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PADEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Michelle Stiles, Superintendent

Frank Jordan, Principal

3-17-19

“NO TAX INCREASE” SCHOOL BOND – VOTE DATE ON APRIL 2ND

Dear Voters,

Paden voters will have a chance to support their school district **on April 2nd**. The last bond, which was the safe room/early childhood classrooms and HVAC systems, will be rolling off the books soon, so it's time to vote on a new bond project to replace the old one. The proposed bond will be **“No Tax Increase,”** and it will be split into two propositions. The reason for being split into two separate propositions is because buses cannot be included in the building/repairs proposition.

Kerr 3 Architecture was hired by the Paden Board of Education to oversee the projects, while J.C. Leonard, VP of Stephan H. McDonald and Associates, is overseeing the bond and bonding process itself.

Proposition 1: This includes various repair projects and upgrades mostly to the elementary building, which was built in 1966, cafeteria equipment, and a school activity vehicle. I'll explain each project in more detail.

Elementary windows – If you drive by the elementary building, you will see walls of windows in each classroom. These windows are part of the original structure that were used for increased air flow in the classrooms, before air conditioning was added. They have now become an economical issue. On a windy day, the blinds will actually blow with the windows closed, and on a rainy day, the rain will leak in through the windows. Over the years, they have been re-caulked and broken panes replaced with plexiglass when they break, but these single pane windows were never designed to be energy efficient. There is much energy lost through these windows. Another factor is the safety of our students. We recently added security features to our elementary and high school buildings that include doors that must be opened by the office staff through a video monitoring system in order to keep track of visitors on our campus. We have also installed security cameras. Phones have been added in every classroom for a universal paging system. These walls of windows decrease our safety procedure effectiveness by allowing visual access to

our students from the outside road, therefore in order to secure the building, we will be remodeling them to allow 2-3 windows in each classroom, with brick or another material to enclose the openings where the large windows were originally. In today's world, we need to keep our students as safe as possible. The new windows would allow a second egress for our students if the need should ever arise to evacuate a classroom, but it would reduce the outside visual access to our students inside the classroom.

Plumbing – The elementary plumbing is also as old as the building and requires frequent repairs. There are major upgrades that need to be done in order to correct these problems other than just patching the problems temporarily. The bathrooms also need some upgrades on the fixtures themselves. Many have been here for as long as most of us can remember. They are not water efficient and use much more water than the newer fixtures.

Drainage – The elementary and FACS (Home Ec) room are prone to flooding. When it rains heavily, water comes into the elementary building from the playground and has to be swept out and dried with large fans. We have been using sand bags for the last year due to damage that the tile floor was receiving. The FACS room floods from the asphalt parking lot, so we have sandbags there, also. Between the ag barn and the bus barn, water backs up and seeps into the ag shop from the bottom of the block wall so that area needs drainage work.

Electrical – Each elementary classroom has a total of 3 outlets: one in the heater closet, one on the East wall and one on the West wall. Most of the rooms have old lockers covering at least one of these outlets. It is a fire hazard to have multiple cords plugged into one outlet, but when a teacher is trying to provide students with classroom computers and technology, it's very important to supply that classroom with the necessary infrastructure to allow for technology growth. Remember, when this building was built in the 60's, technology that we have in classrooms today was not even a thought in construction.

Soffit – On the elementary, the soffit is rotting. The cafeteria soffit was changed to metal when we replaced the roof on the cafeteria after the Christmas Eve storm about four years ago. The current wood soffit would be replaced to match the soffit on the East end of the building and would last much longer than the old fashioned wood and particle board soffit that was used in the past.

High School Entry Doors – Even though we recently added a security system on our campus doors, the high school door, which was installed in 1989, is beyond repair, and in the recent months, sometimes that door does not work with our security system. We need to replace that door, possibly with a door with security glass. The elementary doors were replaced in the last 5 years.

IT Room – The technology room where all of the internet, server, and phone infrastructure is housed in the high school is not enclosed, therefore, it cannot be kept cool in the summer heat. This has resulted in the loss of expensive battery backups and loss of equipment for the entire

campus, due to damage from the heat. We did add a window unit to the room, but we find that we are actually cooling the entire attic space above the classrooms in the high school. A simple fix for this is to build a wall and ceiling around this expensive equipment.

Cafeteria Equipment – Our cafeteria equipment is extremely old. Most of it has been worked on numerous times over the past several years, and at this point, most of the older equipment is now beyond repair. We were able to buy a new 3 door fridge and 3 door freezer earlier in the year, and Creek Nation is buying a new steam table for us, but our walk-in cooler is as old as the building itself. It was built in as the building was being built, therefore we cannot afford to replace the inside walk-in because it would have to be custom built to fit the existing space. We will have to buy a ready-made cooler that sits outside by the freezer, just outside of the East kitchen door. This alone will cost around \$20,000, which is much cheaper than having a custom built model. I do need to thank T & D Meats and Prague Schools because when this cooler goes down, we have been able to borrow space from them to store our food. Our equipment is so old that it takes several weeks to get parts in, if they are available, and get repairs completed.

Activity Vehicle – The school and the ag program own a school truck, but that truck is used mainly for ag activities. There is also an old ag truck that is used by the maintenance man for general work around the school yard. It is not in good shape, no air, no speedometer, etc, but it works for maintenance purposes on campus. We purchased a school van two years ago which is in use almost daily for different school activities in which smaller teams and groups can travel. The only other vehicle is the school car, which is an early 2000 model, high-mileage car. We do have teachers and staff that attend meetings and professional development throughout the year and do need a reliable school vehicle to drive, rather than their own, especially if they are taking students with them, due to responsibility and insurance purposes. We would like to purchase a vehicle that could be used for several staff members or even small groups, such as our robotics and academics teams to use for activities. We do not necessarily need something brand new, just something reliable, economical, and good gas mileage, that will haul several people. Our staff does not drive vehicles home or use them for personal reasons, so this is strictly a school vehicle.

PROPOSITION 2: Purchase 3 school buses – We have been in contact with several bus sales companies and may be able to buy slightly used buses, rather than new, if the opportunity arises. Our current buses were bought roughly 10 years ago. They are not high mileage, but our rural routes have literally beat our buses to pieces. We are constantly replacing metal parts under the hood that have broken and come apart from the dirt roads. The dust and dirt under the hoods is also rough on the engines. We have been looking at several different options, and if a slightly used bus with highway miles or in-town route miles is available when it's time to purchase buses, it may be the best way to go. If not, we have allotted enough money to buy new buses. We would then sell or trade in the two oldest buses and keep the two newest for back up buses. The activity bus does not need to be replaced. It is mainly used on the highway and is still in good condition.

The total bond amount is for \$750,000. These are the projects listed on the brochure. I have handed the bond brochures out at ballgames, school activities, and the senior citizens, but if you have not received one and would like one, please call me at my office at 932-5053 ext 100, and I will drop one off to you or put one in the mail. They will also be available at the post office, the senior citizens, city hall, and the elementary and high school offices.

In the past 4 years, through various money-saving endeavors, we have saved enough money to pay off the portable building that was purchased several years ago, after the ice storm that destroyed the gym. We bought and paid for money-saving LED lights for the campus, we bought and paid for the activity van, we put a new roof on the cafeteria, we put a new metal roof on the ag barn, and we put a new white roof coating on the high school. We also replaced all of the HVAC systems on the campus – some with the remaining bond money from the last bond, and the others with money that was saved by going to a four-day week for a short time. We also went without a maintenance person for a year in order to save money. During that time, the principal, ag teacher, myself, and many volunteers took care of basic lawn maintenance and repairs. We also had businesses that helped us with repairs and materials. We try to be financially responsible stewards of the tax payers' money and use the funds in the best way possible, but there are some things that would take us years to complete if it were not for the citizens passing bonds. I can't ask you to vote for the bond, but I can make you aware of what this bond would be used for if it is passed. **Once again, this is a "No Tax Increase" bond election on April 2nd, 2019.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me. I'll be more than happy to answer any questions you may have regarding this bond election.

Sincerely,

Michelle D. Stiles
Superintendent
Paden Public Schools
(405)932-5053 ext 100