

# **Tomball ISD Facility Study Steering Committee Minutes**

**Wednesday, May 5, 2021**

Dr. Martha Salazar-Zamora, Superintendent of Schools, opened the meeting at 5:30 pm. The meeting was held at the TISD Staff Development Center. Dr. Salazar-Zamora welcomed and thanked everyone for attending and supporting the district with their participation on this committee.

Dr. Eddie Coulson, facilitator, opened the discussion with a reminder of the fast growth in the district, along with the need to address equity in older facilities and update them to district standards. He reminded the group of the charge from the Trustees to provide a list of prioritized needs in the district. Dr. Coulson continued with a review of the previous recommendations from the committee to this point.

Mr. Jim Ross presented the bond proposition language required by the Texas Education Code. He explained that bond language for an election ballot must include separate propositions for certain items and must include statements regarding a tax increase, even if there will not be an actual increase for the district. Mr. Ross stated that he felt the attitude of the community towards the bond affects the passage more than the price of the bond and gave examples of other districts' recent bond elections.

Dr. Coulson reminded the group that the money spent in a bond election is a local decision and process.

Dr. Coulson reviewed previous committee recommendations for growth including recommendations for additional facilities; instructional technology upgrades; and CTE, safety, infrastructure technology, fine arts and athletics improvements.

The meeting opened with an opportunity for questions related to growth in the district. One member questioned the potential decision of building a third high school in relation to athletic competitions and being the smallest 6A schools in the district. A few members offered opinions regarding the benefits of 5A versus 6A, and Dr. Coulson eventually redirected the discussion to focus on bond proposals.

Additional conversations evolved concerning how much land to potentially purchase to prepare for growth in the next several years. Continued discussion followed regarding the facilities to be prioritized for the proposal to the Board and the understanding that the Board may also adjust the recommendations for the actual bond election.

One member believed there was a need to add enough funds to do as much as possible to establish equity with older schools and the construction of new schools.

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Discussion continued with instructional technology upgrades. Ms. Tidwell clarified information regarding classroom teacher microphones and the instructional pods that were proposed.

The potential CTE center was reviewed. A suggestion was made to enlarge or add an Ag Show arena due to the small size of the current facility.

Transportation needs were discussed. Questions were asked regarding whether a second facility would fall under a general proposition, and Mr. Ross answered that it would. There was a question about the numbers of trips reduced by having a second facility and another question about the location of a second facility. Dr. Gutierrez responded that the location could be in the southern or western area of the district.

Questions regarding the funding of technology from bond or general funds were addressed by Mr. Ross. Short term purchases of technology are funded with short term structured bonds.

There was significant discussion regarding equity in the facilities for Fine Arts. Several committee members voiced a strong opinion that there needs to be additional funding for Fine Arts upgrades across the district. The age of the two high schools was discussed and compared for possible inequity in the programs and facilities. Some committee members responded that students at both schools have equally strong educational and extracurricular experiences. Dr. Gutierrez and Mr. Ross elaborated on how renovations would be listed in a bond.

Regarding Athletics upgrade recommendations, members expressed strong support for needed enhancements to junior high school fields and for a multipurpose center that could be used across the instructional community within a campus. The idea to increase the amount of funding to provide these options was highly encouraged by the committee; although, some of these options would require a separate proposal in a bond election, depending on the function of the renovation or construction.

Dr. Gutierrez and Dr. Coulson encouraged the committee to put their prioritized recommendations in the proposal and to also let the Board know of all the topics discussed for other suggested needs. Dr. Coulson indicated that the Board would see a natural break in the prioritized order of recommendations and other items discussed.

Dr. Coulson asked the committee members to individually prioritize their lists and take a short break.

Dr. Coulson opened discussion regarding the suggestion for multipurpose facilities at each of the existing high schools and a potential third high school. A committee

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member suggested that if we moved forward with that recommendation, it would be better not to bundle it with athletics. A multipurpose facility would cost potentially \$2.5M for each campus. One member stated that there are 144 multipurpose facilities associated with districts in Texas. Another member stated that these facilities also provide safety for athletics and fine arts students during hot weather practices. A different member suggested that the committee add these facilities to recommendations to the board and allow the board to address the request. It was determined that these facilities would be added to the list of recommendations for prioritization.

The discussion moved to the potential third and fourth high schools needed in the district. Dr. Coulson asked for feedback from the committee on this topic. He confirmed that there would not be long term enrollment relief in the buildings if a CTE center was opened. A committee member felt strongly that smaller schools involve more students. The discussion continued around asking for one high school now and considering a fourth, based on how large the Board feels the campus enrollment should be. There should also be consideration for facilities that would have empty space if two facilities were built in this bond.

Dr. Coulson asked the committee to form small groups to discuss priorities and then to use menti.com as a survey to finalize individual priorities from the list of 9 items proposed.

Results from the survey were:

- 1) Facilities - 1 High school, 1 Intermediate, 2 elementaries, and an asterisk for an additional HS for consideration by the Board
- 2) CTE center and THS upgrades
- 3) Transportation - new buses and second transportation center
- 4) Safety and Security - cameras and safety vestibules
- 5) Fine Arts - FA classroom technology upgrades; TIS music upgrades, TJH dance upgrades and THS FA upgrades
- 6) Multipurpose Facility at each high school
- 7) Infrastructure technology - Device refresh, Cybersecurity/Data Center, Fiber Ring
- 8) Instructional technology - Classroom upgrades
- 9) Athletics - Lockers; Netting and sound system upgrades at THS and TJHS; bleacher upgrades through expansion or additions

Dr. Coulson reiterated that the rankings do not indicate that #9 is less important than the others; however, the number 1 and 2 priorities are seen as the most immediate needs. He asked for feedback from the committee on the results. One member stated that she felt that athletics should have ranked higher and must receive funding as facilities are lacking at the junior high schools (bleachers at fields).

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Dr. Coulson reiterated the committee feels that equity between facilities is very important and the district must take a wider view into considerations for facilities.

Dr. Gutierrez discussed the next steps and timeline for this process. The committee recommendations will be presented at the next board meeting on June 14. Three members have volunteered to present these recommendations: Mark Segaloff, Daisy Cone and David Apolskis. The bond call could be made by the board on August 10 and, if approved, there would be time for community education from August through November.

On behalf of Dr. Salazar-Zamora, Dr. Gutierrez thanked everyone for their work tonight and over the past five weeks and adjourned the meeting at 7:35 pm.

[Facility Study Steering Committee Meeting #5](#)