
Facility & Bond Steering Committee

Meeting 2 – Thursday, December 12, 2024

MINUTES

Dr. Martha Salazar-Zamora, Superintendent of Schools, opened the Facility & Bond Steering Committee #2 at 5:30 pm. at the Tomball Event Center. She welcomed everyone and expressed her thanks and those of the administration to the attendees. Dr. Salazar-Zamora stated that this important work is for the future success of Tomball ISD. Dr. Zamora indicated that we have a large amount of information to share tonight and consideration of the requests presented will be crucial, as there will be more needs than dollars available. She reintroduced Dr. Brian Woods, the facilitator of this committee.

Dr. Woods commented that due to the very tight schedule tonight, all questions generated by small group conversations will be entered into a google form that may be accessed by a QR code at each table. He gave a brief overview of tonight's agenda, and then introduced Dr. Michael Webb, Chief Academic Officer.

Dr. Webb began by highlighting the district Career Technology Education (CTE) programs development from 2020 and planned continued development through 2027. He stated that all campuses opened in the past years due to rapid growth have achieved an A rating. There are currently 27 programs of CTE study and 40 courses have been added since 2021. There were 1,417 industry-based certifications earned by students in 2023-2024.

Dr. Webb continued by showing the planned expansion of CTE programs in the district and the proposed future location for industrial programs at the Tomball Innovation Center (TIC) at Warehouse 7. These programs include Fire Science, Automotive and Collision Repair, Diesel and Heavy Equipment, HVAC and Sheet Metal. Information Technology Support and Services would be located in unused offices at the former Special Services building. Family and Community Services would be located at each high school campus. ESports would be located at the Special Services building in an unused gym.

In addition to CTE programs, the two NJROTC programs support the Raider program that is a signature feature of NJROTC that the district cannot support effectively at this time. Space is located on both campuses to retrofit for this purpose.

Elementary campus libraries also need upgrades to remain current with newer schools. Older libraries are literature-based only with little space for project-based and digital learning. In order to remain competitive, spaces are needed to implement science into SMART labs that allow students to develop projects and research to stay current with technology advances in this area.

Dr. Steven Gutierrez, Chief Operating Officer, continued presenting information regarding co-curricular athletics and fine arts. Almost half of the enrolled TISD students participate in athletics, fine arts and ROTC. These students are proven to show better academic, behavior and attendance performance.

Dr. Gutierrez explained the wet bulb globe temperature monitoring system that is currently mandated for the safety of students practicing or performing outdoors. He continued discussing the risks and stress of heat-related illness to students and staff. There were over 100 weather-impacted days in the last school year. Multipurpose facilities provide safe spaces for students to practice in extreme weather conditions. These facilities could also be rented to outside organizations as schedules permit, and would create a revenue opportunity for the district to offset operating expenses.

Fine Arts and Athletics replacement cycles were discussed. Equipment and uniforms are continually maximized for life span, typically twice as long as recommended. Technology upgrades are available for equipment that improve safety to staff and students. Theater spaces are also needing replacement of equipment and curtains to maintain standards. Tracks, turf, netting, dugout cabling, and many other athletic equipment needs were also presented as needs in the district for the next ten to twenty years.

Dr. Woods asked the small groups within the committee to discuss key insights and questions. After time for discussion, Dr. Woods reconvened the meeting and asked for key observations and questions from each group. Questions were also submitted through a google form.

After a short break, Dr. Gutierrez resumed the discussion. He mentioned that the proposal should also include a natatorium for the new high school to be equitable with the other. The natatorium and the multipurpose facilities would need to be placed on a separate proposition according to state law for bond elections.

Dr. Gutierrez continued the presentation with information on transportation and custodial operations. He showed bus fleet information that indicates the 10-12 year lifespan for a school bus and noted that most of our fleet normally attains a 16 year lifespan. TISD has a very high ridership and provides transportation to all students. TISD also maintains a white fleet for first responders within the district. We also have semi-trucks and trailers for band equipment transportation but also supplement the district transportation needs with rentals. The district has spent approximately \$300,000 in the last two school years on rentals..

Dr. Gutierrez also discussed the additional needs for bus parking and office space within the district.

The district needs assessment continued with the presentation of safety requirements for emergency scenarios. Communication is essential in the event of an emergency and cell service is typically lost within the first 10 minutes. A multiple radio system is needed to provide communication within the district in an emergency situation.

Security needs to be enhanced with select fencing at campuses, which is not covered by state grants. Additionally, a public address system for non-instructional facilities would allow communication within the buildings.

Dr. Gutierrez moved on to needs in the custodial department. There is a replacement cycle for cleaning equipment such as carpet extractors, floor scrubbers, vacuums and burnishers. Equipment is maintained far past the normal age. District vehicles used for campus intradistrict travel are 11 to 27 years old. Industrial washers and dryers are needed to wash cleaning cloths and flat mops. This work is currently being done by residential-level equipment not designed for the heavy daily load.

Mr. Jason Piazza, Director of Technology, presented information on upgrades in technology needed to maintain standards and replacement life cycles to provide quality instruction. Physical security for buildings is in a state of deficiency. Electronic access for facilities is necessary to maintain secure control of buildings. Cameras for several campuses need to be upgraded within the next 4 years. Power protection systems for servers must be continually upgraded to maintain proper coverage in the event of an emergency.

Network infrastructure needs to be updated within a 5-7 year lifecycle. Campus switching and routing, cabling and cybersecurity, along with instructional technology are ending their life cycles.

Mr. Zack Boles, Chief Financial Officer, continued the presentation with facilities maintenance upgrades. TISD has 44 facilities and is adding two new campuses in the next two years. Half of our campuses are over 20 years old. Four of those schools are over 40 years old. Major plant equipment at these older facilities are reaching the end of their life cycle and will not be able to be rebuilt or repaired. Roof replacements are needed at several campuses, along with bleachers and select campus flooring. HVAC equipment, plumbing and electrical equipment have reached or exceeded life expectancy at several campuses. Generators are needed for emergency situations during power outages.

Facility deficiencies were then identified. Fire alarm panels and sound systems need to be maintained and replaced as needed. Irrigation systems need district-wide updates. Approximately 50% of all maintenance vehicles are older than 15 years. The maintenance fleet also needs to be expanded to accommodate the district growth. Staff efficiency is lost with deficient numbers of vehicles.

Dr. Woods asked the small groups to discuss the last topics presented. After a short discussion time, Dr. Salazar-Zamora reviewed the past two meetings and explained that the next and last meeting will be the critical component of the facility and bond assessment. Dollar values will be assigned to the needs presented tonight. She asked the committee to continue using the QR code to submit questions and comments. She also asked the committee to remember to consider all students' needs in the district in addition to their own students' needs. She thanked the group again for their support and participation on the committee and being the ambassadors for Bond 2025. She adjourned the meeting at 8:00 pm. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 7, 2025 at the Tomball Event Center at 5:00 pm.