**Bond Oversight Committee – Status Report 4/30/2013**HISD’s Bond Oversight Committee heard a detailed update on the district’s 2012 and 2007 bond programs during its inaugural quarterly meeting on April 30 that included the latest steps in planning, renovating and building dozens of schools across the district.

The independent committee was established to monitor the district’s bond programs, which includes ensuring that bond revenues are spent appropriately and evaluating the risks and controls of the bond program.

The district recently reorganized the group’s charter to give it more oversight responsibility, via independent and periodic reports to the superintendent, the Board of Education and the general public.

This report is intended to fulfill that requirement.

**Executive Summary**  
As the Houston Independent School District moves forward with planning for the 2012 bond program to renovate, build, or replace 40 schools, work is underway to finish all the projects in the 2007 bond program over the next two years.  
  
As of March 31, more than 70 percent of the approved work in the 2007 bond program was complete. Among the milestones are 20 new schools that are open and serving students. Three additional schools are under construction, with two slated to open for students this fall.

Overall, the $805 million in funding approved by voters in 2007 included more than 180 expansion and renovation projects across the district. These projects varied greatly in scope and size, from the installation of 8,800 additional security cameras on campuses across the district to an $11 million classroom and science laboratory addition at Bellaire High School.

The overall goal of the 2007 bond program was to replace deteriorated and outdated school facilities, relieve overcrowding at various campuses, and renovate and repair aging facilities throughout the district to address safety concerns, accessibility requirements, and deferred maintenance issues.  
  
Because so much of the 2007 bond program focused on elementary schools, HISD officials decided in 2012 to ask voters to put bond dollars to work on the district’s high schools.  
  
The $1.89 billion program, approved by an overwhelming majority in November, will rebuild or replace 40 schools across the city, including 29 high schools, many of which are more than 50 years old and cost-prohibitive to maintain.

As of April 11, architect contracts have been awarded for 23 projects, including middle school restroom renovations and 19 schools.  
  
Both the 2012 and 2007 bond programs share some common ground, including the emphasis on providing technologically up-to-date and environmentally sustainable learning environments.  
  
The two bond programs also share the goal of maximizing participation by qualified Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises. HISD's minimum M/WBE goal levels are 20 percent for all levels of purchasing and construction and 25 percent for professional services. In the 2007 program, the M/WBE commitment from all firms has reached nearly 34 percent. In the 2012 program, the contracts awarded to date reflect a 51 percent M/WBE commitment.

As with the 2007 bond program, a key goal of the 2012 bond program is community engagement. The goal is to create a program that is transparent and accountable to the public.

Toward that end, a Project Advisory Team (PAT) will be formed at each of the 2012 bond campuses.

Each PAT will be comprised of stakeholders including administrators, teachers, students, parents, and community members. The PAT will meet monthly and will be actively engaged in making decisions about planning and design issues throughout the project.

In addition, the district has held two symposia on 21st century learning to help district staff and parents understand how these new facilities will deliver education in innovative ways.

The district also held Student Focus Groups and has given bond updates to HISD advisory committees, including the African American Advisory Committee; Hispanic Advisory Committee; Asian American Advisory Committee; Indo-American Advisory Committee; HISD Supplier Diversity Advisory Committee; 21st Century Schools Advisory Committee; and the Superintendent’s Parent Advisory Committee.

The next steps for the district include:

* Moving forward with additional design team recommendations
* Completing site specific Ed Specs for Group 1 schools
* Meeting with Project Advisory Teams and architects to begin design work
* Holding design charettes and eco-charettes to help gather community feedback
* Making initial contractor selections
* Beginning summer work related to the 2007 bond program

In conclusion, the district’s bond programs are:

* Progressing on schedule and within budget
* Promoting environmental sustainability
* Exceeding goals for M/WBE participation
* Emphasizing community engagement
* Operating with transparency and accountability