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A little log building, which stood one mile northwest of Leander, was moved to Bagdad\*in 1855 to serve as a school. It had only one door and a log removed served as the window. The teachers' salary in the early days was only what tuition was received. Each parent paid whatever amount they could afford.<sup>1</sup>

Between 1850 and 1900 Bob Davis, Nanie Robinson, Will Robertson, Mr. Sales, Mr. Rose, who was also a preacher, and Mr. & Mrs. Brown each taught in the Bagdad schools.<sup>2</sup> Very little formal education was demanded of teachers in the early days, but they had to demonstrate an ability to teach the subject matter. On December 5, 1893, Leander became a free school. Students no longer had to pay to attend school. For a period of time there were two schools, the one at Bagdad and one on the east side of the railroad.<sup>3</sup> They would have school at one place one year and at the other the next year. The same teachers taught at both schools.<sup>4</sup>

On June 24, 1868, a group of Masons met for the purpose of organizing a Masonic Lodge in Bagdad. Lot #1 in the town of Bagdad, located about one mile west of present-day Leander, was donated by James Babcock.<sup>5</sup> A 28' X 77' two-story building was constructed of native stone. The lower floor was used for school, church and public meetings. The upper floor was reserved for the Masonic Lodge. Estimates for the stone and wood work was some \$2,163.00 with donations of scaffolding and rafters made by Ero Talbert of Georgetown. Most of the labor was donated. The building was completed on May 11, 1870.<sup>6</sup> The first trustees were R. B. Davis, James Branch, Henderson Kirk, M. B. May and William Wilson. The first teacher, R. M. Johnson, was employed on December 2, 1870. School began on the first of December and was held for some five months. There were no grades; however, all students studied only the three subjects -- Arithmetic, Reading and Spelling. Students sat on benches and listened attentively.<sup>7</sup>

The school term in the early days of the twentieth century was somewhat indefinite, although school officials attempted to have the school function for about five months of each year. The distance to school and the weather often played a part in a student's attendance because there was no way to get to school except walk. During planting and harvesting seasons, the children were expected to help on the farms, and if the weather was bad, it was often too risky to start out for school. In most instances, however, students went

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<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth Bailey, The History of Leander, p. 100.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>James E. Babcock, The Story of Bagdad Prairie From 1851 - 1870, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>Frank Faubion, Personal Journal.

<sup>5</sup>Norton Moses Masonic Lodge #336, Archives.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Elizabeth Bailey, The History of Leander, p. 100, 106.

The early supporters of the Leander School represented most of the prominent towns-people. They included S. M. Woolsey, J. H. Faubion, J. E. Humble, W. E. Craven, H. S. Jennings, G. L. Robertson, J. N. Mason, John F. Heinatz, Mr. Smith, James Babcock, J. W. Branch, John Hamilton and others who were largely responsible for the strong foundations laid by the Bagdad schools.<sup>9</sup>

The lodge relinquished all claims to the title of the building on April 1, 1899, provided the building was moved to Leander and additions made to make a suitable public school.<sup>10</sup>

On the 27th day of June, 1899, S. M. Woolsey, J. H. Faubion, J. E. Humble, W. E. Craven, H. S. Jennings, G. L. Robertson and J. N. Mason, citizens of the State of Texas, residing in said Williamson County, formed a voluntary association to be incorporated under the laws of the State of Texas and for that purpose did subscribe the following charter:

- The name of this corporation shall be "The Leander High School Association".
- The purpose for which this corporation is formed is the support of a strictly educational undertaking without profit to the share holders.
- The place where the business of this corporation is to be transacted is at Leander, Williamson County, Texas.
- The term for which this corporation is to exist shall be the period of fifty years.
- The number of directors of this corporation and the names and residence of those who are appointed for the first year are S. M. Woolsey, J. H. Faubion, J. E. Humble, W. E. Craven, H. S. Jennings, G. L. Robertson and J. N. Mason, all of whom reside in said town of Leander, Williamson County, Texas.
- The amount of the capital stock of this corporation shall be five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) and the same shall be divided into five hundred (500) shares of the par value of ten dollars (\$10.00) each.<sup>11</sup>

This Charter was presented to the attorney general's office and was granted on June 29, 1899. D. H. Hardy, Secretary of State, filed the Charter with the Department of State.

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<sup>8</sup>Elizabeth Bailey, History of Leander, p. 103-106.

<sup>9</sup>Leander Independent School District, Historical Files.

<sup>10</sup>Norton Moses Masonic Lodge #336, Official Minutes.

<sup>11</sup>J. H. Faubion, W. E. Craven, H. S. Jennings, G. L. Robertson, Original Charter of The Leander High School Association.

corner of Block No. 17 in the town of Leander thence 19<sup>0</sup> W with Mrs. Walker's line 330 feet to public road, thence N 71<sup>0</sup> E 370 feet to the place beginning, containing by estimation 2.81 acres of land, more or less.<sup>12</sup>

The revenue from the sale of stock was used to build the new two-story school around the turn of the century. It was constructed of rock from the old Bagdad school and was used until it burned in 1938.

The teachers' manual for country school teachers of Williamson County in the early twentieth century, prepared by the County Superintendent, stressed the importance of teaching fewer courses of study, but treating those in more depth. Recitation was considered a critical part of the curriculum. Sufficient written work was provided to give the necessary practice and stimulate interests.<sup>13</sup> Students were prepared when called upon.

In 1907 a state increase in per capita proportionment to public school provided funds for at least a six month school session.<sup>14</sup> Soon after this, Leander provided an eight month school term in ten grades. Students had to go to Georgetown or Liberty Hill to graduate until 1931 when the eleventh grade was added. In the 1934-35 school year, during the depression, money ran out and teachers agreed to teach the full nine months for seven months pay. Twelfth grade was implemented in the early 1940s.

Immediately following the burning of the school in 1938 a new building was begun. Trustees at that time were: Lois Giddens, Warren Jones, Arthur Faubion, E. A. Pinkard and Rome Linebarger. Rocks from the old Bagdad school were used in the foundation of the structure. Classes were held in the local churches, over the bank building and in the Masonic Hall while the new school was under construction. The one-story school was completed in 1939. It was funded under the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, Project #Texas 2365F called WPA (Works Program Administration) Grant.<sup>15</sup>

In 1928 Pleasant Hill had consolidated with Leander, and in 1938, Round Mountain, Nameless, and Volente followed and consolidated. The community of Whitestone consolidated in 1952. Conditions became very crowded and in order to alleviate this problem, second and third graders were bused to Whitestone for classes until the eight room Leander Elementary School was opened in 1955. With enrollment increasing constantly, six additional classrooms, restroom facilities and office space were built in 1962. In 1965 more restrooms, a library and lunchroom cafeteria was constructed. A bond issue was passed in 1967 to build a gym, physical education classroom, ag shop, building trades shop and a band hall. Student enrollment continued to rise. In 1969 a bond election was passed and a new high school constructed. This building served

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<sup>12</sup>County Clerk, Williamson County Deed of Records, Volume 96, p. 19.

<sup>13</sup>D. L. Hamilton, Williamson County Superintendent for Public Instruction Teachers Manual, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup>Legislature of the State of Texas, Constitutional Amendment - 1907.

<sup>15</sup>Legislature of the State of Texas, Constitutional Amendment - 1907.

building originally constructed as a junior high and the Junior High was moved to the school that was built as an all level school in 1938. By the 1983-84 school year five portable buildings had been added to the Junior High to accomodate 553 seventh and eighth graders.<sup>16</sup>

The first school had only one room and one teacher; by 1948 there were nine teachers and some three hundred students. At the end of the 1970's there were approximately one hundred twenty teachers and around twenty five hundred students in grades K - 12.<sup>17</sup> The rapid growth of the community brought about a need for a second elementary school, which was erected in 1975. The school purchased 14.999 acres of land, more or less, being a part of an original 1400 acres of land deeded to Thomas Edward Nelson, Jr., recorded in the Williamson County Deed Records, Volume 534, Page 561, located about two miles southwest of Cedar Park on Cypress Creek Road.<sup>18</sup> This elementary school was named in honor of Mrs. Ada Mae Faubion who taught here for 35 years and is still a strong supporter of the school district. An addition to Giddens Elementary was built in 1979 to accommodate a current enrollment of 827 students in grades K - 5. The name of Leander Elementary was changed in November of 1980 to Giddens Elementary for Lois F. Giddens for his many years of service and dedication by him and his family to the Leander Schools. Ten classrooms were added to Faubion elementary also and their enrollment now stands at 835 in grades K - 5.<sup>19</sup>

On December 13, 1980, the Leander Independent School District passed a bond issue in the amount of \$8,670,000 to build a high school complex for 1200 students with possible expansion to 1800 students. Sixty acres of land was purchased on the west side of Bagdad Road midway between Leander and Cedar Park. This parcel of land is out of the S. J. Dover Survey in Williamson County, Texas and being the southeast portion of 200.15 acre tract of land described as tract one (1) in volume 550, page 389 of the Deed Records of Williamson County, Texas.<sup>20</sup> The purchase price of the land was \$180,000.00.

Construction of this facility was completed and opened in the fall of 1984 with a current enrollment of 901 students in grades 9 - 12. The Junior High moved to the building constructed in 1972 and has an enrollment of 822 in grades 6 - 8.

The school is now and has always been a nucleus of Leander. The district encompasses one hundred ninety seven square miles. The school board and administration are constantly searching for ways to meet the growing needs of the community. The offering of adult education and vocational courses in the evening is a positive step in that direction. They are continually upgrading our curriculum with computer science being offered in the fall of 1984. With

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<sup>16</sup>Leander Independent School District, Official Records.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>County Clerk, Williamson County Deed of Records, Volume 534, p. 561.

<sup>19</sup>Leander Independent School District, Official Records.

<sup>20</sup>County Clerk, Williamson County Deed of Records, Volume 550, p. 389.

Since the spring of 1982 Leander I.S.D. and Austin Community College have been cooperatively offering academic college courses ranging from English to Typing. In the fall of 1983 A.C.C. expanded its program by offering vocational block- time programs in Power Mechanics, Upholstery, Drafting Design and Horticulture - Landscaping. These last programs are being offered for high school students and adults simultaneously in the afternoons and evenings at the Leander High School.<sup>21</sup>

In 129 years Leander schools have grown in service to the community they serve. Since the time a handful of students attended the log school house in Bagdad, the district has grown to serve more than 3000 students in kindergarten through grade twelve as well as adults in college and community education courses. The consistent growth of the area promises a continued expansion of school services. An ever improving instructional program promises continued success in this dynamic community, which has its roots in the tradition of that little log school so many years before.

BUILDING HISTORY OF LEANDER SCHOOLS - ADDITIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS

DATE	BUILDING LOCATION	ARCHITECT	GENERAL CONTRACTOR
1899	FIRST SCHOOL SITE		
1938	OLD WPA BUILDING		FED. EMERG. ADM. OF PUBLIC WORKS
1946	FOOTBALL FIELD LAND		
1948	WPA BUILDING ADDITIONS	ARNOLD WHITTMAN	
1953	FOOTBALL FIELD LAND		
1954	BUS MAINT. SHOP	IN HOUSE	
1955	LEANDER ELEMENTARY LAND		
1955	LEANDER ELEMENTARY BUILDING	WHITTMAN	CAMP CONST. CO.
1956	LITTLE RED BUILDING		
1961	FOOTBALL CONCESSION BLDG.	IN HOUSE	
1961	LEAMDER ELEM. ADDITIONS	BARNES GOODMAN	ALLEN DE STEIGER
1962	OLD TAX OFFICE		
1965	LEANDER ELEM. ADDITIONS	BARNES GOODMAN	R.W. JONES CONST.
1967	SITE		

1969-70	ACADEMIC ADDITION	BARNES GOODMAN	J.C. CONSTRUCTION
1971	FOUR PORTABLE BLDGS		ILCOR
1971	ATHLETIC FIELD HOUSE	BARNES GOODMAN	IN HOUSE
1972-74	ACADEMIC ANNEX & CAFETERIA	BARNES GOODMAN	BAR KILLEEN
1972-73	COSMETOLOGY BLDG.	BARNES GOODMAN	NOBLE WALKER
1973-74	ADMINISTRATION BLDG.	IN HOUSE	
1973-74	IMPROVEMENTS	IN HOUSE	
1973-74	WAREHOUSE	IN HOUSE	
1973	SITE		
1973-74	FAUBION ELEM.	BARNES GOODMAN	JACK GRAY CONST
1977	PORTABLE BUILDINGS		NOBLE WALKER
1979-80	ADDITIONS 10-CLASSROOMS	SHAW INC.	ALTON WATSON
1981-84	LEANDER HIGH SCHOOL	JESSEN ASSOC.	HERMAN BENNETT

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(Researched by Lois Giddens)



In compiling the History of the Leander Independent School District, interviews were conducted with each of the following citizens:

- Mrs. Roscoe Craven (citizen)
- Mr. W. E. Craven (former Board Member)
- Mrs. Ruby Davis (retired teacher)
- Mrs. Ada Mae Faubion (retired teacher)
- Mrs. Beth Giddens (retired teacher)
- Mr. Lois Giddens (former Board Member)
- Mrs. Irene Mason (citizen)
- Miss Myreta Matthews (retired teacher)
- Mr. Elmo Noble (former Board Member)
- Mr. R. C. Shelton (retired Superintendent)
- Mrs. Lucille Shows (retired teacher)
- Mrs. Essa Wiley (citizen)
- Mrs. Beulah Wright (citizen)

## PRINCIPALS and SUPERINTENDENTS of Leander Schools

The schools did not have superintendents until 1928. Some of the principals were:

Mr. Spiegel  
J. M. Ater - 1910-1911  
Neal Matthews - 1921-22  
J. R. King - 1923-24  
Warren Jackson - 1912-1913  
A. N. Ashmore - 1914-1915  
Mr. Lyles - 1920-1922  
J. E. Williams - 1924-1927

### Superintendents:

Mr. Williams became the first superintendent in 1928 and served until 1932.

Roy C. Shelton - 1932-1945  
J. W. Murray - 1945-Jan. 1947  
Robert Schulze - Jan. 1947-1948  
Oscar Faught - Jan. 1948-July 1951  
Scott Pyle - 1951-1956  
Howard Adare - 1956-1959  
Robert L. Lane - 1959-1974  
Jack Warner - 1974-1976  
Joe Ward - 1976-1978  
John J. Thurman - Aug. 1978-Mar. 1979  
Fred A. Hopson - Mar. 1979-present

## SCHEDULE OF LAND ACQUISITIONS BY LEANDER INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Leander Independent School District business office was instructed to research the past financial records, Board minutes and land acquisition records in order to ascertain the historical cost for all parcels of land acquired by the District. The amounts listed herewith represent all of the costs involved in the several transactions with any exceptions so noted.

The following represent all land acquisitions from 1899 to February, 1984.

1. 2.8 acres more or less conveyed to Leander High School association on July 17, 1899 for \$100 by Eliza E. Mason.
2. 2.5 acres more or less to Leander Independent School District by John T. Atkin and wife, Genevieve on October 16, 1946 for \$500 (Football Field).
3. 1.0 acres more or less conveyed to Leander Independent School District by John T. Atkin and wife on August 31, 1953 for \$250 (addition to football field).
4. 3.9 acres more or less conveyed to Leander Independent School District by J. T. Atkin and wife on April 20, 1955 for \$975 (Giddens Elementary School).
5. 1.0 acres more or less with improvements (house) conveyed to Leander Independent School District by Bessie Mae Dorrah on October 9, 1956 for \$8000 (Tax Office and West Williamson County Coop. office).
6. 6.1 acres more or less conveyed to Leander Independent School District by J.T. Atkin and wife on July 28, 1958 for \$1830 (baseball field).
7. 1.0 acre and improvements conveyed to Leander Independent School District by H.H. Powell, et. al. on July 23, 1962 for \$2,400. (Old tax office conveyed to P.D.K. Incorporated on July 17, 1973 as part of the consideration for the present Administration Building and site.)

8. 17.2 acres more or less conveyed to Leander Independent School District by L.P. Mason and wife, Nellie on November 9, 1967 for \$8,760. (Present Junior High School site).

9. 1.065 acres more or less conveyed to Leander Independent School District by F.D. Glass, Junior, on November 24, 1969 for \$1,065 (addition to Present Junior High School Campus).

10. 1.0 acres more or less and improvements conveyed to Leander Independent School District by P.D.K. Incorporated on July 1, 1973 for \$30,000 and the old Tax Office (present Administration Building).

11. 14.99 acres more or less conveyed to Leander Independent School District by Thomas E. Nelson, Jr., on November 8, 1973 for \$34,625\* (Faubion Elementary site). \*Includes \$875 Survey Costs.

12. 11.497 acres more or less conveyed to Leander Independent School District by Irene H. Mason on March 3, 1977 for \$23,903.75 (present bus and maintenance site).

13. 60.0 acres, more or less, out of the S.J. Dover survey in Williamson County, Texas, and being the Southeast portion of that certain 200.25 acre tract of land described as tract one (1) in a deed of record in Volume 550, Page 389 of the Deed Records of Williamson County, Texas. Such tract was purchased from the Minyon Partnership for \$180,000. (present Leander High School site) Site purchased and conveyed by warranty Deed dated July 10, 1981.