

COVNA Beverages, Bonds, and Boundaries  
With AISD District 7 Rep Yasmin Wagner  
Sunday April 2, 2017  
Start time 2:15pm  
End time 4:00pm

Ms. Wagner: Started with a short history of the FMP process which started 2 years ago and assessed 130 campuses with a facility/structural score and an educational suitability score. The FMP addresses recommendations across AISD but also addresses each campus individually. The intent is to review the FMP every two years to stay current with needs. In regards to Cowan specifically, Cowan is over-enrolled by roughly 200 students and its facility score was one of the lowest in the district due to major systems failure. It's been slated for priority group 1 - Timeframe 1-6 years due to the state of the facility with a review of enrollment, over and under, for Baranoff, Kiker, Cowan, Kocurek, and Boone. What are the needs? Where can we find relief? Over-enrollment needs are a priority at Baranoff, Kiker, and Cowan. For relief, look at nearby under-enrolled schools, Kocurek and Boone.

#### BOUNDARY QUESTIONS:

Michelle: What are the proposed boundaries? When would this be implemented? We don't know yet. The recommendation is to look at streets and tracking patterns. The boundary process starts with the [Boundary Advisory Council \(BAC\)](#). The BAC will have initial discussions and then meet at the local school during the [Campus Advisory Council \(CAC\)](#). An initial boundary draft will be developed and proposed, then out for community input, then a revised draft, if necessary, and then either out for additional community input or then voted by the Board for fulfillment. This must be voted on or before the December board meeting for the upcoming school year.

The BAC would not be engaged until we determine the status of the November bond package. If the November bond package is approved then they would have to determine the actual slate of construction. Once the construction timeline is approved then the BAC may start boundary change discussions. **The next CAC meeting at Cowan is this Thursday, April 6 at 5:30pm.**

Laurie:

Is the transfer of Baranoff students to Cowan off the table? If not, who will make that decision?  
Undecided.

Rita:

I hope we can get clarification not only on the process regarding boundary changes but the criteria that is considered when drawing the boundaries. Some may not know that Conva had tracked to Bowie before it was changed to Akins - Unsure when those boundary changes took effect but most likely occurred with the opening of Akins.

What is the process and criteria that is considered when drawing boundaries? Criteria includes walkability, desire to not split up apartment complexes or tight-knit neighborhoods, and tracking

patterns. The boundary process is very difficult and at the end it may not be what we want but AISD will try to accommodate as many needs as they can and keep the process transparent.

Tina:

Kiker is at 140%. Cowan and Baranoff are at 127%. Why are we worried about Baranoff relief when Kiker is the most over capacity? When Grey Rock is developed, Baranoff will have roughly 189 kids above capacity. With Kiker relief, the new SW school would take about 309 students from Baranoff and Kiker.

Matt:

I've heard claims that the Baranoff Principal told the Cowan Principal that Baranoff kids will have to go to Cowan because their parents do not want them to move to a lower tiered school thus forcing Cowan kids to Kocurek. Can you please comment on this? Calling schools lower-tiered is unfair because they are amazing schools and you are encouraged to visit them. Kocurek has a new Principal and has already made improvements. I don't think that the Principal of Baranoff would discuss that.

Michelle/Rachel:

If one school (Baranoff) is overcrowded, why not route those new students to the uncrowded school (Kocurek) Instead of another crowded or beyond capacity school (Cowan). We're sensitive to feeder patterns but everything is to be determined. Using feeding patterns is problematic because clean tracking is not always the case. A school's vertical team is not always the tracking school. Cowan is lumped into Bowie but it can also have Akins' kids.

Do school principals have the authority to set school boundaries? Follow-up: Who has the authority? The BAC determine boundaries. How do you learn more about BAC including how to get on the BAC? Info is available online. The current committee membership is listed [here](#). To apply, go to <https://www.austinisd.org/advisory-bodies/application>.

Rachel:

Kocurek is closer to Shady Hollow. What is the logic behind proposing Baranoff kids go to Cowan? Baranoff and Cowan were in a cohort grouping through the FMP process.

Annie:

According to the proposed Facility Master Plan, it shows 2 vertical feeder plan proposals that could affect COVNA: a) Cowan will feed into Bowie High and 2) Kocurek will feed into Akins. Currently COVNA is zoned to Cowan but feeds into Akins. Which current criteria would AISD use to decide what feeder group we go into, our currently zoned high school of Akins or our currently zoned elementary of Cowan? It's not a clean feeder pattern. You may be lumped into a vertical team that does not match your feeder high school.

The FMP is showing that the timeframe for Cowan to take in Baranoff students is being moved up. What does that mean? The original timeframe for renovation was 6-12 years but it was

moved to 1-6 year timeframe because of structural assessment not because of Baranoff overcrowding. An edit to the FMP has been submitted.

If the bond in November doesn't pass to fund building the new SW Austin elementary school to relieve Baranoff and Kiker, how does that affect the move up date. If the bond doesn't pass it will affect the bottom line of AISD, pulling from the maintenance budget and would have to take from all other budgets including programming, teacher salaries, etc. With the Grey Rock build-out creating a 189 kid strain, the next step would be to look at boundaries that much more quickly. Over enrollment is the driver of the boundary review. Kocurek can take about 140 students. Cowan is overenrolled by about 200, Baranoff roughly 200 too.

FMP/BOND QUESTIONS:

Tanya:

What are the vertical teams? *Answered previously.*

Tanya:

How are the vertical teams the same or different than the current feeder pattern of schools? *Answered previously.*

Nelly:

What date does the bond proposal have to be approved by to make it onto the November ballot? The bond has to be filed by August in order to get on the fall bond measure. The work to start formulating numbers starts in April.

Matt:

If the bond doesn't go through will the BAC still draw the new boundaries? *Answered previously.*

Nelly:

What sort of impact will the school choice bill/proposed legislation at the Capitol have on the upcoming bond proposal and school funding for AISD? The school choice bill basically gives a certain \$ amount per child for which they can use to fund their own private school account. This pulls funding from public schools and offsets a portion of a private school education. Of larger impact is Recapture. AISD is property wealthy despite significant need. No real plan to combat school choice bill but advocate for calling your representative. It also reinforces the priority to assess our current facilities.

Laurie:

Is there an update to how the last bond money was spent for Cowan, of which projects like parking lot construction and roofing were included? No update. Projects should be complete by FY 2018. Cowan's bond dollars were for erosion control and parking lot construction.

What other projects are there that ease traffic? Unsure however Ann Klitchens is a resource for the district. In addition a Mobility Bond could help.

Question on equity - Don't foresee any radical shift in socio-economics. Demographic reports are available online. Discussions are held yearly regarding development and growth.

BAC - who, what, when - Previously answered above however terms are 2 years but some members extend. Anyone can apply. There are at least 2 representatives for each vertical team. Open seats are available. The BAC may meet once a month but it may vary depending on action items. There are staff liaisons to provide context to the BAC. BAC meets, goes to campus for feedback, and then make recommendations. The next BAC meeting is scheduled for April 11. 6-8pm. For more info, go to <https://www.austinisd.org/event/1-10-2017/bac-meeting>. Agendas can be found [here](#).

New SW high school update. The 2008 bond of \$32M passed. AISD looked at the growth and challenges at Bowie and at Akins. Bowie is over capacity. To help curb these numbers, sibling transfers will stop this fall. Overall Bowie has enough usable classrooms to accommodate the large population however their common areas are deficient to handle the large number of students. Akins is dependent on portable buildings. Therefore the decision was made to add another SE school because of current population and future growth. Bowie is not expecting explosive growth due to the large footprint of environmentally sensitive land. Buying tracts near Bowie with contingency funds will allow for immediate changes including modernization and size.

Transfer policy for Cowan - Currently frozen. Transfer policy explained. Discussion regarding stopping transfers and/or making a policy change to the transfer policy.

Value of diversity - There are geographic challenges to equity. AISD is looking at magnet school enrollment and it's match to demographics and revising enrollment/application scoring from students of underserved schools.

Is the capacity set for the new SW elementary school? No. We are still going to look to see if it could be built to accommodate 700. And since the FMP will be reviewed every 2 years, it can accommodate current and projected demographics.

Live-in population versus transfer - The FMP process has everything being reviewed. Do schools like Cunningham need support? Does it need a target utilization plan? Where are we considering consolidation? What are the partner schools affected? We're having these conversations and campuses are needing time to look at their own situation.

Transfers are grandfathered however during a boundary change discussion, changes can be negotiated such as keeping 4 and 5th graders to stay at the frozen campus. Or can even negotiate 3, 4, and 5th graders to stay.

Revoke transfers versus look at boundaries - Transfers are a special privilege, why are they guaranteed? It seems like Cowan homeowners are penalized due to the transfer policy. Perhaps a policy change is in order. AISD is trying not to disrupt kids already at the school.

Bowie status - Mark Robinson was just recently voted as Principal. He has a vision to bring Bowie forward and has experience with a campus expansion. With such a large population, 3000 students, it can limit opportunities such as football. Is there a way to provide ample opportunity given the higher population? Because it's a larger school, it also has additional offerings. Band can grow to population. Additional sub-teams within freshman, JV, and Varsity could be another way to expand opportunity.

What are we doing to improve Kocurek? The new principal has been there for just a few years but all signs show gains in growth. There is a Creative Learning Initiative. Kocurek is more economically diverse than some schools. We encourage you to visit and not rely too heavily on STAAR scores.

New school construction - how do you keep contractor's accountable? Cowan is not currently a safety concern. The roof is not going to collapse. The facilities are checked for mold. Major contracts require board approval and is overseen by an oversight committee. We're still waiting on answers regarding accountability for Cowan design/structure flaw in addition to whether an insurance claim can be made.

Portables - We have a large amount of portables and a vast amount are in poor condition. Impervious cover also adds to challenges to portables and school growth.

Is there any discussion regarding special programs or magnet schools located in south Austin such as McCallum? We're actively in conversations. There is talk of replicating Anderson's engineering program and bringing it to Bowie. Talking with Seton to bring a health/sciences program to LBJ. Crockett has an Einstein program, Bowie a culinary arts option, etc. In addition, AISD allows for a student sharing program.

How do we keep the neighborhood intact? Coordinating your voice. If there is something inherently wrong with the FMP, email the board: [trustees@austinisd.org](mailto:trustees@austinisd.org) For bond proposal conversation - Make your voice heard. The board hopes to have the bond proposal draft complete in June. In regards to the boundary process, advocate with the BAC, attend CAC meetings, contact the AISD Board.

How much weight does our voice carry? Depends on the options. FMP consolidation of Ridgetop was stalled. LASA in east Austin was scrapped.

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