



C A S E S T U D Y



Huffman Independent School District

K12 *INSIGHT* HELPS HUFFMAN ISD PASS A \$44.1M BOND MEASURE

Huffman Independent School District in Texas had tried to pass school bond measures before—with mixed results. From these past experiences, the district learned that engaging the community in two-way conversations was critical to success. That's when administrators turned to Let's Talk!, from K12 *Insight*, to help solicit feedback from the local community. Here's how they did it.

THE CHALLENGE

With 3,600 students, Huffman ISD might not be large by Texas standards, but the student population in this diverse school system is growing by 8 percent per year—and with a new state highway coming soon, that growth is expected to accelerate. District officials knew they needed to build a second elementary school to get out in front of this expansion, and they planned to ask voters to approve a bond measure to help with the financing.

Huffman ISD had been down this road before. In 2002, the district tried to pass a bond measure to replace its middle school, but the measure failed. (CONT'D).



3,600

Number of students served

Source: Huffman



\$44.1M

Value of the bond measure passed in 2016



66%

Percentage of voters who approved the bond



THE CHALLENGE (CONT'D FROM PG 1)

When leaders examined what went wrong, they realized that voters did not want a new middle school building—they preferred a new high school building instead. Two years later, the district went back to the drawing board, revised its plan, and passed a successful bond.

This time around, leaders wanted to get the process right from the start. They needed an easy way to engage the community in two-way conversations, seeking the public's input and eventually putting forward a proposal that would enjoy a broad base of support.

THE SOLUTION

To facilitate a two-way conversation with stakeholders, Huffman ISD turned to Let's Talk!, from K12 *Insight*. The cloud-based customer service and community engagement solution gives school leaders an easy way to solicit feedback, while collaborating across teams to provide timely, accurate, and courteous responses. Stakeholders can submit questions and comments on social media, or via a tab on the district's website. In each case, these messages are instantly routed to the appropriate district team member for an efficient, timely reply.

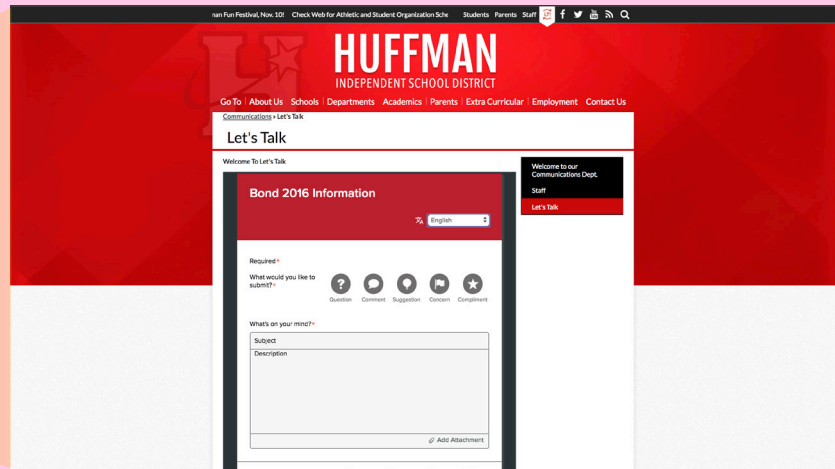
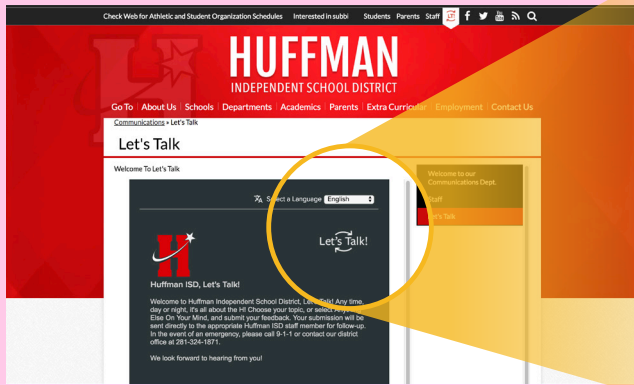
"We have tried holding town hall meetings to have a conversation with stakeholders, but only a few people would show up," says Shirley Dupree, executive director of communications for the district. "I get it: People are working, and they have children to take care of. They're busy. Let's Talk! provides a more convenient platform for those important two-way conversations to take place."



The key to passing a school bond measure is having two-way communication with stakeholders. That's where Let's Talk! really helps."



SHIRLEY DUPREE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
OF COMMUNICATIONS,
HUFFMAN ISD, TEXAS



BUILDING SUPPORT

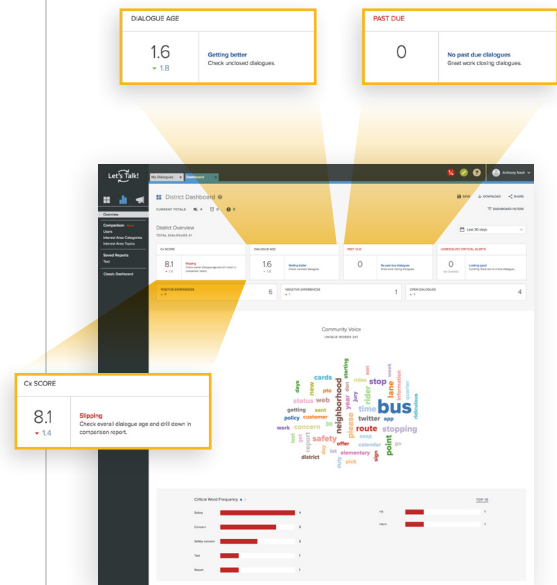
Let's Talk! not only helped district leaders gather feedback on the plan—it was a key part of the district's communications and support strategy. School officials created a dedicated web page featuring information about the bond proposal. The page included a tab to Let's Talk!, so community members could easily submit questions or comments, right from the website.

“We had a single page where we could send people for information, and they could ask questions right from this page as well,” Dupree says. “We didn't let any questions linger; we tried to answer them all within 24 hours. We also looked at social media every day to spot rumors and misinformation, and we used Let's Talk! and our social media channels to push out the correct information.”

THE RESULTS

With help from Let's Talk!, Huffman ISD's \$44.1 million bond measure passed on its first try in 2016. The new elementary school opened in fall 2018 with about 800 students, and the district was able to make substantial upgrades to its other buildings.

“The key to passing a school bond measure is having two-way communication with stakeholders, where they have an opportunity to ask questions and take part in decision making,” Dupree says. “That's where Let's Talk!, from K12 Insight, really helps.”



Measure your response time.

Earn community support and buy-in for your next bond or funding measure. Call **703-542-9600**. or visit www.K12insight.com.