

McMillan Elementary First Community Meeting Summary

September 16, 2026

Community feedback reflected strong opposition to decommissioning McMillan Elementary. Participants described McMillan as a highly successful, close-knit school that provides academic, emotional and practical support to students and families with significant needs. Many expressed concern that the current process is moving too quickly and that the information presented does not yet provide a complete basis for a decision.

Major Themes

1. McMillan is viewed as more than a school.

Participants repeatedly described McMillan as the center of its neighborhood and a trusted source of stability. Families value the small-school environment, strong relationships, low staff turnover and the fact that employees know students personally. The campus also supports community events, sports, summer programs, after-school activities and partnerships.

2. Participants want student outcomes to carry greater weight.

Community members asked the district to include academic achievement, student growth, attendance, school culture and staff performance in its evaluation. Several participants questioned why a school they view as successful would be considered for decommissioning.

3. Equity and continuity of services are significant concerns.

Participants emphasized McMillan's Title I, special education, multilingual learner, preschool, intervention, Community School and McKinney-Vento supports. They expressed concern that students may not receive the same level of service at other schools, particularly if students and staff are divided among multiple locations.

Participants also highlighted:

- Small class sizes and favorable student-to-teacher ratios
- Accessible classrooms, restrooms and playground equipment
- Free meal and after-school programs
- Support for students experiencing homelessness, foster care or instability
- Strong special education, IEP and 504 services
- Multilingual learner services and cultural diversity

- Community partnerships that provide volunteers, supplies, activities and family assistance

4. Boundary changes were the most frequently suggested alternative.

Many participants asked the district to adjust attendance boundaries before considering decommissioning. They questioned why nearby schools with available enrollment or schools of choice were included in the analysis without first examining whether more students could be assigned to McMillan.

Other alternatives suggested included:

- Creating a bilingual, magnet or specialized program at McMillan
- Better promoting McMillan's programs and accomplishments
- Reviewing the number and effect of schools of choice
- Waiting for neighborhood turnover and future enrollment growth
- Phasing any change over several years
- Seeking community or contractor support to reduce repair costs

5. Participants questioned the enrollment and capacity calculations.

Community members requested more explanation of McMillan's reported utilization and available-seat figures. They noted that rooms identified as available may currently support special education, intervention, Title I, preschool, staff collaboration or other programs and therefore may not function as traditional classrooms.

They also requested:

- Current and projected neighborhood demographics
- Five- and 10-year enrollment trends for McMillan and nearby schools
- A map showing where McMillan students live
- Information about students living within the boundary who attend other schools
- An explanation of how older school designs and modern program requirements affect capacity
- Projected class sizes and program capacity at potential receiving schools

6. Participants want a more complete financial comparison.

Questions focused on the approximately \$5.4 million in projected repairs and whether comparable facility assessments were completed for other schools.

Requested information included:

- A detailed breakdown of McMillan's projected repairs
- Maintenance and capital-investment comparisons with nearby schools
- Recent improvements already made at McMillan
- Transportation and transition costs
- Costs associated with maintaining a vacant building
- The long-term financial effect on receiving schools
- Whether decommissioning would produce meaningful net savings

7. Transportation and neighborhood access are major concerns.

Many McMillan students currently walk or bike to school. Participants worried about safe routes, increased busing costs, traffic near receiving schools and the ability of families without reliable transportation to access a more distant school.

8. Participants expressed concern about the effect on staff.

Staff members asked whether they would retain employment, positions, seniority and established teams. Several emphasized that McMillan's success is closely connected to its experienced staff and strong working relationships.

Participants requested clarity about:

- Whether staff positions would be guaranteed
- How placement decisions would be made
- Whether staff could move with groups of students
- Whether employees would retain building seniority
- Whether employees would need to interview for new positions

9. The future of the Community School hub and property remains a major question.

Participants want to know how Community School services, childcare, after-school programs, sports and community partnerships would continue. They also asked what would happen to the building and property and expressed concern about losing a neighborhood gathering place.

10. Participants want more time, communication and direct engagement.

Many believed the timeline was too compressed and said families received insufficient

notice of the meeting. Participants preferred communication directly from McMillan through TalkingPoints, email, flyers, the school marquee and the principal.

They requested:

- Additional community meetings and opportunities for dialogue
- More advance notice
- Communication with neighboring property owners and residents without children
- Prompt responses to questions raised at the meetings
- Clear information about how feedback will be presented to trustees
- Assurance that trustees will receive all questions, comments and concerns

Overall Sentiment

The dominant message was: Keep McMillan open and examine alternatives.

Participants believe McMillan's smaller size is one of its strengths, particularly for students who need individualized support and stability. If decommissioning remains under consideration, the community expects the district to demonstrate that students will retain comparable services, relationships, accessibility and educational opportunities.