

MAY 16 BOND UPDATE

Athletics & Outdoor Activities



Hi Bulldog Families,

In this week's bond update, I want to cover the proposed athletics & outdoor improvements. These improvements account for about one-third of the bond plan with the remaining two-thirds dedicated to safety and education. However, the athletics portion is just as important to our students in terms of academic performance, their ability to compete for scholarships, and our district's ability to make the most effective use of the track & field we have.

Making the best use of our outdoor facilities.

Right now, we are fortunate to have the opportunity to lease the use of Baker's field for games and events. However, we continue to face limitations and safety issues with this arrangement. Baker's athletics program is growing – which is great for our community and for student athletes. But, as the university's program grows, we recognize the growing difficulties in asking them to balance our athletics schedule in between their own schedules, which understandably take priority.

That's why the proposed bond takes a pro-active approach to upgrade the track & field we already have. Currently, **Baldwin is the only 4A district in the region that does not have a field with lighting, turf and a regulation track.** By making these upgrades, we can address the issues that parents and the community have brought to us. This includes making sure parents can watch their children's activities rather than having to take off work for daytime games; providing our student athletes with the chance to play full games so they are equipped to compete for scholarships with their peers rather than cutting them off when daylight ends; and eliminating the safety issue of students walking across Highway 56 to get to the leased field after school.

Making our space multi-use – for more than just sports.

The proposed improvements will make our existing space multi-use in both wet and dry conditions, allowing the district to host football games, soccer games, track meets, senior night and band events. It will also allow the district to do more in terms of getting kids outside for outdoor learning opportunities, PE classes, grade school field trips, elementary school field days and Recreation Commission activities.

Specifically, the improvements would include: lighting, turf, seating, restrooms, a regulation track (utilizing our existing track and adding two more lanes), long jump, pole vault, high jump, javelin, discus and shot put.

The impact of athletics & outdoor activities on student education & well-being.

We know that participating in school sports directly impacts academic achievement. The National Federation of State High School Associations reports that students who play a sport have a higher graduation rate, higher GPAs, greater discipline and a greater focus on learning. But, it goes beyond academics too. Sports and physical activities improve students' overall well-being, including their mental health, leadership skills, time management, and social development – all of which we are focused on helping our students achieve so they are equipped for success in college, in the workforce and in life.

Please remember to vote on Tuesday, May 16! Or, request an advance ballot here – ksvotes.org – if you prefer to vote by mail. You can find more information about the bond at www.USD348.com/bond. Don't hesitate to contact me personally with any questions at mdodge@usd348.com or 785-594-2721.

Mark Dodge
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#BaldwinBuilt