

Recommendation:

That the Board of Education call a Bond Election for 19 May 1965 for the authorization of \$59,800,000 in Schoolhouse Construction Bonds.

The patrons of the Houston Independent School District want efficient, safe, modern, and healthful school buildings. They have expressed their support for an efficient School Construction Program through support of school construction bond issues during the past twenty years.

In 1945, the Houston Independent School District was overcrowded with an enrollment of 75,799 students, many of whom were attending school on double sessions. The double sessions and shortened school days continued through the school year of 1958-59. Since 1959, there have been no double sessions in the Houston Independent School District, which now accommodates 217,998 students, an increase of 142,199 pupils in twenty years.

With seven successive bond elections without defeat, this School District has provided in excess of \$175,000,000 to build adequate housing for its ever-increasing student body. The foresight of the Board of Education and the demonstrated public school support on the part of the patrons of this community are strong reasons that the Houston Independent School District maintains a high standing academically among the great cities of the United States and yet ranks lowest in the per capita cost among the fifteen largest city school districts.

It is estimated that we may expect an average annual increase of 10,000 to 11,000 pupils during the next five years. These children must be provided with sound educational programs, good teachers, adequate housing, and other physical facilities. Also, there will be a continuing need for

renovations and modernization of some existing schools, major maintenance work on others, and replacement of certain older buildings which otherwise might present future problems of safety and efficiency.

We must provide funds for new and additional equipment, to supply for the instructional program new and proven electronic, mechanical, and graphic equipment and materials developed by modern research. Our dedicated teachers can effectively use such equipment to provide better learning opportunities for Houston's boys and girls. There is a great need for a reasonable reserve of new school sites for future growth -- and these sites will likely not be less expensive in the future than if purchased now.

The Building Program of the Houston Independent School District is carefully planned and steadily developed on the basis of educational needs. School staff study is coordinated with the studies of other community governing bodies and agencies.

In view of these facts, the staff has given a great deal of concentrated study and consideration to the continuing building and facility needs of the Houston Independent School District for the next five-year period. It is our considered judgment that such needs can be financed within the present tax structure, without any increase in local taxes, to support a bond issue to finance this program, the estimated cost of which will be \$59,800,000, and it is so recommended. An outline of the facilities to be constructed and sites to be purchased at a cost of \$59,800,000 is attached as an Exhibit. These summaries are backed by careful studies of specific classroom, equipment, and other school facility needs in all parts of the Houston Independent School District.