

**Accurate Information about Various Elements of CCSD's Proposed Building Priorities**  
***A Response to Statements Made by NPRI Regarding Question 2, Pay-As-You-Go***

**DO WE NEED AUXILIARY GYMS AT RURAL SCHOOLS?**

For students attending schools in rural areas, auxiliary gyms are considered a vital part of their educational program. We have been hearing from vocal proponents of gym expansions for years, and for students and their parents who live in these outlying areas, this is an equity issue that has risen to a top priority. Although these students have a smaller school population, they have just as many athletes competing as do the large comprehensive schools in the Las Vegas valley. The larger schools have many more spaces for students to practice and compete while the outlying schools are expected to make do with a single smaller gym for the same number of activities. Additionally, because of the support-your-school enthusiasm that exists in these outlying areas, the gyms are packed beyond capacity when competition takes place. The gyms in the outlying areas are also used for community activities, dances, graduations, and band concerts.

Adequate gym space has become both a safety issue and an academic issue. The safety issue comes into play because practices are scheduled one after another (rather than simultaneously as they are in schools with more gym space), so some students end up with practice times that extend late into the evening, and then drive home on narrow country roads late at night. Because of the rural nature of these communities, many of these students also start very early in the morning with chores on the family ranch or farm, so the safety concern sometimes determines whether or not a student plays sports.

Academically, parents feel that some students may lose the opportunity for lucrative scholarships related to sports because of the inequities that come from not having equal practice time. They also feel the unreasonable practice schedule the coaches are forced to maintain has a negative impact on the amount of time students have to study and sleep, both important academic considerations. Like students who attend schools in the Las Vegas metropolitan area, rural students who participate in extracurricular activities, including sports, are more motivated to stay in school, stay out of trouble, earn higher grades, graduate, and continue on to secondary education settings.

When comparing the cost of the proposed gyms with the Mendenhall Center, we need to make sure the comparisons are equal. The Mendenhall Center is intended to be used as a practice arena for men's basketball, which means it will have fewer people using the space for a singular purpose and thus contains less equipment. We have never published a proposed price for the new gyms, so I'm not sure where they came up with the \$11.9 million figure, but the Moapa gym is budgeted to cost \$8 million, and that figure is a "turnkey" cost for 31,245 square feet that is designed, built and furnished for multiple sports including wrestling, basketball, and volleyball as well as general PE classes. Additionally, construction costs in rural areas are higher than in Las Vegas. The \$8 million price tag also includes architect/engineering fees, technical and professional services, graphic allowances, inspection costs, and technology costs. The Moapa gym is expected to cost about \$256 per square foot; based on the figures quoted in the NPRI article, the Mendenhall Center has a cost of about \$313 per square foot.

Comparing the cost of the new gyms to the Basic High School gym addition isn't an even comparison. Not only was the Basic gym built 12 years ago, but the addition was only 9,310 square feet, less than 1/3 of the size of the Moapa gym. The cost per square foot of the two gyms are very close, approximately \$254 in 2000 and an estimated \$256 in 2013.

## **DISKIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AND AIR CONDITIONING NEEDS AT OTHER SCHOOLS**

It is true that Diskin Elementary School is not included in the list of schools slated for renovations if Question 2 passes. Even with its highly-publicized failures during the first week of school, Diskin's Facility Condition Index didn't bump it to the top of our priority list, which gives you an idea of the condition of the schools that are on the list. However, because of Diskin's failures, a new chiller (not a total HVAC replacement) has been proposed for inclusion in Revision 18 of the 1998 building program. Revision 18 is expected to go to the Trustees for approval before the end of the year.

The NPRI article also raised issues related to the schools included (or not included) for HVAC upgrades on the 2012 capital improvement list. There are many parts to an HVAC replacement including: chillers, cooling towers, hydronic piping, controls, and air handlers. When a school is listed for an HVAC replacement, it constitutes a total replacement of all parts. In other schools, when parts of systems have failed, they have received partial replacements to keep them running. For example, Sawyer Middle School had its chiller and cooling tower replaced; Greenspun Middle School had a chiller replaced. Sawyer Middle School was bumped to the 1998 program (Revision 17; approved on August 1, 2012) because of the ongoing severe needs there.

Many of the 47 school HVAC systems that experienced outages during the first week of school did so because of maintenance issues that are not capital related, rather are related to the drastic budget cuts the District has experienced over the past four years. However, when the aging systems on the list are replaced, the amount of time devoted to keep them running will allow our small team of technicians more time to perform the routine maintenance that is needed on the 6,000 air conditioning units we have throughout the school district, resulting in fewer AC outages.

Contrary to NPRI's statement, Griffith Elementary School, Walter Long Elementary School, and Chaparral High School all experienced AC outages during the first several days of school, and all three are included on the 2012 projects list. For the other schools which experienced outages during that first critical period of instruction, many were repaired by replacing various parts or portions of the system, rather than requiring a total replacement.

## **ELECTRICAL SYSTEM UPGRADES**

Regarding the comment that some of the schools slated to receive electrical systems have already received money, three schools (Beckley, McWilliams, and Culley elementary schools) were removed from the 2012 list. They were temporarily included on a preliminary draft list of projects due to a clerical error but are not included on the final list because the work at those schools is completed. (Please see the attached list of projects for the correct schools identified for relief via Question 2.)

## **WEST PREP NEEDS**

The cost of the conversion of West Prep is similar in cost to the construction of gyms because both the cost per square footage and the number of square feet is about the same for both projects.

## **GIBSON MIDDLE SCHOOL AND PROMETHEAN BOARDS**

The money used to provide Promethean Boards (also known as "smart boards") for many schools is funding that was included in the textbook/technology budget provided by the Nevada legislature and was used to meet the "maintenance of effort" requirement attached to those dollars. Not only could those funds not be used for necessary improvements at Gibson Middle School or any other projects listed on the capital improvement list, but the benefits of Promethean Boards for teaching and learning

in classrooms are well documented and represent a good use of the technology available to teachers to improve student achievement.

As a side note, Gibson Middle School received a major modernization in 1999 and a roof replacement in 2011. They have also received several other upgrades in the last few years, including new telephone systems, LAN/WAN, intercom, CCTV, an electrical system replacement, and extensive site work.

### **GENERAL STATEMENT**

We appreciate the interest of the public in the projects included in the Capital Improvement Plan. By necessity, the plan must be fluid to respond to changes in conditions that occur to the major systems and conditions in our schools. As such, this statement accompanied the CIP list as it went to various bodies for approval:

- The 2012 PAYGO Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) list of anticipated projects describes the specific projects to be completed by the proposed pay-as-you-go financing initiative to be placed before Clark County voters on the ballot as Question 2 on November 6, 2012.
- The listed projects were determined using the District's Capital Improvement Program Master Planning Process. In accordance with the process, priorities may be adjusted as student enrollment projections change, as facilities age, and as instructional program needs change.
- The needs of each school were determined by performing a thorough inspection of each facility. The findings of the assessment, along with mandated modification and changes to educational programs were the determining factors in prioritization and execution of the plan.
- Listed projects will be completed as needed at a particular school according to Board policy. The order that the projects appear on the list does not indicate the priority for funding or completion.
- The final cost of each project will be determined as plans are finalized, construction bids are awarded, and projects are completed.
- Projects will be added, deleted or modified as necessary to meet enrollment and changing program needs within the District in "revisions" to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).
- Any revision to the CIP will be fully vetted through the Capital Projects Process Flow receiving review and endorsement from the staff Capital Planning Group, the Superintendent, and the Bond Oversight Committee, with final approval given by the School Board of Trustees through the formal revision process.

### **YES! LET'S BE LIKE NEW YORK!!**

In an article appearing in the Sunday, October 7 edition of the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, NPRI communications director Victor Joecks compared CCSD schools to those in New York City. However, New York City schools are heavily invested in with ongoing capital improvement programs – that is why they last as long as they do. Their current five-year capital plan (2010-2014) shows \$3.5 billion earmarked for new schools; \$750 million scheduled for school replacements, and \$6.7 billion set aside for "capital reinvestment," the term they use in New York for modernization. It would be wonderful if we were able to think of maintenance dollars as a "reinvestment" fund rather than a fund that is the first to be cut when budgets don't balance.

And NYC's current five-year capital plan isn't an anomaly – their previous 5-year plan was for \$13.1 billion. Combined, the programs boast an average of \$2.62 billion per year, half of which comes from state funding. In Nevada, school construction and renovation dollars must be generated on a county basis while state-supplemented general funds have been drastically reduced over the past two biennia, resulting in over \$600 million in budget cuts to CCSD's operating budget over the past four years. In CCSD's attempt to keep those cuts as far from the classroom as possible, departments such as Maintenance, Custodial Services, and Landscaping have absorbed extremely deep cuts, resulting in some of the inadequacies our schools currently face.