

## GFW Business Office



December 8, 2019

Dear GFW District Residents:

The GFW School Board is looking for input from the district residents following the November bond referendum election that didn't pass. The information below is meant to give you more details about our current financial and facilities status. We would ask that you then complete the survey on our website. If you are more comfortable doing a paper and pencil survey, they are located at each of the GFW School buildings in the main office.

The board is looking at both future financial and facilities planning with a short window of time for some of the decisions. At a December 3rd board work session, board members made a commitment to closing one of the three building sites for the 2020-2021 school year. They will continue to look at all the options and information before making a final decision on which building will close.

### Financial Steps:

The school district now meets the definition of being in Statutory Operating Debt. The board will look at all of the following options to address this issue:

- Reducing operating costs through the closure of a building. (They have already made this commitment.)
- Reducing staffing and/or programs. This will be part of the FY21 budget building process.
- Requesting an increase in the operating levy through a November of 2021 election. The district currently has an operating levy in place through FY22.

All these steps are intended to address the financial issues the district faces.

### Facilities Steps:

The long-term facilities maintenance issues identified during the bond referendum election meetings haven't gone away and the board realizes the issues need to be addressed. For this reason, they are considering running a bond referendum similar to the one site November proposal or a referendum to have two sites. When looking at the various options, the tax impact of the operating levy and the bond referendum are very closely connected. School finance is not an easy topic to understand, so here are a few notes:

- The tax impact of an operating levy is on residential, business, and the house, garage and one acre for those in agriculture.
- Funds generated from an operating levy can be used for district expenses. Bond Referendum funds can only be used for construction. Levy for learning, Bond for building.
- The amount of increase the district will need to request is dependent on whether the district is in one site or two. If it is two sites, the increase will depend on whether the two sites have been renovated or two current buildings with no renovations.

Again the board is committed to addressing both of these areas as that is the only way to have a plan for sustaining our district and providing the best possible education for our students now and in the future.

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*fostering lifelong learners in a caring environment*

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