



February 1, 2021

The Honorable Matt Shaheen
Texas House of Representatives
Post Office Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768

Dear Representative Shaheen:

In an article in the January 28, 2021 edition of the Dallas Morning News, Speaker Phelan was quoted as saying “I would support holding ISDs harmless provided that I also felt comfortable that all efforts were made and all due diligence was done in reaching out to the missing students.” Plano Independent School District would like to be completely transparent with you, our entire delegation, and our community regarding the lengths we have gone to in our effort to recover students and bring them back to Plano ISD or to verify that they are in school elsewhere and receiving an education. We are very proud of the results you will see reflected in the data provided in this letter.

In June 2020, Plano ISD started planning our outreach to families and in July 2020 began implementation of our Enrollment Recovery Plan leading up to the opening of school in August. The Enrollment Recovery Plan required us to spend additional resources to try to recover students. It also required us to pull staff away from other core functions to implement this plan to achieve the results we desired: Ensure every child within our boundaries is receiving an education in Plano ISD.

Our guidance counselors worked around the clock reaching out to over 50,000 families to ensure that the parents understood the reopening plan and options for their child’s learning environment in the pandemic. The counselors asked families about their needs and connected them to District and community resources. For those parents who we were unable to reach, we created a “no contact list.” This list contained the names of 3,795 students. The Enrollment Recovery Plan continues today as you will see in the timeline below.

Enrollment Recovery Plan - Timeline:

June – Administrators strategized about how to keep in contact with students, particularly our most at-risk students and families.

July/August – School counselors began making contact with every student. Counselors also inquired about student/family basic needs and intent to learn remotely or in-person.

September – Plano ISD identified 3,795 students that did not return to Plano ISD and counselors began to make inquiries.

October – Plano ISD reallocated seven social workers and substance abuse specialists to conduct home visits for unaccounted for students. We were able to reduce our “no shows” or “dropouts” (Leaver Code 98) to 734 students. By the end of October 28, we had 262 students coded as 98.

November/December – Campus teams began reaching out to families and calling every number and contact on the student’s emergency card and reaching out to known friends of each student coded as 98.

January – We currently have 108 students with a leaver code of 98. This week, we will be reaching out to these students to determine their current needs and ensure they are re-enrolled in school.

Additional Resources Allocated for Enrollment Recovery:

- Reallocation of seven professional and three paraprofessional staff trained in home visitation
- Training for school administration and staff in home visitation
- Central office team support with home visits
- Repurpose District vehicle to conduct home visits
- Create and staff Attendance Review Board addressing Plano ISD attendance and engagement issues

Enrollment and Attendance Results:

# home visits conducted by central office and campus staff	115
# previously enrolled students missing on 10/13 in TSDS*	734
# previously enrollment students missing on 10/31 in TSDS	262
# previously enrollment students missing on 1/29 in TSDS	108
# recovered during the school year back to Plano ISD	1,279

*TSDS is the Texas School Data System for required enrollment data reporting

Grade Level	2020 - 2021 Projections	Actual Enrollment as of 8/14/2020	Actual Enrollment as of 1/22/2021	Recovered through Recovery Plan 8/14/20- 1/22/21
EE	581	159	260	101
PK	1,295	781	1,026	245
K	3,385	2,927	3,144	217
1st	3,536	3,202	3,296	94
2nd	3,643	3,394	3,508	114
3rd	3,757	3,474	3,547	73
4th	3,728	3,493	3,568	75
5th	3,818	3,667	3,747	80
Structured	N/A	142	236	94
6th	3,862	3,742	3,807	65
7th	4,121	3,986	4,001	15
8th	4,176	4,007	4,027	20
9th	4,107	3,861	3,876	15
10th	4,042	4,004	4,026	22
11th	4,115	3,976	4,014	38
12th	4,108	4,076	4,087	11
Total	52,274	48,891	50,170	1,279

Through the efforts of the Plano ISD team, we have verified the enrollment of all previously enrolled students in Grades 1 – 12 (47,013 children) and, as of 1/29/21, only 108 were either not enrolled in Plano ISD or unaccounted for in the TSDS system (down from 734 in October).

For students who said they were coming back, enrolled but have not shown up, or who are not regularly attending, we have created the Plano Attendance Review Board to provide family support and intervention to get kids to come back to school. One hundred thirteen (113) families have benefited from this program and students have come back to the District. The District's attendance rate is 96.4%, which is only .3% below our attendance at the same time last year, demonstrating our commitment to have every child enrolled and engaged in their education.

For students NOT previously enrolled in the District in Early Education, Pre-K, and Kindergarten, we are 40% below enrollment projections (based on previous year averages from our demographers). In August, this group represented 66% of our total enrollment loss but through our Enrollment Recovery efforts we recovered an additional 563 students or 26% of those previously unenrolled students and they are now enrolled in Plano ISD.

The monumental task of teachers, counselors, principals, and central office staff who have dedicated time calling parents, calling students, making home visits, and finding kids to bring them back to school has been unprecedented. Finding all but 108 of our previously enrolled students after starting with 3,833 "missing" students demonstrates the commitment we have to being accountable for every single child living in our boundaries.

I hope this compilation of activities and results will demonstrate to the legislative leadership that in Plano ISD we have done our due diligence and much, much more in our effort to recover students and to provide an excellent education to our students in the midst of a global pandemic.

We believe that those kids who are missing will be coming back and we need to be staffed and ready to serve them with our excellent programs and services. We must retain our outstanding workforce to be ready to close the gaps that will exist when the kids return to school. We stand ready to serve our students and will need every teacher and additional resource required to close the gaps. Plano ISD is but one District of many across the State who can easily provide this detailed information of due diligence if asked in order to prove that the allocation of the Hold Harmless dollars are indeed necessary as we continue to provide multiple platforms for learning while adapting to the conditions of the public health crisis. I'm happy to provide any other information, testimony, or information as needed in this continued discussion of the Hold Harmless.

Sincerely,



Sara M. Bonser
Superintendent