



Abilene Schools U.S.D. No. 435

School Improvement Bond Issue Election

April 1, 2014

OUR MISSION

Quality education is the priority for Abilene Schools, and NOW is the time to take on the responsibility of providing the best educational opportunities for Abilene's 1600 students. Improving the quality of our district's aging facilities will allow Abilene's children to learn and thrive in the 21st Century.

OUR PROCESS

In June, 2012, Dr. G. Kent Stewart, Kansas State University, completed a study of USD 435 buildings and educational methods. He described Abilene as a town where "students are living in a dramatically changing 21st Century world, but they are learning in mid-20th Century school buildings. Buildings are aging and if they are to continue to serve well as they have in the past half-century, improvements are needed." Abilene USD 435 is also seeing a steady increase in enrollment and will welcome approximately 100 new-to-the-district students by 2016.

Following Dr. Stewart's report, the Board of Education took the following steps:

- ✓ **Formed a Community Advisory Group of 30 parents, patrons, and school staff who:**
 - **Toured the facilities**
 - **Consulted with architect and bond financial advisor**
 - **Surveyed staff and administration to gain input**
 - **Prioritized needs**
 - **Recommended this bond issue proposal to the Board of Education**

As a result of these efforts, the Board of Education of USD 435 has approved a resolution scheduling a bond issue election for April 1, 2014 asking for the authority to issue no more than \$24.2 million in general obligation bonds to finance improvements that will make our school system safer, more effective, and focused on producing citizens who will thrive in our modern society.

OUR PLAN

<p>Kennedy Elementary (K-1)</p> <p><i>Challenges:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 51-year-old building • Building entrance poses security concerns • Pick-up and drop-off areas are dangerous • Parking is limited 	<p><i>Solutions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Interior renovation to create a controlled access entry and improvements to pick-up and drop-off area ✓ Additional improved parking to enhance safety and security
<p>McKinley Elementary (2-3)</p> <p><i>Challenges:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 63-year-old building • Building entrance poses security concerns • Pick-up and drop-off areas are dangerous • Parking is limited 	<p><i>Solutions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Expand the administration area/entry for controlled access ✓ Re-route bus traffic to enhance safety and security ✓ Add additional Parking
<p>Garfield Elementary (4-5)</p> <p><i>Challenges:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72-year-old building • Building entrance poses security concerns • Outdated & inefficient heating system • Expensive and disruptive window air conditioning • Outdated electrical system that won't serve modern technology needs • Undersized classrooms - 700 sq. ft. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (modern classrooms are 850-900 sq. ft.) • Need additional space for classrooms, administration, counselors, special education, and a nurse • Not in compliance with ADA standards for handicap access • Portable buildings pose safety and security concerns • Combined gym/cafeteria challenges scheduling • Designed for 237 students, but houses 248 • Current location is not adequate for expansion, parking, and playground 	<p>NEW Eisenhower Upper Elementary School (4th & 5th Grade)</p> <p><i>Solutions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Construct a new elementary school, to be named Eisenhower Upper Elementary, to serve 4th and 5th grade students, allowing the current Garfield building to be repurposed ✓ The new Eisenhower School will contain approximately 32,438 sq ft of space with modern, larger classrooms, support areas, and technology to support today's educational methods ✓ Sell Garfield Elementary to an entity that will repurpose the building in a manner that will benefit the community.
<p>Abilene Middle School (6-8)</p> <p><i>Challenges:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 39-year-old building • Building entrance poses security concerns • Special Education spaces are extremely inadequate • Need additional Science classroom space 	<p><i>Solutions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Construct 3,867 sq ft of new space including Science classrooms for 6th and 8th grades ✓ Renovate 7,326 sq ft of space to secure the entrance, improve the administration area, and provide space for Special Education

For additional information please go to www.abileneschools.org

Abilene High School (9-12)

Challenges:

- 59-year-old building
- Three different building entrances pose security concerns
- Need additional classrooms, support space, and cafeteria space
- Industrial Arts areas for Metals and Woods need separation and improvement for safety and efficiency
- Gymnasium was built before girls' sports existed in USD 435 - 10 team sports have been added since - additional gym space is necessary – AHS is the only school in the league that cannot host all games at one site
- Wrestling and weight room facilities are undersized and create safety concerns
- The auditorium is inadequately small for school and community needs – the 28 ft. wide stage is 1/3rd the size of other facilities and does not allow band performances at AHS
- Current enrollment is 280 band students and 150 in vocal music (grades 6-12)
- Technology systems in the auditorium are outdated based on current standards
- Debate and Forensics participation is growing and the current auditorium prevents AHS from hosting state tournaments

Solutions:

- ✓ Construct 45,398 sq ft of new space to create:
 - a new administration area with controlled access entry
 - an expanded cafeteria
 - a new entry/commons area
 - an expanded Industrial Arts/Agriculture area
 - a new secondary gymnasium with locker rooms
 - a new 800-seat Fine Arts Auditorium
 - additional restrooms
- ✓ Renovate existing spaces to:
 - Add and improve classrooms
 - Add new elevators for handicap accessibility
 - Replace the existing competition gymnasium's flooring
 - Replace the current auditorium with a multipurpose space for wrestling, dance, cheerleading, and other activities
- ✓ Relocate the Bus Barn to create additional parking

AHS Football Stadium

Challenges:

- Locker rooms are antiquated and inadequate and pose safety concerns
- Inadequate storage

Solutions:

- ✓ Construct a new locker room facility with additional storage

OUR FINANCING

- ✓ \$24.2 million bond issue to pay project costs as well as costs of issuance and interest during construction
- ✓ Interest rates, estimated at 4.75%, are near 50-year low levels
- ✓ Current additional state aid at 39% of both project and interest costs offers opportunity to bring an estimated **\$17.2 million from Topeka** benefit of our children and community.
- ✓ The average state aid is calculated based on average wealth per pupil compared to all other districts in the state of Kansas. This percentage is determined annually. (see chart) The Governor has proposed an end to this state aid offer, so now may be a last chance to take advantage of this program
- ✓ The USD 435 assessed valuation has averaged growth of nearly 4% in the last 10 years. To be conservative in our Plan of Finance, we have assumed growth of only ½ of 1%
- ✓ The USD 435 mill rate in school year 2013-14 at 45.695 mills is one of the lowest among 20 school districts in Dickinson and surrounding counties – (see chart below)
- ✓ A mill is \$1 of tax on each \$1,000 of assessed valuation of property in USD 435
- ✓ USD 435 has existing bonds outstanding approved in 2003 that require a levy of approximately 2.211 mills
- ✓ The Plan of Finance is to “wrap” the proposed new bonds around the existing debt to create a structure where one consistent levy will retire all bonds at a mill levy rate of an estimated 12.49 mills or a net increase of 10.28 mills.

Year	Documented State Aid - USD 435
2013-2014	39%
2012-2013	36%
2011-2012	35%
2010-2011	34%
2009-2010	33%

OUR PROJECTED COSTS

NET INCREASE OF 10.28 MILLS

Added taxes on a \$100,000 home of an estimated \$9.85 per month—
about the cost of a large pizza
Added taxes on 160 Acres Dryland Farmground .76 cents per acre yearly
Added Taxes on \$100,000 Commercial Property \$21.42 monthly

In communities like Abilene, schools are the lifeblood. Our schools have served us well over many decades, but time, use, and changing educational methods require an investment to keep our schools effective. Education and teaching have changed dramatically since our buildings were designed and built. In addition to educational challenges in outdated buildings, safety and security of students and staff must also be a priority. Please get the facts, register by March 11 if necessary, and plan to vote on or before April 1, 2014.

**“...Our children, our future citizens” -
Dwight D. Eisenhower**

2013-2014	CURRENT Total Mills	Bond & Interest
Peabody-Burns USD 398	69.043	15.502
Herington USD 487	67.648	19.957
Durham-Hillsboro USD 410	62.631	10.597
Twin Valley USD 240	59.942	9.848
Goessel USD 411	59.892	13.446
Blue Valley USD384	58.946	8.052
Salina USD 305	58.116	11.517
Ell-Saline USD 307	56.784	9.517
Rural Vista USD 481	56.654	8.554
Where USD 435 would rank with a 10.28 mill increase(55.975)		
Riley County USD 378	54.588	4.651
North Ottawa County USD 239	54.152	7.112
Marion-Florence USD 408	52.541	10.88
Manhattan USD 383	52.453	9.697
Chapman USD 473	49.473	6.563
Solomon USD 393	47.112	4.696
Centre USD 397	46.394	3.240
Geary County USD 475	45.961	3.109
Abilene USD 435	45.695	2.211
Clay Center USD 379	44.844	3.828
Southeast of Saline USD 306	39.973	0***
Averages	54.142	8.149