

From: Kim Dobecka </O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=87A3995BA5C740958CBACDC639A06FE1-KIM DOBECKA>
Subject: Letter to GCISD Trustees - City of Grapevine
To: shannon.braun@gcisd.net; dalia.begin@gcisd.net; matthew.foust@gcisd.net; Kathy Spradley <kathy.spradley@gcisd.net>; aj.pontillo@gcisd.net; dianna.sager@gcisd.net; mary.humphrey@gcisd.net; brad.schnautz@gcisd.net
Sent: October 6, 2025 4:08 PM (UTC-04:00)
Attached: Letter to GCISD Trustees - City of Grapevine.pdf

Good afternoon Dr. Schnautz and GCISD Trustees,

A letter is attached from Grapevine Mayor, William D. Tate, and the members of the Grapevine City Council. Thank you for your attention and thoughtful review.

Best regards,
Kim

Kim Dobecka

Executive Assistant
City Manager's Office, City of Grapevine





October 6, 2025

Grapevine-Colleyville ISD
3051 Ira E. Woods Avenue
Grapevine, TX 76051

Dear President Braun:

Over the last few weeks, we have become aware of some disturbing budget reduction options (including closing District neighborhood elementary schools) that were presented to the Education Master Planning Committee. While we understand that the district was simultaneously managing budget concerns, it is noted that the District paid off unused bonds, funds that potentially could have been allocated towards expenses such as repairs, equipment, safety, and technology, thereby easing pressure on the general fund.

The reduction of the tax rate apparently cost the District significant dollars, while at the same time, the Board in November 2024, asked the voters to approve the VATRE to deal with the District's financial shortfall. Unlike other districts, the VATRE passed in our District; yet we are still faced with budget problems in GCISD? It doesn't make a lot of sense to already be in this position. We have tried to determine how much of the bond money could have been used and how much the total loss in ad valorem taxes cost the District over the last four years before the VATRE's passage. However, that information is not easily attainable. This adds to the suspicion that this is information you don't want the public to know, or that you have not already evaluated all the financial options.

Concerns with Committee Composition

The stated task of this Committee is to review the current fiscal condition of the District, along with campus facilities, programs and the utilization of each building, and subsequently make recommendations to the Board of Trustees to address the budget shortfall. Taken at face value, this seems to be a reasonable approach, however, we take issue with the composition of the Committee. You appointed a committee that is comprised of 18 individuals, only two of which represent non-GCISD employees or Trustees that reside in Grapevine.

Grapevine has a population of approximately 52,000 and Colleyville 27,000. One might assume that the student and revenue generation split would be similar to the population of 2 to 1 or even more. One might expect that there would be a citizen representative from each school attendance zone. Despite this, Grapevine residents that are not District



employees represent only around 10% of the Committee membership. Consequently, there is no representation of any Dove or Silverlake constituents. While we would hope that the Committee members could look at the issues without bias, the optics should support that as well. We have heard two Board members say the Committee was selected based on their talent and not their location. This is a slap in the face to every citizen and every voter in Grapevine.

Second, the Committee is looking at closing campuses and relocating students with their only focus being on classroom space available. We are concerned whether Silverlake and Cannon can manage another two hundred students and the challenge that the parents will face in the delivery and pickup of students. We will not allow this increased capacity to destroy the peace and enjoyment of the surrounding neighborhoods. Furthermore, the streets, utility infrastructure, sidewalks, and the crossing guard locations will have to be studied and reallocated as necessary. You cannot solve your problem and create new problems for the City. These issues have to be worked out with the City before any decision can be made on school closures.

The closing of a school only saves \$1.2 million per year and yet you have a several million-dollar shortfall coming next school year. We understand that additional schools may have to be closed in the next year or two. Liquidation of this much of the District is unconscionable and begs the question of how will the rest of the gap be closed and what measures can be taken to ensure sustainability going forward?

Statewide Funding Challenges

We understand that state funding for schools has changed over the last few years. The Legislature has limited school districts in Texas and taken a lot of the local authority away. Even though our District received about \$14 million more this year than last year from the State, we still have more than \$30 million going back to the State because of Robin Hood. We urge the District to review the possibility of joining with other similarly situated districts to challenge Robin Hood in court again. We can't imagine the Supreme Court of the United States saying that it is constitutional for a District like GCISD to have to send more than \$30 million of its revenue to other districts and at the same time need several million to balance their own budget or have to liquidate their school assets to balance the budget. Finally, we are being told that there have not been recommendations made and that the committee is still doing analysis, yet we were also told that the teachers at Dove Elementary were told that their campus will likely be closing at the end of the year and they need to think about where they want to go or if they want to retire or leave the District entirely. Is the Committee really making recommendations, or is the Board just looking for Committee cover after the fact?

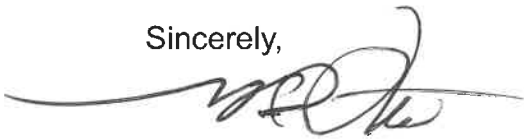
Exhaust all Other Options

Taking all of this into consideration, we would urge you to start from scratch. Appoint a balanced committee that includes proportional representation of Grapevine residents and includes someone that has some experience with each school in the District. Or better yet, in the alternative, thank the Committee for their service and in their place, hire the best school financial consultant in the State to review the financial condition of the District and write a report that is transparent and understandable by the average citizen. You should carefully evaluate each option, working with the appropriate experts to determine feasibility. The report should analyze every possible alternative to school closing and prove that the closing of schools is the only viable alternative.

Finally, before you make any drastic moves, be sure that you have turned over every stone for revenue-thinking outside of the box with the creativity that GCISD is known to embody. Closing neighborhood schools disrupts neighborhoods and neighbors who rely upon those schools. While we understand the difference between the interest and sinking rate and the maintenance and operations rate, is there a way, with voter approval, to use the I&S rate to supplant expenditures that would normally come from the M&O rate? Would the voters support the implementation of Copper Pennies? If that was an opportunity, we would urge you to see what the voters have to say. It's not an ideal situation, but you don't know until you ask. There is a point of diminishing returns where lower property values caused by draconian reductions could result in less overall revenue for the District. Additionally, for each school you close, you risk losing students to private, charter, or homeschool. We would expect that the citizens would rather raise taxes than close schools.

Once you have created a transparent, fair and balanced committee or sought the assistance of outside financial advisors and have exhausted all other means, the taxpayers will likely be more accepting of the results. Once again, we urge you to reset and start over.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W.D. Tate', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

William D. Tate

Mayor



Paul Slechta, Mayor Pro Tem



Sharron Rogers, City Council



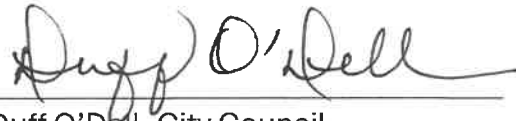
Leon Leal, City Council



Sean Shope, City Council



Chris Coy, City Council



Duff O'Dell, City Council

CC:

Dr. Brad Schnautz

Shannon Braun

Dalia Begin

Matt Foust

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