



DRIPPING SPRINGS

Independent School District

Bruce Gearing, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools
510 W. Mercer Street, P.O. Box 479, Dripping Springs, Texas 78620-0479
Phone 512.858.3002 Metro 512.465.6102 Fax 512.858.3099
www.dsisd.txed.net

Dear Parents,

Our district, working closely with the architectural firm Huckabee & Associates and Engage Learning, has made outstanding progress on the planning and design of projects that were included in the May 2014 bond program. Regular updates are posted to the bond website at: <http://www.dsisdbond.net/project-information.html>.

I mentioned in the November update that we have identified an opportunity to achieve inflationary savings through strategic timing of projects. This opportunity was made possible by higher-than-expected property values, which meant we were able to sell the entire \$92.4 million authorization in August. (The original plan was to sell the bonds in two parts, which dictated when projects would begin.) If the facilities slated for construction in 2016 (the multi-purpose stadium, baseball/softball complex, and locker room expansion) are accelerated by a year, the district will achieve savings in inflationary costs that can be applied to the instructional facility or other projects in the bond package. If any funds remain at the end of the bond program, they can be used for a range of purposes as stated in the election order.

The following is a summary of progress in different areas.

Elementary School and Middle School:

- A Traffic Impact Analysis was completed in November. Findings showed that 1) increased traffic can be accommodated at both off-site intersections for the next eight years; 2) deceleration lanes should be added at site driveways; and 3) approximately 4,000 linear feet of queuing space is needed for each drop-off/pick-up area. A detailed site plan including parking, driveways, entrance/exits, and queuing space for pick-up/drop-off has since been approved.
- The floor plans for both the elementary school and middle school have been approved. The two schools overlap in the Center for Learning and Innovation, with the second floor being for middle school use and the lower floor designated for elementary students. Other areas that connect include the kitchen and the back area of the front offices.
- The feedback we have gathered on exterior renditions has been overwhelmingly positive. See the design update page of the bond website to view these renditions. Selections on exterior materials such as rock and glass have been made.
- An Aesthetics Committee has met several times to work with the architect and interior design specialists to consider interior finishes, furniture choices, and color schemes. The color palettes are similar for the elementary school and middle school, but each has its own signature. These choices were presented the DSISD Board of Trustees in December. In addition, a display board has been compiled with samples of each item; this will be available for public viewing at the DSISD Administration Building in January.
- Construction documents will be released in March, and we expect to break ground sometime in April.
- The schools are scheduled to open for the start of the 2017-18 school year. Discussion regarding attendance boundaries and zoning will occur during the 2016-17 school year.

(continued)

“We inspire and equip students to be lifelong learners and positive contributors to the world.”

Athletic Facilities:

- A conceptual design for the athletic facilities included in the bond package was approved at the Dec. 15 Board meeting.
- We are initially planning to build an 8,000-seat stadium with expansion capability to 10,000 seats.
- We are exploring options for the locker room expansion, which was included in the bond package because of the growing number of student-athletes in the football and other sports programs. In addition, once the baseball/softball practices and games are moved to this site, those teams will need space on-site. A possible option is to convert use of the current field house to all other sports and move football to a separate building. This transition also could result in a wrestling practice room, which currently does not exist. Cost estimates are being developed so this option can be fully evaluated.
- We are working with our current architects and baseball/softball stakeholders to apply and/or adapt previously developed architectural plans for the baseball/softball complex so as not to replicate work.
- Because we have a limited amount of space with which to work, we want to look at possible future facilities in this vicinity as well. For that purpose, the architects have included a placeholder for a future indoor practice building; however, this is not scheduled for construction at this time.
- The new location of the district's Network Operations Center (which in the bond program was referred to as the data center) is still being discussed and has been placed on the layout only as a placeholder. Originally, this facility was going to be part of the new campus, but it has been determined that the central location of DSHS is a better choice.
- We are in discussion with the City of Dripping Springs, Hays County, and TxDOT regarding the road that is planned to connect the stadium to Highway 290. There are some right-of-way challenges that we are working to resolve.
- The design development presentation will occur at the Jan.26 Board meeting.
- The goal is to have the baseball/softball complex ready for the 2016 season, with the remainder of the athletic projects slated for completion in fall of 2016.

Other Items:

- Technology purchases have been planned over the course of the bond program and are purposely staggered to accommodate implementation and staff capabilities.
- The Facilities and Construction Department is scheduling HVAC and roofing projects at Walnut Springs Elementary, Dripping Springs Middle School and Dripping Springs High School to coincide with school breaks.

During the month of January, residents may stop by the DSISD Administration Building (510 W. Mercer St.) to view poster-size renditions of the new schools, a display of materials that will be used for finishes, and other graphics related to the new facilities at both the elementary school/middle school campus and the high school.

I'd like to extend thanks to the many community and staff members who have contributed their expertise and feedback to the development of these plans and designs. I believe we are creating efficient, high-quality facilities where our children can grow and thrive, and we are doing so while being mindful of our fiscal responsibility to taxpayers.

Sincerely,



Bruce Gearing
Superintendent of Schools