

MINEOLA ISD



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For Immediate Release

Kim Tunnell, Superintendent
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News Release

AGING FACILITIES AND IMPROVED SAFETY AND SECURITY MEASURES IN MINEOLA ISD PROMPTS BOND ELECTION

Mineola: The Mineola ISD Board of Trustees voted unanimously tonight to call for a bond election to be put on the May ballot. On Saturday, May 6, voters will go to the polls to vote on a \$41 million school bond referendum. The bond package provides for a new High School including a Performing Arts Center and Career and Technical Education (CTE) classrooms in response to a multi-year long range facility plan developed by local parents, staff, business and community members over the course of the past year beginning with the Strategic Planning Committee in January 2016.

Mineola ISD High School was built in 1967 and currently has 7 additional buildings with multiple classrooms that require students to travel outside along sidewalks and open areas. While the structure is still in good shape, the multiple buildings do not meet the needs of a comprehensive high school with expanding programs. In the effort to upgrade safety and efficiency features using the most conservative approach in financial planning, the committee made the recommendation to preserve and utilize as much of the existing facilities with renovations after building a new high school.

“With two campuses built 50 years ago and the newest campuses being 30 years old, the board wanted to implement a plan to address the needs of the district in the most conservative way while planning for the future of Mineola ISD” said Kim Tunnell, Superintendent. “There were over 115 community and staff members who worked on committees and a lot of input was gathered from parents and business owners leading up to this bond package.” She said, “The fact that over 19% of the current MISD budget has been used in the past four years for maintaining and repairing campus buildings is an indication that addressing our facilities needs is important.” Mineola ISD has not had any debt for the past 14 years and taxpayers have not seen any increase in school taxes during that amount of time.

The long range facilities plan was developed from the recommendations of the Facilities Committee with identified critical needs and priorities of:

- Improved safety and security on all campuses to eliminate outside access to classrooms and additional security measures on every campus
- Construction of new high school including CTE classrooms and labs as well as a Performing Arts Center (Phase 1)
- Construction of new road to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion on Loop 564 (Phase 1)
- Renovation of the existing high school for middle school students (Phase 2)
- Renovation of primary / middle school campus to move all PK-5 students to one campus (Phase 3)

School Board president, Regan Brandon, said, “Mineola ISD has been good stewards of the money entrusted by the taxpayers for many years and we are at a point where our outdated facilities need to be addressed in a more economical, value-added manner. We are charged to provide a safe, secure, and modern learning environment for our students and our staff and believe that this bond package will begin that process.”

Four former and retired superintendents, Dr. Bill Knight, Dr. John Abbott, Mary Lookadoo, and Dr. John Fuller were in attendance in support of the bond election and long range plan for the future of Mineola ISD students.

The bond proposal carries an estimated monthly cost of \$35.19 for the average homestead valued at \$109,549. The last bond election was held in 1986 for the construction of the middle and primary school campuses. Additional information and Frequently Asked Questions will be posted on the Mineola ISD website.