



DURÓN'S DIGEST

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Building A Brighter Future

As an eventful 2010 draws to a close, we have much to be grateful for at SAISD—and much exciting progress in our immediate future.

The year's biggest news came on Election Day, when voters overwhelmingly approved a \$515 million bond issue. On behalf of our 55,000 students, let me say *"Thank you!"* for this critically important investment in the future of our schools. We appreciate your vote of confidence, and we will be working hard to ensure the funds are spent productively.

In fact, plans are already under way for the many projects outlined in the bond proposal. You may recall that we're targeting seven specific areas of improvement. In some cases (such as classroom technology, and playground equipment), we will be able to fast-track improvements, making the necessary purchases and installations soon after the bonds are funded. In other cases (such as school renovations), the task is a bit more complex. With that in mind, let me provide a broad overview of the construction management process.

Over the next few months, SAISD will assemble a team of architects, engineers and consultants to design and oversee the construction program as well as bring in a program administrator team to manage major activities. For major projects, the schedule generally requires a year of design work, followed by three months to bid and award contracts, and then approximately two to three years of construction (with work proceeding in phases to ensure safety and limit disruptions for students and staff.) Overall, we expect a majority of the projects to be deployed within the next three to five years.

There are two additional components to our stewardship. First, we plan to issue the bonds in stages, based on the cash flow needed for construction and the timing required to maximize SAISD's eligibility for state aid. Second, the Board of Trustees is creating a Citizens' Oversight Committee to review progress and provide feedback about the expenditure of bond funds. (See www.saisd.net or call the district's Community Relations office for more information about serving on this Committee.)

Of course, we're not just looking to the future of SAISD. Many important signs of progress are happening today—for example: the first influx of 100 Teach for America volunteers, enhancing instruction in our classrooms; the new Health Professions magnet program at Fox Tech; a new \$14 million grant to expand our innovative dropout prevention program; and the launch of a new leadership program with Girl Scouts in all of our high schools.

As always, we count on your continued engagement and support to make our schools strong and keep the entire district moving forward. We are grateful for the many ways in which the community rallied around us in 2010—and we look forward to even greater progress all across SAISD!

Best regards,