

## **Hillsboro High School Building Project Answers to Commonly Asked Questions**

On November 8, 2022, residents of Hillsboro CUSD 3 approved a proposed \$13M bond issue for a capital project at Hillsboro High School. Another \$10 million from other available resources will be included to fund a \$23 million building project.

### ***Q: What is included in the \$23M project?***

A: The project will replace the 102-year-old main building at Hillsboro High School with a new structure that will connect the existing Gym Building, Cafeteria Building, and Ag. Building, resulting in a single building with one central, controlled main entrance. There will be approximately 65,000 square feet of new construction.

The project will address the following identified needs for Hillsboro High School.

- New main structure connecting all high school buildings
- Indoor air and environmental quality
- Single, central entrance
- Improved science labs and other learning spaces
- New school will meet needs of students with disabilities
- Necessary modifications to HHS agricultural, cafeteria and gym buildings where needed for the attachment to the new building

### ***Q: How will a new high school connected to the other buildings improve security?***

A: School safety is a priority in our schools and a priority for our community. Currently, Hillsboro High School consists of four different buildings with 18 entrances, making it impossible to implement best practices in school safety and security. The District will construct a new main building on the hill, enclose and connect all four buildings and create a single, secure main entrance to better ensure the safety of our students and staff.

### ***Q: Will a new high school address the issues with energy costs and improve comfort levels in classrooms?***

A: Yes. Current facilities are not energy efficient and there is little ability to control heat, cooling, and ventilation. Whether hot or cold, or rain or snow, students now must repeatedly go outside during the school day to get from one building to another. Heating

and cooling systems are outdated and many classrooms are often too hot or too cold for effective instruction. This project will provide for new and renovated energy efficient HVAC, plumbing, electrical, and other critical systems that will cut costs and provide a more comfortable environment.

***Q: Why is the high school being replaced instead of renovated?***

A: Hillsboro High School is more than 100 years old, making it difficult and costly to maintain and repair. Our high school building is simply worn out and past the point where normal maintenance and repairs address the needs. The building has numerous inadequacies: structural, mechanical, electrical, functional, safety and security, and accessibility for students with disabilities. Moreover, the building lacks facilities to support the learning needs of students and best prepare them for success in the workplace or higher education. The cost to maintain a school more than a century old continues to rise, and without a new building to replace it, the maintenance, repair, and upkeep costs will continue to reduce the funds available to support student learning. Replacing a school that can't be cost-effectively renovated is financially prudent.

A complete renovation would displace students into expensive temporary mobile buildings for up to two school years. The funds needed to install and use these temporary buildings would be of no long-term benefit and would be better used to construct new spaces to be used for generations to come. A new school is good for students' education, but in the long run, is also much more efficient to operate thus saving our District money. It is good financial and educational planning.

***Q: Will this project increase the bond and interest property tax levy?***

A: No. This project will not change the District's bond and interest property tax levy.

The tax rate would not increase because our District has paid down previous bond debt and will be completely retiring one bond issue just as the new bond payments would begin. Also, we will be using two other funding sources: funds generated by the county sales tax for school facilities that passed a few years ago and Federal ESSER funds that the District must spend in the next few years. Since the District has bonds that will expire in 2023 and 2028, the timing is ideal to take care of our schools without increasing the property tax rate. New school building bonds will replace expiring bonds and maintain the current bond and interest tax levy. It is important to understand that, for any given year, the amount of property taxes you pay to support our schools might change based on changes in the assessed valuation of your property.

***Q: The voters approved a \$13 million bond issue. To complete the work, an additional \$10 million is needed. Where is the additional funding for the total project coming from?***

A: To fully fund the proposed \$23 million project, \$13 million will come from bonds supported by the property tax. The additional funds will be secured from alternative sources and grants - \$2.5 million from Federal ESSER grant funds and \$7.5 million from bonds supported by sales tax.

***Q: Beyond improving our schools, how will the project help the community?***

A: Public schools in our area go back more than 150 years when a “free English school” was established in 1856. For many generations, providing high quality schools has been a source of pride for us. Schools are the backbone of our community. Improving our school building now will benefit many future generations of students and homeowners. An up-to-date high school will help us make sure that our graduates, now and well into the future, are well-prepared for success in the workplace or in higher education.

***Q: Why should we do this work now and not wait until later?***

A: Just as homeowners must sometimes spend money to maintain their homes, the District must spend money to protect the investment that the community has made in its schools and neighborhoods. This project will allow us to help protect the financial future of our District, continue to provide outstanding schools for our students, and allow HCUSD 3 to remain a source of pride in our community.

Investing in updated and improved buildings will benefit many future generations of students and homeowners. The facilities will be more efficient to operate thus saving our District money. It is good financial and educational planning.