time?

Could we do this more cost effectively?



5 Define Metrics for Evaluating Success

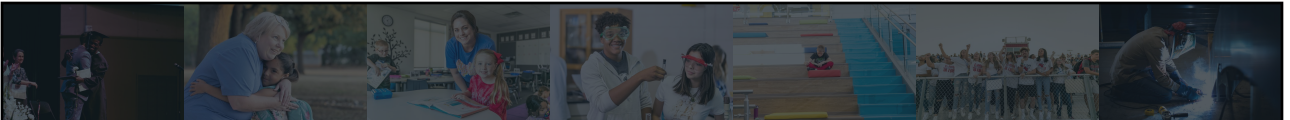
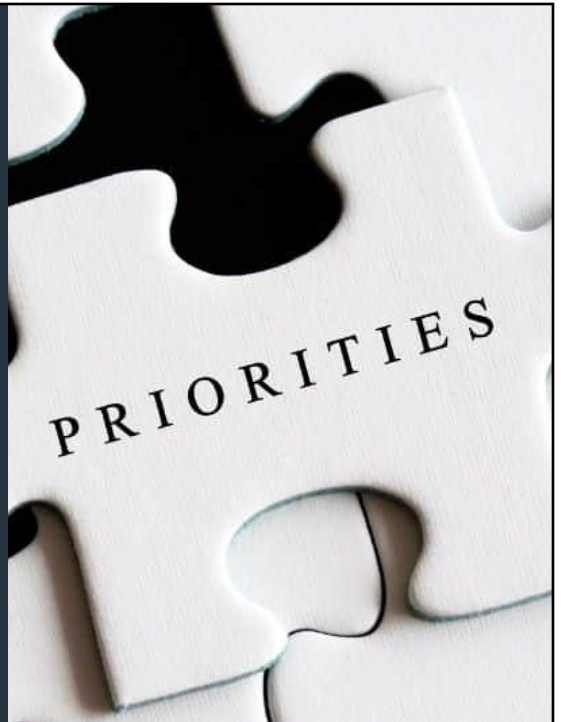
How will we know if we are implementing our strategy?

What change in outcomes do we expect?

How will we measure it?

Budget Priorities & Forward Thinking

- Aligning Payroll & Staffing Levels to Enrollment
- Aligning resources with priorities & outcomes
- 2025-2026 Compensation Discussion
- Appraisal Districts and Certified Values (April-July)
- Tax Rate Compression for 25-26 (August Adopt)
- Voter Approved Tax Rate Election
- Sustainable budget plan moving forward



Upcoming Budget Workshops

- May
 - Fiscal Year 2025 - How is it going?
 - Fiscal Year 2026 - Enrollment Projections & Revenue Workshop
- June
 - Preliminary Revenue Estimates
 - Preliminary Expenditure Estimates





Questions?



Budget Workshop

Jennifer Hinds
Executive Director of Finance

Abilene Independent School District Board Document - Agenda Item II.B.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

Meeting Type: Workshop

Item Type: Presentation

Future Action Required: Yes If Yes, Month: April

Subject: Group Health Insurance

Background Information:

In early January, a request for proposals was published for group health insurance. We received a total of three responses, but one was disqualified because it was for a self-insured plan and didn't meet the requirements of the RFP. Since then, our Benefits and Human Resources team has met with our partners at HUB, ranked bids, and determined a recommended plan for the 2025-2026 school year. Heath Haigood from HUB will lead the board through a presentation to share the recommended plan.

Attached Supporting Documents:

PowerPoint Presentation

Fiscal Implications:

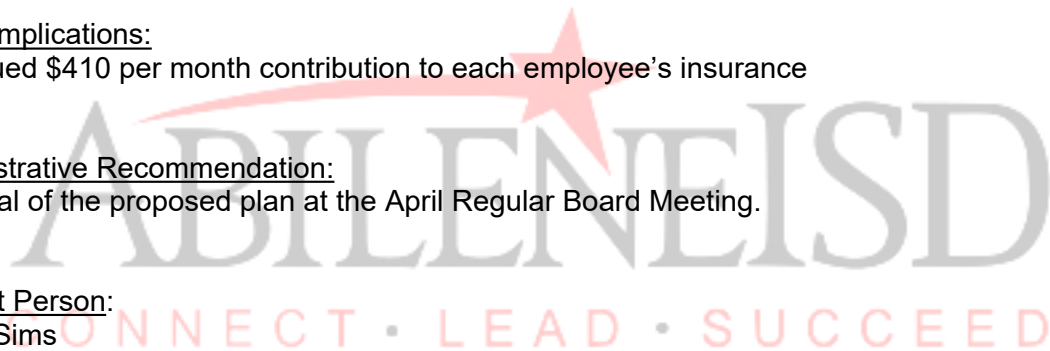
Continued \$410 per month contribution to each employee's insurance

Administrative Recommendation:

Approval of the proposed plan at the April Regular Board Meeting.

Contact Person:

Alison Sims





AIISD Health Insurance Overview & Recommendations

Heath Haigood

Senior Account Executive, Public Sector

April 3, 2025

Overview



- AISD released a Medical / COBRA Administration RFP on January 14, 2025
- Proposals were due on February 25, 2025

| MEDICAL CARRIER | RESPONDED / DECLINED |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| BCBSTX | Incumbent - Recommended |
| Baylor Scott & White | Responded |
| Curative | Responded - Disqualified |
| Cigna | Declined – Uncompetitive |
| Aetna | Declined – Uncompetitive |
| TX Health Benefits Pool | Declined – Uncompetitive |
| United Healthcare | Declined – Uncompetitive |

- HUB received Best and Final Offers on March 25, 2025
- HUB scored the Best and Final Offers on March 25, 2025

Financial Overview



| | Annual Plan Cost | \$ Difference from Current | % Difference from Current | Notes |
|--|------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Current Plan Cost - BCBSTX Health Plans 2024-25 | \$13,858,438 | - | - | - |
| Renewal Plan Cost - BCBSTX Health Plans 2025-26 | \$17,862,436 | \$4,003,998 | 28.9% | Includes \$500k One-Time Premium Credit Current Plan Designs |
| Proposed Plan Cost - BCBSTX Health Plans 2025-2026 | \$14,820,738 | \$962,300 | 6.9% | Includes \$500k One-Time Premium Credit Condensed to 4 Plan Options Includes HSA Plan with No Cost to Employee Only |
| Proposed BSWHP Health Plans 2025-26 | \$23,403,408 | \$9,544,970 | 68.9% | Uncompetitive |

BCBSTX Proposal - BAFO



| Plan | HSA 6000 - PPO (NEW) | | HSA 3300 - PPO | | HMO 2000 | | HMO 6000 | |
|--|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------|-----|
| Annual Deductible <i>Individual / Family</i> | \$6,000 / \$10,000 | \$6,000 / \$12,000 | \$3,300 / \$6,600 | \$6,000 / \$12,000 | \$2,000 / \$4,000 | N/A | \$6,000 / \$12,000 | N/A |
| Out-of-Pocket Maximum <i>Individual / Family</i> | \$10,000 / \$20,000 | Unlimited | \$6,900 / \$13,800 | Unlimited | \$6,000 / \$12,000 | N/A | \$7,000 / \$14,000 | N/A |
| Coinsurance | 20% | 50% | 20% | 50% | 20% | N/A | 20% | N/A |
| Office Visits <i>PCP / Specialist</i> | 20% | 50% | 20% | 50% | \$45 / \$55 | | \$45 / \$55 | |
| <i>Telemedicine</i> | 20% | 50% | 20% | 50% | \$0 | N/A | \$0 | N/A |
| Urgent Care | 20% | 50% | 20% | 50% | \$100 | N/A | \$100 | N/A |
| Emergency Room | \$750 Copay + 20% AD | | \$750 Copay + 20% AD | | \$750 Copay + 20% AD | N/A | \$750 Copay + 20% AD | N/A |
| Retail Pharmacy | | | | | | | | |
| Deductible | Integrated with Medical | | Integrated with Medical | | N/A | | N/A | |
| Generic / Tier 1 <i>30-Day Supply</i> | \$20, \$0 for certain generics | | \$20, \$0 for certain generics | | \$20, \$0 for certain generics | | \$20, \$0 for certain generics | |
| Brand / Tier 2 & 3 <i>Preferred / Non-Preferred</i> | \$50 / \$80 | | \$50 / \$80 | | \$50 / \$80 | | \$50 / \$80 | |
| Specialty / Tier 4 & 5 | \$150 / \$150 | | \$150 / \$150 | | \$150 / \$150 | | \$150 / \$150 | |

| ESTIMATED ENROLLMENT | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|------------|
| <i>Employee Only</i> | 89 | 779 | 70 | 338 |
| <i>Employee + Spouse</i> | 5 | 39 | 1 | 8 |
| <i>Employee + Child(ren)</i> | 16 | 229 | 16 | 89 |
| <i>Employee + Family</i> | 6 | 43 | 2 | 15 |
| Total Employees by Plan | 116 | 1090 | 89 | 450 |
| Total Employees | 1,745 | | | |

| RATES | HSA 6000 - PPO (NEW) | HSA 3300 - PPO | HMO 2000 | HMO 6000 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Proposed | 2025-2026 | 2025-2026 | 2025-2026 | 2025-2026 |
| Emp Only | \$409.69 | \$619.65 | \$736.11 | \$505.36 |
| Emp + Spouse | \$827.04 | \$1,250.87 | \$1,485.98 | \$1,202.15 |
| Emp + Child(ren) | \$717.64 | \$1,085.40 | \$1,289.41 | \$885.21 |
| Emp + Family | \$1,199.84 | \$1,814.72 | \$2,155.80 | \$1,480.00 |
| Monthly Total | \$59,279 | \$858,081 | \$77,956 | \$281,413 |
| Annual Total | \$711,347 | \$10,296,970 | \$935,470 | \$3,376,951 |
| Combined Annual Total | \$14,820,738 | | | |
| \$ Differential from Current | \$962,300 | | | |
| % Differential from Current | 6.9% | | | |

Proposal Tabulation



Proposal Tabulation

**Abilene Independent School District
Health Insurance
Proposal #009, 24-25**



| | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Contracting Firm | Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas | Baylor Scott & White Health Plan |
| Initial Proposal Price | \$17,862,436 | \$23,403,408 |
| Best and Final Proposal Price | \$14,820,739 | \$23,403,408 |

Evaluation of Proposers



Evaluation of Proposers

Abilene Independent School District
Health Insurance
Proposal #009, 24-25



| Evaluation Criteria Used for Ranking Proposers | Points | BCBSTX | BSWHP |
|--|------------|-----------|-----------|
| Proposal Price | | | |
| Purchase Price | 40 | 34 | 28 |
| Reputation of the Vendor and Vendor's Goods or Services | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Quality of the Vendor's Goods or Services | 30 | 30 | 26 |
| Extent to which the Goods or Services Meet the District's Needs | 25 | 24 | 24 |
| Vendor's Past Relationship with the District | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Impact on the Ability of the District to Comply with Laws and Rules Relating to Historically Underutilized Businesses | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Long-Term Cost to the District to Acquire the Vendor's Goods or Services | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| For a Contract for Goods and Services, Other than Goods and Services Related to Telecommunications and Information Services, Building Construction and Maintenance or Instructional Materials, whether the Vendor or Vendor's Ultimate Parent Company or Majority Owner 1) Has its Principal Place of Business in this State, or 2) Employees at least 500 Persons in this State | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Any Other Relevant Factor(s) Specifically Listed in these Specifications | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 100 | 93 | 83 |
| Ranking of Bidders (Ranking Value) | | 1 | 2 |

BCBSTX

| Non-Responsive Vendors <i>(Vendors that obtained plans but did not respond)</i> |
|---|
| Cigna |
| Aetna |
| TX Health Benefits Pool |
| United Healthcare |

Thank you.

BSWHP Proposal



| Plan | BSW Access PPO 1500-8k | | BSW Access PPO 2500-8.5k | | BSW Access PPO HSA 3300-5.25K | | BSW Plus HMO 1500-5k | | BSW Plus HMO 5000-7K | |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------|-----|
| Annual Deductible <i>Individual / Family</i> | \$1,200 / \$2,400 | \$2,400 / \$4,800 | \$2,500 / \$5,000 | \$5,000 / \$10,000 | \$3,200 / \$6,000 | \$6,000 / \$12,000 | \$1,500 / \$3,000 | N/A | \$5,000 / \$10,000 | N/A |
| Out-of-Pocket Maximum <i>Individual / Family</i> | \$7,000 / \$14,000 | Unlimited | \$8,000 / \$16,000 | Unlimited | \$6,900 / \$13,800 | Unlimited | \$5,000 / \$10,000 | N/A | \$7,000 / \$14,000 | N/A |
| Coinsurance | 20% | 50% | 20% | 50% | 20% | 50% | 20% | N/A | 20% | N/A |
| Office Visits <i>PCP / Specialist</i> | \$30 / \$45 | 50% | \$30 / \$45 | 50% | 20% | 50% | \$30 / \$45 | | \$30 / \$45 | |
| <i>Telemedicine</i> | \$0 | 50% | \$0 | 50% | 20% | 50% | \$0 | N/A | \$0 | N/A |
| Urgent Care | \$75 | 50% | \$75 | 50% | 20% | 50% | \$75 | N/A | \$75 | N/A |
| Emergency Room | \$500 Copay + 20% AD | | \$500 Copay + 20% AD | | \$500 Access Fee + 20% AD | | \$500 Copay + 20% AD | N/A | \$500 Copay + 20% AD | N/A |
| Retail Pharmacy | | | | | | | | | | |
| Deductible | N/A | | N/A | | Integrated with Medical | | N/A | | N/A | |
| Generic / Tier 1 <i>30-Day Supply</i> | \$10, \$0 for certain generics | | \$10, \$0 for certain generics | | \$10, \$0 for certain generics | | \$10, \$0 for certain generics | | \$10, \$0 for certain generics | |
| Brand / Tier 2 & 3 <i>Preferred / Non-Preferred</i> | \$40 / \$70 | | \$40 / \$70 | | \$40 / \$70 | | \$40 / \$70 | | \$40 / \$70 | |
| Specialty / Tier 4 & 5 | \$100 / \$150 | | \$100 / \$150 | | \$100 / \$150 | | \$100 / \$150 | | \$100 / \$150 | |

| ESTIMATED ENROLLMENT | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| <i>Employee Only</i> | 286 | 493 | 89 | 70 | 338 |
| <i>Employee + Spouse</i> | 18 | 21 | 5 | 1 | 8 |
| <i>Employee + Child(ren)</i> | 75 | 154 | 16 | 16 | 89 |
| <i>Employee + Family</i> | 13 | 30 | 6 | 2 | 15 |
| Total Employees by Plan | 392 | 698 | 116 | 89 | 450 |
| Total Employees | | | 1,745 | | |

| RATES | BSW Access PPO 1500-8k | BSW Access PPO 2500-8.5k | BSW Access PPO HSA 3300-5.25K | BSW Plus HMO 1500-5k | BSW Plus HMO 5000-7K |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Proposed | 2025-2026 | 2025-2026 | 2025-2026 | 2025-2026 | 2025-2026 |
| Emp Only | \$985.13 | \$888.50 | \$826.17 | \$961.73 | \$809.21 |
| Emp + Spouse | \$1,989.78 | \$1,793.60 | \$1,667.09 | \$1,942.26 | \$1,632.63 |
| Emp + Child(ren) | \$1,762.43 | \$1,556.34 | \$1,446.65 | \$1,685.23 | \$1,416.77 |
| Emp + Family | \$2,887.12 | \$2,602.08 | \$2,418.20 | \$2,818.08 | \$2,368.08 |
| Monthly Total | \$487,278 | \$793,435 | \$119,520 | \$101,863 | \$448,188 |
| Annual Total | \$5,847,336 | \$9,521,218 | \$1,434,242 | \$1,222,358 | \$5,378,253 |
| Combined Annual Total | | | \$23,403,408 | | |
| \$ Differential from Current | | | \$9,544,970 | | |
| % Differential from Current | | | 68.9% | | |

Abilene Independent School District Board Document - Agenda Item II.C.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

Meeting Type: Board Workshop

Item Type: Presentation

Future Action Required: Yes

If Yes, Month: April 7, 2025

Subject: Middle School (6-8) RLA Curriculum-Amplify

Background Information:

This report provides information regarding Amplify, a new curriculum being requested for Middle School RLA. Implementation would begin in the 25-26 school year.

Attached Supporting Documents:

Curriculum & Instruction: Middle School RLA-Amplify Presentation

Fiscal Implications:

Use of grant money and textbook designated funds

Administrative Recommendation:

Approve the change in Middle School RLA Curriculum

Contact Person:

Lyndsey Williamson, Executive Director of Secondary Education

Patti Blue, Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

Margaret Hope, Secondary ELAR Coordinator



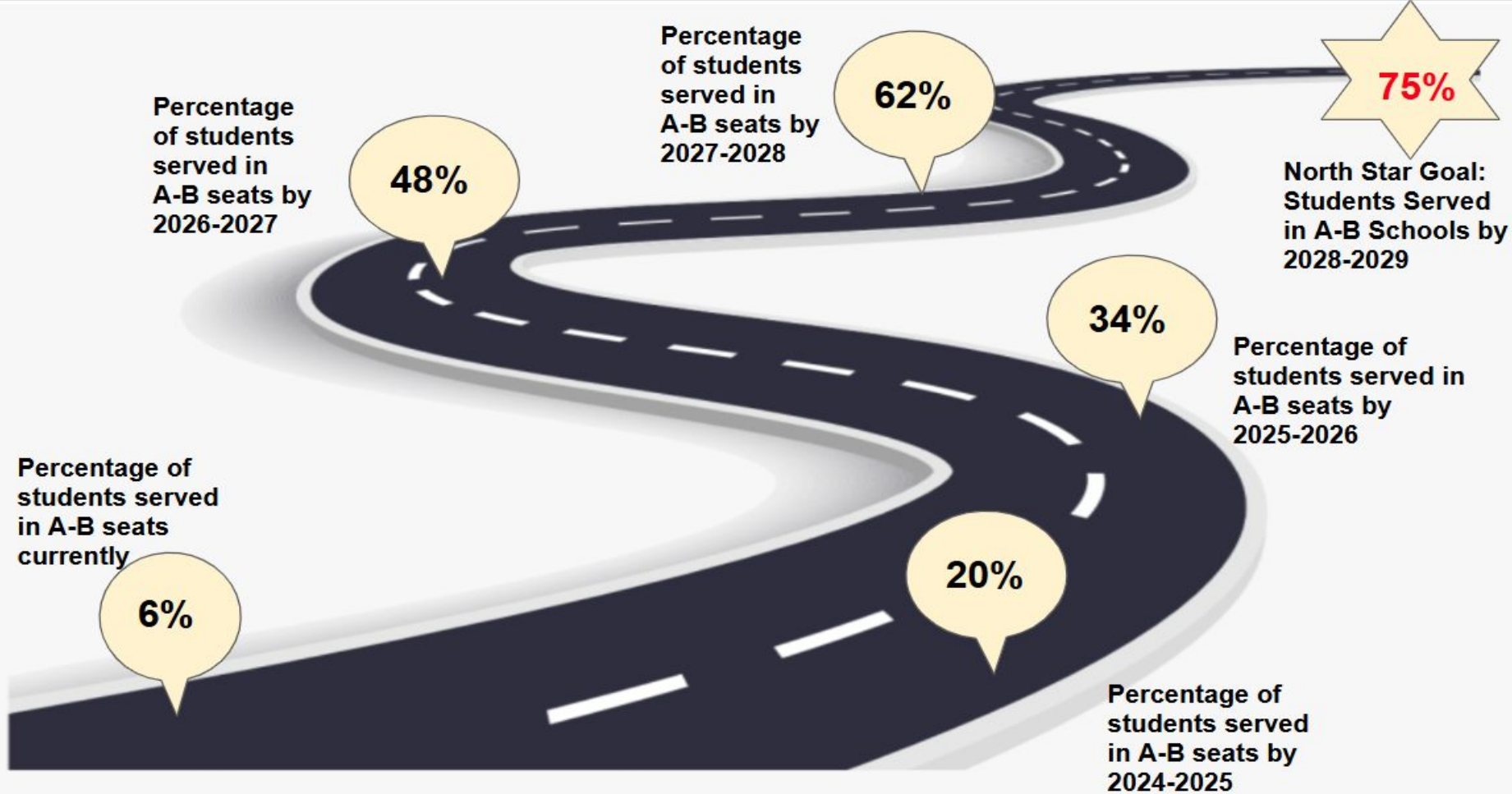
**Adoption of Amplify for MS
RLA
Abilene ISD**

*Mrs. Lyndsey
Williamson*

*Executive Director for
Secondary Education*

North Star Goal

By the end of the 2028-2029 school year, 75% of students in Abilene ISD will be in A or B seats.



Percentage of students served in A-B seats by 2026-2027

48%

Percentage of students served in A-B seats by 2027-2028

62%

North Star Goal: Students Served in A-B Schools by 2028-2029

75%

Percentage of students served in A-B seats by 2025-2026

34%

Percentage of students served in A-B seats currently

6%

20%

Percentage of students served in A-B seats by 2024-2025

RLA STAAR Data

| | | 12-13 | 13-14 | 14-15 | 15-16 | 16-17 | 17-18 | 18-19 | 20-21 | 21-22 | 22-23 | 23-24 |
|--------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Reading-3rd | TX | 81 | 76 | 77 | 73 | 73 | 77 | 76 | 67 | 76 | 76 | 74 |
| | AISD | 78 | 75 | 78 | 73 | 71 | 76 | 70 | 61 | 69 | 71 | 69 |
| Reading-4th | TX | 72 | 74 | 74 | 75 | 70 | 73 | 75 | 63 | 77 | 77 | 82 |
| | AISD | 72 | 71 | 70 | 77 | 67 | 66 | 71 | 54 | 67 | 71 | 76 |
| Reading-5th | TX | 87 | 86 | 87 | 81 | 82 | 84 | 86 | 73 | 81 | 81 | 78 |
| | AISD | 87 | 89 | 85 | 80 | 81 | 80 | 82 | 66 | 75 | 73 | 72 |
| Reading-6th | TX | 72 | 78 | 77 | 69 | 69 | 69 | 68 | 62 | 70 | 77 | 75 |
| | AISD | 73 | 74 | 70 | 66 | 64 | 65 | 60 | 52 | 56 | 69 | 68 |
| Reading-7th | TX | 78 | 76 | 76 | 71 | 73 | 74 | 76 | 69 | 80 | 78 | 72 |
| | AISD | 79 | 77 | 72 | 61 | 67 | 68 | 70 | 59 | 70 | 70 | 60 |
| Reading-8th | TX | 90 | 90 | 88 | 87 | 86 | 86 | 86 | 73 | 83 | 83 | 78 |
| | AISD | 91 | 91 | 88 | 83 | 82 | 84 | 83 | 63 | 70 | 77 | 68 |
| E1 | TX | 69 | 67 | 71 | 65 | 64 | 65 | 68 | 67 | 65 | 72 | 67 |
| | AISD | 68 | 70 | 69 | 66 | 60 | 60 | 63 | 62 | 60 | 67 | 62 |
| E2 | TX | 79 | 69 | 72 | 67 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 71 | 72 | 74 | 75 |
| | AISD | 75 | 68 | 71 | 71 | 64 | 67 | 64 | 67 | 71 | 72 | 72 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Writing- 4th | TX | 70 | 73 | 70 | 69 | 65 | 63 | 67 | 53 | X | X | X |
| | AISD | 71 | 69 | 63 | 68 | 62 | 54 | 60 | 45 | X | X | X |
| Writing- 7th | TX | 71 | 72 | 73 | 69 | 70 | 69 | 70 | 63 | X | X | X |
| | AISD | 75 | 73 | 64 | 61 | 59 | 62 | 60 | 55 | X | X | X |

Program description



The **Strong Foundations Planning** grant provides support to LEAs to develop a strong instructional framework in **math** or **literacy**, provides optional adoption supports in selecting new high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) if LEAs choose to make a materials switch; and trainings to support creating systems to effectively manage instruction at the district level.

Strong Foundations Planning

- A 50 member AISD Strong Foundations Planning Committee made up of teachers, administrators, and instructional specialists have led the work through the Strong Foundations Planning Grant.
- A smaller group, The Strong Foundations Planning Leadership Team, has led the work and guidance for moving forward.
- The majority of Summer and Fall of 2024 was spent learning more about what good Reading Language Arts instruction looks like and what it should include. Based on this learning, the Strong Foundations Planning Committee developed a learning framework.

Literacy Instructional Framework

Our Vision

All Abilene ISD educators will prioritize high quality, intentional literacy instruction through engagement in relevant reading and writing experiences to equip our students to be critical thinkers and effective communicators.

Our Beliefs

Foundational Skills

We believe in the implementation of explicit, systematic foundational literacy instruction for **ALL** students which results in skilled readers and writers. We consistently support students in the transition from learning to read to more thoughtful comprehension.

Equipped Students

Strong Tier 1 Instruction

We believe students from **ALL** backgrounds and performance levels should have access to strong Tier 1 instruction everyday, while creating a culture that fosters a love for literacy.

Text-based Responses

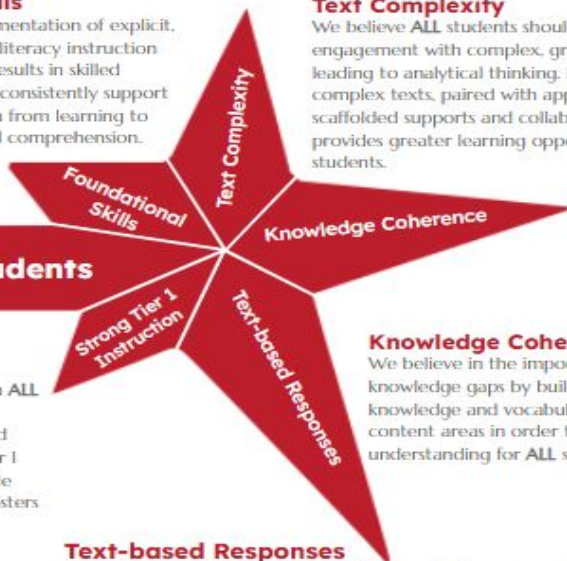
We believe creating text-based written and oral responses across all content areas results in deeper understanding and critical literacy skills for **ALL** students.

Text Complexity

We believe **ALL** students should have daily engagement with complex, grade level texts leading to analytical thinking. Interaction with complex texts, paired with appropriate scaffolded supports and collaboration, provides greater learning opportunities for students.

Knowledge Coherence

We believe in the importance of closing knowledge gaps by building background knowledge and vocabulary across all content areas in order to increase understanding for **ALL** students.



Our Actions

District Leaders

- Create systems aligned to the shared vision of literacy instruction
- Provide quality materials, intentional professional development for campus leadership and teachers, and consistent instructional support in order to reach literacy goals
- Collaborate with campus leadership and teachers to make necessary adjustments to district support

Campus Leaders

- Create opportunities for collaborative learning across the campus and grade levels aligned to a shared vision for literacy
- Engage in professional development alongside teachers and provide ongoing support
- Monitor literacy instruction and analyze data in order to guide coaching conversations and professional development opportunities
- Protect time for teachers to effectively plan and implement high quality Tier 1 instruction

Teachers

- Daily internalize and implement lessons that prioritize a systematic approach to the development of foundational skills, fluency, vocabulary, reading, and writing
- Implement the scope and sequence of high-quality materials with fidelity
- Plan daily instruction around the complex, grade level texts and provide opportunities to engage analytically and build background knowledge
- Identify knowledge demands and vocabulary of each text and plan to systematically build knowledge students need to access the text
- Plan questions and responses that require students to provide text evidence through written and oral responses using academic language in complete sentences
- Provide students daily, authentic writing experiences that build skills to communicate ideas and apply new learning
- Use student data to monitor and adjust instruction to provide strong Tier 1 instruction as well as necessary scaffolds and supports

Students

- Actively engage in learning by participating in class discussions, asking questions, seeking clarification when needed, and collaborating respectfully in order to deepen comprehension
- Be willing to take risks, give your best effort, accept feedback, and believe that mistakes are a part of learning
- Embrace challenges in literacy by reading complex texts, engaging in authentic writing experiences, and thinking critically
- Take ownership of your learning and academic achievement

Families

- Prioritize student attendance
- Read and discuss books with your student(s)
- Communicate openly with students, teachers, and school
- Encourage your student to actively participate at school in order to reach their goals



Strong Foundations Planning

TEA Learning Labs are opportunities for other districts to come and observe HQIM in classrooms.

Learning Lab Campus Visits:

- October 2nd: 17 elementary teachers and administrators went to Crowley ISD.
- October 23rd: 6 secondary teachers and administrators went to Lubbock ISD.
- November 14th: 17 elementary teachers and administrators went to Lubbock ISD to observe Bluebonnet (piloting).
- January 16th: 13 secondary teachers and administrators went to Lubbock ISD.

Strong Foundations Planning

In the Learning Lab classrooms, the group observed the following:

- Consistent curriculum and instruction across the campuses
- Engaged students asking relevant and thoughtful questions
- Significant time spent on reading and writing tasks
- Lessons centered around complex texts
- Higher order questions asked by teachers and students

Amplify Curriculum Overview

Amplify is a curriculum that is organized by thematic units that integrates cross-genre texts. It focuses on high-quality rigorous texts and weaves in the TEKS using higher order questions and activities. It emphasizes building background knowledge throughout the unit.



6A: Dahl & Narrative

28 Lessons



6B: Mysteries & Investigations

32 Lessons



6C: The Chocolate Collection

26 Lessons



6D: The Greeks

27 Lessons



6E: Summer of the Mariposas

27 Lessons



6F: The Titanic Collection

25 Lessons



6G: Beginning Story Writing

1 Lesson



Grammar 6th Gr

37 Lessons



7A: Red Scarf Girl & Narrative

31 Lessons



7B: Character & Conflict

30 Lessons



7C: Brain Science

25 Lessons



7D: Poetry & Poe

29 Lessons



7E: The Frida & Diego Collection

25 Lessons



7F: The Gold Rush Collection

25 Lessons



7G: Intermediate Story Writing

1 Lesson



Grammar 7th Gr

37 Lessons



8A: Perspectives & Narrative

27 Lessons



8B: Liberty & Equality

32 Lessons



8C: Science & Science Fiction

29 Lessons



8D: Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet

22 Lessons



8E: Holocaust: Memory & Meaning

21 Lessons



8F: The Space Race Collection

25 Lessons



8G: Advanced Story Writing

1 Lesson



Grammar 8th Gr

37 Lessons

Why did we select Amplify?

Initial conversation began with Mann's STEM redesign. They had to select a curriculum that was either state-adopted or satisfied a rubric that aligned with RBIS (cost for Mann will be covered by grant money).

After the visits to Lubbock ISD to see the RBIS in secondary classrooms, we began more conversations about Amplify in middle school.

With RBIS becoming increasingly emphasized by TEA, a curriculum that aligns is important.

It will be helpful to have all four middle schools teaching the same curriculum. We will also have the same model of curriculum K-8 with the adoption of Amplify at middle school (cost for Clack, Craig, and Madison will be covered by textbook designated funds).

Amplify Pilot

Each middle school had at least one teacher pilot Amplify at the beginning of the spring semester.

Margaret Hope, Secondary RLA Coordinator, met with each one weekly to discuss planning, progress, and to internalize.

Teachers have noticed an increase in engagement, higher order thinking, and writing skills during the pilot.

Some piloting teachers plan to continue to use Amplify after STAAR for the rest of the year.

Amplify Pilot Reflection

Rachel Zayas, 7th RLA at Craig: “As I am still navigating and getting to know the system, the most beneficial thing I have learned is the differentiated levels. Today with the Write Activity, students had sentence stems that helped support them with what I have been modeling and saying all along. It seemed to "click" better with them. As for student engagement, students are mostly ALL engaged, better behaved, and enjoying the "Red Scarf Girl" unit. It seems to be getting easier as we continue to move along. For that, I am grateful and cannot wait to see growth in their vocabulary and learning.”

Lacey Henderson, 8th RLA at Madison: “I am loving the varied assignments that Amplify incorporates. It is including resources that students need for those lessons, also. The only issue we have come across is the slow loading of articles and images as the students are working through the lessons.”

Jennifer Mansker, 8th RLA at Madison: “Piloting Amplify has been a positive experience in 8th grade. Seeing it in action in Lubbock ISD was very helpful. Once we figured out the ins and outs of the platform, the flexibility has been wonderful. The complex texts and above level questioning has been very helpful. I enjoy not wondering what material I will be using to teach skills. We are learning how to take the lessons and scaffold for academic students vs. honors students as well. I also really like the varied activities it includes- we are hitting all learning styles.”

Questions?

Abilene Independent School District Board Document - Agenda Item II.D.

Meeting Date: April 3, 2025

Meeting Type: Workshop

Item Type: Workshop

Future Action Required: NO

If Yes, Month: N/A

Subject: TCASE Special Education Review

Background Information:

With the transition to new leadership as well as the many other district innovations, this is a good time to have an outside group come in and give us feedback regarding our Special Education program. Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE) offers these services across the state. They will look at all aspects of our program to help us ensure that we are using our resources to provide the appropriate services to our students.

Attached Supporting Documents:

NONE

Fiscal Implications:

No impact to General Fund

Administrative Recommendation:

We have started the process of having this review conducted. We should have an Executive Summary at the end of May, first of June. This report will help us as we finalize plans for the 25-26 school year and beyond.

Contact Person:

Patti Blue



Board of Trustees Workshop

April 3, 2025



Special Education Review

Patti Blue
Associate Superintendent for
Curriculum and Instruction



Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE)

TCASE's mission is to support special education administrators in Texas by providing resources, networking opportunities, and professional development.



Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE)

Purpose:

The purpose of this program review is to evaluate Abilene ISD's special education services in alignment with best practices and compliance standards. This review will identify strengths, areas for improvement, and actionable recommendations to enhance student outcomes and overall program effectiveness.



Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE)

Best Practices:

The review will assess the district's special education framework for best practices, ensuring equitable access to high-quality instruction, appropriate supports, and inclusive learning environments.



Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE)

Recommendations:

An executive summary will outline key commendations and recommendations to maintain and enhance the district's service delivery model. The report will provide:

- Targeted strategies for improving instructional practices and service implementation.
- A cost analysis of proposed enhancements.
- A comparative analysis with similarly sized districts to benchmark performance and resource allocation.

This review will serve as a roadmap for continuous improvement, ensuring that Abilene ISD remains at the forefront of excellence in special education.



Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE)

Timeline:

April 29th , 30th, and May 1st (TCASE staff in Abilene.)

The executive summary will be provided within 30 days of the last site visit day



Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE)

Site Visits:

Site visits are a critical component of the process that allow our evaluators to conduct one-on-one interviews with campus administration and visit classrooms to observe the efficiency and effectiveness of staff usage in all instructional arrangements. Each site visit should include a 30 minute interview with the principal and structured classroom observations to include the full continuum offered. Each site visit schedule should allow for approximately one and a half to two hours on campus including the principal interview.



Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE)

Interviews with Stakeholders:

Stakeholders individual interviews will be conducted with central office and district leadership personnel. Information provided will be helpful to understand the systems and structures that drive staffing decisions and ultimately, the provision of services to students with disabilities and the district's requirement of paperwork and documentation of services.



Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE)

Focus Groups with Stakeholders:

Stakeholders Structured group interviews will be conducted with representative groups of campus staff and service providers.

Information provided will be helpful to understand the systems and structures that drive staffing decisions and ultimately, the provision of services to students with disabilities and the district's requirement of paperwork and documentation of services. Each Focus group should include no more than 12 participants.



Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE)

Possible Stakeholder Focus Groups:

- ARD Facilitators
- SLPs
- LSSPs
- Elementary Special Education Teachers
- Middle School Special Education Teachers
- High School Special Education Teachers
- Elementary General Education Teachers
- Middle School General Education Teachers
- High School General Education Teachers
- Special Education Teachers by program- Life Skills, Behavior, ECSE, Autism, etc.
- Assistant Principals
- Parents



Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE)

Documentation and Process Review:

A thorough review of documents will be conducted to gather background information on the staffing process and utilization of personnel. A review of existing documents will help the evaluator to understand the history, philosophy, culture, and operation of the program.



Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education (TCASE)

Surveys of Stakeholders:

Stakeholder Surveys allow evaluators to gather large amounts of feedback directly from individuals who are affected by program decisions. Survey questions will be provided to the district, and a survey window will be determined. The district will send the survey to stakeholders. The perceptual data collected will be analyzed and included in the executive summary.

Surveys will be sent to district staff and parents of special education students.



Questions