

Letter to the Editor / Harrison Press

Oct. 4, 2018

John C. Hamstra, Superintendent, Southwest Local Schools

An Update on the Southwest Local Schools Facilities Project

In November, 2017 – the voters in our great community approved the passage of a 6.99 Mill Bond Issue to fund three new elementary schools, a new middle school and a \$10.1M renovation to Harrison High School. \$71.7 million in funds will be generated locally and the state is contributing 32 percent, or \$26.6M. This is obviously a significant investment on the community's part and we fully intend to honor that investment with schools that are on-budget and built on-time. We plan to start moving dirt or break ground in April, 2019. We plan to start in the new buildings in the fall of 2021.

A more detailed update on where things stand and where we are going:

*Schematic Design drawings have been submitted for the 3 new Elementary Schools and the new Junior School. The construction manager, Skanska / Megen, will complete an initial cost estimate on the design. Cost estimates should be received next month (November). The Schematic Design drawings are the result of dozens of meetings stakeholders have been included in.

*Several programming meetings (at a core team level and then a larger, building design team level) established the parts and pieces that will be in each building. There is a fixed amount of square footage that can be used (and co-funded by the state) for each building. The district has divided this square footage to fit their unique academic needs and educational vision for future-ready schools.

*There is a Building Design team for the Elementary project and Junior School project. This team includes community members, teachers, staff, and administrators who have provided input on the types of spaces that should be provided within each building (vetted the programming effort).

*Traffic studies have been completed for all 3 project sites. One obvious area that will need attention is the intersection of Dry Fork and West Road.

*An initial exterior design concept has been developed for each site and will be brought to Neighborhood Design teams in the coming weeks. We will advertise the date, time and location via social media and the Harrison Press, once we have confirmation.

*As we enter Design Development the Building Design Teams, Neighborhood Design Teams, and Core Team will be involved with adding the next level of detail to the buildings and sites. Color schemes will be established and interior design, finishes, and graphics will be discussed.

*A detailed Design Development set will be completed for the Elementary Schools in January of 2019 and the Junior School in February 2019. This Design Development set will include the next level of detail on the interior and exterior, selecting building materials and bringing the project to life.

Obviously, there is a lot going on with our school design process! It's an exciting time for both the schools and community in general!

John C. Hamstra
Superintendent
Southwest Local Schools