



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**TRUSTEES CONTINUE TO ADVANCE 2017 BOND PROJECTS TO ADDRESS GROWTH**

*Board authorizes construction contract negotiation & selects name for 11<sup>th</sup> Elementary School.*

BELTON, TX – During tonight’s Belton ISD school board meeting, trustees authorized the Superintendent to negotiate and execute construction contracts for the District’s 11<sup>th</sup> elementary school, the Wall Street Auditorium, and the Lakewood Elementary Music Classrooms and Gymnasium Addition Projects. These projects are all a part of the \$149.7 million bond program supported by voters in May 2017.

After consideration of all proposals submitted to the District, Cloud Construction had the highest ranking for the construction of the new elementary school and Mazanec Construction earned the top ranking for the Wall Street Auditorium and Lakewood Elementary Music Classrooms and Gymnasium Addition Project.

“Selecting these contractors is an important next step in delivering on our long-range planning goals,” Superintendent Susan Kincannon said. “The committee considered the experience and qualifications of each firm, including but not limited to experience with comparable-sized projects, past performance, experience of the proposed personnel and management team, reputation, financial resources, corporate stability and each firm’s safety resources.”

“We’re preparing for the continued growth of the school district. We want to make sure our buildings are here and ready for students when they come. This the next step in doing that,” Dr. Kincannon added.

District officials will now move forward with contract negotiations and plan to break ground on these projects in January 2018.

“We appreciate the diligence that was taken in vetting these bids and the time invested in interviewing firms to determine the best value for our students and community,” said Board President Randy Pittenger. “We are excited to put these firms to work on building and improving these facilities for our community.”

In addition to advancing projects to the construction phase, Board members voted on the name for the District’s 11th elementary school. Following discussion of historical and geographical features of the property, Trustees selected the name of Charter Oak Elementary.

Charter Oak Elementary School is expected to welcome its first students for the start of the 2019-2020 school year.

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Also during the meeting, the District's financial advisor, Jennifer Ritter of Specialized Public Finance, reported that bonds refunded within the last week exceeded projected interest cost savings. Belton ISD taxpayers saved \$6.8 million in interest payments on portions of the District's 2010 and 2012 bonds, taking the total of refunded bond savings since 2010 to approximately \$15 million.

Due to current federal tax legislation under consideration including the elimination the of advance refunding debt savings after December 31, 2017, a special meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on December 4 to authorize the District to refund bonds in order to deliver these cost savings to local taxpayers.

Further underscoring the importance of continued diligence and planning by the Board, the District's demographer, Bob Templeton with Templeton Demographics, provided updated projections for the District through 2028. The District is expected to add 2,257 students in the next five years, for a fall 2022 enrollment of 13,787.

"Everyday more families are discovering that our community is a great place to work, play and raise a family. As more families move here, our schools will have a growing number of students to serve." Pittenger summarized.

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