

December 23, 2013

From: The Citizen's Action Group of Harrah

To: The Long Range Planning Committee

Please find enclosed a copy of the cover letter and survey that were emailed to the principals, teachers and support staff of the Harrah School System by the Citizen's Action Group of Harrah. Also enclosed are the results of the survey.

The Citizen's Action Group of Harrah is being formed by a group of concerned citizens that will be working toward the betterment and positive growth of our community. We hope that our leg work will help in your endeavor to complete the bond process. It was our aim to give every teacher, principal and support staff the opportunity to be heard. We are aware many of the suggestions will not be part of this first bond issue, however we hope the information may give you a head start on the contents of any subsequent bond issues.

We are here to help you in any way we can. Please feel free to contact us at cagofharrah@yahoo.com if you have further questions about the survey or if there is another topic where we might be of assistance.

Sincerely,
Carrie Wiegert
Chairperson
CAG of Harrah

Dear Teachers, Principals and Support Staff of the Harrah School System,

Please see the attached survey that is being sent to you by the Citizen's Action Group of Harrah. We are a group of concerned citizens that will be working for the betterment and positive growth of our community. It is our goal to work side by side with the school and other community groups to achieve this.

It is very important to us that your voices are heard in regards to the upcoming bond decisions. We have therefore put this survey together. Please be assured that your name is not required nor will any names be included in the results, only the percentages of your suggestions. If you, however have issues that you feel would be best served by including your name will we be happy to talk with you and see if we might be of help in presenting your concerns to the Board of Education and or the Long Range Planning Committee.

Due to time constraints we ask that you return your survey as soon as possible as we will not be able to count any results received after December 13th. On December 16th we will present the findings to the Long Range Planning Committee and will send the findings to all members of the Board of Education.

Some of the information that will be presented will include:

- The number of surveys sent out compared to the percentage of surveys returned
- The number of surveys sent out compared to the percentage of surveys returned categorized by teachers, principals or support staff
- By percentage, the top five concerns
- Other concerns by percentage earned
- Any special request

Again let me assure you your name will not be given to anyone. This is strictly to give the Board of Education and the Long Range Planning Committee general information that will help them make the best decision for our schools and our community.

The survey is set up in excel so you should be able to fill it out on your computer. Please return it to cagofharrah@yahoo.com or if you prefer to print out the survey please turn it in to your school office.

Sincerely,
Carrie Wiegert
Chairperson
CAG of Harrah

FUTURE BOND ISSUE CONCERNS SURVEY - HARRAH PUBLIC SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL: TEACHER: SUPPORT STAFF:

Top Five Concerns you wish to see on the upcoming bond:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

Other concerns or ideas:

For teachers only - How important are textbooks to you?

Please return survey to: cagofharrah@yahoo.com

Bond Issue Survey –December 2013

The surveys were emailed to principals, teachers and support staff of each Harrah school site on December second with a required return by December thirteenth.

The survey was an excel document that could either be printed, filled out and left in the principal's office for pick-up or filled out on their computer and returned by email.

Out of 148 teachers 29.7% returned the survey

Out of 7 principals 57% returned the survey

Out of 110 support staff 10.9% returned the survey

The respondents were asks for their top five concerns for future bond issues. The results were returned as follows:

- 1) The number one priority by 58% was **Technology**.
(The remainder of percentages breaks down as follows: 25% **Capital Improvements**, 15% **Security** and 2% **Textbooks**).
- 2) The number two priority by 46% was **Technology**.
(The remainder of percentages breaks down as follows: 35% **Capital Improvements**, 13% **Security** and 1% **Textbooks**).
- 3) The number three priority by 50% was **Capital Improvements**.
(The remainder of percentages breaks down as follows: 28% **Technology**, 12% **Security** and 10% **Textbooks**).
- 4) The number four priority by 57% was **Capital Improvements**.
(The remainder of percentages breaks down as follows: 30% **Technology**, 8% **Security** and 5% **Textbooks**).
- 5) The number five priority by 64% was **Capital Improvements**.
(The remainder of percentages breaks down as follows: 32% **Technology**, 3% **Textbooks** and 1% **Security**).

Not every respondent filled in all top five blanks.

Within technology the main priorities given were computers and/or tablets, internet upgrades and a new phone system.

Within capital improvements the main priorities were heat and air units and replacing flooring at Clara Reynolds. Also mentioned several times was multi-sports facility and performing arts venue.

The information listed below is from the other concerns and ideas option.

New performing arts building with fully equipped stage and auditorium. Sports facilities all need to be upgraded. Activity bus would be nice, our kids need to be empowered w/the knowledge that they are supported.

Consider refurbishing/updating existing buildings to serve existing school and community needs. Old isn't bad when updated, when existing buildings are structurally sound. Fix sound system/microphone jack outlets at the Middle School and have written explanation about using the system there.

Including as much info as possible to all, I think the older population of our town is very key to any bond. They are still living in the power plant paradigm. They don't understand state funding for our school.

Build on to the high school and Jr High – shut down the middle school – yes. The so called “safety entrances” or face lifts to each school site certainly does not warrant the cost. Sandy Hook had state of the art “safety” – you can't protect against drugged crazy people.

Cosmetic repairs/updates, landscaping/playgrounds. Professional development would be great!

Jeans day every day (maybe with school shirts). No cost to district, saves teachers money and boosts morale!

Elementary performing arts center. Pk – 6th music books.

At Clara Reynolds, update library, class sets of trade books, children's “best sellers” in the library (Caldecott, Newberry, Sequoyah books). New desk and chairs in classrooms. Updated computers and immediate tech support.

Professional development to be equipped to do /use the new technology! Moving kids from middle school to jr high. Freshman to the high school, adding classrooms. Raise the middle school buildings. FFA improvements.

School appearance is important. When I walk through buildings and see wallpaper peeling off, holes in walls, out of order signs, carpet w/duct tape, water stained ceiling tiles,

etc... It's embarrassing. I love where I work and who I work with, but the conditions of our facilities are very lacking.

Harrah looks run down, not inviting at all. I'm worried about the high school and jr high school curriculum, there's nothing for our gifted students. That's why we are losing families to Choctaw.

Money to fund websites to be used (spelling city, etc). Please allow us more freedom w/blocked sites. We can use those greatly.

The school needs to improve a lot. I think we are losing numbers because our facilities and technology are old and inadequate and frankly don't look good. All of this needs to be addressed. The arts are not given the attention they deserve from this district and this needs to change.

I am concerned about the HMS auditorium. If the MS is abandoned, I don't see how there will be sufficient up-keeping of the building. Also, if an elementary performing arts center was built, it would help all the schools with the scheduling of performances. In addition, I am not certain that there is a mold "emergency" at CRE, but the school is certainly in need of a deep cleaning and general interior facelift. I also believe that the grassy area in front of CRE should be turned into parking, so that people do not need to park on the grass for school events.

The high school needs a new computer lab that could be utilized by classes during the day. It would need to be available all hours, so it could not be used to teach a computer class. We need this addition to the library computer lab. When English classes are working on research papers for 2-3 weeks (for each English teacher) it ties up the library computers & other subject areas are not able to use the library computers.

We are so far behind on technology sometimes I feel like we are teaching with one hand tied behind our back. I know that we are doing the very best we can with what we have, but we need to be up to date. Our teacher and students deserve that.

Tablets need to be available for every student. Updates cost SO much less than buying new books every few years.

Has anyone spoken to the students? All grades? The ones who actually go to school here? The Community is quick to decide what we need and what we don't need. However, the students (aka the future of Harrah) understand they have below-par supplies/building/technology. As a former Harrah graduate, is this the best we can offer our students? Is this the perception we want for our future? Perception means a lot to the average student.

In order to reach our standards, especially at the elementary levels, we need smaller class sizes. Our class sizes have been increasing along with our standards and expectations. This requires the need for more small group and one-on-one time. Our building classrooms are all being utilized at this time.

It is imperative that we get some new technology including new network infrastructure. Need to make sure the plans will allow for future growth.

The sports program CANNOT be left out of the equation like so many want. Like it or not sports brings many new students to schools. And likewise can be the reason students transfer out. Our programs are on the rise and the facilities need to be brought up to meet at least a standard set by other schools our size locally.

How teachers answered "how important are textbooks to you?"

Not that important. If technology were upgraded, I would barely use a textbook.

I feel they are a great resource and needed for our classrooms. It gives a basic platform for the teacher to build from. They then can adapt their lesson plans how they feel necessary.

If we had updated technology, textbooks would be a thing of the past. If we remain in this situation with extremely outdated technology, then textbooks are a necessity. It just makes me sad for our students that we are so far behind in the technology world.

Very important. I am currently teaching a class without textbooks and it makes it very difficult to come up with materials for my students.

Textbooks are important resources, but they are more important for some subjects than for others. Social studies textbooks provide lots of visuals to go with the text which is good for students. Textbooks are needed as a source, but not the only source that should be used.

Very important as they help us introduce much needed ideas and basics to build our teaching on.

An updated supplement bought by the district is EXTREMELY important. I would prefer E-books to textbooks. The question would then be: How do you obtain the tablets needed and how do you ask a family to repay the cost of a tablet if it were broken? Food for thought....

I teach science in the middle school and our textbooks are completely trashed. Other subjects are also in poor condition. We are in desperate need of new textbooks.

I think textbooks are important, but should not be your only source for teaching. The text books do help cut down the copy usage. I also believe the students and parents need a resource to go back to if they don't understand the concept, especially parents.

Most books are online now, but we don't have the technology to access them.

I am not opposed to going away from traditional textbooks, if each student had a school provided tablet such as a kindle, ipad, etc. I don't like the current situation. We only have a classroom set of textbooks. We can't send assignments home that need to be looked up. It is difficult to keep track of books, since they aren't checked out to an individual student. The books are getting worn out quickly because they are getting 4 times the use. Also we don't get all of the resources, such as free workbooks, from the company, when you buy a partial set.

Textbooks and music need to be kept up to date and are very important.

VERY!!! Our general music classes (elementary) could be much better aligned if all 3 schools were following the same curriculum. At the present time, the music teachers have each been creating their own curriculum form year to year, with no alignment.

Unless all students are going to be provided with laptop computers and internet access, I have to have textbooks to teach literature.

Right now, I am unable to send history books home due to the fact that I have so few. However, I would be willing to deal with that awhile longer if tablets were on the horizon.

Textbooks will become obsolete. However, for the time frame we are in, textbooks would be nice to have. The middle school currently has math textbooks that are over 10 years old. Math has not changed, but the standards from the state of Ok have. The books are falling apart and we do not have enough to give each student in grades 6-7. The previous administration (school board/super) opted NOT to purchase newer textbooks during the adoption year.

The only textbooks used at our level is our book of stories to go along with our reading series. These are of high importance. I do understand the need at the higher levels, especially to serve homework needs. I also believe they should be used as a resource along with other methods.

Not that important, with proper technology we should go to ipads or tablets. Also, with common core implementation, textbooks should not be the focus. It's a new concept for many.

Very, while there are other resources, a textbook help the kids create routine. Other resources can be added but textbooks should be the foundation.

A new reading & math series would be nice but not until they are common core ready. I will always pull from outside sources to supplement.

Very, if available online even better. Saxon math needed!

Important, but internet access can take the place of textbook material often times. Let teachers use the websites they need.

Very! Must have (at minimum) a current math book and a current reading series!

Textbooks are VERY important to me, but if technology is up to date virtual textbooks are good. We may need actual textbooks to get us through until technology is up to date.
Math textbooks!

Not very important, I have pretty much gotten completely away from them. Technology is much more important in the time we are living in. Textbooks that are interactive w/smart boards would be a great way to incorporate both.

I feel like, although our curriculum is gravitating away from their use, it is vital that we have them (updated)! Parents can't help students with work on weak areas w/o help themselves and not everyone has internet access at home!

Very! We need books that reflect what's going on in our world today. The middle school doesn't have books to send home to study by.

Very important, we need new reading books in 2nd grade.

Math – very important. Liberal arts and reading – we can get by.

If text books are not purchased there needs to be subscriptions to reputable sources for both teaching materials and enrichment activities. These should be accessible to parents as well for homework help. There needs to be something concrete for parents to use as examples for homework help.

Very important, that's like asking a truck driver if he needs a truck to transport his load. Every child deserves to have their own books to study from and not have to share to get work done.

If textbooks are aligned with CCSS they could be very beneficial.

Textbooks are important if they are common core aligned.

We are in need of current textbooks, however they need to be common core aligned.

Carpenter – how important are hammers to you? Policeman – how important are guns to you?

Textbooks are very important because we are limited in the paper and copies we can use/make. If we are to use supplemental material that we find on our own, don't limit our copy use!

With limits on copying because of budget cuts, textbooks have become much more important to have (up to date textbooks).

Would like to have current materials to teach with. Class sets of grade level books would be great. Need access to sites with resources for teaching w/o textbooks.

Textbooks are very important. The students and parents need something to refer to when working on homework. Textbooks would greatly reduce the number of copies we have to make.

I use a textbook in class. I don't need a book for each student – classroom set is fine, but a book every 5 years would be great. A textbook is very important to me.