



2023 Facility Advisory Committee

Questions and Answers – As of 04-14-2023

Question #1:

What is the meaning of “Recapture” when it comes to funding and does CCISD have to do this?

Answer:

Recapture refers to funds that are required to be sent back to the state when property tax revenue generated from a school district’s tax base is too high. The state recaptures the funding to redistribute to other school districts, but since Clear Creek ISD is not a recapture district, no funds are recaptured. Recapture typically applies to school districts with high commercial and industrial tax bases, as opposed to school districts whose tax base has a high proportion of residential property.

Question #2:

Can the savings from Bonds 2013 & 2017 Bonds be used?

Answer:

Bond project savings and interest earned on bond funds may be used for purposes authorized by the original bond referendum ballot language. Historically, we have used the following ballot language for our bond elections:

“The issuance of \$XXX,XXX,XXX School Building Bonds for the Construction, Acquisition and Equipment of School Buildings in the District (Including the Rehabilitation, Renovation, Expansion and Improvement Thereof), the Purchase of the Necessary Sites for School Buildings, and the Purchase of New School Buses and Levying of the Tax in Payment Thereof.”

This ballot language allows our Board of Trustees to approve the use of Bond Savings and Interest for pressing capital needs. Savings and Interest for the 2013 and 2017 Bond Programs will be discussed in detail at the April 18th Committee meeting.

Question #3:

Where does the revenue generated by bus advertising go?

Answer:

Advertising revenue is deposited into the Advertising Fund, which is used to fund operating expenses for the C3 Studios Career and Technical Education (CTE) program at Challenger Columbia Stadium. This fund is also used to accumulate funds to replace the Video Board and related control room at Challenger Columbia Stadium based upon its 10-year replacement life cycle. When excess advertising revenue is generated, funds are transferred to the General Fund to offset Marketing Program operating costs.



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Question #4:

Can the committee get a list of projects that were not funded in prior bond cycles?

Answer:

Yes. The needs assessment presented to, but not recommended by the 2013 and 2017 Facility Advisory Committees will be provided to the committee on April 11th.

Question #5:

What is the difference between the “Debt Service Fund” & Capital Projects Fund”?

Answer:

Capital projects funds are used to pay for capital and other long-term needs. When voters approve a bond referendum, the funds generated by the sale of bonds are deposited into Capital Projects funds and are expended as projects are completed. The Debt Service Fund is used to pay principal and interest on long-term debt. Debt Service property taxes are levied based upon the tax rate set by the Board of Trustees each year.

Question #6:

Does the school district receive the funding for the Bond in one lump sum?

Answer:

We issue bonds based upon the unique cash requirements of each bond program. We cannot logistically complete all approved projects immediately, so they are scheduled to be completed over a 5-year schedule. We are very conservative when investing district funds, so the interest rates we pay on long-term debt are typically higher than our rate of return on investments. This draw schedule ensures “just-in-time” funding of our projects, which keeps the tax rate as low as possible.

Question #7:

Does the school district re-negotiate the Bonds to get lower interest rates?

Answer:

Yes, we periodically re-negotiate and/or restructure bonds to obtain lower interest rates when market conditions are favorable.



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Question #8:

What was the COVID drop and how did it relate to school district funding?

Answer:

Enrollment and attendance rates decline in 2020 and have fluctuated several times with covid resurgences. It has been sporadic and difficult to pinpoint trends to determine why the students are not returning. School district funding is based upon the Average Daily Attendance, therefore declines in attendance rates result in reduced funding.

Question #9:

Why does the tax rate continue to decrease if we are still paying for bonds?

Answer:

The Debt Service tax rate is established by the Board of Trustees annually and is based upon principal and interest payments required for each year. If the assessed value of the tax base increases due to growth, the tax rate required to generate the necessary funds to cover principal and interest payments is reduced.

Question #10:

How do we determine the priorities of the items listed in the assessment?

Answer:

Priorities are determined based upon standard life cycles, experience, condition, programmatic implications, and impact of items on District and Campus operations.

Question #11:

How do we determine the Life Cycle of items listed? Is there a standard list?

Answer:

Life cycles are developed based upon unique system types, industry standards and district experience. We will present a sample of life cycles at the April 11th Committee meeting.



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Question #12:

Has the District tried to apply for assistance from the Inflation Reduction Act? Could this be used for these types of projects?

Answer:

We are reviewing this program and its eligibility requirements, and we will determine whether the program could be of benefit.

Question #13:

When looking at the Life Cycle of the item, is depreciation taken into consideration?

Answer:

Life cycles for our building systems and other capital assets are based upon their expected useful life. As systems near the end of their life cycles, the frequency of breakdowns and difficulty obtaining repair parts necessitates replacement to prevent disruption of campus and district operations. Since depreciation is typically defined as the reduction in the value of an asset with the passage of time, mostly due wear and tear, depreciation is factored into our life cycle determination.

Question #14:

Can an email version of the Assessment data be sent out?

Answer:

Yes. An MS Excel version of the assessment databased will be provided to the committee on April 11th.

Question #15:

How is the consensus reached/determined? By table voting, individual voting, etc?

Answer:

We do not vote on issues requiring action, but all issues are fully discussed. CCISD School Policy BQA (Local) states that “For consensus to exist, it is not necessary for every participant to agree in full, but it is necessary for every person to be given the opportunity to be heard and, in the end, for almost all to believe that the decision does not violate his or her convictions.” During the recommendation development meetings in May, we will assign teams to evaluate the information presented and each group will make recommendations for their area to the committee. The recommendations will be discussed, and the committee will attempt to reach consensus.



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Question #16:

How is the construction cost determined?

Answer:

The estimated cost of facility and construction related assessment items was provided by our Architects and Engineers based upon the cost estimating database. The estimates in their database are determined by recent bids in the Houston area K-12 construction market as of Spring 2022. Cost estimates for other items such as fine arts instruments, buses and technology were based upon information supplied by each individual department.

Question #17:

If we feel that there is a facility need that is not on this assessment, how do we go about adding it to the assessment for Committee consideration?

Answer:

Committee members are encouraged to bring these types of items to the committee for discussion at any time. The committee will discuss and determine whether the items should be added to the assessment and prioritized for inclusion in the committee's recommendation.

Question #18:

Is there anything that can be done to address the parking situation (or lack of parking) at Clear Springs High School?

Answer:

Campus staff and instructional leaders have expressed concerns about a lack of adequate parking at the campus, but the unique site characteristics at Clear Springs High School make the addition of parking a significant challenge. We will prepare estimates for possible options and present to the committee for consideration at a future meeting.



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Question #19:

Can we get more detailed information regarding the line items related to cameras? The description only says “camera” and the committee would like to have more information about these items.

Answer:

Due to the sensitive nature of our security system designs and capabilities, we cannot publish detailed information beyond what is included in the assessment. We can provide an opportunity for committee members to view more detailed information at our office, if requested. The multiple line items for each campus listed in the assessment database allows us to provide more accurate estimates for various areas of each building. The assessment also includes additional cameras based upon blind spots identified by campus and Safe and Secure Schools staff over the last few years.

Question #20:

Are there cameras in the parking lots of high school campuses? If no, why not?

Answer:

We do not currently have cameras in our High School Parking lots due to the high cost of installation and maintenance. We do not recommend placement of cameras on parking lots, but it is possible to add higher resolution cameras with zoom capability that can be strategically installed on our buildings for optimal parking lot coverage. Our Technology Team is developing estimates for this type of system for Committee discussion and consideration at a future meeting.

Question #21:

There are roads listed for Challenger Columbia Stadium and the Education Village? Why are these needed and why were they not added when the original construction was completed?

Answer:

These roadways are needed to improve traffic flow and safety at each location.

- Challenger Columbia Stadium – When the project was designed in 2014, this road was included as an “alternate” during the procurement phase, but the project was over budget due to inflation, so the alternate was not accepted at that time. Also, the road’s design called for connection of the road to an extension of Landing Boulevard and Beamer Road, which were not near the design phase at the time. Both extensions are in the final stages of design and construction is slated to begin within the next two years.
 - Education Village – As discussed at last week’s meeting, the Education Village was the first of its kind at the time. Concerns about student safety and proper separation of the three campuses influenced the overall design of the campus and access between the three (3) campuses. Our operational experience over the last twelve (12) years has alleviated those concerns and identified significant safety and traffic issues that need to be addressed.
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Question #22:

Why are “control systems” (HVAC) under both Mechanical and Technology disciplines?

Answer:

The district utilizes building automation systems (BAS) to control mechanical, electrical, and plumbing equipment throughout the entire District and these systems are listed in the Mechanical section of the assessment. Main data equipment rooms (MDF) and Intermediate data equipment rooms (IDF) require separate dedicated air conditioning units to maintain target temperatures and humidity levels 24-hours a day, and these units and control systems are listed under Technology – Building Systems section of the assessment.

Question #23:

What is the status of gender-neutral bathrooms in our high schools?

Answer:

Our high school campuses currently utilize gender neutral single person bathrooms to accommodate students on a case-by-case basis.

Question #24:

Where would the existing priority level be for the performing arts center repairs on seating and lighting for Clear Springs High School?

Answer:

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. We have added replacement of stage lighting system at Clear Springs High School as a Code/Condition Priority 1 item (C1) to the assessment database. Replacement of auditorium seating was not identified as a need based upon our assessment. These seats typically have a 25-year life cycle and are typically replaced as part of a larger renovation. For reference, the auditorium seating at Clear Brook High School was installed in 1988 and was replaced in 2015 when the auditorium renovation was completed as part of Bonds 2013. Our Maintenance Department will reach out to campus staff and determine if repairs are needed.

Question #25:

Being new to the district, how many Title 1 schools do we have?

Answer:

Fifteen (15) of our forty-four (44) schools are Title 1 campuses including three (3) Intermediate and twelve (12) Elementary.



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Question #26:

How many schools still have portable buildings?

Answer:

Over the last ten years, our goal has been to remove as many of these portable classroom buildings as possible. As a result, we currently only have twelve (12) campuses with portable classroom buildings, and the portable buildings will be removed from another three (3) campuses this Summer.

Question #27:

Has the district looked at obtaining sponsorships for our scoreboards?

Answer:

The district does obtain sponsorships for the scoreboards at both stadiums which raise approximately \$300,000 annually.

Question #26:

At Greene Elementary, why is there no key card entry access to the 2nd grade hall from the playground and from the track to the gym/gym hallway (2 different doors).

Answer:

The District Wide Security Upgrade project completed in 2021 included replacement of the hardware and infrastructure for existing card readers, along with a new access control management system. We also added card readers as needed to provide access from the playground areas if card access did not already exist. Greene Elementary has two card readers at the back of the campus to allow staff to quickly access the building from recess and PE, which is comparable to our other elementary schools, so additional card readers were not added at the time. Our Safe and Secure Schools Department staff will review and determine if an additional card reader is warranted at this campus.

Question #27:

Why specifically does the school district need generators? How many facilities have them?

Answer:

Generators are necessary to ensure that critical safety systems including emergency egress lighting, fire alarms, telephones, intercoms, cameras, and kitchen cooler/freezers remain operational in case of power outages. Generators have been installed at every facility except for Seabrook Intermediate, Victory Lakes Intermediate, Clear Path Alternative School, the East Ag Center, and the West Ag Center. Generators are included in our assessment for these facilities to bring them up to District standard.



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Question #27:

From the meeting on April 11th, it sounded like we have two security camera systems: one that is older, but still within its life cycle and one that is newer. As I understood the recommendation, it sounds like the staff would like to retire the older system completely even though it has life in it? Please help me understand if I understand this correctly, and if so, why we would retire a functioning system prior to the end of the life cycle?

Answer:

The 2017 Bond program included replacement of obsolete analog and low-resolution digital camera systems as part of the Districtwide Security Upgrades Project. At the time this project was designed and completed, several projects had been recently completed with the lower resolution digital cameras utilizing the old Video Management System. These projects were part of the 2013 Bond Program and the early years of the 2017 Bond Program. As a result, we did not include these projects in the Districtwide Security Upgrades project because they were not at the end of their expected useful life at the time. These projects were completed in 2016, 2017 and 2018, and since cameras have an expected useful life of seven (7) years, they are at the end of their life cycle in 2023, 2024 and 2025 depending on when they were installed. It will not be necessary to replace the infrastructure (cabling, power, etc.) installed at the time, so our estimates only include replacement of the camera device with a new high resolution camera device.

Question #28:

Is a landscape architect evaluating all the drainage issues around the district? How are you determining the scope and cost of drainage repairs or improvements?

Answer:

Drainage improvements and associated costs that are included in the assessment were initially identified by campus, Facilities and Maintenance staff based upon site observations over the years. These lists were provided to our 3rd party Civil Engineer who evaluated likely causes and developed the scope of improvements necessary based upon current codes and ordinances. The 3rd party Civil Engineer also developed the cost estimates included in the assessment.
