



Building Success

On BOND Newsletter

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April 2005

Ysleta Independent
School District

INSIDE:

pg.2

- Bond Oversight Committee Update
pg.3
- Focus: Eastwood Middle School
- Play to Take on New Feel at Elementary Schools

www.yisd.net

Vision Statement

All students who enroll in our schools will graduate from high school, fluent in two or more languages, prepared and inspired to continue their education in a four year college, university or institution of higher education so that they become successful citizens in their community.



Superintendent's Message



In early 2004, the YISD community voted to pass a \$250 million Bond issue to upgrade the District's 62 facilities. A short year later, we are well on our way to building on our success while maintaining the promise to be efficient, responsible and inclusive in upholding the community's trust.

The Board has shortened the completion timeline from five to three years for implementation of the Bond Program, which will potentially save our taxpayers some \$25 million. The change in the

schedule will result in more construction taking place simultaneously, and will require coordination, but will not reduce the scope of work promised to each campus.

“ Although we've had to make some tough decisions, we are moving forward with projects in an expedient, fiscally responsible, and inclusive manner. ”

At Eastwood Middle School, we have decided to demolish the school and build a completely new campus on the site of the existing structure. The students and staff will be transferred to other sites for the duration of the project, which may take up to 2 years. The alternatives would place the school building in a flood zone or cost the project some

\$3 million to build a temporary portable

continued on pg. 4

Schools Enjoy New Drop-Off Zones



Seven YISD elementary school communities are enjoying the fruits of

the 2004 Bond Program with new drop-off zones. The zones are the first projects to be completed in the \$250 million school improvement program passed by voters in January 2004.

The drop-off zone projects were developed to meet the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee's priority of addressing health and safety issues at all YISD campuses. The first group of zones - built at Alicia Chacon, Ascarate, Cedar Grove, DesertAire, Edgemere, Pebble Hills and Presa elementary schools - were constructed

continued on pg. 4

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Bond Oversight Committee Update

By: Laura Esparza, BOC Chair

The Bond Oversight Committee (BOC) continues to meet monthly. Its goal is to maintain its commitment to the community of YISD by overseeing the equitable allocation of funds to each school campus making their needs a reality. The BOC has met and reviewed first year projects with architects and administration in order to maintain the timeline schedule.

The Board of Trustees, along with Mr. Hector Montenegro, charged the Committee with the responsibility of keeping contractors, construction entities, and the District on target, with final accountability to the taxpayers of YISD. Construction of new buildings, remodeling and a clear maintenance directive are key elements to a vision for the future of our students and community.

The uniqueness of being a Committee member comes not only from each individual who makes up the Committee, but the sense of commitment taken on by the members as a

whole to see all projects successfully completed. Committee members have proudly volunteered their time and have realized the need for long term dedication to the goal of bringing health, safety, replacement and maintenance issues to completion throughout the District.

The Committee greatly appreciates the community's trust and confidence it has placed in the Board of Trustees and the BOC. Securing the funding in order to address the needs of the District has given each student the opportunity to be part of an exemplary learning experience, true to the Vision Statement of YISD.

The BOC is made up of 40 community members from across the District who have volunteered their time, effort and expertise to represent their fellow constituents in overseeing the actions of YISD and its consultants as they implement the \$250 million Bond Program passed in January 2004. Committee meetings are open to the public.

Bond Oversight Committee • Meeting Dates

Tuesday, April 19, 2005
 5:30 PM • Chamizal Rm.

Tuesday, May 17, 2005
 5:30 PM • Mission Rm.

Tuesday, June 21, 2005
 5:30 PM • Mission Rm.

Tuesday, July 19, 2005
 5:30 PM • Mission Rm.

Tuesday, August 16, 2005
 5:30 PM • Mission Rm.

Tuesday, September 20, 2005
 5:30 PM • Mission Rm.

Tuesday, October 18, 2005
 5:30 PM • Mission Rm.

Tuesday, November 15, 2005
 5:30 PM • Mission Rm.

Tuesday, December 13, 2005
 5:30 PM • Mission Rm.

Tuesday, January 17, 2006
 5:30 PM • Mission Rm.

Tuesday, February 21, 2006
 5:30 PM • Mission Rm.

All meetings will be held at the YISD Administration and Cultural Arts Center located at 9600 Sims Drive.

Focus: Eastwood Middle School

The design for a new Eastwood Middle School at 2612 Chaswood, the first of five new campuses to be built in YISD's 2004 Bond Program, is on schedule. The \$32 million project will build a new state-of-the-art campus complete with staff and visitor parking, student drop-off areas, landscaping, central courtyard, Fine Arts facility, athletic fields and four full blacktop basketball courts.

In November, Alvidrez Architecture Inc. presented four possible designs for the campus to administration, the Campus Educational Improvement Council and the Bond Oversight Committee. After careful review of each layout and the flood plain and site analyses, the Bond Oversight Committee chose the plan that best complements the Eastwood Middle School community.

Fifty-two percent (52%) of the 15 acre property is in a 25 year flood plain area.

According to Alvidrez, building the new facility on the same footprint as the existing building will help protect the structure from possible flood damage and

““
After careful review of each layout and the flood plain and site analyses, we chose the plan that best complements the Eastwood Middle School community
””

will maintain the site's accessibility and visibility.

Demolition of the existing facility is expected to start after classes let out for the summer in May 2005. Construction of the new building, which is large enough

to house the projected enrollment in permanent classrooms and eliminate the need for portables, will take about 18 months after the site is cleared. Students and staff of the school will be housed at other area schools for the duration of the project.

“We reviewed all possibilities prior to making this decision,” said Dr. Anna Perez, Associate Superintendent of Operations. “Given the structural integrity of the existing building, we have to rebuild, and the cost of building a portable campus to house all of the students during construction is far too high. We will work with the design and construction teams closely to ensure that the school is built as quickly as possible, while maintaining a safe environment and ensuring quality workmanship.”

During construction of the new facility, all incoming seventh grade students

continued on pg. 4

Play to Take on New Feel at Elementary Schools

YISD's elementary students may not understand the Bond Program, but they will surely appreciate it when they see the \$9.4 million in playground and playcourt



enhancements scheduled for their schools.

By the end of this calendar year, all 36 elementary schools will be equipped with

two sets of playground equipment and shade structures built to accommodate children ages 5-8 and the older 9-12 year old students. All of the schools, except four that have recently been built, will also receive resurfaced playcourts. In addition, one Pre-K Center will receive an additional play set.

“Through this effort, we are providing equitable play areas for all of our students in the District,” said Pat O’Neill, Executive Director of Special Programs. “Not only will recess and lunch take on a whole new excitement for the children, the enhancements will improve the schools’ physical education activities and enhance the socialization and creative development of our children.”

The improved areas will also offer a fun

and safe place for students to play and exercise with their families during the evenings and weekends. “I play on Olay (Vista Hills Elementary School students’ name for their ‘old’ playground equipment) every day during PE and recess, and sometimes after school and on the weekends with my sister,” said Denise Escobar, a first grader at the school.

The playground equipment and playcourt enhancements were included in the Bond Program to meet new safety and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. The new sunshades will protect the children and equipment from the sun.

The bid for the playground equipment materials and installation was approved by

continued on pg. 4

continued from pg. 1

Superintendent's Message

campus. We are asking the school community to be patient and understanding while we build them a new state-of-the-art campus complete with all the amenities initially identified by the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee.

As promised, the decisions made by the administration and Board have been shared and reviewed by the Bond Oversight Committee (BOC) and the community at-large. The BOC has remained vigilant in overseeing the actions of our staff. They continue to meet monthly to discuss the progress of the

program, and attend meetings to monitor and participate in the design and implementation of each project. We have also presented plans and designs of all projects to each school's staff and community.

Already, seven of our elementary school communities are reaping the benefits of the investment made for our children with new drop-off zones constructed to provide a safe and convenient location for parents to drop-off and pick-up their children, and reduce traffic congestion. Also, the purchase and installation of new

playground equipment has been approved for all of our elementary schools.

Designs for the remaining year one projects are being developed and finalized by dedicated teams of consultants, administrators and community members. These projects, at 29 campuses across the District, will break ground this year and vastly improve YISD's educational and extracurricular offerings.

In short, we are proud to report that we are on schedule and within budget! Thank you again for your support and trust in allowing YISD to Build on Success!

continued from pg. 1

Schools Enjoy New Drop-Off Zones

primarily to provide parents with a safe and convenient location to drop-off and pick-up their children.

"The drop-off zones make it much quicker and easier for me in the mornings and afternoons," said Virginia Meza, whose two children attend Alicia Chacon Elementary School. "I especially like the fact that they no longer have to walk

through traffic around the school to get to their classrooms."

In addition to the students' safety, the zones will serve to relieve traffic congestion surrounding the campuses. "We strive to be good neighbors to our friends in the community," said Gloria Polanco-McNealy, principal of Alicia Chacon Elementary School. "Our

neighbors appreciate the decrease in cars parked along their streets."

Each of the seven schools will have additional upgrades funded by the Bond Program to meet the equitable standards set by the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee. Twenty-two more campuses throughout YISD will receive new drop-off zones through the Bond Program.

continued from pg. 3

Focus: Eastwood Middle School

(current sixth graders) will remain at their respective elementary home schools and teachers from Eastwood Middle School will be assigned to each elementary campus in the feeder pattern. Next year's

eighth graders (current seventh graders at EMS) will attend classes in portables situated on the campus of Hanks High School.

Community meetings will be held at

the school this spring to review the proposed elevations and floor plans of the new facility, and to discuss the temporary relocation of students. All public meeting notices will be posted in the school.

continued from pg. 3

Play to Take on New Feel at Elementary Schools

the Board in October 2004 and awarded to three vendors. Although the evaluation has been contested by a respondent to the request for proposal, the District will proceed as scheduled with the best value vendors recommended and approved by the Board.

"The evaluation team considered not

only the price, but also such things as safety, quality and appropriateness of design, and expected texture and durability of the materials," said Liza Montelongo, a member of the Bond Oversight Committee who participated in the evaluation. "The packages are within the original budget approved by the

community for the project."

The new equipment will start to arrive at campuses this spring and will be installed at all elementary schools by the start of the 2005-2006 school year. The installation of the shade structures and the resurfacing of the playcourts will be completed in a later phase.