1897 While recovery from gunshot wounds, James Henry Dishman teaches school at the Las Alames Ranch in the vicinity of what will later become Combes.

1899 In what would later become the north side of the Stuart Place Tract, Jesse Thomas Avery builds a one-room schoolhouse and teaches the area's children in it.

1903 The children of La Providencia Ranch hands are taught by Miss Margarita Villareal (later she becomes Mrs. G.M. Lozano. Their son G.M. Lozano, Jr. will marry another early arrival to the Harlingen scene. This is Ida Priestly, who arrived here in 1922, as her father with ancestors from Clarksville, TX takes up tenant farming in the Rangerville area. In 2002 she is to celebrate her 86th birthday.) Having been graduated after eleven years of schooling in Brownsville Margarita is qualified to teach. Instruction is in English. Later the school moves into the second floor of the Pioneer Building. This serves some of the Hispanic children until the school district builds a facility.

9/05 Lon C. Hill, the founder of Harlingen, builds a small frame schoolhouse near his new home. It opens with the seven Hill children as pupils; three children (Frank, John and Elizabeth) of Hill's sister and brother-in-law –Mr. and Mrs. J.C. McBee; the children (Lynn and Etta) of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas L. Jones, who had accompanied Hill from Beeville; Henry Bell; and later Katherine Weller, daughter A.H. Weller. This is 14 students in all to be taught by W.A. Francis (1905-07). He will someday head the English Department at Texas A&I College in Kingville. He is to be followed by Miss Johnnie Phipps in the 1907-08 school year and Lillian Weems, later Baldridge, in 1908-09. According to Mrs. Baldridge her students were: Kathryne Weller (Mrs. H. D. Seago), Mary Jones (Mrs. H. E. Bennett), Lynn Jones, Henry Bell, Ida Hill (Mrs. H. K. Morrow), Lon (Mose) C. Hill, Jr., John and Frank McBee, Gordon Hill, John Hill, Annie Rooney Hill, Hickman Hill, Sunshine Hill (Mrs. M.L. Caul), and Elizabeth McBee (Mrs. W.L. Darnell).

1906-09 Miss Jesusa Garcia, later Mrs. Cirilo Rodriguez, teaches 12 to 15 Hispanic students in a small house outfitted to be a school room. It is on the property her father, Pancho Garcia, has bought from Hill in the 300 block of West Harrison. Mrs. Rodriguez is to die at age 94 on 11/1/84 leaving four surviving daughters.

10/5/09 The Harlingen Independent School District Board of Trustees holds its organizational meeting in the office of the Morrow Brothers Lumber Company. The board consists of John E. Snavely (chairman), C.F. Perry, H.N. Morrow (secretary), J.A. Card, R.S. Chambers (treasurer), W.E. Hollingsworth, and W.H. Kilgore. On 2/1/10 the board would appoint Osco Morris as assessor and collector. The first school site purchased was the future Alamo School site, west of the railroad tracks between what is
now South E and F Streets. Lon C. Hill donated half the site and the District purchased the other half for $900, according to Warren W. Ballard, later business manager of the schools. Miss Anna Dixon, later Mrs. Clark of Austin, teaches at the two room, one-story brick school for Hispanics.

1908-09 The number of school children is still small enough to list. They are: Allie Hathaway (Mrs. Harold Looney), Auro Hathaway (later Buster), Rhubena Hathaway (Mrs. Dallas Ingle), Peter Hathaway, J.D. Dorough, Bunny Dorough, Moody Dorough (Mrs. Flagg), LeRoy Hoffman, Roland Ogan, Lois Ogan, Grady Ferguson, Lucie Mary Weems, Vivian Barbee, Archie Barbee, Lucille Barbee, Luella Barbee, Quinton Barbee, Emmett Anglin, Wyatt Clark, Earl Waterwall, Laura Lockhart, Basil Watwood, and Jesus ?.

1909 Mrs. George Pletcher, mother of George Pletcher, Jr., who would enter the nursery business and become mayor of Harlingen, along with Mrs. Wiles' sister Eula were school teachers in the former Adventist Church building. Her brother H.C. Ware and his wife owned a home next door to the old Adventist Church building, which was later to become a community building.

One student, I.E. (Renus) Snavely, of this period recalls that before the first brick schoolhouse was built classes were held in a succession of places. These were the Adventist Church building, which the Adventists never got to utilize, the Baptist Tabernacle, a red brick building on Harrison Street, and two buildings on the downtown blocks of Jackson. One of these was upstairs over a saloon with a pool hall next door.

9/28/09 An election approved the formation of a Harlingen Independent School District and seven trustees were elected.

C. E. Williams was principal-superintendent of schools at this time. He serves from the fall of 1910 to February 18, 1911.

5/14/10 The School Board of Trustees considers a bond election. On 7/8/10 the issue is set for $40,000, payable in 40 years at 4% interest in order to construct, equip, and purchase the sites for two brick schools. When in 1910 the school bond election for $40,000 was held to finance the construction of the two brick schools, forty-six voters out of the population of 1,126 participate. When the state attorney general did not approve the election, a second one was held 11/26/10. The issue received 51 unanimous votes for approval. L.S. Green of Green and Briscoe, Architects, Houston is selected for the "Main School" to serve grades 1 through 11. A.W. Cunningham is instrumental in purchasing a whole city block between 5th and 6th Street along Main Street for the site of the school. It is purchased from Lon C. Hill for $3,500. The Anglo students are attending school in the former Seventh Day Adventist building while the Hispanic students are in the brick one-story two-classroom school on what will be South E Street.

Evie Chaudoin will commence teaching school this year and continue until 1917 when she takes a position at the Planters State Bank. When the new school arose Miss Tarver taught grade 1, Mrs. Clift will be teaching high school classes, Pearl Boss will handle mathematics, and Mrs. Kuykendall music. While W. E. Sturgeon is school principal his wife is ambitious enough to organize both the girl's basketball team and the boy's football team.
It is 1910 when Dr. Pierre Wilson and John F. Rodgers work to erect a two-room wooden school house about in the center (presently Primera) of the Wilson Tract. Rodgers, with six children to educate, has a vested interest in providing a school.

4/15/11 Contract for $5,649 let to R. H. Tadlock to construct the second story addition to the existing two classroom brick schoolhouse for Mexican ethnics. [The mystery here is who erected the one-story brick schoolhouse to begin with since no school district existed when it was built.] When he opts out the contract is let to Ledbetter and Bales. To some this school was called the Benito Juarez School after the president of Mexico. Juarez was called the Lincoln of Mexico for expulsion of the French and his many reforms during his service as president 1861-1872. To others its name is simply the Mexican School. The school will then have four classrooms. This school is located between what will later be named South F and South E Streets on the east side of the 400 block of South F Street at 415. The School Board Trustees accept this addition on 3/12/12. This is the first of two schools to carry the name Alamo. By 1930 the original building was no longer being used as a school. Its second story was removed in 1949, and the rest demolished in 1975. At this time J.S. Ford is president of the Board and Prof. William L. Sturgeon is school superintendent and secretary to the board. Sturgeon serves from February 1911 until 1914 when A. B. Tyson takes over. Sturgeon is also a staunch First Christian Church member. Later when the board is reorganized, John E. Snavely will handle security.

4/25/11 Andrew Goldammer is awarded a $25,000 contract to build a three story brick schoolhouse on the northwest corner of Jackson and 6th Streets. J.P. McDonald is to supervise its construction. Another source puts the low-bid contract at $22,800. Now called a $40,000 school, it is nearing completion by 10/26/11. The building is accepted 3/25/12. First called the Central Ward School, it is, in 1936, renamed the Sam Houston School.

Advanced students this year occupy a room above the saloon at the corner of Jackson and A Streets. One teacher instructs 15 students who even have to take a course in Latin. Ireneus Snavely, who will be graduated in the class of 1915, later recalls that boisterous saloon customers were frequently a distraction and the facility had no amenities.

1911/12 Mary Wooten is a schoolteacher at the Dilworth Ranch School west of town. In 1912 she will marry Mackie Chaudoin, son of ranch overseer Robert Lewis Mackie.

1912 A small elementary school sponsored by the Sacred Heart of Mary Immaculate Catholic Church opens in southwest Harlingen with 48 students. It is in a frame house donated by the Extension Society. In 1918 Sisters of Mercy will come from Laredo to join the teaching staff and take care of administrative duties.

4/1/12 The Central Ward School is occupied. It serves as a school from 1912 to 1950 then several years as a community center. In 1952 it is purchased and renovated into an office complex named the E.O. Matz Building.

E.W. Anglin, a school board member in 1911-12, recalls, "We gathered up all the classes scattered about town on April 1, 1912 and moved them all to the new brick building on Jackson Street. The next year was a rainy one and we had to build a board walk all the way from downtown to the school."
10/12/12  A school census shows the scholastic population to be 294.

1913 Enough boys are enrolled in the high school, so a 14 man football team organizes. 1913-18 Lyceum Courses for adults are held in the Central Ward School in these years. 5/14 The first graduating class (then 11 grades) of the Harlingen High School is composed of Roberta Chaudoin (later Mrs. I.E (Renus) Snavely), Murl and Gladys Snavely, and Fred Osborn.

1915 The Wilson School at Primera to the west of J.F. Rodgers' place is built. Rodgers and J.T. Avery are its prime movers. Lilian Weems Baldridge is to be its first teacher. The Sacred Heart of Mary opens a three room school. Three years later a fourth class room is added. It is located just south of the church on Winchell (now C) Street. September of this year is when W. F. Jourdan becomes Harlingen school superintendent until 1918 when T.J. Foster comes on board. Foster comes from McKinney Texas where he was principal for seven years. 3/20/1915 When established this date, the Cameron County School District No. 4 included the future bounds of Harlingen.

4/7/16 Pearl Botts is principal of the high school. Domestic science classes will be added next term. Miss Pearl Cleary is principal of the Wilson rural high school. There were never more than two men on the staff at one time.

1918 This is the year Paul Earle Phipps comes to the Valley where he later becomes Superintendent of McAllen schools for two years. He comes to Harlingen in 1922 and takes the same position here until 1933, the year of his death. He is a native of New Boston, MO having been born there 4/30/88. He was educated at Kirksville Teachers College in Missouri and Columbia University where he received an M.S. degree. He also has a Superintendent School Diploma from Columbia. This Methodist and Mason married Susan Case on 6/28/11. He was president of the Valley Mid-Winter Fair Association its first two years in Harlingen. Paul Earl Phipps was superintendent of schools in Princeton, Missouri in 1918 when, due to his father's health condition, he brought his family including his father, wife Susan Case, and daughter Jean to McAllen in the summer of 1918. Two years later he was selected to be Harlingen Superintendent of Schools, a position he filled until 1932. His daughter, Jean Phipps Clore, will provide a valuable service by documenting the history of the First Methodist Church in Harlingen. Jennie Case comes to the Valley from Missouri. She is a graduate of the George Peabody College of Nashville. She and her sister, Mrs. Mattie Case (d.5/51), begin teaching in Harlingen in 1920. This First Methodist Church member dies 7/19/59 leaving a niece Jean Phipps Clore (here in1920). Her brother-in-law, the late Paul Phipps, was an early Harlingen school superintendent. It is in this year that bonds are voted to construct a new high school.

1919 Some time before 1920, the population of rural Leeland to the west of Harlingen had grown enough that a school was warranted. A frame building consisting of two large rooms to serve all grades was erected at the corner of what is now Business 83 and Altas.
Palmas Roads. Before 1923 this facility was being outgrown, so a one-room frame building was added to hold the first and second grades. It is around this year that Samuel Emmons Van Burkleo, wife Mary Jane Penn, and children Ben, Elizabeth, Dora, Hugh Perry, Christina, and Tracy move to Stuart Place from Altus, Oklahoma. He will become a teacher at the school.

At the Central Ward School shelters were provided on the north side for horses and vehicles. On a scaffold at the entrance to the school was a bell rung to summon and dismiss students at regular sessions and at recess. In 1954 it was still in use at Travis serving as a fire signal.

By this year a small Catholic school building has been set up just south of the Sacred Heart of Mary Catholic Church.

1920  The school enrollment at the Central Ward School and the West Ward Mexican School is 284 pupils as the school year starts. The children of new arrivals will soon push it to 425, 90 of whom are high school students. The Central Ward School has eight real classrooms four improvised ones and two in a new framed addition constructed on the northeast side. The West Ward School has four classrooms. The student growth necessitates the successful passage of a $30,000 bond issue in addition to the $40,000 for the new high school.

Superintendent of Schools at this time is J. T. Foster until Paul Phipps arrives in the fall. At this time the city's population is 1,784, the school enrollment is 450 taught by 16 teachers of whom five hold degrees. The next spring sees the school graduate seven boys and nine girls.

It is 1920 that sees the city hire its first football coach, D.M. Denton.

In the 1920s Harlingen segregates its Mexican surnamed school children through the 4-5th grades.

When early records of high school graduate were lost in the 1933 Hurricane, Eunice Simmons Madeley (Mrs. Neil Madeley Sr.) and other early graduates took it upon themselves about 1974 to reconstruct the names of individuals. Since the number is small it is accounted for below:

1914  Roberta Chaudoin, later Mrs. Renus Snavely
     Gladys Snavely, later Mrs. E. M. Bowen
     Murl Snavely, later Mrs. Pletcher
     Fred Osborne

1915  Doris Snavely, later Mrs. Paul Earl Phipps
     Ophelia Harrington, later Mrs. Morris Chaudoin
     Estelle Smith
     Moody Dorough
     Mary Lou Brown
     Irenus Snavely, who would marry Roberta Chaudoin

1916  Vera Thompson
     Roy Decker
     Emmett Anglin
     Arethusa Brown

1917  Pauline Snavely
     Eunice Simmons, later Mrs. Neil Madeley Sr.
Frances Scarborough
Roland Ogan
(Van) Buren Sidener
1918 Mattie James, later Mrs. Hough
Willis Weaver
1919 Roscoe Witt
Joe Chaudoin, who was to marry Dallas Hartin
Mabel Waters
Opal Snavely
Corinne Verser
Mildred Gustafson
Jamie Stockton
Gladys Poteet
Gladys Smith
Lois Ogan, later Mrs. Williams
1920 Phillip Hargage Cooper
Lafayette Ferris Weaver
Martha Clarketta Griffith
Edgar S. Place Jr.
Dorothy Louise Place
Eustacia (Sunshine) Dabney Hill, later Mrs. M. Caul
Mertie Elizabeth Hill
Margaret Edna Cook
Bessie Virginia Oler
Betsy Bass

In 1925 the West Ward Mexican School is greatly expanded with additions to the north of the original. W.T. Liston received the $10,000 contract to add four classrooms, two on each side of the front of the West Ward School on E Street. This would double its student capacity to accommodate its wholly Hispanic student body. By 1937 a larger facility is built at adjacent 501-2 S. F Street and named the Alamo School. In 1970 the school is closed but not demolished until 1975. By 1970 the school is closed. In the 1987-88 school year Alamo Jr. High School is to open at the present site of the Harlingen High School – South.

1921 Luz Ramirez, later to be Mrs. Bennie Leal of San Benito, is the first student of Mexican origin to be graduated from Harlingen High School. In 1922 Alfred Lozano, later to be Doctor Lozano, is the first Hispanic boy to be graduated.

4/9/21 A $30,000 school bond issue is voted in. It will supplement the earlier $40,000 issue and allow the construction of a high school.

6/19/21 A $50,000 bond issue is voted by Stuart Place residents to construct a schoolhouse. Bob and O.E. Stuart donate 10 acres of land for its site. It is scheduled to be completed by January 1, 1922. Mrs. Hugh Fitzgerald is president of the board and Mrs. R. D. Corn secretary. The former is one of the few women in the state to hold such a position. B.A. Elwing and Roy Mulhausen, architects of San Benito and Harlingen, have submitted plans for a modern building to serve the 185 scholars presently enrolled in the district.
The same architects have designed the $50,000 new Harlingen High School. The 216' x 145' structure will have two wings each holding eight classrooms and be constructed by W.T.Liston and Son.

1921-22 In this school year 534 students are enrolled.

12/12/22 The School Board of Trustees appropriates $60,000 for construction of a new senior high school. Its ornate twin-towered building is erected on the west side of the double block extending from 6th to 8th Street and between Polk and Tyler. It costs $45,452.50. Four years later on the east side of the two-block strip another main building is constructed for use as a junior high school. In the Hurricane of 1933 the first building sustains such serious structural damage that it has to be torn down. A gymnasium-auditorium is then built in the middle of the block. By 1937, the surviving structure called the Travis Junior High School operates at this place until 1949 when a new junior high school is constructed on 13th and Madison on land donated by the Minnie Gay family. The former junior high school, now turned into the Travis Elementary School, will be demolished along with the gymnasium when a new Travis Elementary School is build on the site but nearer 6th Street in the late 1970s.

1923 The Stuart Place School is dedicated. On the stone monument commemorating it are inscribed the names of the school board. They are: O.E. Stuart, president, J.J. Garrett, vice-president, Mrs. Hugh Fitzgerald, Secretary, W.H. Maupin, I.B. Corns, and H.C. West. A year later with the first graduated class comes the school's first edition of its annual, "Hoja de Palma". The school building will become the gathering place for the rural residents of the area and even be used for church activities. By 1928 the school will be fully accredited.

June 1923 Seven boys and 13 girls are the first to be graduated from the Central Ward School after 11 years of instruction. Teacher Frank Bruneman has taught Richard Stout, Kenneth Macy, Raymond Rodgers, Frank Houghton, Margaret Thomason, Lucille Bobo, Roe Davenport, Velda Goldammer, Essie McLeod, Vera Letzerich, Maureen Elmore, Velma Baize, Mayme Anglin, Mary Jennings, and Gladys Word among others. There are now 140 high school students and the total number of students has jumped to 1,100. The "High School Buzz" a monthly student newspaper is now being published.

3/5/25 On this date it is announced that a bond issue for $100,000 for new school construction will be voted on 4/4. At month end, Supt. Phipps, who has been here four years, is retained. The bond issue passes. Plans are to add an auditorium to the high school (Blk. 45), additions to the Mexican School (Blk.109), and repair the grade school (Blk.50). Total expenditures will range from $60,000 to $65,000. By July a $43,000 contract was let to H. J. Hanson and Son, Brownsville for new junior high school building (decades later referred to as the "old Travis") to be erected next to the senior high school on 6th. The cost of a 900-seat high school auditorium is put at $21,000 with R. E. Ewing its contractor. W.T. Liston received the $10,000 contract to add four classrooms, two on each side of the front of the Mexican School i.e. West Ward School on E Street. This would double its student capacity to accommodate its wholly Hispanic student body. After the renovation the school is called Ward West Junior High School. By 1937 a larger
facility is built at adjacent 501-2 S. F Street and named the Alamo School. In 1970 or
1971 the school is closed but not demolished until 1975. In the 1987-88 school year Al-
amo Junior High School is to open at the present site of the Harlingen High School-South
campus.
In 1925, newly elected to the school board of trustees are John Sanders and A.E. McLen-
don taking the places of John James and C.A. Bobo who do not choose to run again.
Holdovers are president, B.H. Brindley, A.A. Kimmel, Miss Paul Hill, L.M. Chaudoin,
R.B. Nunally, with R. B. Hamilton, secretary. Residing in a large bungalow at 313 E.
Monroe, John F. Sander's family includes John Jr., Joe G., and Bennie Ray. Joe G., a
band member in 1931-32 along with brother Bennie, will distinguish himself at H.H.S. by
being named All-District guard in 1935 and being elected president of the "Hy-Y" Club
(1936).
5/10/25 The largest graduating high school class ever consists of 34 students.
9/25 G.W. Moothart, president, of Harlingen Business College, opens the school after
obtaining a three year lease for space in the A.J. Wittenbach Building. He has operated a
similar school in Brownsville.
1926 This is the year Lucy A. Phillips Gough started teaching in the Harlingen School
District and which she would continue to do so for 26 years. Her specialty was 7th and
8th grade language arts. A native of Sealy, Texas from which school she was graduated
in 1903, she then attended the Texas Normal School in the first year it was open. She
taught eight years elsewhere before coming to Harlingen. This First Baptist Church
member was an originator of the Fine Arts Club in Harlingen where she continued to live
for 31 years after retirement. She was also a supporter of the Valley Baptist Academy and
the library. In the 1980s she moved to Sealy where on 9/6/92 she celebrated her 107th
birthday.
In 1926 Combes voted to go into the Harlingen School District and the original section of
a school was constructed with the promise of additional rooms to be built. James "Uncle
Jim" Dishman donated money and the 300' by 600' site for the school and presented it a
$1,000 gift for books. Despite his reluctance, the school was named in his honor. By
1928 an extension had been constructed and dedicated by Thomas S. Pickens, Superi-
intendent of Instruction of Harlingen Schools. A new elementary school was completed in
1950. When, on 1/27/64, its new wing became operable, John H. Morgan, superintendent
HISD gave the dedication speech.
10/8/26 At a PTA meeting Supt. Butler of the Stuart Place School notes that the addition
of four more credits this school year will bring the total to 17 ½ or 18.
10/26 E.H. and Mabel Briggs and A.W. and M.B. Coleman donate land for the construc-
tion of a public school to be known as Briggs-Coleman School for the Dishman School
District No. 15 of Cameron County. In the late 1940s it would fall under the Rio Hondo
School District. It operates until 1967 and is abandoned. The Country Playhouse com-
mences using its auditorium in 1979. In this year Bob Briggs, a descendent of one of the
land donors seeks to reclaim the land under its original grant stipulations.
1/11/27 School student enrollment is 1,475 or 325 greater than the previous school year.
An aerial photograph of Harlingen taken 9/11/27 shows the two wings that have been
added to the Mexican School. It will continue to be added to on its north side and even have a wooden classroom erected alongside. This year also wings and an auditorium are added to the Wilson School in Primera.

9/23/27 The Briggs-Coleman School, on what is later to be north FM 507, opens its school year in a new building. Prof. C.O. Slaughter is principal, Miss Jewel Hudson teacher of the elementary grades and Miss Mildred Hudson, the primary grades. In the 1970s after the school has closed the Country Playhouse will use the building to host amateur theatrical productions.

1928 The Lozano Building's upper floor is remodeled by Dr. Alfredo Lozano to convert it into Harlingen's second business college. The city brags that six schools have been completed with a $500,000 investment, and $400,000 of bonds voted for a new high school and two others. School attendance is 2,564. This same year the South Ward School at 306 W. Lincoln is erected. It is later renamed the James Bowie Elementary School. Its unique colorful cast-concrete frieze by Luiz Lopez Sanchez provides it the nickname, La Escuela de la Vibores (the school of snakes.) The façade blends Mexican and native-American motifs. At this time at 700 E. Austin the North Ward School, later to be called Austin Elementary, is built with designs by the Meriwether and Sauers Company. The combined cost for both is $93,258.50. Also started this year are portions of the Dishman School.

After working in numerous areas in Texas, Lillian Weems Baldridge returns to Harlingen and resumes a teaching career here spanning the years 1928 through the 1950s. She had attended four colleges earning a B.A. in 1941 and an M.A. in 1951. In 1958 she is named the Teacher of the Year. She will contribute articles to the Brownsville News, Brownsville Herald, and Valley Morning Star, primarily on history subjects. This daughter of the early Harlingen pioneer was a founder of the Lower Rio Grande Valley Historical Society. An Episcopalian born 1/10/1885, she was to die at age 84 on 8/2/69.

7/24/28 Several weeks earlier the school district boundaries were extended 900 acres to include Combes and a few other areas. R. B. Hamilton, board secretary, indicates the new Combes School will cost $20,000 to construct. For the token amount of $1 James Henry Dishman sells five acres of land to the HISD trustees in order for a school to be built in Combes. The trustees are O. N. Joyner, Miller Harwood, J. R. Grimes, H. J. Gostzke, A. E. McClendon, William Watterman and Frank Brunneman.

9/11/28 Schools are to open this date with an enrollment of 2,200 expected and this to rise to 2,600 later. Teachers in the system number 70. [This averages to 31.4 students per teacher.]

1929 A business college is operating above the Grimsell Feed Store on Monroe.

1/2/29 2,100 children are in school as of this mid-school year date. From 1920-21 when the school population was 816, the system gained only 305 to 1924-25 then 238 were added in 1925-26 bringing the 1926-27 start total to 1,475. This grew to 1,697 by January and 1,983 by April. The escalating growth indicates the dynamic development of the city in this period.
1/8/29  Dewitt and Washburn, Dallas are to be the architects for the new $270,000 high school expected to be completed by January 1930.

2/14/29  W.L. Lehman, proprietor of the Valley Business College, dies at age 41. He leaves his wife and three small children.

4/29  Carl S. Chilton is the principal of the Central Ward Grammar School. He will later become principal of the junior high school.

6/17/29  Large ads are carried urging residents to approve a supplemental bond issue of $100,000 in order to finance the $52,000 shortfall for the construction of the new high school but also $20,000 for additions to the West Ward School, the same amount to pay off Comb School notes, and retire other indebtedness. The issue is to carry 278 to 217.

6/30  Student enrollment is put at 2,383.

9/4/30  Called "the showplace of the Valley", the new $350,000 senior high school at 125 S. 13th Street at Harrison is dedicated. It is designed by architects Dewitt and Washburn of Dallas. The former designed the east wing of the White House. It has advanced features such as almost square rooms, sliding blackboards, a first class cafeteria, large rest rooms for teachers, boys and girls showers, special cooking and sewing classrooms, an auditorium with a motion picture booth, a sound proof music room on the second floor, a photo darkroom, and illumination spotlights for the front exterior. At this time the superintendent of schools is Paul E. Phipps. On the board of Trustees are Mrs. J.I. Coursey, O.N. Joyner, Ira E. Eells, S.D. Grant, A.E. McClendon, and Dr. John Crockett. The last senior class to use the facility is that of 1959 which started there but finished in the new high school on Marshall Street. The Spanish Revival style facility in 1958 becomes Vernon Junior High School named in honor of Julia Vernon, a popular English teacher and librarian for years at the high school.

The West Ward School is at 415 South F Street. Its principal is Mrs. Bertha J. Traylor. The South Ward School is at 309 W. Lincoln and Mrs. Lucy A. Gough is its principal. It will later be re-named the James Bowie Elementary School. B.E. Bailey is principal of the Central Ward School, Mrs. Lillian W. Baldridge at Dishman in Combes, and Kathleen Robertson at the North Ward School.

After the high school students move into their new facilities on 13th Street, the Travis Junior High School campus grows to include the former high school on 6th Street. Having moved from the Central Ward School, Carl S. Chilton is its principal. A small school that existed for several years was the Good Will Center at 507 S. C Street. It helped make Mexican students in their traditional Spanish language. Not far from it at 402 W. Polk was the Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School with Sister M. Ernestine as principal.

In 1930 the Harlingen Valley Business College was located at 215 ½ W. Monroe. By 1937 the college was operating on the third floor of the Embee Building addition at 119 S. Street. When between 1938 and 1941 the Durham Business Institute took over the site, Mrs. Harman Straub moved her school to the Embee Building at 121 W. Van Buren. She would close altogether by 1944. By 1942 the Embee school location had become the Durham Business College and was under the management of Carl A. Scott. It stayed in this location until 1958 then, after a year at 106 ½ N 1st, moved to 5621 S. F Street. In the 70s it changed its name to Durham College of the Valley. Durham was to go out of
business after 1973, possibly when it experienced difficulties with defaulted government student loans.

30-31 A listing encompassing eleven years indicates the growth of the city and its student school population: school year 1920-21 816, 21-22 853, 22-23 1052, 23-24 1099, 24-25 1121, 25-26 1359, 26-27 1686, 27-28 2152, 28-29 2450, 29-30 2735, 30-31 2897. The school budget this year is $217,983 for a final enrollment figure of 3,138. In 1931 by the time Superintendent Phipps resigns the student enrollment has grown to 3,128 with a city population of 12,124.

1931 (fall) J. T. Buck serves as superintendent until August 1934. The Great Depression forces the district to curtail its expenditures. This year Ira E. Eells becomes the business manager of the school system, a position that he holds for a decade.

1932 The Coast & Geodetic Service map of the Harlingen Quadrant shows the two building Palmetal School located at the far east end of Grimes Road and south of Rio Hondo Road. It serves the farm children of the sparsely populated area.

1933 The eighth grade class is moved to the high school building on 13th Street. 9/5/33 The Labor Day Hurricane of 1933 delays the start of school initially 9/18 to 9/25 and then to 10/2. The high school on 6th Street is damaged beyond repair as is the school for Negroes in the West side of town. The North and South Ward Schools suffer only minor damage. The number of students is put at 3,430, down 147 from the previous year.

1934 The Booker T. Washington School to serve Harlingen's Negro children is erected in the 800 block of W. Filmore at H Street. As the number of blacks diminishes over the years it will be integrated. Although an addition to it will later be made, it is to be superseded. It ceases to be used as a school in 1959. It currently is being used by the school district as a Parental Involvement Center. In the Fall of this year the Cardinal Football Field is constructed at the cost of $4,500. It is adjacent to the high school. 9/1/34 From this date until August 31, 1941 E.C. Deering, U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D.C., occupied the office of superintendent.

5/35 The School Board with Frank E. Davis as president, Dr. John Crockett vp, Ira E. Eells, secretary, and Mrs. H. C. Rader assistant secretary vote to rename the schools for the Texas Centennial to be held in 1936. The intermediate school is named for William B. Travis, Central Ward for Sam Houston, North Ward for Stephen F. Austin, South Ward for James Bowie, and the West Ward for the Alamo. 1935-36 The school budget drops to $192,125 for 3,276 students.

1936 The school system has 80 teachers.

1937 The new Alamo Elementary School is operating at 501-21 South F Street. By 1970 it ceases to function.
In this period E.C. Deering is superintendent of schools. He holds a BA from Baylor University and an MA from the University of Texas. D.M. Denton, who is the high school principal, holds an AB degree from Baylor University.

1940 Durham's Business College opens to train people in stenographic, secretarial, and office skills.
1940-41 The school budget is $199,868 to educate 3,828 students.
1940-41 It is thought that it is this school year that the Harlingen public school system added the twelfth grade. Previously only eleven grades were taught. The end of the 1941-42 school year sees the conclusion of 11 years of matriculation for grade school students to receive their high school diploma. Across Texas the school years offered are now extended through grade twelve. Some transitional scheduling for 11-12 graders is offered the next two years.
1941 The Bryne Select School of Business is at 117 ½ W. Jackson. It exists only this one year. Mrs. Harry (Ethel) Eggleston is superintendent. Her husband is the owner of the Merchants Credit Bureau.
An annex is constructed at the Alamo School on F Street.
7/1/41 The new superintendent of schools is Ernest H. Poteet, who will serve until January 15, 1948. W. W. Bollard is the system's business manager this year.

12/31/42 The school enrollment is 3,125 with a faculty of 97. As 1943 commences the public schools are: Harlingen Senior High School (13th St.), Travis Junior High (Polk), Sam Houston, James C. Bowie, Stephen F. Austin, Alamo, Booker T. Washington, and James F. Dishman. The total investment in the physical plants was $800,000. The 75 member uniformed high school band was a proud achievement.

1943 In this year an annex is added to the Sam Houston and to the Travis School.

4/3/44 One of the buildings in the Hardin Ranch School complex east of Briggs-Coleman burns and is a total loss.

1945 Along 8th Street a lengthy annex is built for the Travis Junior High School. Three years later another structure is added to the school at its northeast corner near Tyler. In the year by a 4:1 margin voters approve a $320,000 bond issue to finance the construction of a new elementary school and improve others.
1945-46 The school budget is $334,213 to service 4,505 students.

7/25/46 A school to be associated with St. Anthony Catholic Church, about to be dedicated, is itself dedicated. Its first classes are held 9/1/46 with Sisters of Devine Providence from San Antonio assuming teaching assignments. Under Father Al Ordner in 1948 new school facilities are erected. A church bulletin states the constructive costs were $43,786.50 while equipment for the school ran $5,155.62. There are five classrooms for 200 students. Over the years enrollment will peak at 468 students in 1960-61 then drop to 188 by 1973-74 years after the air base closed and grades seven and eight were dropped in 1969.
The Valley Baptist Academy gets its start in Harlingen under the sponsorship of the Rio Grande Baptist Association. Its mission is to teach grade school children primarily from Latin America areas. Its first home is an old store building on E. Madison. Here 28 are enrolled. In its second year it moves to Brownsville and remains there until 1956 when the old Valley Baptist Hospital, 613 South F Street in Harlingen becomes available. By 1962 it has 107 students, 88 of whom live in its dormitories. This same year it becomes an institution of the Valley Baptist Convention of Texas and by 1972 is a primary project of Texas Baptist Men. In 1964, 44 acres of land for a new campus, 5700 E. Harrison, are donated. When the 1972 school season starts and the Academy celebrates its 25th Anniversary it has 165 students, grades 8 to 12, from the U.S. and 11 other countries, mostly Mexico and Central America. The campus has five dormitories, classroom and administrative buildings, the president's house and four faculty houses. There is a staff of 20 teachers, administrative and maintenance personnel. At this time Dr. H.E. Gray has served as the Academy's president since 1952.

Some years after the F Street Valley Baptist structure is demolished, the multi-unit, two-story Robin Hood Apartments are constructed on the site.

It is 1947 that the school district establishes the Colonial Acres School for "exceptional children". It is at 500 Elm Street near the airfield. Mrs. Polk (Lucille) H. Hornaday is first a teacher then after two years principal, and she also teaches the third grade in this seven classroom school with grades 1-6. In the years 1923-25 she taught homemaking before going back to college. In 1937 she began teaching for 11 years at the Alamo School, having a science degree from UT and a MS from Texas A&I. The school begins its classes in September 1948. Within three years the school will grow from five teachers and 127 pupils to 14 teachers and 400 pupils, 90 of whom who were second graders transferring from Bowie Elementary. This school will in November 1953 move its location and be renamed Bonham Elementary School.

Mrs. Hornaday will move on to the Austin Elementary school as principal in 1951 after its longtime principal, W.L. Spradling dies. After 17 years there she will retire in 1968. An auditorium and two classrooms are added to the Dishman School and a vocational shop to the high school. The Jefferson School is constructed. By 1951 it already needs the addition of six more classrooms.

1947 The Cardinal footballs teams of the 1940s and especially 1945, 46, and 47 enjoy great success under coach Weldon "Stoney" Phillips. Future businessman Lewis Levine, who will go on to the University of Texas, stars at fullback. The teams and fans are able to view the success in a stadium constructed in 1947.

1948 St. Alban's Episcopal Day School is established. Its first year sees 28 three to five year olds for the half day sessions. By 2003 this accredited school serves pre-school (age 2 through 6th grade.) The intervening years had seen numerous transitions, especially after the air base closed. By 1956-57 there were 85 students through the newly added third grade. A fourth grade was added the following school year only to see a retrenchment of both grades in 1958-59.

In this year the West Ward Elementary School is in the 600 block of South J. By 1950 it has been renamed the Thomas Jefferson Elementary School as much of it is new, having been constructed in 1946 by Bruce Ramsey construction to plans by Cocke and Bowman.
M.H. Connally becomes superintendent of schools this year and Dr. N.A. Davidson is president of the school board.
The Booker T. Washington School with two rooms is remodeled and the grade level goes from 8th through 10th as two grades are added.
9/48 The St. Paul Lutheran School is established at Third and Tyler. Its goal is to educate elementary students together with Christian overtones. The school will later expand to handle kindergarten through 8th grade. When the school first opens it has 28 students, one teacher, and a principal. By May of the next year the enrollment has risen to 53.
12/21/48 A site is given by R.E. Smith of Houston in memory of his mother Minnie B. Gay of Brownsville. Smith is an oil operator in Conroe. The deed is given to J. Lewis Boggus, president of the school board. Smith is cited as trustee for his daughter, Bobbie Sue Smith, 1 year old, for whom the tract had been given. Mrs. Gay came to Brownsville from Jefferson, TX in 1908. Her husband, Portes Gay, was chief of the Border Patrol at Brownsville. The 40 acre tract was acquired by Mrs. Gay in 1918 and remained in tact until the railroad cut through leaving 37 acres. Of this, 6.8 acres has been given for the school site next to Cardinal Field. Brownsville attorney Robin Pate, a family friend, is credited with generating the gift. On hand are board members Arthur Purdy, F. Earl Davis, T.D. King, J.R. Fitzgerald, Guy Leggett, and W.W. Ballard business manager.

1949 The Minnie Gay Junior High School comes into existence on 13th at Madison. Its architects are Cocke, Bowman & York and its construction is by E.J. Waitman. In the 1990s its name is changed to Memorial Middle School as a bone to "political correctness" since the word "gay" has become synonymous with homosexual. The St. Paul Lutheran School has grown to the point that a school lunch program is instituted. By 1950 it will have to add a fourth school room. It May of that year it has classes from grade one through eight and will graduate three from its eighth grade class.

1950 The school system has 5,662 students. This year sees the final integration of the Stuart Place School and the Wilson School of Primera into the Harlingen Consolidated Independent School District.
The Fair Park Elementary at 1406 W. Jefferson will become the David Crockett Elementary School in 1952. The new Travis Elementary will open at 700 E. Taylor. The short-lived Colonial Acres Elementary is at 500 Elm, which is near the airport. This year 19 year old Joanne Cleckler, coming from East Texas with her husband, begins a 45 year teaching stint with the school district. She retires in June 1957 as assistant principal at Ben Milam. For many years she taught home economics studies at the junior high. Crockett Elementary will open this year, a music building will be added to the high school, and the Booker T. Washington School will see the addition of two classrooms. Crockett was designed by Cocke, Bowman & York and built by Frank Parker while M. H. Connelly was school superintendent and J. Louis Boggus president of the school board.
1/23/50 Gay Junior High School to accommodate 630 students is set to open. It features a $365,000 ultra-modern auditorium seating 548.
1950-51 With school enrollment jumping to 7,190 the budget escalate to $1,275,284.
7/51  C.E. (Dad) Burnett, 19 years with the Corpus Christi school system, takes the position of Harlingen School Superintendent. He takes the place of M.H. Connelly, 17 years in the system and superintendent the last four years, who has resigned to take over an insurance business. Burnett born 7/19/01 in Stephenville, TX has a two year degree from John Tarleton College, is a UT graduate in 1925, and received an MA degree from UT in 1936. He married Mary Lucile in 1930.

This same month the school board seeks a site to expand Gay Junior High so it can sustain a ninth grade and approves the 1951-52 school budget of $1,536,476. By 1952, 20 additional classrooms have been added to Gay.

9/28/51  Don Schmidt is principal of Colonial Acres School for Exceptional Children (handicapped.) He employs Dan Jackson, a specialist to assist. With the reactivation of the air field the Air Force takes over Colonial Acres by January 1952 and pays the city $45,810 for the 6.5 acres and buildings. The students are then dispersed among the elementary schools in the city.

10/51  The new Board of Education Building opens on Harrison near its intersection with 77 Sunshine Strip while this year the Austin School adds six classrooms and Dishman two, and two tennis courts are built at the high school.

1952  The city has one high school, one junior high school, and eleven elementary schools. There are 5,762 students enrolled under a faculty of 240. The high school now has a 100 member uniformed marching band. The Dishman and Wilson School systems have been integrated into the new Harlingen Consolidated Independent School District (HCISD). Supplementing the public school system are two Catholic parochial schools, one Episcopalian and one Lutheran school each. There are three vocational schools and Durham's Business College with its capacity of 125 students.

1/12/52  W.O. Ferguson and Sons, Brownsville is awarded the $235,442 contract for the addition at Gay Junior. On this date the elementary school population has grown from 4,290 in 1950 to 4,428 in 1951, the junior highs from 704 to 778, while the high school has dropped from 932 to 899.

2/12/52  Parker Construction is awarded the $32,042 contract for the school administration building plus $3,730 to Rio Refrigeration for its air conditioning.

5/4/52  Briggs-Coleman votes 83 to 28 not to consolidate with the HCISD. 225 elementary studies currently attend, while junior and high school students are going to Harlingen which is reimbursed. In August 1952 the HCISD says it no longer has room for the 33 Briggs-Coleman students.

5/21/52  A $750,000 school bond issue passes 588 to 195.

5/23/52  J.B. Chambers, Jr., president of the school board, awards diplomas to 130 high school graduates.

7/18/52  The 1952-53 budget sits at $1,216,849.

9/4/52  Beginning school year enrollment increases to 5,816 including 272 dependents of Air Force personnel.

1952-53  During this school year four classrooms were added to the Dishman School and the same to the Bowie School. The capacity at Gay Junior School was doubled with facilities added for shop, home-making, music, audio-visual education, art, and regular classrooms.
1953-54  For 8,200 students the school budget is set at $1,790,187. The increased number of students, teachers' pay raises, and inflation all added to rising expenditures. Out of every educational dollar $.55 went to the instructional program, $.23 to capital outlay, $.08 ½ to debt service, $.04 1/8 to operation of plant, $.03 ¼ to administration, and the remainder to auxiliary services, plant maintenance, and fixed charges.

Towards the end of 1953 a Student Parent Teacher Association is formed at Harlingen High School to generate interest among these constituents. Mrs. E.O. Matz is its first president. In February 1954 the group sponsors the first Cardinal Mardi Gras. Mrs. E.C. Bennett is general chairman of the event.

1954  8/10/53  The Lorenzo de Zavala Elementary School, 1111 North B, is projected by architect Walter Bowman to be mostly ready occupation by September or October and the Harlindale School, at what will become 2400 E. Jefferson, a little later. The latter will be renamed for James Butler Bonham, the Alamo hero, after a vote of the student body of Colonial Acres. Horace McGee is to be principal of Zavala and Don Schmidt at Harlindale. At the time C. E. Burnett is school superintendent and J.B. Chambers is president of the school board. One of Bonham's first teachers is Mrs. Lee Means who will later become president of the HCISD board. The school district is forecasting an increase of 829 students. Seventy three new teachers will include 14 additional to last season. Plans also call for the addition of six rooms to the Crockett Elementary School as well as six to eight rooms to Jefferson Elementary.

The school census this year puts the student population at over 7,000 pupils serviced by 285 professionals.

7/8/55  The Harlingen School Board votes to admit the city's black high school pupils now attending the Washington School to Harlingen High School. They number around 11. The sixty other grade students at Washington include 10 from Santa Rosa, La Feria, and Raymondville. The board delays a decision on their status and also that of the three black teachers under contract and surplus to the system if integration occurs. The actual integration doesn't occur until 1957 when the three teachers find employment outside the Valley.

8/8/55  A budget of $1,902,561 is approved by the school board. A real estate valuation of $1.35 per $100 is used this year.

9/21/55  First month school enrollment is up. There are 923 in the first grade classes and 4,736 overall in grades 1 through 6. In junior high are 1,470 and in high school 834 bringing overall enrollment to 7,040.

3/56  The city has one high school, one junior high school, and thirteen elementary schools. The physical plant is valued at $4,170,000. A faculty of 320 serves 10,390 children.

Lamar Elementary School comes online at 1100 McLarry Road. It was constructed in 1955 with C.E. Burnett as superintendent and L.R. Baker as president of the school board.
9/56  The School of the Sacred Heart of Mary Immaculate opens its new brick structure with seven classrooms. It would close in 1971, and the building will be used for its parish religious education program.

8/57  Robert I. (Bob) Irby comes to Harlingen as the High School Choir Director and as part time music director at the First Baptist Church where he will also serve as deacon. Born August 4, 1926 in Memphis TN, he will die in Harlingen 12/15/04 at age 78, leaving his wife of 30 years, Gail, four children, and eight grandchildren. Sadly he had over the years lost his first wife, Beulah, and sons Bill and David. He attended school in Austin and was graduated from Plainview High School. In 1950 he earned a Bachelor of Music degree from North Texas State University and in 1957 a Master of Music Education from the same institution, now North Texas University. From 1957 to 1986 he served the school district where his choirs and students won many awards. After his initial retirement he taught four years at the Marine Military Academy and returned in the school years 1999 through 2001 to teach Advanced Placement Music Theory to senior and junior high school students. The music department established a Bob Irby Scholarship to honor his accomplishments.

1958 St. Anthony Church purchases the remaining ½ block on the north side of Van Buren Avenue and constructs a kindergarten building. In March 1960 it will borrow $50,000 at 4 ½% interest to build new classrooms for its school. In 1957 the school has a staff of eight, three lay teachers and five sisters. The student enrollment, first through eighth grades, is 312.

12/19/58  Is the date of the first occupation of the new Harlingen High School on E. Marshall. C. E. Burnett is school superintendent and Dr. Thomas La Motte is president of the school board. It costs $1,485,000 including the grounds according to Warren W. Ballard, school business manager. On 1/26/59 it is officially dedicated. Speakers are Dr. Ernest H. Poteet, president of Texas College of Arts and Industry. He was superintendent of schools here for 7 ½ years. J. Gordon Nix is to be principal of the school constructed by W. B. Uhlhorn.

2/14/59  Joel Hendrix Murray of 1307 E. Filmore dies. He came to the Valley from Stephenville in 1921 and until seven years ago was building superintendent of Harlingen schools.

9/23/59  The HISD is to put forth a $450,000 bond issue. C. M. Callihan is serving his first year as superintendent of schools, having commenced on July 1, 1959.

1960  The new Sam Houston School, an elementary one, opens at 301 E. Taft bringing the city's total to 14. The HISD this year has 10,463 students and 402 teachers.

3/1/60  The school board approves new $911,654 second junior high school to be built at Coakley Village and the submission of a bond issue to cover its cost. Last week it approved three elementary schools – one at Coakley Village, one Rangerville Road and one at 1st Street and Davis. Coakley Village is on the C.R. Jullian Coakley Estates. The school will eventually be named for Mary E. Coakley. By 6/7/60 plans are drawn for this school.
The Ben Milam Elementary School is being built at 1215 Rangerville Road.
8/23/60 The school budget of $4,715,299 is approved. It necessitates raising the district
tax rate from $1.50 to $1.70. When the schools open in September there are 8,931 regis-
tered students with the breakdown: 5,689 elementary, 2,175 Gay Jr. High, and 1,067
Harlingen High School according to Supt. C.M. Callihan.

3/61 The School Board buys out the contract of C. M. Callihan for $18,000 and lets him
go. Harvey Broyles takes over as acting superintendent of schools.
3/22/61 Adams Brothers General Construction Co. of Brownsville is awarded the contract
for the $602,187 cost of the Coakley Jr. High School. In 1/62 when it comes in at
$700,000 the city lacks money for paving 6th Street and the Taft crossing. The school
district then says it will not open Coakley this school year.
4/6/61 In view of the announced HAFB closing the school board holds in abeyance the
construction of 10 new classrooms.
6/1/61 High school graduates number 257.
8/13/61 The $810/yr teacher pay raise will cost the district, which pays about 13% of the
teacher's salaries, $50,000. The base minimum is presently $4,014 annually. The 400
plus teachers here received a raise of $120 last year. In 1960-61 the district received
$2,215,863 from the state. About 11,500 students are expected to register for the 1961-62
school year up from 10,976 of 60-61. When a count is made in November, the number of
10,314 is actually down.
9/3/61 A shop and a 12-classroom wing have been added to the Harlingen High School.
11/2/61 The school enrollment is down for the 1961-62 school year to 10,314 from its
level of 10,564 in 1960-61.

2/8/62 Twelve additional classrooms are approved for the high school.
4/20/62 Warren W. Ballard, for 30 years business manager of the Harlingen School Sys-
tem, resigns. He started work here in 12/1/30. The dual system of management since
1920 will be abandoned and the Supt. of Schools will control all aspects.
5/18/62 John H. Morgan superintendent of the Taft School System is named superinte-
dent of Harlingen schools. His three year contract called for a salary of $16,000 per an-
um and a car allowance of $100 per month.
5/27/62 The completion of the Mary E. Coakley Junior High School is one year late. Its
total cost is $750,000 for the building, paving, and equipment. In September 1,000 stu-
dents are expected to attend it. It was built under Harvey J. Broyles, school superinten-
dent, and Frank N. Boggus, school board president. Its architects are Hester, Bowman &
Swanson while Adams Brothers is the building contractor.
5/30/62 There are 251 graduates of Harlingen High School.
8/62 The La Motte School (T.M.R.) at 216 N. 21st is opened to handle special students.
It will come to have 14 teachers and 133 students.
This year also sees the construction of Sam Houston Elementary School to the south of
Coakley.

6/63 By this date the Alamo School on S. E Street had grown to have in addition to its
main building to the north and two annex building to its south. Total classroom and ad-
ministration area was 11,724 sq. ft. An auditorium to the northwest was an additional 4,500 sq. ft.

10/25/63 The old high school, now a junior high school is renamed in honor of Julia Vernon. Julia Shawson, the third child of Andrew Jackson and Elizabeth Ann (Ray) Shawson, was born 10/24/93 in Youngsport, Bell County, TX. She came to Harlingen in the 1920s and married Thomas Spillar Vernon of West Virginia in Brownsville on 12/22/26. They made their home at 1218 E. Harrison but had no children. She obtained a 1923 teaching degree from Southwest Texas State Teacher's College, and later added a B.A. from Texas A&I, an M.A. from her first college in 1949, and a B.A. in library science from Texas State College for Women in 1951. In Harlingen she taught elementary school children, then middle school English, and finally high school students before becoming the high school librarian. She organized the chapter of Future Teachers of America at the high school and the chapter was named after her. Her husband died of diabetes complications in 1947. This much–loved educator passed away in Waco at age 88 on 6/29/82.

1965 It is this year that Harlingen College, a business school, establishes itself at 513 E. Jackson in the Matz Building. It is started by key personnel of the San Antonio Business College in that city. O.N. Bard, who worked for them in 1964-65, moves back here and becomes its first manager in 1965.

9/65 The first classes, with 59 students, of the Marine Military Academy take place at old wartime facilities of the Air Force Navigation School at the deactivated Harlingen Air Force Base. The academy for high school students follows elements traditional to the U.S. Marine Corps. Prior to 1965 the founders of MMA planned to locate in Prescott, AZ. A Marine recruiter in Harlingen, Gunner Sgt. John S. Allerton, read about the proposed academy in Leatherneck. He showed the article to Sam Searles, then a major in the Army Reserve and an official of the Harlingen National Bank. Searles was a former Marine Corps sergeant-major. He spoke to city officials about the academy. The organizers visited here and liked what they saw. Funding came from many sources. One major one was J.D. Stetson Coleman, a WWII Marine Corps Veteran. He bought 26 buildings and about 83 acres from the city for $55,000. He also secured a half million dollar loan and paid the interest on it for the first three years. By 1985 the academy had nearly 400 cadets, 37 teachers, and an annual budget of $3 million for its now 139 acre campus. Its 1981 class had 20 going on to the U.S. Naval Academy, and one the Air Force Academy. Sixteen others received full ROTC scholarships to attend college, with 41 others accepted at major colleges and universities.

In this year the Alamo School at 512 South E is noted as (migrant).

This year the St. Paul Lutheran School is located near the church sanctuary. Nearby is built, under the direction of the Rev. L.F. Westerman, a facility to house five classrooms, a principal's office, a staff workroom, and a parish hall. The facility, under principal Richard Lewer, is air-conditioned. The educational program is to grow. In 1973 a Day Care program is initiated as part of the Early Childhood Education Center. The first year 19 children are under the care of Barbara McCaslin, who continue as director until her retirement in 1987. As ground is broken in 1977 this program is integrated into developmental programs for two-year old through eighth grade. Don Schmidt is principal. In
1981-82 while David Glienke is principal, the construction of a 4-room two story addition allows all classes to be in separate rooms. A school library is added in 1986.

1967 O. N. Bard of Harlingen College leaves the school and together with local businessmen forms the Valley Central College (VCC). By 1968 it was located at 119 W. Van Buren where its competitor, Harlingen College (HC), had moved in 1966. HC advertises that it offers courses in shorthand, accounting, office machines, bookkeeping, drafting, electronics, air conditioning, refrigeration, and heating. While offering similar studies VCC has both a two year plan and short course. Joining Bard, who is president and treasurer, are four more corporate officers. There are three administrative personnel and the faculty is comprised of nine experienced teachers. By the 1970s the focus is already on automation. VCC will establish satellite facilities in Brownsville by 1970 and also in McAllen. In a dispute with directors over the profitability of VCC, Bard leaves and Ray Martin becomes general manager by 1971. In 1975 VCC ceases to function while HC had closed in 1973.

7/4/67 Tom Hestand becomes principal of the high school. He was previously assistant principal of Smiley High School of the Northeast Houston ISD. A native of Denison he has a BA from Austin College and a MS from North Texas State University, Denton.

9/67 Texas State Technical Institute (later to be renamed College) – Harlingen, also known as the Rio Grande Valley Campus begins operation as an extension of the Waco Campus of the Texas State Technical Institute (also called the James Connally Technical Institute). Located at the former HAFB, it starts with two instructors and 40 students. Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey is guest of honor at the official dedication ceremonies held in a former aircraft hangar on 10/23/68. In the summer of 1969 it, and the campuses at Waco and Amarillo, is separated from the Texas A&M system. Milton Schiller became the vice president of the TSTI Rio Grande Valley Campus and Archie Rosales the school's first general manager. By 9/69 it is offering classes for credit; 78 students are taking classes.

This year structural additions are made at Vernon Junior High School.

1968 The Lamar Elementary School is opened on M Street.

1969 Rosendo Rodriguez Jr. is principal of the Alamo School, the year before it closes its doors forever on its E and F Streets campus.

4/70 Students number 11,000 in Harlingen schools. The school budget is $5.6 million, $712,893 from federal sources. The monthly HCISD budget is $345,776.

9/70 TSTI has four new buildings nearly completed. They will add 83,000 square feet to the existing 114,493.

7/18/73 The School Board votes to close all elementary school campuses at the start of the school year. This means children must stay on the campus rather than going home for lunch or elsewhere.

1974 TSTI has 1,262 students.

4/74 There is a school bond issue election. Sought is approval to replace the old Travis School, create a new cafeteria at Bowie, build a new Primera School, create new toilets at Zavala, and a gym and a band hall at Gay-Vernon, all for $1.98 million; air condition all
elementary and junior high schools at a cost of $2.2 million; build a Central Media Center for $150,000.
This year the new Wilson Elementary School at Primera is opened to accommodate the area's growing student population. Designed by Cline Associates it was constructed by Dan Winship, Inc. At the time the School Board of Trustees president is Johnny C. Means and the superintendent of schools is James I. Thigpen.
5/21/74 Miss Margaret Thomason retires from the HCISD with 46 years tenure, the longest of any teacher in the Harlingen district. Mrs. Mildred Pierce also retires having taught 26 of her 29 years as a teacher in the Harlingen system.

2/75 TSTI has recently spent $2 million in constructing six buildings, a cafeteria, student center, swimming pool, and dormitories. It is about to make use of two hangers adjacent to the runway.
1975 (fall) The A.O.C. Dent Building is added to help hold the increased enrollment of students at St. Alban's. Surplus military barracks purchased in the 1960s are removed. In 1983 this will be followed by the Marian Cocke Building with its eight class rooms and the main office building. Leon Daniell and Dr. Clark are to provide an activities center and paved play area in 1985. This latter year is to see the first graduation of sixth graders from the school and four years later the school will receive accreditation. The Cocke building will receive an addition in 1993. By 1999, 8,000 pupils will have gone though the school.
At this same time Calvary Baptist Church on 7th Street institutes its Cavalry Christian School. It commences with a school for the youngest children then incrementally adds grades annually until it serves 2 year olds through the eighth grade. Shirley Ashley is the school's first director. By the school year 2004-05 there are over 25 classrooms. Plans are to add 9th and 10th grade levels in 2005-06. These will be housed in two portable buildings having six rooms total. The brick classroom wing on the north side was constructed in 1984. The two story $750,000 gymnasium and six classroom structure was completed in 2003. School tuition is relatively nominal and payments are spread over an eleven month period.
10/20/75 The new $759,627 Travis Elementary School built to accommodate 720 students is dedicated. SHWC, Inc. is its architect while the Eddleblute Construction Co. erected it. In attendance are Dr. Norma Schultz, president of the school board, J. Gordon Nix, principal, and former superintendent of schools, James I. Thigpen.
This year Allan Brumley becomes head band director at Harlingen High School. (He will have served in various band capacities at San Marcos, Edinburg and Rio Hondo for the previous seven years.) He will occupy that position until 1981 when at age 34 he resigns to go into the insurance business. In 1980 the high school band will be named by the National Band Association one of the Top Ten High School Bands in the country. In 1981 the band with over 300 members marches in the Tournament of Roses Parade on New Years Day in California. In its first appearance it is the largest marching unit in the parade.

1976 Jo Ellen Paschall, wife of Dr. Charles Paschall, founds the University Preparatory School, a four year accredited facility. By 1985 it has 47 students and 5 certified teachers. In 5/77 it bought its 6 acre campus on Breedlove Street.
The HCISD initiates the first HOSTS (Help One Student To Succeed) Program in the state. Volunteers mentor students needing extra reading and math skills. By 2003, 975 mentors coach students in each and every school.

4/76 There is a school bond issue election. Sought is approval to replace the old Travis School, create a new cafeteria at Bowie, build a new Primera School and a gym at Gay-Vernon, all for $1.98 million; air condition all schools at a cost of $2.2 million; build a Central Media Center for $150,000.

1978 Basketball coach Carl Owens comes to HHS. With the Cardinals until his resignation in February 2003, he amasses 570 wins over the 25 year span. His overall career coaching record is 809 wins and 387 losses. In his tenure the Cards win 11 district titles and make 19 playoff appearances. In 1973 he led tiny Kennard High School to a 2A State Championship.

Dr. J. Gilbert Leal becomes Texas State Technical Institute president after being on the faculty nine years. At this time the school's 44 acres have nine instructional buildings, a staff of 184, and an enrollment of 992 students.

This year the Treasure Hills Elementary School is constructed on Haines Drive. Additions will be made to it in 1990 and 2006.

6/78 By a large margin the $14 million school bond issue is defeated. The VMS in a series of seven editorials had opposed the measure as an extravagance. Other City bond obligations stretching to 1994 amount to $14 million.

5/11/79 Bill Borgers resigns as HHS principal to further his studies. Wally Jackson, assistant principal at Gay Jr. High takes on the assignment. Phase I of the HHS construction is accepted by the School Board.

5/27/79 The Marine Military Academy breaks ground for its Athletic Center.

8/27/79 The School Board dedicates the new 24 room Treasure Hills Elementary School.

1980-81 School district enrollment reaches 12,502 students.

1/15/81 It is proposed by Lubunski Associates that the Stuart Place School be demolished and replaced by a new 20-unit classroom building. The 57-year old structure is deemed to costly to renovate. It currently serves 503 students in overcrowded classrooms. Eventually only the old entrance to the school is retained for historical purpose.

6/24/81 Joe Gassiott, 34, is named HHS principal to replace Wally Jackson who resigned earlier in the year. Gassiott has been for two years principal at Corrigan-Camden High School near Lufkin.

4/30/81 U.S. District Judge William Wayne Justice rules that Texas must provide bilingual education to non-English speaking students in grades 1-5 for the 1981-1982 school year and phase it into grades 6-12 in the next seven years. Supt. Dan Ives indicates that this will present no problem for the HCISD. It currently has 18 certified bilingual teachers for kindergarten, 37 for first graders, 33 for second and 23 for third. At present the system has 12,400 students and 700-750 teachers.

6/18/82 The School Board approves $203,150 for the purchase of portable buildings. Three will be placed at Gay Jr. High School, two at HHS, and one at Austin Elementary.
6/20/84 City permit is granted for the HCISD to build the Jane Long Elementary School at 2601 North 7th Street.

1985 TSTI has 2,359 students, 138 full time faculty, 153 non-faculty employees and an annual budget of $7,619,836.

1986 Major General Harold Glasgow, USMC (ret.) assumes the position of superintendent of the Marine Military Academy. By 1989 the enrollment is up to 375, who are offered college preparatory course, grades 8 through 12. Jack Hatfield, executive with the Valley Morning Star, and others establish The Literacy Center of Harlingen. It will eventually become a Council Member of Laubach Literacy Action, one of the largest literacy providers in the U.S. By 2005 the local center provides instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL), Basic Instruction for English Speakers who need to learn how to read and write, General Equivalency Diploma (GED) training, Pre GED training, Basic Math instruction, and Citizenship Preparation.

9/1/86 The new Alamo School is ready to open with classes to commence 9/2. It will serve only ninth graders. At present 9th graders attend the Vernon School and, together with 7th and 8th graders, the Coakley Middle School.

1/1/87 The Harlingen High School Band of well over 100 members marches in the Tournament of Roses Parade in Los Angeles.

3/14/87 Larry Guilliouma, Harlingen High School band director is inducted into the National High School Band Directors’ Hall of Fame. A graduate of Jackson high school, Massilon, OH he went on to receive a BA then an MS degree from the University of North Alabama by 1975. He then was employed at the University of Mississippi, and the Victoria school system before coming to Harlingen in 1981 where he would supervise seven directors. He was to submit his resignation in June 1987.

5/3/87 The Alamo School, 1701 Dixieland Road, designed by Lubunski Associates Architects is dedicated. At the time T. Carl McMillan is school superintendent and Ben Warrenburg, president of the school board. The new junior high school opened in September in an undeveloped area west of the Municipal Golf Course. J. Glen Cleckner is its principal. Initially it serves only 9th graders, but plans are for it to accommodate 10th graders in the 1988-89 school year. This will later be the site of Harlingen High School-South, the physical result of additions and renovations in 1988 and more additions in 1990. Major General Harold Glasgow, USMC (ret.) assumes the position of superintendent of the Marine Military Academy. By 1989 the enrollment is up to 375, who are offered college preparatory course, grades 8 through 12.

1990 A group of concerned business people in the community form the Harlingen Area Education Foundation. Over a twelve year period it will grow to encompass New Directions, a leadership, tutoring, and mentoring program for high school students; New Directions, a similar program for middle school students; Texas Scholars, a curriculum improvement program that requires 24 graduation credits in college entry subjects; and
Technology Academies dealing with computer literacy. The Foundation is financially supported by Harlingen businesses and individuals. This school year the three junior high schools educate 7th and 8th graders. The former Alamo Junior High School becomes Harlingen South High School.

1992 The Zavala Elementary School is remodeled and in 1997 added to.

9/91 By an act of the 72nd legislature the Texas State Institute-Harlingen becomes the Texas State Technical College-Harlingen. Its Harlingen campus library holds 16,000 books. It has a faculty of 141 for 2,623 enrolled students.
8/91 The HCISD opens the KEYS Academy on North 7th Street near Loop 499. It is a non-traditional school for at-risk students. In 1994 Yolanda Gutierrez becomes its principal.

1993 The Harlingen CISD initiates the New Pathways Center. Its motto is "Guiding One Child at a Time." At its 208 South F Street campus, it offers services to elementary students who may struggle with disciplinary problems at their regular campus. Dr. Mary Brower will be its principal and director for at least its first ten years. The first "Bird Bowl" football game is played as the new Harlingen High School South Hawks play the Harlingen High School Cardinals.

1994 An alternative disciplinary school for problem secondary students opens on F Street, but two years later the Secondary Educational Alternative Center is opened at 1310 Sam Houston. Pupils in need of strict control may be placed in the school for periods ranging from five to forty-five days. The motto of the school is "Attitude is Everything." Javier Gutierrez has been with the school for 10 years; by 2005 he is Assistant Director, Liaison. For the 1994-95 school year Harlingen High School becomes a four grade (9th to 12th) campus.

3/95 Dr. Jesus Honorio Chavez is named the new superintendent of schools. He comes from Round Rock where he was assistant superintendent of schools. He was born in Brownsville and for a time taught there. He replaces James Smith who left for a position in Houston. Dr. Chavez will serve until 2001 when he leaves for a similar position in Corpus Christi. His successor is Dr. Linda Wade.

11/13/96 The School Board names the new middle school on Wilson Road the Lt. George Gutierrez Jr. Middle School. This individual graduated from Harlingen High School and Texas A&M University with a degree in civil engineering. Enlisting in the army in 1964, this pilot died October 1965 in action in Vietnam. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star, and the Purple Heart. Diaz Park in West Harlingen was also renamed in his honor.

11/96 Texas Monthly in its cover article "Our Best Schools"(elementary) names Harlingen Long, Wilson, Treasure Hills and Stuart Place as four-star, the highest ranking.
5/25/97 Guillermo "Mr. Rod" Rodriguez, principal of Memorial Junior High School retires. This quiet gentleman was much loved by students and teachers alike.

6/18/97 JoAnn Cleckler, assistant principal of Ben Milam School and originally a Michigan native, retires. She began her 45 year teaching career several years after coming here in 1950 as a 19-year old.

In the 1997-98 school year 6th graders now become part of the middle schools.

4/26/98 At the Vernon Middle School a $1.36 million gym is going up to replace the 1939 "the Barn" gymnasium. At Zavala, Dishman, Bonham, and Milam Elementary Schools older classrooms are being renovated as part of a $5.415 million upgrading project. The district has invested $58 million in expansion and improvement projects since 1989 in order to serve the now 16,000 students coming from Harlingen and Combes, Primera, Palm Valley, and Stuart Place as well.

9/98 The Valley High School, a private charter school, opens at 2701 Breedlove Street. It crafts its mission at "high risk" students with histories of low academic scores. In November 2002 the State threatens its closure due to its poor performance and higher than allowed dropout rate for its 300 elementary, 30 middle school, and 150 high school students.

1999 The HCISD tax goes up 10 cents as voters pass an $80 million bond issue for the HCISD, but use of the monies is not implemented until 2002-03. Projects include athletic field houses, performing arts building and expansion of current and existing classrooms. Each of the two high schools will have new soccer dimension stadiums with bleachers on each side, press box, restroom facilities, and concession stands. Harlingen HS South's field will be constructed on Dixieland Road and Harlingen HS on an open field located south of Keys Academy. The new athletic field houses at each school will occupy 16,000 square feet. Approximately 42,000 square feet will be added to each school at the cost of $21 million. Boggus Stadium will also be improved.

In this year St. Paul Lutheran School has obtained the former Charles M. McKelvey Army Reserve Center at 1920 E. Washington. It is given the property by the Federal government as it has been declared surplus but with the stipulation that it has to be used for educational purposes for a period of 30 years. It is completely renovated and 40% new construction added along with a full-size gymnasium. It opened for school on 10/9/99. The facility has modern classrooms, fully equipped science laboratory, art room, and music room. It has been part of the educational system operated by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The school is overseen by a 10-member school board.

5/12/00 Cesar Morales, a Zapata native, retires after being Lamar Elementary School principal for 30 years. He attended Texas A & I College and began his teaching career in 1962 at Gay Junior High School.

5/20/00 Verna Young retires after 46 years of service in the HCISD. She began teaching math in 1953 at Gay, served as principal at Bonham Elementary 1975-1984 when she became Harlingen High School principal until this date. She was later elected to the school board.
2/25/01 Jefferson Elementary School and Memorial Middle School are having extensive work done. The jobs are worth $1.8 million and $4.5 million respectively.

4/18/01 Travis Elementary School soon will undergo a $1.8 million upgrade for its 535 students. Treasure Hill Elementary School will get $3.25 million for renovations for its 658 students. Other expenditures are $11.5 million for Harlingen High School South and $9.95 million for Harlingen High School.

2002 After 55 years of existence the Rio Grande Valley Baptist Academy ceases its operation.

9/02 TSTC enrollment continues to climb year to year. On 9/00 it was 3,228, 3,841 in 9/01 and 4,217 this date.

2002 (summer) Memorial Middle School is extensively updated.

10/3/02 As the Texas State Technical College-Harlingen celebrates Pres. J. Gilbert Leal's 24 years in office, it has grown on its current 124.5 acre campus to 69 buildings, more than 500 employees, and more than 4,000 credit students. Since 1978 projects added have included 14 instructional buildings, the Student Center, the Fieldhouse, a child-care center, a service support center, and a work force center. These have been valued at more than $30 million. The property inventory has grown to almost $35 million and the annual budget exceeds $38 million. The fall 2001 enrollment was 3,842 and in 2002 was 4,618. Earlier this year TSTC Chancellor, Dr. Bill Segura, named Leal Vice-Chancellor for Border Opportunity Development.

2003 The TSTC Harlingen Annual Report extols its 124 acre campus, 78 buildings, its 4,500 student enrollment, the employee number over 500, and an annual budget of over $45 million.

5/03 The Valley Baptist Academy closes permanently at the end of the school year. It is then utilized as the Valley Baptist Mission Education Center.

5/25/03 Construction begins at TSTC for a new Learning Resource Center. Scheduled for completion in October, the two story facility with 35,000 sq. ft. will house the library media center, a library instructional classroom, a spacious lobby, circulation area, study rooms, as well as reference and general collection areas. It is dedicated on 1/22/04.

7/12/03 As a joint project with the Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Parish, St. Anthony Catholic Church opens a middle school for 7th and 8th graders after having closed one in the 1960s when the HAFB ceased operating. The physical plant is at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church on C Street.

2004 A partnership involving the auto industry and others contributes to the school sports infrastructure. Knapp Chevrolet and Valley Baptist Medical Center donate $250,000 each for the project while Hino Gas and Electric adds $200,000. High tech scoreboards are constructed at the Boggus Stadium and also some middle school fields.

1/24/04 TSTC’s Learning Resource Center building is dedicated.

5/12/04 Diana Walker, a third grade teacher at Calvary Christian School for eleven years, is selected as teacher of the year '04 from 18 school districts. The honor comes from Freedom Communication Newspapers in Education.

4/05/04 Clearing begins at the site of the new elementary school on FM 2994 (Wilson Road) on its north side about ¾ mile west of its intersection with Stuart Place Road. It
had been a sugarcane field farmed by Frank Burns. Construction of the school designed by FRO International, architectural engineers, and erected by the Sam Corp, general contractor, and both of McAllen is two-thirds along by early August. The school will have 85,324 sq. ft. The Rodriguez Elementary School, named after the Harlingen doctor, will not be ready for a September school year opening, so the 500 students who will occupy the school are diverted to temporary quarters behind the Wilson Elementary School according to school principal, Traci Gonzalez. The greatly growing school population has put the district under a strain. Construction projects under way include: Austin and Bowie Elementary Schools, classroom renovations by 1/05; Stuart Place and Wilson Elementary schools, classroom renovations by 5/05; a new middle school, total construction by 7/05; and Harlingen High School, campus renovations and extra-curricular facilities by 11/05.

8/04 The HCISD has a teaching staff of 1,250.

9/7/04 While construction continues on some parts of the school, 27 rooms of the Rodriguez Elementary School welcome new students.

11/04 Edwin and Corinne Swaney publish their 364-page book, "Marching in Cadence: The History of MMA." Sale proceeds will go to the Marine Military Academy. Mr. Swaney volunteers at the MMA Iwo Jima Museum which he helped establish.

12/15/04 After the 15-member nomination committee recommends it, the school board votes for the name Moises V. Vela Middle School, in honor of the city judge and former county commissioner. The school, costing $13.5 million, is located off Palm Blvd., .3 mile south of Business 83. When opened in August 2005 it will serve about 684 students.

TSTC sees a 19.3% enrollment increase from its spring 2004 numbers. 4,461 are currently enrolled with 845 as new students. The percentage over 35 years in age is increasing steadily. Currently 50% are in the 18 to 24 age group; 20% between 25 to 35; and 30% 36 years or older.


1/28/05 TSTC enrollment is 4,461 compared to spring 2004 of 3,739.

3/11/05 The Dr. Hesiquio Rodriguez Elementary School is officially dedicated. This gentleman graduated as valedictorian of the Harlingen High School class of 1935, when he was 15. By the time he was 22 he was a practicing doctor, having received his medical degree from the University of Texas Medical Center in 1942. While serving in the U.S. Army 1942-45 he interned in St. Louis where he met and married psychiatric nurse Annabel Alberts. He served on the Rio Hondo School Board 1948-51 before moving back to Harlingen in 1954. He died in 1977 at age 58. Among 60 Rodriguez relatives present at the ribbon cutting ceremony were the doctor's widow Ann Rodriguez Guerrero, daughter Suzanne Rodriguez Jones, and his son Charles Rodriguez.

4/8/05 The school district is considering the expenditure of $1.068 million to renovate and upgrade a deteriorating Boggus Stadium.

5/1/05 Calvary Baptist School announces that it will commence high school classes for grades 9 and 10 for the school year 2005-06. Two portable buildings have been set up to accommodate the new classes. The next phase in the school's plans is the construction of a library, expansion of the early childhood center, and making all handicapped accessible. Later a permanent high school structure will be erected and 11th and 12th grade classes
added. A fundraising goal is $778,000, of which $260,000 is earmarked for the high school.

6/11/05 Nora "Coach Z" Zamarripa is inducted into the RGV Sports Hall of Fame. At this time the high school girl's basketball coach has a record of 528 wins and 223 losses in a career at Edinburg and Harlingen High Schools. This Lyford native has come a long way since hoeing cotton field on her parent's farm. She played basketball herself at Lyford going on to play at Texas A & I University in Kingsville where she changed her major from business to physical education. She then started her ongoing 25 year coaching career characterized by "an intensity that can be fierce."

2006 The Moises Vela Middle School is constructed on Palm Blvd, just south of Business 83. It required $13 million.
This same year the HCISD opens the Early College High School on the campus of TSTC.
12/8/06 It is announced that over the next seven months the last of the $80 million 1999 school bond issue money will go toward renovations of school district-owned Boggus Stadium. The 9,000-seat facility will get enclosures under the bleachers, more restrooms, and slimmed-down light towers for an estimated $2 million.

2/2/06 A survey reveals that the HCISD salaries are in line with the state average. Serving 17,660 students Harlingen teachers start at $34,000 with the average salary for all teachers being $41,790. The latter is $76 less than the state average of $41,866. The district also pays additional supplemental stipends for attendance, and programs such as band, sports, theater.

2/4/06 TSTC Regents OK transfer of up to 48 hours credit from the school's curricular to a student moving on to a four-year university. The board also approved a $1.275 million purchase of a 42 acre tract south of Rio Hondo Road and between Loop 499 and 25th Street. This will allow for future expansion.

8/07 As the school year begins the HCISD estimates a student population of 18,000 compared to a 2006-2007 one of 17,700. In 2002 there were 16,049 students. A new elementary school is currently being constructed to relieve overcrowding at the Long and Bonham Elementary Schools.
11/28/07 Sitting on a 15.65 acre site on Loop 499 near 13th Street are the foundations for a new 800 pupil elementary school. To cost about $10 million, it is expected to be completed by the start of the 2008-2009 school year.
12/30/07 Due for completion in the spring of 2008 is the TSTC Cultural Art Center at the corner of Raintree and Loop 499. This $2.1 million structure with 15,563 sq. ft. will be able to seat 600. Having moveable partitions and a separate conference room capable of holding 20-30 people plus a kitchen for catering, it will offer multiple uses to students and community alike. Ample parking will also be provided.

1/22/08 Linda Wade, Superintendent of Schools since 2001, announces her retirement in June. She has completed 35 years in the field of education starting with 14 years as a teacher in Missouri. Next came 21 years in various capacities in the HCISD. She leaves with an ending salary of $160,000 a year.
3/29/08 At age 59, Cheryl Card Gray, daughter of former Mayor Bill Card and Garrison Card dies after a long battle with cancer. Thirty-five years of her life were with the
HCISD. She was the first director of the HOSTS Program and for 18 years principal of the Stuart Place Elementary School. Her last year here was 2004. She leaves behind her husband Harold Gray, her parents, and siblings. Her successor as principal is Vivian Bauer.

7/1/08 Steve Flores, 43, commences job as HCISD school superintendent. This San Angelo native has been involved with education for 25 years including high school and junior high school principal in that city, assistant superintendent Pflugerville ISD and Round Rock ISD, Area VI superintendent for Dallas, and acting general superintendent for the Round Rock ISD. He holds a masters of education degree in school administration from San Angelo State University and a doctorate degree from the University of Texas at Austin in 2001. His starting salary will be $189,500 plus $200/month phone and $700/month car allowances. The previous superintendent ended her career at a $170,000 salary. He also received a $3,500 moving allowance.

8/31/08 J. Gilbert Leal, president of Texas State Technical College, retires after 39 years with this institution. His first nine years were spent as teacher, migrant counseling supervisor, director of admissions, dean of students, and general manager before becoming president. When he started the institute had 67 students and 30 employees. Today TSTC boasts an enrollment of 6,000 and more than 500 employees.

10/10/08 Dr. Cesar Maldonado is named the new TSTC president. Dr. Maldonado has been serving on the TSTC Board of Regents from which he will now resign. A trustee of the HCISD Dr. Maldonado is an engineer and businessman. He has an MS in engineering and a PhD in systems and engineering management.

1/5/09 About 240 pupils from Long Elementary and 200 from Bonham are relocated to the newly completed $10 million Lee Means Elementary School on Loop 499. Principal Elizabeth Maldonaldo leads the staff of 43 teachers and professionals. The school adopts the name Wolverines as a symbol and hunter green as its color.

1/30/09 Texas State Technical College exceeded the 5,000 enrollment mark for the first time last year and this fall registered more than 6,000 students, 6,541 to be exact. This is up remarkably from the 2005 enrollment of 4,565. Unfortunately tuition is set to rise for the 2011-2011 term. It will go up $140 per semester from its present $2,807 to $2,947.

4/30/09 The EDC grants TSTC up to $4.2 million to support a long distance learning center.

2/19/09 TSTC to receive certification to open its May program of Vocational Nursing.

5/4/09 After a student at Long Elementary School is preliminarily diagnosed as probably having a case of swine influenza, the schools of the HCISD are announced closed until May 11. In its closure, the district joins numerous other Valley school systems facing a possible pandemic from the disease originating about two weeks ago in Mexico.

8/24/09 More than 18,000 students begin the school year under the direction of Superintendent Dr. Steve Flores.

8/28/09 The school board approves a $147 million budget for 2009-2010. It is projected to cover costs for 18,350 students at two high schools, one alternative high school, five middle schools, 17 elementary schools, and nine Head Start Centers. This is a 5.5% increase over the previous budget of $139,822,228. A $1,500 raise for teachers is foreseen. As a full-day kindergarten program is instituted 31 additional teachers will be employed.
Because of a 1.7% increase in taxable properties the district is able to keep the same tax rate of $1.12 ½ for each $100 assessed property valuation.

10/19/09  A Vocational Nursing Program is to be offered at TSTC in May following certification.

10/25/09 Associate of Science degrees in seven categories are to be implemented at TSTC after Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approval.

9/8/09  TSTC installs 861-sq. ft. array of photovoltaic panels to help power the Autobody Collision Technology Building.

5/8/10 The School Board of the HCISD presents a proposition regarding authorization to" issue and sell bonds of the District in the principal amount of $98,600,000 for the purpose of constructing, renovating, designing, acquiring and equipping school facilities and the purchase of the necessary sites for school facilities", etc. 59% of the voters (2,348 to 1,630) approve the proposition. Bond money will be used to build a Performing Arts Center on Wilson Road just west of the Gutierrez Middle School; a new Memorial Middle School on Rio Hondo Road near Morgan Blvd.; revamp the old Memorial School building for adminstration use; construct a new classroom wing at Jefferson Elementary School; erect a Ninth Grade Academy; build an Aquatic Center; construct a high school agricultural building; and upgrade various school infrastructure.

8/6/10  The Texas Educational Agency approves a grant to pay off half of the HCISD $98.6 million bond project.

8/10  A tax hearing notice reveals that the HCISD will seek to raise property taxes. Last year the district put forward $1,995 per student while the state put forth $5,859. This year the figures are projected to be $2,271 locally and $5,583 from the state. Whereas the taxation rate per $100 valuation was $1.125 the district seeks to raise it to $1.222. This would elevate the tax load for the average residence from $847.56 to $932.84 or $85.28.

8/31/10 For the year ending this date the HCISD expended a total of $172,040,913. $93,316,110 of this was for instruction. Other large expenditure items were: plant maintenance & operations $16,702,991; food services $9,676,065; school leadership $8,801,194; guidance, counseling & evaluation services $5,874,217; co-curricular/extracurricular activities $5,041,264; and long-term interest on debt $4,682,916.

9/10/10 An open forum to discuss salaries and class sizes is conducted at TSTC. The average TSTC instructor receives roughly $35,000 per year, 68th of 71 when compared with other two year institutions.

12/14/10  A new middle school is planned to be constructed on a rezoned 30-acre site on Rio Hondo Road east of 13th Street. The $98.6 million bond issue funds may go towards a new performing arts center, a middle school, and a 9th grade academy among other things.

12/10 School officials announce that the HCISD has failed to meet its 2010 adequate yearly progress, a federal mandate from the No Child Left Behind law, because too many of its special education students took a modified standardized test (TAKS).

2011 University Center opens at TSTC. Having two stories and 35,000 sq. ft., it cost about $6 million. It is energy efficient with its 434 solar panels on its roof. It is a long-distance learning center built and furnished with funds from the Economic Development
Corp. of Harlingen and the City of Harlingen. Partners include TSTC and eight universities. Stephen Zarate is the center's director. In the fall of 2011 the center will have 796 students and in spring 2012, 788 with the summer session enrollment of 288.

1/15/11 The VMS reports that the HCISD has a "high spending index with little academic progress" The Financial Allocation Study for Texas found that the HCISD spent $8,018 per student over an average of three years.

2/4-5/11 A most unusual occurrence took place this date. Harlingen (and other valley towns) were subjected to below freezing temperatures for over 24 hours. This phenomenon coupled with a drizzle resulted in icy roads and dangerous driving conditions. Schools were therefore canceled for two days. The lost time would later be made up by eliminating two scheduled holiday dates.

2/25/11 TSTC regents vote to increase tuition $10 a credit hour for academic courses and $25 per credit hour for technical classes beginning the fall 2011 semester. Tuition for academic classes will then be $82; technical classes $97. This is necessitated by the proposed $15 million Texas legislature cut in the TSTC System budget.

12/11 TSTC is warned that it could lose accreditation if it did not make some changes to its programs. (TSTC was no longer in jeopardy as of January 2013.)

4/12 Groundbreaking for the HCISD's Performing Arts Center of 15 acres at 3217 West Wilson Road. Projected to cost $9 million, it is already $770,000 over budget. The district's Agricultural Farm of 15 acres at Primera and Hand Roads is completed. With pens and sheds the facility cost $1,753,500.

4/25/12 Connect to Success Credit Recovery Program at Keys Academy is designed for students who have fallen behind in their credit hours.

5/15/12 Harlingen schools to begin dual language program to teach students both English and Spanish.

9/20/12 Boggus Stadium to get $26,000 in renovations.

10/8/12 HCISD provides students with more than 1,000 e-books through online data bases.

11/12 TSTC partners with UTB-TSC to transfer college credits.

11/18/12 HCISD to set Harlingen Cardinal and Harlingen South Hawks logos as official trademarks with licensing fees to use them.

12/6/12 There is groundbreaking for the HCISD's new 9th grade academy at 1701 Lozano Road. Its cost will be $26.8 million. It will accommodate 1,200 to 1,400 students and will focus on technology. The school will carry the name of Dr. Abraham P. Cano. He practiced medicine in Harlingen for over 30 years. Another projected project is to build a new School of Health Professionals at 21st Street and Rio Hondo Road. It will service 500-600 eighth through 12th grade students. It is projected to cost $12.5 million.

12/12 Former students of the Booker T. Washington School (for Blacks) push the HCISD to remove the Harlingen Headstart Building name now on the structure and restore the old school name. In January 2013 the trustees vote to place a plaque at the building to denote its former use.

1/4/13 HCISD claims Texas state STAAR tests waived from from some standardized testing.
1/19/13  TSTC enrollment bucks trend. Spring semester is expected to be 5,456 or a 2.9% increase from last year.

5/16/13  While the original cost of the Performing Arts Center of the HCISD was $9,547,321, an additional $35,034 has been approved to install an audio-visual recording system to document events on the stage. The center is scheduled for completion in July 2013. $34,501 has been added to the budget of the Dr. Abraham Cano School to secure special science room tables. The libraries at both Harlingen High School and Harlingen High School South have been renovated to accommodate new internet cafes. Cost for the former school was $4,189.87 and $5,244.62 for the latter.