

Boerne ISD Receives 73%+ Approval on \$175M Bond Referendum - Using Data Analytics Has Significant Impact

THE SITUATION

Nestled in Texas Hill Country, Boerne Independent School District (ISD) has increased student enrollment 19% over the last five years. This fast-growth school district is busting at the seams – literally. Currently, two of the district’s five elementary schools are over capacity. In just a few short years, the middle schools and high school will also exceed capacity. With a projected annual growth rate of 5%, Boerne ISD knew it had to do something to accommodate the growing enrollment and alleviate the current overcrowding issues, but also address future capacity issues and provide equity for evolving and growing student programs. With a bond referendum necessary to address these important needs, there was a vast amount of data preparation to be completed in order to present a compelling story that would gain approval. For Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance Tish Grill and her colleagues, this process is not only time consuming, but daunting.

THE SOLUTION

When Tish attended the 2016 TASA Mid-Winter Conference, she happened to attend a session presented by a well-respected colleague at another ISD in Texas. After hearing about his experience with 5Sight from Forecast5, she was very intrigued and immediately thought there would be value for Boerne ISD.

Tish says, “The amount of data you have access to easily and quickly is powerful. 5Sight is a new resource to have fresh conversations.” Before 5Sight, Tish and her colleagues would have to find data for all peers through manual surveys, emails or even personal phone calls. The next step would be to combine the data, clean it up and design charts and graphs. This process was very lengthy, costly and time consuming. Additionally, some of the data they needed was hard to find or just not available. By having the data and analytics from 5Sight at their fingertips, Tish and her colleagues could now focus more of their time on being strategic with the data and better communicate the district’s situation.

THE RESULTS

Immediately after subscribing to 5Sight from Forecast5, Boerne started to use the software for various day-to-day tasks and projects. From salary analysis to budget presentations, Tish and her colleagues have been using the product to help in proactive and reactive ways. They’ve become very comfortable with even using it on the spot in board meetings if a question comes up, quickly and easily pulling up a graph or chart to answer a question or foster further discussion.

“Boerne ISD has received enormous value from the ability to compare our data against benchmark districts. We use analytics to quickly answer stakeholder questions. With 5Sight we now have the ability to clearly demonstrate how we compare to other districts in areas such as debt, expenditures, teacher salaries and more”, says Tish.

Most recently, Tish proudly shared that for the Bond Referendum and related budget meetings at the end of the year, Boerne ISD was able to effectively communicate their needs and related decisions using 5Sight. Through a Pre-Vote, Boerne learned that the community was only 49% in approval of the bond. In response, they made trips around the community and presented comparative and historical trend data analytics to communicate the reasoning behind their decisions. The data 5Sight provided really opened the door for a conversation and helped stakeholders feel invested in the decisions being made. The District passed a \$175M bond with 73% approval to build three more campuses. Says Tish, “The biggest struggle for all Districts is coming up with resources to support fees tied to solutions like data analytics software. As one can see, the product more than pays for itself.”



ORGANIZATION TYPE

K-12, Independent School District

ENROLLMENT

8,301

ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

\$65,234,167

Boerne Independent School District (ISD), nestled in the scenic Texas Hill Country, is a “destination district” for families who enjoy Boerne’s unique combination of rural roots, small town atmosphere and easy access to America’s seventh largest city – vibrant San Antonio.

The community places a high priority on education and has built a reputation for excellence that has been sustained through the years. Just over 8,300 students attend class at five elementary schools, two middle schools, two high schools and an alternative campus.