

## Building/Facilities Committee

Nov 14, 2011

From: The Building/Facilities Committee for Prairie View Unified School District 362  
To: Board of Education for Unified School District 362

Subject: COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRAIRIE VIEW SCHOOLS

Since September 21, 2011 our committee members have reviewed documentation, toured schools, listened to guest speakers and held four Town Hall meetings. The committee would like to thank the School Board and Superintendent for supporting this committee by helping provide all the necessary tools and allowing us to make an informed thought out recommendation to our Board of Education. Ten of the twenty seven member committee attended our final meeting last night to finalize recommendations contained in this letter. After polling close to three hundred residents throughout the School district, the committee believes there's significant interest for a school bond measure. The bond measure would be an alternative to the Board of Educations authority to increase the mill rate by two mills without a required taxpayers vote. The strongest support for bond options from Town Hall meetings was in the 12-14 million dollar range. Of all the surveys turned in from our Town Hall meetings, less than 10 individuals felt that a bond was unnecessary at this time. During our present difficult economy many concerns were voiced from citizens about the timing of a bond. Citizens routinely commented on spending a large amount of money. They asked that the board protect, against waste, fraud, and abuse. Several comments were made encouraging local contracting when possible, if a bond passes.

A primary selling point during a bond campaign is that there is a real need for a new school. Fontana needs to be replaced. Also this maybe the best financial opportunity that the School District will ever have in obtaining a low interest loan, based on interest rates dropping to and all time low dating back as far as 60 years. Although there is good support to put a bond on a ballot there are two key areas of concern. One is to eliminate line items from the survey which will cause a bond to fail. The committee's recommendation is not to include the Competition Gym as part of the bond, based on public opinion. Redesigning the current gym should be a consideration if it is cost effective and satisfies KSHSAA regulations for hosting future events at Prairie View. Items the committee recommends being placed on the bond include the track, new precast concrete stadium, synthetic football field, storage facility, HVAC and FEMA shelters (based on grant approval). The committee is not recommending a dollar amount for the bond. The reason is based on the recommended elimination of the gym and the pending grant approval from FEMA for the storm shelters. There is simply no way for the committee to come up with an accurate dollar amount at this time.

Second, the location of a new school will certainly be a pivotal issue in obtaining enough "yes" votes to pass a bond for any amount. This was debated at length during yesterday's meeting because the information retrieved from the surveys show that voters within a township tend to vote for their township dividing overall district opinion. For

example, three of the locations (LaCygne, Linn Valley, and Parker) showed little to no support for placing a school back in the town of Fontana. A majority of Fontana voters however, are of in favor of rebuilding in Fontana. Parker's majority was in favor of Hedge Lane. Both Linn Valley and LaCygne support a School East of LaCygne, (Ullery Road) area. After a lot of debate from the Committee our recommendation is for a new school to be located at Prairie View. The committee's opinion differs from overall voter's opinion, in that surveys East of LaCygne have the majority of support and higher registered voter population. The committee offers this as a compromise as there is some support in all four towns for a Prairie View site. This also least affects students being uprooted, and causes minimal redistricting. Further the committee feels that when designing a new school not only should the classrooms have the capability to be enlarged at a later date, but the core facilities such as the kitchen, dining area, gym, and library contain the same design considerations.

All current surveys and materials were turned over to the school superintendent. I would like to encourage board members to read some of these comments made by residents of the district.

Rick James  
Committee Chair