

2020 BOND

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW WAS THE HFISD 2020 BOND DEVELOPED?

The 2020 Hamshire-Fannett ISD School Bond is a result of quality community input and careful weighing of options. The bond package was pulled together by a Master Planning Committee made up of 23 community leaders, parents, and teachers representing a cross section of the district. The Committee held 7 meetings from August 2019 to May 2020 during which they envisioned the future of education in Hamshire-Fannett ISD, took tours of campuses, analyzed a facility condition assessment and demographic data, and received information on school finance and HFISD's technology plan. The committee prioritized projects and presented their final recommendation to the HFISD Board of Trustees on June 8, 2020. On June 29, 2020, the Board approved the committee's recommendation and unanimously called for a school bond election.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE 2020 BOND, AND HOW MUCH IS IT FOR?

If approved by voters, the proposed 2020 Bond will construct various renovations and new construction projects as a phased approach to rebuilding Hamshire-Fannett High School, including demolition of obsolete areas, new classroom and elective space, tie-in to the existing building to create a secure campus with controlled entry, utility upgrades, and a new Ag Project Center and pasture. The HFISD Board of Trustees unanimously called for a \$38 million bond referendum to fund these proposed projects. The 2020 bond is separated into two propositions: \$36,920,000 for the various improvements to the high school and \$1,480,000 for a new concession stand.

WHY NOW?

The HFISD Board of Trustees elected to proceed with a bond election for three main reasons. Firstly, to address student safety by creating a single, secure campus for high school students with controlled access. Secondly, to address aging facilities at the high school, where a significant portion of the campus was built in the 1950s. Thirdly, the Board wanted to take advantage of historically low interest rates for bond financing, in an effort to save HFISD taxpayers money.

HOW MUCH WILL THIS BOND INCREASE MY PROPERTY TAXES?

It's important to note homeowners that are over age 65 or are disabled will NOT see any tax increase on their residential homestead property by or prior to the 2020 tax roll if qualified. Homeowners may apply for a homestead exemption at the Jefferson County Appraisal District. The proposed Hamshire-Fannett ISD 2020 Bond will increase homeowners' property tax rates by 21 cents. However, recent legislation mandated school tax rates be compressed, which means all homeowners saw an overall reduction in their school tax rate. Hamshire-Fannett ISD taxpayers saw a decrease of around \$0.12 to the tax rate over the 2019-2020 school year, and will see an additional decrease of \$0.01365 to the tax rate over the 2020-2021 school year regardless of whether or not the 2020 Bond is approved by voters.

EARLY VOTING: OCT. 13-30  **ELECTION DAY: NOVEMBER 3**

I AM A SENIOR CITIZEN IN HFISD. WILL MY TAXES GO UP?

No. Citizens ages 65 and older will see no tax increase* if the bond measure passes.

**For those with appropriate homestead exemptions on file*

DO HOMESTEAD EXEMPTIONS APPLY TO MULTIPLE PROPERTIES?

No. Texas Law requires school districts to offer a \$25,000 exemption on residence homesteads. The owner has an ownership interest in the property and uses the property as the owner's PRINCIPAL residence. The applicant is required to state that the applicant does not claim an exemption on another residence homestead in or outside of Texas.

Texas Tax Code Section 11.13

DOES THIS 65+ EXEMPTION APPLY TO MULTIPLE PROPERTIES?

No.

IS HFISD REQUIRED TO SELL THE ENTIRE BOND AMOUNT APPROVED BY VOTERS?

No. HFISD will sell what is necessary to complete the proposed projects.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "A PHASED APPROACH" TO REBUILDING THE HIGH SCHOOL?

The proposed 2020 Bond will address the immediate needs of a long-term plan to ultimately rebuild Hamshire-Fannett High School. Future Board of Trustees members will be responsible for determining the best timing for implementing the second phase of the plan, which includes new construction to replace all spaces of the original high school not impacted by the first phase proposed in the 2020 Bond.

WOULDN'T THIS MONEY BE BETTER SPENT ON OUR STUDENTS' EDUCATION?

Bond money CANNOT pay for teacher salaries, purchase instructional materials, run buses, provide food services or maintenance and custodial services. If the bond does not pass, any renovations, remodels, and/or improvements to keep our schools open will come from maintenance and operation funds, which WILL take funds from the education of our children.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THE BOND ELECTION DOES NOT PASS?

The identified needs will not go away. They will continue to grow and increase in cost (average annual inflation = 4% to 7%), and HFISD anticipates the district would have to call for another bond election in the future. Note: Current interest rates (the cost of borrowing money) have remained at all-time historical lows, providing an optimal time to sell school bonds. It is expected to cost more in the future to finance the capital improvements needed. Again, just because bond referendums are rejected doesn't mean the needs go away.

I AM NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE. HOW DO I REGISTER? WHEN IS THE LAST DAY I CAN REGISTER TO VOTE IN THE NOVEMBER 3 ELECTION?

In order to vote in the November 3 HFISD Bond Election, a qualified voter must be registered no later than Monday, October 5. A voter registration form may be acquired from the Jefferson County Courthouse Tax Office (1149 Pearl Street; Beaumont, TX) or at VoteTexas.gov.

WHAT IF I WANT TO VOTE WITH A MAIL BALLOT? HOW DO I OBTAIN ONE?

Applications for mail ballots for the HFISD 2020 Bond Election must be submitted no later than Friday, October 23, 2020. Applications for mail ballots for Jefferson County residents may be submitted by mail to the Jefferson County Clerk at P.O. Box 1151; Beaumont, Texas 77704.

WHEN IS EARLY VOTING AND ELECTION DAY?

Early Voting runs Tuesday, October 13 through Friday, October 30. Election Day is Tuesday, November 3. Polling locations and times can be found at www.hfisd.net.