

# Nov. 4, 2014 BOND



**Oct. 6** - last day to register to vote

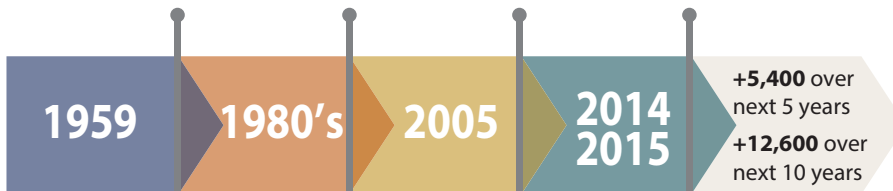
**Oct. 20 – 31** - Early voting

**VOTE NOV. 4**



## FBISD Continues to Grow!

Fort Bend ISD was formed in 1959 with the consolidation of the Missouri City School District and the Sugar Land School District. At that time, the District had seven campuses, approximately 2,800 students and was 80 percent white and 20 percent African-American. The small town and rural communities that originally formed the District changed with the development of suburban, master-planned communities such as Quail Valley, Sugar Creek, First Colony, Pecan Grove, Sugar Lakes, Lake Olympia, New Territory and others.



By the mid-1980s, Fort Bend ISD had 27 schools with 26,707 students, and by 2005, the District doubled its size to 60 campuses with 66,140 students. The ethnicity of students has also changed, as reflected in its majority-minority student population.

## Looking Ahead

The District has faced challenges with state funding budget cuts while its enrollment and economically disadvantaged student population continues to grow. The enrollment projection for the 2014-2015 school year is **72,317**, an increase of approximately 2,000 students from the previous year. And, according to the most recent demographic update, Fort Bend ISD is projected to serve more than **5,400** additional students over the next five years and **12,600** over the next 10 years. Right now, more than 7,000 of our students are attending classes in 168 portable, two-classroom buildings to keep up with the growth.



At the August 18 Board meeting, the Fort Bend ISD Board of Trustees called a **\$484 million bond election for November 4, 2014** to address the District's growth, to provide safety and security improvements, and to upgrade the District's technology infrastructure.

## The November 4, 2014 \$484 Million Bond Package includes:

### \$365.4 million

for new construction and classroom additions to support increasing student enrollment, and major maintenance and renovation items identified through a comprehensive facilities assessment



### \$26.9 million

for safety and security improvements



### \$15.9 million

for new school buses, bus cameras and global positioning systems on all buses



### \$39.4 million

for technology infrastructure



**\$36.5 million** for land purchases and other needs



Notable projects in the bond proposal include **four new elementary schools** to address growing student enrollment, funding for improving **career and technical education, safety and security improvements at all schools**, and **wireless network infrastructure improvements at all schools**.

Nov. 4, 2014  
**BOND**



## BOND 2014 FAQ's

### 1. What is the purpose of the FBISD Bond Election?

The bond election on Nov. 4 will provide an opportunity for citizens to choose whether Fort Bend ISD should issue debt to address the District's growth, to provide safety and security improvements at all schools, and wireless network deployment and technology infrastructure improvements at all schools.

### 2. Has the District included community input?

Beginning in September 2013, the District invited the community to participate in identifying and prioritizing the District's needs. As a result, a **facilities master plan**, **safety and security plan** and a **technology plan**, were used to develop the **FBISD Capital Plan**.



### 3. What is the Capital plan?

The FBISD Capital Plan is a long-range plan that will guide our District through 2023. A majority of Phase One of the Capital Plan priorities will be funded in the 2014 Bond.

### 4. When was the last bond election?

The last FBISD bond election was held on Nov. 6, 2007.

### 5. What did we build with it?

The 2007 Bond projects included: Ridge Point High School; Bowie Middle School; Schiff Elementary; Seguin Elementary; Ferndell Henry Center for Learning; campus improvement projects; technology upgrades and replacements; new buses; and safety upgrades and replacements. Elementary 46 and Middle School 15 were also part of the 2007 Bond. Elementary 46 will open for the 2015-2016 school year, and Middle School 15 will be built in approximately 3-5 years.

### 6. How much money is left from the 2007 Bond?

The remaining 2007 Bond funds as of August 31 are \$22.1 million. The District also has \$63 million of unissued, but authorized debt to fund construction of Elementary School 46, Middle School 15 and the purchase of some buses.

### 7. Will bond expenditures be audited?

Bond fund expenditures are audited by the District's external auditors as part of its annual financial audit. The District will also hire an external auditor to review all invoices paid with bond funds. Additionally, each project will undergo a quality assurance/quality control review.

### 8. Does the Board support this new bond election?

At the August 18 Board meeting, the Fort Bend ISD Board of Trustees voted 7-0 to call the \$484 million bond election for Nov. 4, 2014.

### 9. How will the Board create transparency and financial accountability for bond expenditures?

At the August 18, 2014 meeting, the Board adopted two resolutions addressing accountability and transparency.

#### Bond Oversight Committee

The Board passed a resolution to establish a Bond Oversight Committee that will meet quarterly to review and provide feedback on the District's management of the bond program and delivery of bond projects. The Bond Oversight Committee will be reflective of the District's diverse community, and is made up of professionals with the knowledge and experiences to provide appropriate levels of oversight, guidance, and feedback to the FBISD administration and Board of Trustees. In preparing the 2014 bond proposal for Board consideration, the superintendent convened the Bond Oversight Committee in an advisory capacity to make recommendations regarding the prioritization and phasing of projects to be included in the bond package.

#### Bond Accountability

The Board of Trustees, based on a recommendation from the Bond Oversight Committee, also approved a Bond Accountability Resolution to ensure that any excess bond funds can ONLY be used on facility-related needs (land, renovations, repairs, etc.).

### 10. Will this result in a tax increase?

There will be no tax rate increase required to fund the new bonds due to the District's increasing tax base, the repayment of existing bonds and debt management.



## 11. What does the \$484 million bond package include?

### The \$484 million Bond Package includes:

- **\$365.4 million** in new construction and classroom additions to address increasing student enrollment, and major maintenance and renovation items identified through a comprehensive facilities assessment.  
From this amount, approximately **\$222 million** will be used to fund construction of four new elementary schools, including elementary school 47 in the Riverstone area, classroom additions at eight elementary schools and one middle school, as well as career and technology improvements.
- **\$26.9 million** for safety and security improvements, including security cameras, security vestibules, access control with video intercoms, and emergency generators.
- **\$15.9 million** for new school buses, bus cameras and Global Positioning System (GPS) devices. All buses will be equipped with cameras and GPS for added security.
- **\$39.4 million** for technology infrastructure to upgrade data connectivity between campuses and to also upgrade and expand wireless network deployment. This wireless infrastructure will allow the District the flexibility to choose the right instructional technology toolsets for the classroom.
- **\$36.5 million** for land purchases and other needs. The facility master plan outlines strategies to accommodate student growth for the next 10 years, and land needed for both Phase 1 and 2 will be funded entirely through the 2014 Bond.

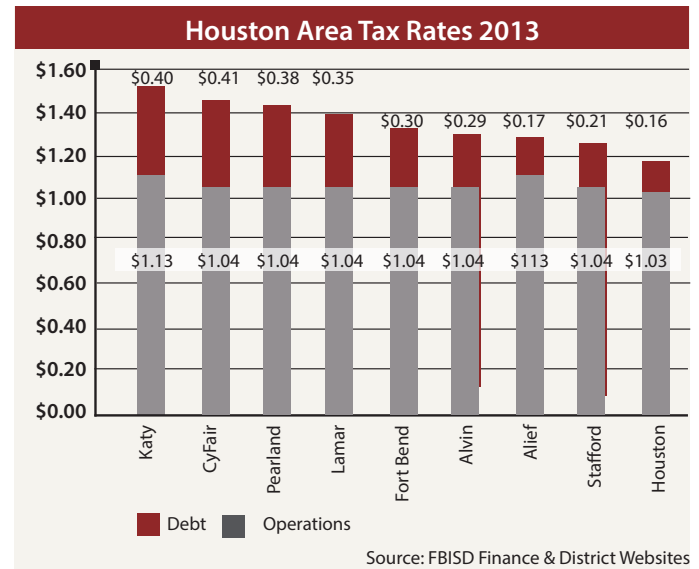
## 12. What improvements for Career and Technical Education are included in the bond, and how will the District determine how the money is spent?

Improvements for Career and Technical Education may include a new district-wide center, renovation of a current facility, or improvements at multiple campuses. Before any commitments to specific projects are made, the District will engage the community in the development of a comprehensive plan.



## 13. How does FBISD's tax rate compare to other School Districts?

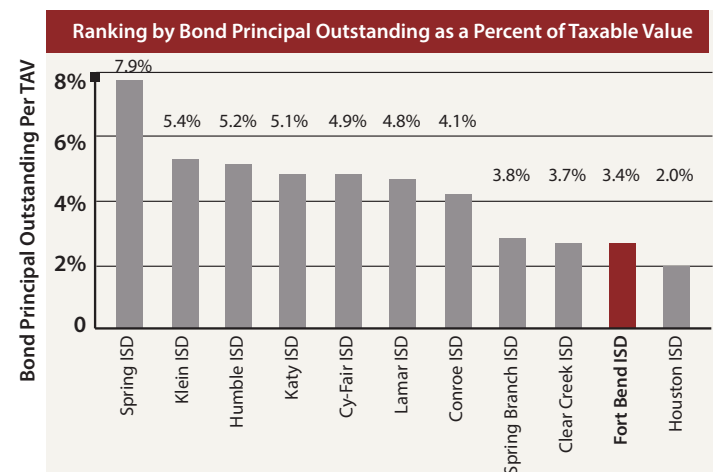
FBISD's tax rate is lower than other Houston area school districts that are experiencing high-enrollment growth.



In the Houston area, only Fort Bend ISD, Deer Park ISD and Houston ISD have a AA+ rating by Standard & Poors rating agency.

## 14. How does the District's debt burden compare to other districts?

Fort Bend ISD's debt burden ranks 138th in the state as a percentage of taxable values that secure repayment of school district bonds. For bond payments outstanding as measured per estimated students using facilities, Fort Bend ISD ranks 139th in the state at \$654 per student. For both measures, only Houston ISD has a lower debt burden.



Source: BOSG, Inc.; Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts – Property Tax Assistance Division and The MAC of Texas – As of August 31, 2013. Includes Voted and M&O Debt.



## 15. How will the District ensure that these schools are not overpriced?

The amounts included in the bond at this time are estimates. These estimates were created using construction cost escalation projections from the Houston Association of General Contractors (AGC), historical FBISD construction data, current FBISD construction data, and current construction data from other Houston area public school districts. All projects are procured on a competitive basis. Procurement results are reviewed by the Board of Trustees before projects are awarded. Ongoing reports will be made to the Bond Oversight Committee quarterly.

## 16. How will construction be monitored so waste is minimized?

In the future, besides ongoing reports to the Board of Trustees and the Bond Oversight Committee, the District will hire an external auditor to review all invoices paid with bond funds. Additionally, each project will undergo a quality assurance/quality control review.

## 17. Where will the new schools be built?

- **Elementary School 47** will be built in the Riverstone community
- **Elementary School 48** will be constructed in the southern part of the district
- **Elementary School 49** will be constructed in the northern part of the district, likely north of Elementary School 46
- **Elementary School 50** will be constructed in the northern part of the district, likely west of Elementary School 46

## Will Elementary School 47 be built to open for the 2016-17 school year regardless of the outcome of the bond election?

Yes. Funds are already available to build Elementary School 47; however, the Bond Oversight Committee suggested the District use available funds for short-term projects. Design and planning for Elementary School 47 has already begun in anticipation of the school opening for the 2016-17 school year.

## 18. Is the cost of these schools comparable with school costs in other Districts?

Yes, FBISD's construction cost estimates are comparable to other Houston-area school districts. Data presented to the Bond Oversight Committee showed current construction cost estimates for FBISD projects to be slightly higher than the average cost estimates from five Houston area school districts. The average, estimated construction cost from other local school districts was \$182 per square foot, compared to FBISD's estimate of \$187 per square foot.

## Why is this the case?

Because there is no standard governmental accounting template to track construction costs, it is difficult to compare construction costs between school districts. Some districts include certain technology components in the cost of construction, while other districts account for the same components as equipment needed to outfit the school. Also, it is difficult to compare the amenities contained in a school building. For example, cost varies greatly based on the efficiency of the air conditioning system or the type of flooring.

## 19. What is the Board's philosophy regarding attendance boundaries, feeder patterns and distribution of programs? Is it reflected in the bond program? How?

Over the past year, the District engaged the FBISD community in the development of the Facilities Master Plan. The District postponed the redrawing of school boundaries pending completion of their work. In **April 2014**, the Board of Trustees approved the Facilities Master Plan. Since that time, the administration has worked together with the Board to develop policy and procedures to guide this important process. In **May 2014**, the Board approved a contract with a consultant to support these efforts. In **August 2014**, the Board adopted new policy regarding school boundaries, feeder patterns, and how we distribute programs to various schools. At the **September Board meetings**, the administration will present proposed timelines for feeder pattern alignment and the development of school boundaries.

## Voting Reminders

**Oct. 6** - last day to register to vote

**Oct. 20 – 31** - Early voting

**VOTE** - November 4, 2014

For voting locations or additional information about BOND 2014, visit our website at : [www.fortbendisd.com](http://www.fortbendisd.com)



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**FBISD**  
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