



2009 Bond Election • Tuesday, Nov. 3
\$197.5 million

What is included in the bond package?

Buses, fine arts instruments and uniforms, and technology hardware; construction of one new elementary in east Arlington, additions at Lamar High School and two east Arlington elementaries, and expansion of Arlington High School cafeteria; facility upgrades throughout the district.

What impact will the bond package have on property taxes?

If the bond proposition passes, the Debt Service portion of the tax rate will increase by about 5 cents from 2011 through 2017. On the average, it is projected that this increase will cost the owner of a \$100,000 home about \$40 per year during that period.

How will the election affect taxes of individuals with an over-65 exemption on their homestead?

For taxpayers with an over-65 homestead exemption, there will be no tax increase as AISD taxes on their homestead are frozen.

When will the bond election be held?

The bond election will be held on the Nov. 3 general election date. The early voting period is Oct. 19 – 30. Early voting locations and hours are available on the bond information page of the AISD Web site, www.aisd.net/bond.

How did the district decide what to include in the bond package?

A committee of 32 citizens met a total of 22 times from April through July to assess the district's capital needs. Committee members visited 22 campuses to assess capital needs through 2015.

What is the AISD doing to minimize the cost of the bonds to taxpayers?

Of the total \$197.5 million bond proposition, the AISD can issue \$25.6 million in Qualified School Construction Bonds, which are zero-interest bonds, over the next two years. The zero-interest bonds are authorized through the federal stimulus program for the largest districts in the country and will save the district approximately \$13.5 million over the life of the bonds.

Why does the district need to purchase new buses?

Fifty-four of the AISD's 224 buses have more than 200,000 miles on them, and 80 buses are more than 12 years old. The older buses are costly to maintain and are not fuel-efficient.

How many new buses will the district replace with bond funds?

The district will purchase 24 new propane buses each year for five years for a total of 120 buses.

Why purchase propane buses rather than diesel buses?

Propane buses are more environmentally friendly. Propane fuel is non-toxic, does not contaminate water or ground soil, and meets 2010 emissions standards. Propane buses have the same useful life as diesel buses, and propane costs less than diesel fuel. Last year, the price of a gallon of propane was 42 percent less than the price of diesel fuel.

How many miles per gallon do propane buses get compared to diesel buses?

Propane buses average 5-6 miles per gallon compared to 6-7 miles per gallon for diesel buses. While propane buses average slightly fewer miles per gallon, the lower cost of propane fuel results in an overall reduction of annual fuel costs.

What is included in the bond package for fine arts?

The purchase of instruments, equipment and uniforms. Every campus will receive funds for fine arts.

Why is fine arts equipment part of the bond package?

Fine arts instruments and uniforms have historically been purchased from the General Operating Fund, but they have been cut from the budget due to financial constraints imposed by the state funding system.

What is included in the bond package for technology?

The package will move the AISD to a five-year replacement cycle for technology from an eight-year cycle. Additional computer labs and classroom projection systems will also be added.

Why do we need to replace our current technology?

Thirty-three percent of the district's computers are more than eight years old, and 49 percent are more than six years old. Older computers have a difficult time operating new curriculum software.

Will any of the facilities bonds be used for new construction?

Yes, bond proceeds will be spent on one new elementary school and additions to two elementary schools in east Arlington, classroom additions at Lamar High School, and the expansion of the Arlington High School cafeteria.

I thought that the AISD's student enrollment had stabilized. Why do we need a new elementary school and additions to two other elementary schools in east Arlington?

The AISD's total enrollment is stable and is not expected to grow much over the next 10 years. Demographic shifts in east Arlington have led to overcrowding at several elementary schools. Student enrollments at Atherton, Johns and Crouch elementaries exceed building capacity of those schools by 29 percent or more. A total of 23 temporary buildings are used at those three schools to accommodate their enrollments.

Can't we redraw boundaries to relieve over-crowding in east Arlington?

Total enrollment in the 17 elementary schools in east Arlington already exceeds total building capacity, and enrollment at those schools is projected to grow by another 1,087 students over the next 10 years. Even if we redraw the boundaries for all 17 schools, there is not enough capacity to accommodate all of the students without using temporary buildings. A combined solution of new construction and redrawing boundaries will be necessary to relieve over-crowding at east Arlington elementary schools.

Why does Lamar High School need classroom additions?

Lamar High School has 28 temporary classrooms, most of which have been there since 1999. Enrollment at the school has been stable for a number of years, and it is expected to remain stable for the foreseeable future. More than 30 percent of Lamar's enrollment is served in temporary buildings each period. Temporary buildings create numerous safety and security challenges for the school. The bond package includes a 34,000 sq. ft. addition at Lamar to reduce the need for temporary classrooms.

Why is the district proposing to increase the size of the Arlington High School cafeteria?

Enrollment at Arlington High School has increased over the past 15 years, including the addition of the ninth grade in 1997. The cafeteria has been enlarged once since that move, but it is undersized for the current enrollment. Students are currently encouraged to leave campus during lunch because there is not enough room in the cafeteria to accommodate all students.

The bond package includes funds for two new science labs at each high school. Why do we need additional science labs?

The additional science labs are needed to accommodate the new state mandate that students take four years of science. Until now, most students have taken three years of science. Most school districts, including the AISD, do not have enough science labs to accommodate students taking four years of science.

What is included in the bond package for facilities projects?

- Safety and security additions including security cameras, keyless entry systems, fencing and sex-offender screening software for all locations
- Roofing and/or flooring replacement and repairs at 46 schools
- Mechanical, electrical and plumbing upgrades and replacements at 67 locations
- Fire alarm system upgrades at 13 schools
- Site work including drainage work and parking lot repairs at 31 schools
- Remodeling work to include installation of sports flooring in the gyms at 25 elementary schools
- Repair of auditorium seating and athletic lockers throughout the district

Where can I see a summary of the specific facilities projects proposed for each campus?

A summary of projects by campus is available on the bond information page of the AISD Web site, www.aisd.net/bond.