

**HISD planning for possible May 2019 bond referendum to strengthen security across district**

*May 17, 2018*– The Houston Independent School District is beginning to plan for a possible May 2019 bond referendum as part of a strategic capital plan designed to rebuild schools and strengthen security at campuses throughout the district.

Board of Education trustees were briefed at their May 17 workshop about the recommendation currently under consideration for the possible referendum. It places a strong emphasis on safety and security.

“The safety and security of our students and staff is absolutely paramount, which is why we believe it should play a major role in any potential bond program going forward,” HISD Chief Operating Officer Brian Busby said. “Our students and teachers need and deserve safe, secure learning environments that allow them to thrive. Our goal is to provide that to them.”

HISD consulted with Rice & Gardner Consultants and PBK architects, which were tasked with reviewing facility needs and student growth data, as well as other data related to planning for the district’s Capital Improvement Plan and future bond programs.

The two consulting groups also were tasked with placing a strong emphasis on safety and security, as well as energy and facility efficiency.

HISD then developed a recommendation for a possible bond referendum using their feedback and data.

The recommendation, which has a cost of $1.7 billion, focuses on replacing 18 schools and building two relief schools, creating security vestibules at all campuses, upgrading building automation systems and district technology, replacing school buses, and expanding the district’s pre-kindergarten program. It also includes a new CTE high school for the southern portion of the district, a replacement district stadium and fieldhouse, and districtwide energy efficient lighting upgrades.

New relief schools would be strategically driven by student growth data, while facility repair and replacement would be driven by facility age and needs, number of temporary buildings on-site, and cost of maintaining existing buildings.

The 18 schools slated for replacement are Bonham, Brookline, Burbank, Durkee, Elrod, Grissom, Kelso, Law, McNamara, Memorial, and Scroggins elementary schools, Cage Elementary School/Project Chrysalis Middle School, T.H. Rogers School, and Deady, Key, Henry, Lanier, and Revere middle schools.

As a next step, district administration plans to conduct site evaluations for all campuses and review demographic data to determine possible design and construction schedules. Trustees will be updated again later this year.

“I’m a big believer that this type of work — building schools — is extremely important,” HISD 2012 Bond Oversight Committee member Phoebe Tudor said during a recent committee meeting. “The track record for [the 2012] bond program and what’s been accomplished is so great. I think that should give people confidence that HISD has the right team in place, and they know what they’re doing.”

More than 50 percent of projects in HISD’s voter-approved 2012 Bond Program are now finished and open to students, and that number is expected to jump to 80 percent by the end of this year. HISD has opened six new facilities and three new additions since January. Twelve more campuses are expected to open by the start of the 2018-2019 school year, and an additional six will follow in January 2019.

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