



Get the Facts - March 21, 2019

The mission of South Summit School District is to support, empower and inspire individuals to achieve academic and character excellence. In order to fulfill our mission, the Board of Education and administration are committed to being proactive and preparing a learning environment that empowers our students with the needed skills projected for the 21st century, including academic opportunities and physical facilities.

Growth and Capital Improvements

A recent study projects that student population will increase 48% in the next ten years, yet all of our current schools have reached or have exceeded their functional capacities. Thus, we are faced with an enrollment that will increase from 1,693 students to 2,500 students in 2028 without the needed space to do so. In order to serve the number of students that will be in our District, bonding is inevitable and must be done responsibly.

An informational brochure was recently mailed that identified four phases for addressing growth. These are the Board's best efforts in planning a road map for facilities needed to meet the projected growth by 2050 and beyond. Copies are available by the doors. Our District is unique in the fact that up until this point there has primarily only been student enrollment on the East side. However, the Silver Creek area, which provides $\frac{1}{3}$ of our current tax base, now has a development under construction, and considerable growth is expected in the next few years. A new elementary school to support the existing Silver Summit Academy is the intended next building for the area. Phase 3 of the District's growth plan addresses this area, and we will responsibly manage the growth as it occurs.

In addition to the needed classroom and learning space to accommodate our growing community, there are significant capital improvement needs, including roofing on our existing buildings and outdated HVAC equipment. The Board is planning to address these needs as funding is available, using resources specifically for capital improvements. The District is currently collecting approximately \$3 million annually for capital projects, but also needs to use these to fund technology equipment purchases, new buses and cars, routine maintenance of facilities and grounds, and safety upgrades. Safety is our number one priority and will always be given the first and foremost attention. Be assured, a District building will never be occupied if there is ever questionable safety issues. We have hired professionals to inspect all our buildings to ensure student and employee safety. The proposed capital improvement projects will prolong the use of the buildings and ensure long-term safety.

How will the funds be used?

The Board of Education has carefully weighed the needs against the costs and has decided that the next step is to bond for the construction of a new high school in Kamas. Capital projects

and the Silver Summit expansion will be addressed as reserve/capital funds are available and in future bonds. The new high school will be built on the property west of Kamas and will be a comprehensive high school campus that includes adequate and appropriate learning spaces for math, English, fine arts, science, technology, business, extra-curricular clubs and organizations, and indoor/outdoor athletic facilities and fields. Residents in our community have communicated to the Board of Education that they support building schools but struggle with bonding for athletic fields when we already have nice facilities, especially our stadium. Certainly we do have nice facilities, in fact so nice that the demand far exceeds availability. Current facilities were not built when the high school had men's and women's soccer as well as spring baseball and softball. The current soccer/football stadium will still be used for high school competitions, middle school classes and events, and recreational activities available through the Aquatics and Fitness Center. The Board considered a bonding option that did not include athletic facilities, but at a cost of just \$5 more a month (for a \$438,000 home market value) determined it is more responsible to include them now.

How much will the bond cost?

The cost of a bond for a comprehensive high school campus is estimated at \$75 million. We realize this is a significant increase from the cost of the bond proposed in 2017, primarily due to rising construction costs. Construction costs have increased over \$50 per square foot over the past year. The school board feels strongly that it is the best time to move forward due to favorable borrowing rates, and delaying the project will likely cost taxpayers more in the future and erode the quality of the educational experience we can provide our students.

Recently, an article was published in the Park Record using some preliminary numbers the Board of Education had received from Zions Public Finance Inc., the selected financial partner. The reported \$90.7 million bond would build a typical new high school in Kamas and a typical new elementary school in Silver Creek. Preliminary estimates suggest a primary resident with an average home market value of \$438,000 would pay about \$60 per month, or \$715 annually. However, in its due diligence, the Board has determined that our community cannot support this great of a tax impact and has opted for a different scenario--one that we believe aligns more with our current taxpayer's ability to financially afford and support.

How much will my taxes increase?

Under our current proposal of \$75 million, \$15 million less than the proposal discussed in the Park Record, a primary residence with an average home market value of \$438,000 will pay about \$494 annually. The Board is very aware and concerned about this impact to our citizens. To help minimize the impact to our tax payers, the Board is committed to contributing \$1.25 million of capital each year towards the bond payment, which brings the tax impact down to \$376 annually (\$31.33 month).

Community Meetings

- April 16 (6:30 p.m.) – Francis City Hall
- April 23 (6:30 p.m.) – Oakley Town Hall
- April 25 (6:00 p.m.) – South Summit High School Gym
- May 9 Open House (10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.) South Summit School District Office