

VICTORIA ADVOCATE

The Victoria Advocate's August Athletes
of the Month both hail from Gonzales.

SPORTS B1

Weekend, August 30-31, 2025

From here. For here. Since 1846.

Vol. 179, No. 371, 24 Pages

\$3.00

VISD BUDGET



VISD Board of Trustees President Micah Patton (Michael Milliorn/Victoria Advocate)

No Increase

VISD Board adopts 2025-2026 budget and tax rate

MICHAEL MILLIORN

The Victoria Independent School District (VISD) Board of Trustees adopted the district's 2025-2026 budget and tax rate on Thursday at a special meeting. The Board adopted a balanced budget and approved a no-increase tax rate. The approved rate maintains the lowest combined tax rate in over 30 years.

The Board of Trustees adopted a total budget of \$159,024,974 for the 2025-2026 year. The budget is composed of three areas: Maintenance and Operations (M&O), Child Nutrition and Interest and Sinking (I&S).

The Board budgeted \$139,045,858 for M&O, \$9,904,916 for Child Nutrition and \$10,074,200 for I&S. Over 80 percent of the budgeted M&O funds are applied to payroll. Staff across the district will receive a pay increase as a result of district

rightsizing and recently passed Texas legislation.

The M&O budget features large expenditures, including almost \$3 million for security services, over \$3 million for curriculum services and over \$4 million for extracurricular activities, according to the VISD 2025-2026 adopted budget.

Additional maintenance needs resulting from unexpected situations, such as emergency facility repairs and bus replacement, will be covered by the district's fund balance. The district is required to maintain at least 75 days of operating costs for natural disasters and emergencies.

The Board approved a total tax rate of \$0.8035 per \$100 of taxable value. The approved tax rate is the same as the previous year, maintaining the district's lowest combined rate in more than three decades, according to the VISD Notice of Public Meeting to Discuss Budget and Proposed Tax Rate.

The tax rate is composed of an M&O component and an I&S component. The M&O rate is 0.6969 percent, the same as last year and the lowest in over 34 years, and the I&S rate is 0.1066 percent, the same as last year and the lowest since 2006.

While the average market value of residences increased from \$234,272 to \$239,402, the average taxable value of residences decreased from \$134,272 to \$99,402, according to the VISD Notice of Public Meeting. This results in a decrease of taxes due on average residences from \$1,078.88 to \$798.70.

Under law, school districts in Texas must exempt the first \$100,000 of a qualified residence homestead's value, reducing the taxable value. Once a homeowner turns 65 or qualifies as disabled, a tax ceiling limits future school district taxes on that homestead. The taxes on that homestead do not increase above

SEE TAX, 3

GUEST COLUMN

Why this damaging rhetoric must stop

This has to stop. On Aug. 27, two small children were killed and seventeen were wounded as they attended mass at Anunciation Catholic School in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The shooter was 23-year-old Robin Westman, formerly known as Robert



ANDREW SCHROER
BREAD CRUMBS

Westman, a transgender woman who previously attended the school. On the magazines of his automatic rifle, Westman wrote phrases like, "Where is your God?"; "Kill Donald Trump"; and "Free Palestine."

The shooting comes just months after 58-year-old Vance Boelter assassinated Melissa Hortman, a Minnesota lawmaker, together with her husband, Mark, at their home. Boelter then proceeded to shoot and wound State Senator John Hoffman and his wife at their home. Both Representative Hortman and Senator Hoffman were Democrats.

According to the evidence discovered, it is clear that both shooters were politically motivated. They considered themselves justified in what they saw as a life-or-death struggle against the evil agendas of those from the other side of the ideological spectrum.

Both men were obviously disturbed and deranged.

But the blame for such violence can't and shouldn't stop with them. It lies with all of us.

The rhetoric utilized by both political parties and the media has poured gasoline on the bonfire of people's passionate political opinions.

Don't get me wrong. Many of the decisions our government makes are life-and-death. In many ways, the morality and future of our country lie in the balance. The issues are important and should be passionately debated.

But the hyperbolic rhetoric utilized by both sides only serves to silence thoughtful discussion and to inflame people's passions.

Just a day before the most recent attack, Minnesota

SEE DAMAGING, A3



Community members embrace Jesse Merkel, whose son Fletcher was killed in Wednesday's shooting, after Merkel gave a news conference at Anunciation Catholic Church in Minneapolis on Thursday, Aug. 28, 2025. (Aaron Lavinsky/The Minnesota Star Tribune/TNS)

FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER

Bowls of Hope helps to fight food insecurity with cereal drive

MICHAEL MILLIORN

For many food banks, cereal is among the most requested items. It provides a quick meal with important nutrients and requires very minimal preparation.

DeTar Healthcare System has partnered with The Food Bank of the Golden Crescent (FBGC) to launch Bowls of Hope this September.

Bowls of Hope is a cereal drive that works to fight hunger as part of FBGC's Hunger Action Month Challenge. This drive will provide a breakfast option with little preparation needs to families in the region struggling with food insecurity.

FBGC supports over 100 agencies across 11 counties: Calhoun, Colorado, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson,

Lavaca, Matagorda, Refugio, Wharton, and Victoria. The Bowls of Hope cereal drive will run through September coinciding with nationally recognized Hunger Action Month.

"A simple bowl of cereal can fuel children and families who might otherwise go without breakfast," Emily Weatherly, DeTar Healthcare System director of marketing, said. "Your donation can make a meaningful impact by ensuring essential nourishment reaches those in need. Together, we can make a difference, one bowl at a time."

Donations can be made in person throughout the month of September. Donation barrels will be available at multiple DeTar Healthcare System locations: DeTar Hospital Navarro, DeTar

SEE CEREAL, A3



DeTar employees (Lana Webel, left and Melissa Braunholz, right) donate boxes of nutritious breakfast cereal at DeTar Hospital Navarro for the September Hunger Hero Challenge presented by The Food Bank of the Golden Crescent. (Contributed by DeTar Healthcare System)

INSIDE

Local	A2
Weather	A3
Obituaries	A4
Markets	A4
Viewpoints	A5
Faith	A6-7
Your Life	A8
Classifieds	A9
Home and Garden	A11
Sports	B1-3
Dear Abby	B6
Comics	B9-12

Wagner: Texas A&M-Victoria's 'Ring of the Lords'

WEATHER

TODAY

Variable clouds with a stray t-storm



96

TONIGHT

Becoming cloudy; humid



74

GAS PRICES

Murphy USA
3407 N. Delmar Dr. & Delmar Dr.

(As of 4 p.m. Friday
Prices are subject to change.)

UNLEADED
\$2.45
DIESEL
\$2.87

VIEWPOINTS A5

Subscribe 361-574-1200
Report News 361-580-NEWS

©2025, VICTORIA ADVOCATE
CMG TEXAS
victoriaadvocate.com

