



Frequently Asked Questions

Who has been involved or provided input during this process?

A 43-member Bond Steering Committee comprised of district patrons, parents and employees began meeting last November to consider items for the bond program. Over several months, the committee reviewed a community telephone survey, projections from a demographer, the financial impact of a bond election, information regarding District facilities and information about educational and technical standards. The committee presented its recommendations for the bond at the April 2005 Board meeting.

Exactly how much is the District asking for?

The bond steering committee reviewed about \$200 million in requests before recommending a \$107.9 million bond program to be brought before voters as a single proposition on Sept. 10. The Board of Trustees approved the program as recommended.

How much money does that mean to me as a taxpayer?

The maximum tax increase to fund the proposed \$107.9 million bond issue is 3.3 cents. This figure is based on a conservative interest rate. Based on the average taxable home value of \$216,063, the bond package would mean a maximum monthly tax increase of \$5.94 for the average GCISD homeowner. For citizens age 65 years and older who have properly applied for and received a Homestead Exemption, there will be no tax increase as a result of the bond program.

How does this address the future of our district?

All campuses and facilities are included in the bond program. The recommendations made are based on a facilities study and a demographer's projections of growth at each campus and within the District as a whole. Ages of buildings and previous renovations were evaluated, and recommendations consider the financial feasibility of additional renovations versus building of a new facility. Recommendations include the areas of safety and security, learning and instruction, technology, co-curricular and extracurricular and operations.

What is the bond history of GCISD?

All bond elections in recent history have been approved by voters. The most recent bond election in GCISD was held in 1998, when \$134 million was approved for renovations to all campuses and facilities. In 1993, voters approved \$75 million for the construction of several new schools, including a new high school.

Aren't we still paying for the last bond?

Yes. Bonds are used to finance assets with long useful lives and will be paid back over the life of that asset. The buildings, renovations and equipment purchased with the last bond proceeds are being fully utilized and annual debt payments are being made on the bonds used to fund them.

How will the District ensure appropriate control and use of bond funds?

The District will closely monitor all spending of bond funds and ensure that expenditures are in full compliance with all accounting rules and standards. For patrons, a detailed line-item list of proposed projects and the estimate of costs is available on online [as a link to "GCISD Facility Details: Opinion of Probable Cost."](#) This list was reviewed and approved by the Bond Steering Committee and was presented to the Board of Trustees. By law, bond monies may only be used for capital improvements and related costs. They may not be used for personnel, utilities and other such operating expenses. In addition, to ensure appropriate accounting of bond dollars spent on each and every project, monthly bond reports will be presented to the Board of Trustees. The GCISD bond website will continue to be updated regularly throughout the bond program to reflect progress reports and status so that patrons can remain informed.

If the majority of voters vote against the bond election how will it affect the GCISD and our children's future education?

If the bond proposal should fail, the District will make every reasonable effort to avoid making cuts to instructional areas. The District would re-assess its operating budget and fund balance and determine how to pay for capital needs items, such as heating/air-conditioner/ventilation replacements or roof replacements/repairs. Depending on the extent and cost of capital repairs and needs, however, the required cuts could result in personnel reductions. Personnel costs (both instructional and non-instructional) comprise 85 percent of the GCISD's operating budget.

Where will the new Colleyville Elementary School be built and how many students will it serve?

The new elementary campus will be built on land currently owned by the District, with entry/exit off Pleasant Run. Attendance areas will not be affected by the new location. The current number of students enrolled at CES is 597. The new CES will be built with a capacity of approximately 690 students.

When will the new CES open?

Construction on the new Colleyville Elementary School is planned to begin in the fall of 2006 and the new facility would open in the fall of 2007 for the 2007-08 school year.

Why not just renovate and/or add on to CES, instead of building a new facility?

Colleyville Elementary School is 43 years old and has been renovated several times with money from previous bond elections. Renovation costs would be approximately \$7 million. With a new Colleyville Elementary School building, the old one can be renovated for less money and used to house VISTA and Bridges, the District's two alternative programs, as well as District meeting space which is currently at Timberline. In addition, the planned widening of State Hwy. 26/Colleyville Blvd./Ira E. Woods will affect the current main entrance to Colleyville Elementary School. The bond program calls for the relocation of CES to another street. The programs which will relocate to the current CES building will generate less traffic.

What are the plans for entrance, exit and the proposed traffic pattern on Pleasant Run for the new Colleyville Elementary School? Has money been included for the redesign of the streets? The current streets are two-lane with no shoulders, turning lanes, drainage or sidewalks. The bridge at the end of Shelton onto Pleasant Run is very small and turns need to be very wide, thus obstructing and sometimes stopping traffic on Pleasant Run.

Details of the site design and school design are yet to be determined. Only preliminary concepts have been used to estimate costs. The school district and officials of the City Public Works Department have participated in meetings to review the potential need for sidewalks, turning lanes and drainage improvements where the District's property fronts Pleasant Run Drive (approximately 700 linear feet). The proposed costs for Colleyville Elementary School include that of a traffic consultant, shared costs with the city for improvements to Pleasant Run in the area described above and the school site.

Why are we combining VISTA and Bridges in one location?

Bridges and VISTA, the District's alternative programs, will relocate into the current Colleyville Elementary School, expanding programs offered to students and the community, and offering the potential to combine support staff for savings to the operating budget. Renovation costs for the current locations of both would far exceed the value of the facilities. Bridges will expand its program to include middle school students, addressing the state drop-out goals and *No Child Left Behind* measurements. The new location will allow both VISTA and Bridges the use of a gym, lunch room, playground, conference space and a security system, which they do not have in the current locations. For information about VISTA and Bridges, select the [Alternative Education Program link on the Bond website.](#)

Why are we adding classrooms to Heritage Middle School?

As housing growth continues in the areas of the District which serve Heritage Middle School, the student population expands. Heritage Middle was built in 1993, with additions made to accommodate growth in 1994-95 and 2000-01. HMS was designed for a capacity of 800 students and currently has 980 students, with 14 classrooms in portable buildings.

Why does Timberline Elementary need to be renovated; didn't it get an extensive renovation with the 1998 bond money?

Timberline did not have any major renovation done with money from the 1998 bond program. That bond provided money to install a canopy at the bus unloading and loading area at the front and side entrances, to build a covered picnic area, to upgrade heating and air conditioning systems, resod the play fields, and to add security cameras and card access. The 2005 Bond program provides funds to reconfigure existing space, eliminating the need to use portable buildings for core classroom space.

Why is a new gym proposed for Cross Timbers Middle School?

Currently every Middle School in GCISD, with the exception of CTMS, has two gyms. CTMS has only one gym which creates a lack of program space for students. A new gym is being proposed to add space for programs such as basketball, volleyball and other physical education activities.

How many schools and buildings will be included in the bond program?

All campuses and facilities are included in the recommendations that are part of the bond program.

Will any safety issues be addressed at schools?

Safety issues will be addressed at all campuses. Some of the proposed projects include adding security cameras and entry/exit access readers, replacing fire alarms, installing radio boosters for emergency communications, adding sprinkler systems and emergency lighting, adding child-safe borders to playgrounds and replacing school buses.

Is there any relief that we can get from the State for funding?

No

Is there any way to fund this other than a bond? Can't we use savings instead? The cost of capital needs far exceed the amount of savings that the District maintains and the District cannot generate enough new tax revenue to buy these items now. Therefore, it is prudent to finance big cost items over the useful life of the asset.

How does the bond process work?

- Bonds are approved by voters.
- Bonds are sold to investors.
- Bond proceeds are delivered to the school district about four weeks after the bond sale.
- Upon receipt of the bond proceeds, the district may enter into contracts for construction of facilities.
- Bond proceeds are invested until needed.
- Each year, the Board must set a tax rate in two parts: one to cover the operating costs (payroll, supplies and equipment, insurance, utilities, etc.) and the other to pay principal and interest due on bonds.
- Bonds may only be used for capital improvements and related costs. They may not be used for personnel, utilities and other such operating expenses.

Who sets appraised property values?

State law requires county appraisal districts throughout the state. Therefore, the Tarrant County Appraisal District sets the valuations of property within GCISD.

What are the accounting procedures of the District?

- Texas school districts follow all customary and required accounting principles and the format mandated by the Texas Education Agency. GCISD prepares its financial statements in accordance with these guidelines and directives.
- GCISD recently was awarded "SUPERIOR ACHIEVEMENT" (Texas Education Agency's highest rating possible) for financial management. GCISD's annual audits are performed in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS).

Why is the expense of artificial turf justified?

At approximately \$700,000 per field (\$2.1 million total), the artificial turf expense is less than two percent of the total bond package. With its durability and weather-resistant qualities, artificial turf requires less maintenance. More students throughout the district will have an opportunity to use the fields for practices, games and other activities. Artificial turf's durability and weather-resistance will save over \$118,000 that is currently being used for maintenance of the three fields at Cross Timbers Middle, Colleyville Heritage High and at Mustang-Panther Stadium. Additional revenue may be generated by renting the fields to outside teams for playoffs, championship games and youth league events.

What is the finance plan referred to as recapture or "Robin Hood" and how does it affect GCISD?

"Robin Hood" is the nickname given to the current formulas used to fund public education in the state of Texas because this method of funding takes property-tax revenues from wealthy districts and redistributes those funds to poorer districts. GCISD is considered a wealthy district and therefore is required to share over 35 percent of its tax revenues with poorer districts. The amount of tax revenues to be shared in 2005-06 is approximately \$51 million.

Is Bond money subject to recapture (Robin Hood)?

Bond money is NOT subject to Robin Hood. One hundred percent of the money raised through this bond election will stay in the Grapevine-Colleyville Independent School District and be used for the proposed projects listed.

Why is painting included in the bond program?

Painting is a natural by product of any renovation. It extends the life and helps maintain the value of facilities within the District.

Why are items with a short life span, such as computers, included in the long-term bond program?

Computers, other technology purchases, buses and other vehicles, band uniforms and instruments, artificial turf and furniture will be financed with short-term bonds that match the life of the asset. They will not be financed with 30-year bonds. The average life of technology is five to seven years but for estimation of debt payoff, GCISD is using a four-year amortization schedule. For buses, vehicles, band uniforms, instruments and furniture, the average life is 15 years, but for estimation of debt payoff, GCISD is using a 10-year amortization schedule. Artificial turf has an average life of 10 years, and a 10-year amortization schedule is being used. Permanent facilities ("real property") will be included in a 30-year amortization schedule.

If the District is replacing 80 percent of its computers in this bond program, will there be a need for another Bond election to replace these computers again within the next several years?

The bond program includes replacement of 80 percent of computers over a five-year schedule. In other words, some computers are replaced each year, not all at one time. The District will likely utilize capital programs to purchase fixed assets like computers in the future. Therefore, a bond program is most likely the financing method for future computer purchases. Remember that the bonds sold to buy computers will be structured to match the life of a computer. In GCISD, computers have been used for as long as seven to nine years.

Is the District considering alternative fuel sources?

All new buses purchased through the bond program will be equipped to run on low-sulfur fuel. The District is also looking into retrofitting our existing fleet of buses to accommodate this lower-emission fuel source. In addition, the District is considering the implementation of an environmental-friendly "no-idle" policy to reduce emissions into the air.

Is a hybrid bus design being considered as an option?

The District currently purchases its school buses from the Texas Association of School Boards' Buy Board, which sets specifications in accordance with the State of Texas. At this time, the state does not offer hybrid buses as an option.