



STOP

SAISD BOND 2018

- NO to \$149M Bond
- NO to 12% Tax Increase
- Still Paying 2008 Bond
- We're Taxed Out
- Kids Need Education
- Kids DON'T Need Our Debt
- Improve Education First
- Bonds Create Bondage

VOTE **NO** MAY 5TH

WE NEED YOUR NO VOTE!

Early Voting: April 23-27, April 30-May 1 Election Day: May 5, 2018 7am-7pm

FIND US ON FACEBOOK: www.fb.me/StopTaxingUsSanAngelo

Stop Taxing Us

The **San Angelo Independent School District (SAISD)** wants to issue a bond for \$149,000,000 to pay for phase 2 of the district's long-range plan to address upgrades and modification to the schools. Given a quick read, the proposals seem reasonable. A closer inspection of them, however, raises serious questions about the accuracy of the information presented and overall wisdom of the endeavor.

The following questions and remarks are in response to the SAISD BOND2018 Quick Fact Sheet. www.saisdbond.org It should be noted that the school district is forbidden by law from advocating for the bond, so the fact sheet is distributed for information only. The responses below are designed to give "the rest of the story."

SAISD says: The Long Range Facilities Planning Committee (LRFPC), which recommended the bond issue, was comprised of a cross-section of the community.

Response: Not quite. While some of LRFPC members are parents and non-parents, district staff and business owners, they hardly reflect the community economically. They are lawyers, bankers, physicians, ranchers, business owners and

managers. The appraised values of their residences are considerably above the current median price of \$154,000.

To them the estimated \$15.32 per month tax increase is insignificant, but it can have a noticeable impact on average residents of our community who have seen their appraised values accelerate in the last few years.

Keep in mind, too, the 2008 school bond of \$117M has not yet been paid off and will not be retired until 2034. The unpaid balance of that loan is still \$104M, which means we have paid only \$13M in ten years.

The SAISD plans to use the new bond money to address/correct issues associated with the aging condition of existing facilities:

SAISD says: Multiple campuses are 40 to 80 years old and are inequitable with the newest facilities.

Response: What does "inequitable" mean? Are the present facilities NOT adequate for teaching? They don't all have to be the same at every school. We will never have every building cookie-cutter alike, and we should not. Santa Rita is eighty plus years old and yet it has typically exemplary scores, which proves that it is what is taught in the classroom, not the age of the building, that is important. To further substantiate this, Lamar, the newest elementary campus, has a current rating in the 11 percentile of all the elementary schools in the state of Texas, which means it is ranked 3802 out of 4308.

SAISD says: Renovations will increase safety and security compliance with current standards.

Response: Are we NOT in compliance with current federal school safety standards now?

Safety and security upgrades:

SAISD says: Schools need new security entrances and access control improvements

Response: What are "access control improvements"? Has NOT the school administration reported to the National Center for Education Statistics that we are in compliance with safety and security requirements?

SAISD says: Schools need exterior fencing around campuses and connection of detached buildings on elementary campuses to eliminate multiple access points.

Response:

- What kind of fencing? How high will it be? Chain link can be shot through and give a false sense of security. What about delivery entrances? SAISD has a total of 27 campuses. With this bond will ALL schools have controlled access points? If not, why not?
- Fenced schools will impact neighborhoods. Children will no longer have access to playgrounds on weekends and during summer break to play with their friends.
- Entrances can be controlled from inside. Entrances also function as exits. Limiting exits can result in people/children being trapped in a shooter situation as well as a fire.

Questions:

- Have other alternatives been explored? Some schools, for example, are arming select personnel.
- Has consideration been given to installing bullet-proof, tornado-proof classroom shelters as has been done in Oklahoma (shelterinplace.com), the JustinKase jamming device (dominatesafety.com) or perhaps retrofit products from School Guard Glass (schoolguardglass.com)?

Major additions and renovations:

SAISD says: They need handicap accessibility upgrades.

Response: What's wrong with handicap accessibility now? Does it NOT meet federal standards now? If it doesn't, are federal grants available to fix them?

SAISD says: Renovations include expansion of undersized classrooms, restrooms and core spaces.

Response: Don't we want smaller classrooms and a low ratio of students per teacher?

SAISD says: New construction is needed at Alta Loma and Fannin to address disjointed layouts and bring multiple buildings under one roof.

Response: Why do they have to be under one roof? How does that improve education? These buildings have been disjointed from their construction. How is that changing that now improving their education?

SAISD says: Tear down Bowie and McGill Elementary Schools and build new ones.

Response: How old are Bowie and McGill? Why can't they be modified? The Santa Rita School was built in the 1930s and has been renovated to increase its adequacy, and it has been consistently an Exemplary campus.

Student Programs:

Note: Student Programs is a misrepresentation. Bond money cannot be spent on programs. What has been identified is buildings and facilities – NOT programs.

SAISD says: they want to buy unspecified new sports equipment, as well as construct the following new facilities:

- New baseball and softball facilities at Lake View High School
- New large multi-purpose gymnasium at Central High School
- New track at Lincoln Middle School
- New Alternate Learning Center

Response:

- Why is the emphasis not being placed on academic competition and excellence?
- We are spending \$50M on athletic facilities. Why are those funds not being spent on vocational facilities where students can learn skills that lead to certification, so they can earn a living after graduating from school—even if they go on to college?
- How many student athletes on these teams will benefit from new facilities?
- The equipment to be purchased will not survive as long as the debt.
- Will new facilities improve student ability to earn a living after graduation?

Tax Information:

SAISD says: For the average home, valued at \$154,000, the monthly tax increase will be \$15.32.

Response: The average appraised value of the homes of the people on the LRFPC is over \$400,000. For them this tax increase is insignificant. The median appraised value of a home in San Angelo is \$154K. The median is the middle. That means half the homes are valued below it, but their appraised values keep going up just like everybody else's, and that 12% property tax increase keeps going with it. Keep in mind, too, that 44% of San Angelo residents rent.

<http://www.myfoxzone.com/article/news/rent-steadily-increasing-in-san-angelo/533357170>

Rent is expected to go up 5% this year. This added expense will have a serious impact on young families and fixed-income households. These residents have

already been affected by the 2% tax increase levied by the county and by higher city water rates.

Voters 65 and over:

SAISD says: People 65 and older will not be affected by the tax increase on homesteaded residences.

Response: This tax increase affects far more than the tax bill for primary residences. Small and large businesses pay increased taxes and have to raise their prices as a consequence. Rents go up. The cost of products and services goes up, etc, etc. The estimated 12% property tax hike this new bond would cause ends up being far more in general cost of living and hurts low income and fixed income people the hardest. Also, higher property rates DO affect people over 65 when they are trying to downsize/sell homes and the buyer must pay a non-exempt, higher property tax rate.

Let's take a hard look at dollars and cents:

The expected 4.15% interest rate on \$149M bond, paid over 300 payments (25 years), will cost the school district:

\$828,000.00 per month
\$99,000,000.00 in total interest
12% increase in school property taxes

The balance of the 2008 \$117M bond is \$104M. In other words, we have paid off only \$13M of the debt in 10 years.

STOP TAXING US

This article was jointly written by a group of concerned citizens who want to inform the public with additional information on this pending school tax bond.