



Geary Public Schools  
Factual Information

It is not surprising that when considering something as serious as the construction of new school facilities, many have strong opinions. It is our aim in this document to provide factual information to aid you in deciding what you will do on February 12.

1. We've heard it stated that the logo(s) shown in renderings of the proposed new school resembles a professional team's logo. Is this a concern?

**Facts:** The flying bison design has been used around the school district for many years and the school logo has seen changes from years past. This design is used on the Stegall-Long field house and has the similar look of this logo, but is not exact. In reference to the professional sports aspect of the matter, it's worth noting that the Director of Corporate Communications for the NFL is on the record in support of schools using logos from NFL teams<sup>1</sup>. This too would/could be the case for our new school. It is also of note that this design can be adjusted once the bond issue passes. (There are other examples of this...i.e. Adding a 3rd restroom to the building for student use and other fine-tuning details for a final product. These things would be done while staying within the budget proposal.)

2. We've heard of questions such as will this bond be for the building only? Will there be another bond proposal, and subsequent tax increase to procure desks, furniture, computers, and updated learning tools?

**Facts:** This bond is for the building with some contingencies for equipment upgrades. Fortunately, most of our technology and classroom equipment is in good shape. In some cases these things have recently been upgraded. We have been adding enhanced learning materials and equipment every chance we get (i.e. new iPads at the elementary). All of our current equipment will transfer to the new building.

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3. We've heard it said that with the rash of school shootings, it isn't prudent to put all kids in the same building.

Facts: We are very conscience of today's safety threats. In our current buildings, we have sought to enhance and upgrade the entry vestibules with door locking mechanisms. We've even installed cameras throughout the buildings. These things will transfer to the new building. However, there is no way that any school, anywhere can guarantee that they will be able to prevent someone who wants to do harm from doing so. As is the case in any such situation our goal would be to slow any intruder down and get help to the school as fast as possible.

4. We've heard it asked if the new building will do away with the stairs at the elementary, as some people can't go down them.

Facts: Yes! In actuality, on one of the fact finding slides on our school Facebook pages and school website, this issue is addressed. It states, "There will be no student required to use stairs to access classrooms." This is part of becoming a 21st century school facility and an ADA compliant school.

5. We've heard it stated that "If you currently pay \$200 per year on your taxes then on year 18 you'll be paying around \$1,500 per year." (Or similar statements)

Facts: Such statements are factually incorrect. All things being equal, someone who paid \$200 in Fiscal Year 2018-19 is projected to pay \$276.45 in Fiscal Year 2019-20 (the first year on the tax rolls) through and including Fiscal Year 2036-37 (the 18th year on the tax rolls)

6. We've heard it asked "how much does the superintendent make off of this project?" (Or similar statements)

Facts: He gets nothing! There are no contract additions, kickbacks, or anything else. Unfortunately, these rumors and accusations spread like wildfire and are completely unsubstantiated. In a situation as crucial as this, your decision must be based on facts, such as whether or not such a facility aids the educational process of the children of this community.

7. We've heard it stated that there were unanswered questions at our community meeting. That individuals "spoke in circles" and didn't communicate in a proper manner. Are there any facts to be stated in this regard?

Facts: We encourage anyone with an unanswered question to approach district administration. We would love the opportunity to answer any question you may

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have. As far as "word choice" during such meetings, please understand those who were speaking, were doing so extemporaneously.

The facts trying to be communicated during the meeting are that we have a once in a generation opportunity to improve the facilities for Geary Public Schools with 'outsiders' picking up most of the cost (greater than 80%). This means that for every dollar of improvements made, the taxpayer burden is less than .20¢.

We might add that while it is not fact, our opinion is that this is an incredible opportunity for the students and community that we would hate to see pass us by!

8. We've heard it asked what happens if the price of gas keeps going down and production (of oil and gas) stops? Additionally, some have asked about the actual amount of the bond issue. They seem to feel as if this is an exorbitant amount compared to what other communities have paid to build new schools. One such example given were Yukon's recent bond issues. What, though, are the facts?

Facts: Oil and gas products are a gross production revenue stream and those do fluctuate. This, however, is not what affects the tax base. The pipelines, pump jacks, gas meters, sand plants, gas plants, etc. will continue to be taxed at the ad valorem rate. This provides the increased tax revenue for the school. The more tax base there is, the less the patrons have to pay. Conversely the less tax base there is, the more patrons would have to pay.

In reference to the amount of the bond issue compared to other schools and in this case specifically Yukon... Yukon schools have recently passed two bond issues; one in 2008 for \$89 million and another in 2017 for \$43.86 million for a recent total of \$132.86 million. This is a substantial difference from the \$36 million that is being sought in this bond issue. Yukon's greater population also requires a greater number of buildings and ancillary buildings in gyms, technology education buildings, athletic fields, and so on. We are seeking to reduce the number buildings in our district which will allow us to better utilize our funds, especially in the area of maintenance costs.

9. We've heard it asked "Will taxes go back down after the school is paid for?"

Facts: If the district has no capital needs (additional buildings, buses, technology, security, as well as any unforeseen needs we are not aware of at this time) at the time the school is paid for, then taxes could fall back nicely. In the all things being equal example above (fact 5)- the \$276.45 would become \$188.24. That is an exact number. Lower than the \$200 hypothetical suggested above which accounts for the 4.00 mills being levied in the current sinking fund. While no school can say that they will definitely have NO further needs, this is a possible scenario.

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10. Should the windows in the new facility be covered for safety reasons? Will the new windows be blacked out like at the (current) high school?

The windows will be covered with an adjustable window covering that will allow staff to take advantage of natural light while at the same time be able to close when needed for use of technology and/or security reasons.

### References

These references are not intended to be an exhaustive list, but are provided to supply some context to statements made above.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.dailyherald.com/article/20101130/news/712019831/>

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