

*Lovejoy Independent School District*  
*259 Country Club Road*  
*Allen, Texas 75002*  
*(972) 562-5077(metro) (972) 562-9924(fax)*

October 17, 2002

Dear Citizens,

Your Lovejoy Independent School District Board of Trustees is currently studying important issues regarding the future of Lovejoy students. For the past 25 years, our district and Allen Independent School District have had a mutually beneficial relationship in which Lovejoy has paid tuition to send its 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to Allen schools to complete their middle and high school educations.

Because of recent legislation affecting how schools are financed, this relationship will change in the near future. No later than December 2002, a decision will be made by each district to begin working toward either consolidation or separation. To separate, Lovejoy ISD must pass a bond and build its own middle and high schools. If both districts choose to consolidate, Lovejoy will be absorbed into Allen ISD and be governed by Allen's administration and Board of Trustees. In either case, citizens will be able to vote on the proposed option.

Several meetings have been held with the Allen ISD Board of Trustees, and much data was developed and shared. Questions from both communities have been identified, timelines for future meetings and workshops have been developed, and possible models for each option are being designed.

On Tuesday, October 22, a joint public forum will be held with Allen ISD at Curtis Middle School cafeteria at 7:00 P.M. On Thursday, October 24, another joint public forum will be held in the Lovejoy Elementary School gymnasium at 7:00 P.M. Both meetings are open to both communities. The purpose of these meetings will be to share information and to provide an opportunity for citizens to ask questions and make comments regarding this important decision.

Included with this letter is a Question & Answer document that will explain and answer questions about these issues. In addition, the Lovejoy ISD website at [www.lovejoyisd.net](http://www.lovejoyisd.net) will have information posted and new updates will be added as necessary.

There is much work to be done in the next several months. It is critical that our community members be aware of all the information available. Please take the opportunity to attend meetings and let officials know your opinions and concerns.

Sincerely,

Rich Hickman, President  
Lovejoy ISD School Board

# **COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT LOVEJOY ISD/ALLEN ISD RELATIONSHIP**

As a matter of full and fair disclosure, the Board notes the financial estimates and projections described in this document are based on studies that it believes to be sound, unbiased and factual, and that are based upon current State school finance law. However, all projected information is based upon assumptions. Any future financial estimate is subject to changes in the economic and legal environments and other uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ somewhat from those contemplated in the studies, as is true for all public schools in Texas.

## **WHAT CREATED THE NEED FOR CHANGE?**

Recent state legislation changed the way districts that do not have all grade levels (K-12<sup>th</sup>) and districts that receive their transfer students are financed. This created additional recapture costs for Lovejoy ISD and a significant loss of revenue to Allen ISD. While the districts were able to delay the impact of this legislation with passage of H.B. 2879, the changes are scheduled for implementation in 2004. At the same time, growth of enrollment in each district will make planning for secondary facilities and providing for increased operating costs a challenge for both districts.

## **WHAT OPTIONS WILL LOVEJOY ISD HAVE?**

The options available are to consolidate with Allen ISD or to separate the districts, with Lovejoy ISD building and operating its own middle school and high school.

Another option, although much less likely, would be for Lovejoy ISD to consolidate with another adjacent school district.

## **WHO WILL MAKE FINAL DECISIONS ON THESE OPTIONS?**

In general, the initial decisions will be made by the Allen ISD and Lovejoy ISD school boards after much citizen input. Lovejoy ISD citizens will then have the opportunity to vote on the choice offered.

Specifically, the following decisions could be made:

- Both districts can decide that it is best for the districts to consolidate.
- Both districts can decide it is best for the districts to separate.
- Allen ISD can decide that it is in their best interest for Lovejoy ISD to build its own secondary schools.
- Lovejoy ISD can decide to build its own secondary schools.

## **WHAT MUST HAPPEN IF THE ALLEN ISD AND LOVEJOY ISD BOARDS AGREE TO CONSOLIDATE?**

If both districts agree to consolidate, an election will be called by both districts and held on the same day in both communities. If the voters in both districts vote yes, consolidation is accomplished. If the voters in either district vote no, there is no consolidation, and the issue cannot be reconsidered for three years.

This process would take about 12 months or less. If consolidation occurs, Allen ISD, being the much larger district, would provide the governance for the new district, and the Lovejoy ISD Board of Trustees would be dissolved. Lovejoy ISD would be incorporated into Allen ISD, pay Allen ISD's tax rate, vote in Allen ISD elections, and have all the rights and responsibilities that Allen ISD citizens have in the schools.

### **WHAT MUST HAPPEN IF ONE OR BOTH DISTRICTS DECIDE TO SEPARATE?**

If either district or both districts decide to separate, then a plan would be implemented to insure a seamless transition for the students who would be Lovejoy ISD's first secondary students. That plan would include:

- A bond election, probably in the spring of 2003, for building secondary facilities.
- Facility planning with community input.
- Curriculum planning with community input.
- Transition planning and timing with community input.

### **WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL COSTS OF CONSOLIDATION?**

If the districts choose to consolidate, studies indicate that costs will increase for the new consolidated district. Additional facilities will be needed as the district continues to grow. Allen ISD is currently studying a bond proposal for fall 2003. The Allen ISD expected tax rate will probably be in the \$1.90's.

### **WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL COSTS OF LOVEJOY ISD BUILDING ITS OWN SECONDARY SCHOOLS?**

If Lovejoy ISD separates from Allen ISD, Lovejoy ISD taxpayers can expect increased tax rates to pay for needed secondary facilities and increased operating costs. The Lovejoy ISD expected tax rate would also be in the \$1.90's, very similar to the rate if the districts consolidate.

### **WHAT KIND OF SECONDARY EDUCATION WOULD LOVEJOY ISD BE ABLE TO OFFER?**

Lovejoy ISD will initially open as a 3A high school. It will continue to offer a high quality secondary program similar to the core program students currently receive in Allen ISD, but in a smaller, community-based setting. Competitive athletics, band, drill team, choir, drama, fine arts, and other activities would be available for students.

### **WHAT ARE FUTURE TIMELINES OF CRITICAL EVENTS?**

October 22	Joint Allen ISD-Lovejoy ISD Public Information Meeting in the Curtis Middle School cafeteria at 7:00 P.M.
October 24	Joint Allen ISD-Lovejoy ISD Public Information Meeting in the Lovejoy Elementary School gym at 7:00 P.M.
October 29	Lovejoy ISD Input Committee of 40 citizens
November 7	Lovejoy ISD Input Committee of 40 citizens
November	Continue data analysis and planning
December	A decision will be made by each district to begin working toward either consolidation or separation.
January-May 2003	Allen ISD-Lovejoy ISD Boards: planning for needs based on decision of districts to either consolidate or separate

For more detailed information, please plan to attend either of the Joint Public Information Meetings on October 22 or 24. If you have additional questions or comments, those questions may be clarified at a public meeting or directed to district officials on the website at [www.lovejoyisd.net](http://www.lovejoyisd.net).