

Dear Trustees:

In March 2015, the Board unanimously passed the Interim Bridge Plan to address the space needs of 10 schools that DISD had identified as so critical that they needed to be addressed ahead of the then-anticipated bond program. Thus far, design and planning all proceeded as anticipated. Stonewall Jackson Elementary hosted public meetings with our DISD design and construction team. The dialogue was open and productive and culminated in a design that Principal Schiff, her staff and our community agreed addressed what was passed in the IBP. Note the IBP budget did not eliminate all of our portables. While disappointed that our 155% utilization problem would not be solved, the Stonewall community appreciated, and believed, the commitment by the Board. The schedule through all of this planning has been that our new wing would be completed for the opening of the 2017 school year.

In April, our design was released to bid and came in over budget, along with several other IBP projects, including that of Lakewood Elementary. What has happened since then has been disconcerting. The lines of communication have shut down, and all our administration and community has been told is that the IBP is now in the hands of the Trustees.

We heard Thursday that it has been recommended that the Board approve a five month delay to the IBP projects and start the entire scope, design and bid process over again. **We simply cannot support this action.** At this point, there are imminent plans for teachers to start packing boxes, and even more concerning are that portables are to be torn down. Simply, Principals need communication and direction from DISD.

Our design at Stonewall is simple and should not be reduced in scope. It includes 12 classrooms and much-needed additional bathrooms, without architectural flourishes. In the design process, we specifically asked for superfluous entrances to be removed to save money, and they were. Recall the original budget didn't even close our 155% utilization. Any reduction in scope, i.e. classrooms, only worsens our problem.

We are not surprised by the overage. We can all look around Dallas and see construction cranes everywhere. We read in the news of multiple bond packages approved by neighboring ISDs. DISD should not wait for a bubble to burst and the construction market to soften to make the updates it identified as critical. If DISD believes the initial IBP designs address each school's problem, the right thing to do is find the funds and see these projects completed. We recommend pulling the IBP Schools' bond funding into Phase I of the Bond. Fully funding these projects now and using any remaining bond funds will be more efficient and save DISD money in the long term.

As a result of the IBP process – through the lengthy meetings, speeches, detailed debate and an ultimately unanimous vote, DISD built trust with the Stonewall community. The unanimous vote reaffirmed our belief that when we chose public education, chose DISD and chose our neighborhood school, that we had made the correct decision. That evening after the vote, several Board members specifically called out the Stonewall Jackson and Lakewood communities, instructing us that since we received our needed construction projects, we needed to support the bond program. On Election Day, our communities agreed overwhelmingly.

We request the Board of Trustees follow through with the commitment made back in March 2015 and fund the IBP projects as initially designed, addressing those schools deemed most critical by DISD.

Regards,

Chris Peters	Outgoing SBDM Chair
Beth Temperley	SBDM Chair, 2016-17
Sara Hundley	Outgoing PTA President
Kearney Crowley	PTA President, 2016-17
Kari Myers	President, Stonewall Gardens, 501(c)3