

Maplewood Parent Advocacy Guide

What You Need to Know and What You Can Do

Updated March 25, 2026

About Maplewood Elementary

Maplewood Elementary is a Pre-K through 5th grade public school at 3808 Maplewood Ave, Austin TX 78722. Built in 1951, Maplewood is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2026. It has served the Cherrywood, Mueller, and Wilshire Wood neighborhoods across three generations of Austin families.

Enrollment	~408 students (94% full based on zoned population)
TEA Domain Scores	Student Achievement: A School Progress: A Closing the Gaps: B
TEA Distinctions	Top 25% Comparative Academic Growth, Academic Achievement in Reading/ELA, Academic Achievement in Science
Cost per student	21% below the AISD average
Programs	Dual language strand (Spanish), SEL-based instruction, No Place for Hate
PTA	200+ active members
Petition	Nearly 1,500 signatures to keep school open

Maplewood is the only public elementary school serving roughly 3.7 square miles of east-central Austin. The nearest public elementary is over a mile away by car. The next nearest is nearly two miles.

What “Closing the Gaps” means: This is TEA’s equity measure. It tracks whether a school’s most vulnerable students — economically disadvantaged, English learners, special education, and every racial and ethnic subgroup — are actually making academic progress. Maplewood scored a B and earned a Top 25% Comparative Academic Growth distinction. The school’s dual language immersion program serves native Spanish speakers and English learners side by side.

How the Money Works

How AISD gets paid: Texas public schools are funded primarily based on Average Daily Attendance (ADA). For every student who attends, AISD receives roughly \$6,160 per year from the state.

Recapture: Because Austin has high property values, AISD is required to send a portion of its local property tax revenue back to the state for redistribution to lower-wealth districts. In FY2024, AISD sent \$665 million back to the state — more than a third of every property tax dollar collected.

The deficit: Enrollment dropped from 72,702 to 69,207 this year — a 4.8% decline. AISD had projected 72,303. The deficit has grown from \$20M to \$49M to \$63M. The district is planning \$39M in cuts this year and \$125M in cuts for 2026-27. The minimum fund balance has been temporarily lowered from 20% to 15%.

AISD's current approach: Sell school properties to cover operating costs. The Rosedale campus was expected to bring in \$26M. The former Brooke Elementary was sold to Trammell Crow / High Street Residential. Becker's 6.86 acres are assessed at \$16M. Under Texas Education Code §11.154, proceeds from property sales go to the general fund with no restrictions on how the money is used.

The math problem with closures: The closures are projected to save \$21.5 million per year. But AISD's own credit rating report (KBRA, July 2025) shows ADA was 63,740 in FY2024, declining at 2% per year. This year, the decline accelerated to nearly 5%. At this pace, ADA will drop to approximately 60,000 by next school year. A loss of 3,740 ADA students costs approximately \$23 million in state funding — which would offset the projected savings entirely. Each closure risks accelerating the attrition that drives the funding loss.

Alternatives the district has not pursued: Solar leasing on school rooftops and grounds, long-term land leasing (retaining ownership while generating revenue), enrollment marketing and retention strategies, administrative overhead reduction beyond the \$10M central office restructuring, City of Austin Parks Department joint-use partnerships (AISD and the City have had a Joint Use Agreement since the 1960s allowing co-management and shared investment in school park facilities), and investment in the programs — like dual language — that attract families to the district.

TEA status: AISD has been released from TEA monitoring at the district level. However, three middle schools (Dobie, Webb, Burnet) face a fifth consecutive F rating. AISD must submit an SB 1882 charter partnership application by March 31 or TEA takes over those campuses.

How We Got Here

2017 — AISD conducts Facility Condition Assessments on all campuses. These scores become a key factor in the closure rubric. They are not updated, even after some schools receive millions in bond renovation money.

2022 — AISD passes a \$2.4 billion bond package. Some schools get full modernization (Harris Elementary: \$56M). Others, including Maplewood, are passed over. The 2022 bond spent approximately \$1.5 million on Maplewood improvements. AISD's 2017 Facility Master Plan had recommended building a new fully modernized elementary school in Mueller because of projected growth in east Austin.

Summer 2025 — Superintendent Matias Segura announces a plan to close and consolidate schools, citing a budget deficit and declining enrollment. Maplewood is on the initial list.

September 2025 — Maplewood parents form the Maplewood Consolidation – Advocacy Google Group and begin coordinating testimony, research, and outreach to trustees.

November 2025 — The AISD board votes to close 10 schools across 11 campuses in two rounds. Seven schools with multiple F ratings: 7-2. Three additional schools (Becker, Ridgetop, Sunset Valley): 6-3. Maplewood, Palm, and Bryker Woods are pulled from the vote and deferred to fall 2026 for “reevaluation” coinciding with districtwide rezoning.

January 2026 — The board approves selling the former Brooke Elementary to Trammell Crow / High Street Residential. The Native American Cultural Center housed at Brooke loses its home.

February 2026 — The Rosedale sale stalls after neighbors raise \$30K for legal defense over a 1938 deed restriction. The deficit grows to \$63M. Becker Elementary is classified as “surplus.”

March 2026 — Leaked internal AISD messages (obtained through a Public Information Act request) show administrators comparing schools by personal preference, disparaging parents who testified, attempting to delete public records, and using ChatGPT to draft responses to families. AISD apologized for comments “made without appropriate care” but defended the closure process.

Advocacy 101 — How the AISD Board Works and How to Influence It

If you've never engaged with a school board before, this section explains the basics: who makes decisions, how and when they make them, and where you fit in.

Who makes the decisions

The Board of Trustees (9 members) is the elected body that votes on school closures, surplus property designations, rezoning, budgets, and charter partnerships. Seven represent geographic districts; two are at-large. They meet monthly. They are your primary audience.

The Superintendent (Matias Segura) runs the district day-to-day and makes recommendations to the board. Staff prepare the analysis and presentations that inform those recommendations. The board can accept, reject, or modify staff recommendations, but in practice, staff recommendations carry significant weight. When you email or testify, you are asking trustees to direct staff to do something different.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) sets the accountability ratings (A-F), administers STAAR testing, and has the authority to take over schools or districts that fail repeatedly.

How the board meets

Info sessions (2nd Thursday) — Staff presents information, data, and recommendations. No votes are taken. General public comment is allowed on any topic.

Voting meetings (4th Thursday, 6pm) — The board takes action. Votes on surplus designations, budgets, closures happen here. Public testimony must relate to an agenda item scheduled for a vote.

Agendas are posted 72 hours before each meeting at austinisd.org/board/meetings.

How a school goes from “open” to “sold”

1. Staff recommends closure based on the consolidation rubric.
2. Board votes to close the school.
3. Staff classifies the campus as “surplus.”
4. Community input meetings are held on whether to lease or sell.
5. Staff presents recommendations to the board.
6. Board votes on the surplus designation — lease, sell, or retain.
7. If the board votes to sell, the property goes through rezoning at the City of Austin, then the sale closes.

Each step is a point where public input can change the outcome. The earlier you engage, the more influence you have. Once a surplus property is sold, it cannot be recovered.

How to be effective

Volume matters. Trustees track how many emails they receive on a topic. Short, personal, specific emails from many people are more effective than detailed policy arguments from a few.

Show up in person. Trustees notice when the room is full. Even if you don't speak, being physically present at a board meeting signals that people are paying attention. Sign in. Wear your school colors.

Coordinate, don't duplicate. Through the advocacy Google Group, parents can divide up topics so that each speaker covers a different angle. Five parents making five different points is more effective than five parents making the same point.

Be respectful and factual. Trustees are more responsive to constituents who are informed, specific, and civil. Lead with facts and personal experience. Avoid characterizing motives — focus on outcomes.

Engage between meetings. Email is the primary way to reach trustees outside of meetings. Phone calls to the board office (512-414-4411) also register.

What You Can Do

1. Email the AISD Board of Trustees

This is the single most important thing you can do right now. Trustees need to hear directly from parents — and they need to hear volume.

Board contact info: austinisd.org/board/members

Your ask: We are asking the board to explore every alternative to school closures and campus sales before making irreversible decisions — including solar leasing, long-term land leasing, enrollment strategies, administrative cuts, and investment in dual language and other programs that attract families to the district.

2. Call your trustee or sign up to speak at a board meeting

The next board info session is **April 9**. The next voting meeting is **April 23** — this is when the board may vote on surplus property designations.

Call 512-414-4411 or sign up online at austinisd.org/board/input. You get 1 minute to speak (2 minutes if you need interpretation).

3. Reach out to candidates running for office

November 2026 is a major election cycle for education in Austin. Here is every race that matters and why:

AISD Board of Trustees — 5 of 9 seats on the ballot (November 3, 2026)

The board votes on school closures, surplus property designations, budgets, and rezoning. Seats up: D1 (Candace Hunter — Maplewood's district, voted yes on both closure rounds), D4 (Whitley Chu), D6 (Gonzales — voted no both times), D7 (Kauffman), At-Large 9 (Singh). Filing deadline: August 17, 2026.

Texas State Board of Education, District 5 — Runoff May 26

The SBOE sets statewide curriculum standards, textbooks, and graduation requirements. Democratic runoff: Allison Bush (former teacher, school counselor, 25+ years in Central Texas public schools) vs. Stephanie Bazan. Winner faces Republican Mica Arellano in November.

Texas House District 49 — Runoff May 26 (no Republican running)

Austin's seat in the Texas House. The representative votes on education funding and recapture reform. Monserrat Garibay (former AISD bilingual Pre-K teacher, Education Austin VP, Biden

DOE) vs. Kathie Tovo (12-year Austin City Council member, former mayor pro tem). The winner is the next representative.

Texas Governor — Gina Hinojosa (D)

Former AISD Board President before being elected to the Texas House. Direct experience with AISD governance and school closure decisions. Serves on the House Public Education Committee. Campaign: ginafortexas.com.

Texas Comptroller — Sarah Eckhardt (D)

The Comptroller administers the Texas Education Freedom Accounts (school voucher) program, which redirects \$1 billion in public funds to private schools and accelerates enrollment loss in districts like AISD. Eckhardt has pledged to audit the voucher system. AISD's \$665M/year in recapture also flows through this office. She faces Republican Donald Huffines in November.

Austin City Council — District 9 (Zo Qadri)

Every AISD surplus campus sale requires a City Council vote on rezoning. D9 covers Cherrywood, Mueller, and Maplewood. Office: 512-978-2109.

4. Submit feedback on the AISD repurposing survey before April 10

AISD is collecting community input on what to do with six closing campuses. Go to publicinput.com/aisd-repurposing-update. AISD will cite participation numbers when they present recommendations to the board on April 9.

5. Get directly involved — volunteer, tutor, substitute

The strongest argument against closing a school is a community that shows up for it.

Volunteer portal: austinisd.voly.org — takes about 5 minutes to apply.

VICTORY Tutorial Program: Free tutoring for grades 1–12. austinisd.org/victory

Austin Partners in Education: austinpartners.org

6. Ask trustees to pursue alternatives

Solar leasing: Install solar panels on school rooftops and grounds, generating revenue through power purchase agreements while retaining ownership.

Long-term land leasing: Lease portions of surplus property for 20-99 years instead of selling outright.

Enrollment strategies: Invest in marketing, dual language expansion, magnet programs, and community partnerships that attract families.

City parks partnerships: Expand the Joint Use Agreement (in place since the 1960s) for shared investment, maintenance, and programming on school grounds.

Administrative overhead: The \$10M central office restructuring against a \$166M projected shortfall. Ask what additional cuts are being considered.

Recapture reform: AISD sends \$665M/year to the state. Advocacy through the legislature would address the root cause.

7. Talk to your neighbors and neighborhood associations

Neighborhood association boards (Cherrywood, Mueller, Wilshire Wood) need to understand that a school closure leads to a surplus designation, which leads to a land sale, which leads to a major development project. In Cherrywood, a developer (Nasteb Keystone Family LTD) has already bought 4.4 acres on E 38th ½ Street and is rezoning for up to 90-foot buildings.

8. Join the Maplewood Consolidation – Advocacy Google Group

Email maplewoodadvocacy@googlegroups.com to join. This is where we coordinate emails, testimony, and next steps.

Know Your AISD Board of Trustees

These are the nine people who vote on school closures, surplus property sales, and rezoning. Maplewood is in District 1.

Trustee	District	Vote: 7 schools	Vote: Becker etc.	Term expires
Candace Hunter	D1 (Maplewood)	Yes	Yes	Nov 2026
LaRessa Quintana	D2	Yes	Yes	Nov 2028
Dr. Kevin Foster	D3	Yes	Yes	Nov 2028
Kathryn Whitley Chu (VP)	D4	Yes	No	Nov 2026
Lynn Boswell (President)	D5	Yes	Yes	Nov 2028
Andrew Gonzales (Secretary)	D6	No	No	Nov 2026
Dr. David Kauffman	D7	Yes	Yes	Nov 2026
Fernando Lucas de Urioste	At-Large 8	No	No	Nov 2028
Arati Singh	At-Large 9	Yes	Yes	Nov 2026

Gonzales (D6) and de Urioste (At-Large 8) voted against closures both times. Whitley Chu (D4) voted no on the second round. Candace Hunter (D1), Maplewood's own trustee and a former Maplewood parent, voted yes both times. Her seat is up in November 2026.

Key Facts for Emails, Testimony, and Conversations

Use these in your own words. Personal experience is more effective than reciting numbers, but having the facts behind you matters.

On Maplewood

- Maplewood costs 21% less per student than the AISD average and earned TEA distinction designations in three categories including Top 25% Comparative Academic Growth.
- Maplewood is 94% full based on its zoned population. AISD listed utilization at 122.22% in the closure rubric — a number that excludes portable classrooms from the capacity count while including the students inside them.
- Maplewood's Closing the Gaps score is a B. Approximately 30% of students are economically disadvantaged. The dual language program serves native Spanish speakers and English learners together.
- Maplewood is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2026. It is a walkable, bikeable neighborhood school serving 3.7 square miles with no other walkable public elementary option. Maplewood's location supports the I-35 cap and stitch initiative.
- Research on school closures consistently shows that students' academic performance declines after a closure and transfer. The district has not presented a transparent net present value model showing the long-term fiscal impact of closing Maplewood.
- The infrastructure at Campbell Elementary would need upgrades to absorb Maplewood's students — including portables, playground replacement, shade structures, and a TEA-compliant bullet-resistant vestibule — all of which have recently been updated at Maplewood through the 2022 bond and PTA-raised funds.
- AISD's 2017 Facility Master Plan recommended building a new elementary school in Mueller due to projected growth. The Cherrywood/Mueller/Wilshire Wood area is adding hundreds of housing units from I-35 redevelopment, the Fiesta property, and DB90 rezoning (330 units adjacent to the school).
- Maplewood's success is pulling families into the public school system. Closing a school that attracts families to AISD accelerates the enrollment decline that drives the deficit.

On the Budget

- AISD's deficit has grown from \$20M to \$49M to \$63M. The district projects a \$166M shortfall for 2026-27.
- Enrollment dropped from 72,702 to 69,207 this year (4.8%). ADA was 63,740 in FY2024, declining at 2% per year historically, now accelerating.
- Closures save an estimated \$21.5M/year. A loss of 3,740 students costs approximately \$23M in state funding.
- AISD sends \$665 million per year back to the state in recapture.
- Under Texas Education Code §11.154, proceeds from surplus property sales go to the general fund with no restrictions.

On the Process

- The closure rubric used Facility Condition Assessment scores from 2017. Schools that received bond modernization money score well. Schools that were passed over end up on the closure list.
- Leaked internal messages (March 2026) show administrators comparing schools by personal preference, disparaging parents who testified, attempting to delete public records, and using ChatGPT to draft responses to families.
- AISD has not presented a public enrollment strategy to reverse the decline in ADA.
- AISD has not publicly evaluated alternatives to land sales.
- Dual language programs are one of AISD's strongest enrollment draws. The leaked messages show district leadership characterizing families who chose dual language as "affluent" and "entitled."

On the Land

- Every closed campus is being evaluated for lease or sale. Rosedale: rezoning for 435 apartments. Brooke: sold to a luxury developer. Becker: 6.86 acres, \$16M assessed value, classified as surplus.
- A developer has bought 4.4 acres on E 38th ½ Street in Cherrywood (Cherrywood Coffeehouse, Alma Apartments) and is rezoning for 90-foot buildings under DB90.

Key Dates

Date	Event
March 28	Education Austin Community Workshop, 10am–12pm, UA Hall, 814 Airport Blvd 78702. Overview of TIP/TAP closures, consolidation, and state intervention in AISD. Open to parents, students, and community members. Childcare and translation available — RSVP to info@educationaustin.org .
March 30	Becker Elementary community meeting, 5:30–7pm
March 31	SB 1882 charter application deadline (Dobie, Webb, Burnet)
April 7	Bedichek Middle School community meeting, 5:30–7pm
April 9	AISD Board info session — surplus property recommendations
April 10	AISD repurposing survey closes
April 23	AISD Board voting meeting — possible surplus votes
May 14	AISD Board info session
May 18–22	Early voting — primary runoffs (SBOE D5, HD-49)
May 26	Primary runoff day: SBOE D5 and HD-49
May 28	AISD Board voting meeting
June 30	Fiscal year ends
August 17	AISD Board candidate filing deadline
Fall 2026	AISD vote on Maplewood, Palm, Bryker Woods closures
November 3	General election — AISD Board (5 seats), SBOE D5, Governor, Comptroller

How to Stay Connected

Advocacy Google Group	maplewoodadvocacy@googlegroups.com
AISD Board members	austinisd.org/board/members
AISD Board meetings	austinisd.org/board/meetings
Sign up for public comment	austinisd.org/board/input or call 512-414-4411
AISD Repurposing survey	publicinput.com/aisd-repurposing-update
AISD Consolidation page	austinisd.org/consolidate
Historic Landmark Commission	austintexas.gov/content/historic-landmark-commission
Save Maplewood petition	change.org/p/help-save-maplewood-from-consolidation

Compiled from AISD board documents, TEA accountability data, KBRA credit rating report, news coverage (KUT, Austin Current, Austin Chronicle, Community Impact, KXAN), and the Maplewood Consolidation – Advocacy Google Group. Share freely. Updated March 25, 2026.