



Spring Branch  
Independent School District

# Introduction to Educational Specifications

**SBISD Board of Trustees Presentation  
08/11/25**



# Definition: Educational Specifications

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**The Texas Education Agency requires all school districts** to create and review a written educational program that guides the design process of new proposed facilities or major renovations.

**Educational specifications provide the link between learning and the design of educational facilities.** They outline essential educational concepts and detailed facility needs, current and future educational delivery, and the impact of technology on learning.

**Educational specifications should support the overall educational goals of the district,** yet be nimble enough to allow for the effective and efficient design of school facilities.

**The educational specifications provide specific facility needs** to complement the district's educational delivery model. These will also provide consistency among similar project types from campus to campus.

**This document is a living document, in need of periodic update on a 5-year basis.**



# TEA Standards: Jurisdiction + Application

## WHY?

Standards for educational adequacy require a **long-range facility plan** to be developed and maintained by a school district for all school facilities. School districts must also develop **educational specifications** for instructional facilities. Plan may be a campus specific or district-wide plan and must be **updated every five years** and prior to the commencement of a subsequent capital improvement project.

## WHAT?

Written, adopted guidelines that **outline minimum expectations** of future projects

## WHO?

**All Texas school district instructional facilities**  
& all open-enrollment charter school instructional facilities

## WHEN?

Effective for capital improvement projects **starting Nov. 1, 2021**

Major Improvements  
OR Renovations  
**> \$50,000**



# TEA Standards: Key Areas Impacted

## Instructional Support Buildings

Elementary, Middle, and High Schools

### Instructional Spaces

General Education Room Benchmarks  
Science Classroom/Lab Benchmarks  
Auxiliary Instructional Spaces Benchmarks

SF defined by SF/Student

### Common Spaces

Library / Media Center  
Benchmarks

SF based off Student Population

### School Safety

Communications Infrastructure  
Access Controls for Exterior Doors  
Exterior Door Numbering  
Visitor Management at Entry  
Security Cameras

## Non-Instructional Support Buildings

Auditorium  
Natatorium  
Stadium



# TEA Standards: Select Method of Compliance

## QUANTITATIVE METHOD



**Baseline Starting Point for Core Instruction spaces.**

*Library/Media + Cafeteria spaces are additional.*

**SBISD historically has used this method**

## QUALITATIVE METHOD



**Requires Board Direction to use this method.**  
*Could result in additional square footage.*

*Cafeteria instruction + serving lunch at same time.*



# TEA Standards: Select Flexibility Level (Minimum Criteria)

## L1 | L2

**Minimum SF Criteria**  
Elementary = **36** SF/Student  
Secondary = **32** SF/Student

Presentation style  
instructional delivery

Inflexible furniture

No technology  
integration

Limited access  
to outdoors

Interactive style  
instructional delivery

Flexible furniture

Moderate technology  
integration

Controlled access  
to outdoors

## L3 | L4

**Minimum SF Criteria**  
Elementary = **42** SF/Student  
Secondary = **36** SF/Student

Interactive style  
instructional delivery

Flexible furniture

Extensive technology  
integration

Unmonitored access  
to outdoors

Student determined  
learning model delivery

Entirely mobile furniture

Multiple, simultaneous,  
integration

Unlimited access  
to outdoors

**SBISD historically has been  
Flexibility Level L1/L2 Minimum SF**



# Differences: Educational Specifications | Design Standards

## Educational Specifications

### Program Elements

- List of Space Types  
(Admin, Media Center, Instruction, SPED, CTE, Arts, Athletics)
- Quantity of Spaces by Space Type
- Area for each Space

### Relationship Diagrams

- Critical Adjacencies within Space Type Category
- Critical Adjacencies with other Space Type Categories

### Room Data Sheets

- Design Considerations  
(Layout, Finishes, Transparency)
- Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment  
(Casework, Shelving | Plumbing | Furniture, Technology )

## Design & Construction Std.

### Building Materials (Div 3 – 6)

- Concrete | Masonry | Metals | Woods | Plastics

### Bldg. Envelope + Interior Finishes (Div 7-9)

- Thermal + Moisture | Openings | Finishes

### Specialties + Equipment + Conveying (Div 10-14)

- Signage | Toilet/Bath Accessories | Lockers
- Kitchen Equipment | Washer/Dryer | Athletic Equipment
- Elevators

### MEP, Controls, Communication, Security (Div 21 – 28)

- Fire Suppression | MEP Equipment
- Bldg. Automation + Electronic Safety / Security

### Site + Exterior Improvements + Utilities (Div 31 - 32)

- Site Clearing | Earthwork | Paving | Irrigation | Planting
- Utilities (water, sanitary, storm)



# Next Steps



## Educational Specifications What is ahead ?

- **Natatorium + Stadium**  
(PBK)
- **Elementary, Middle & High School**  
(Stantec)



Spring Branch Independent School District  
**Inspiring minds. Shaping lives.**

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