

USD 220 PRESS RELEASE

Unified School District #220 - Ashland-Englewood Public Schools

Facility improvements are coming to USD #220. Over the course of the past seven months, the USD #220 Board of Education and Administration have been working with Johnson Controls to develop a facilities improvement plan for the district. The scope of the study included both structural upgrades and the addition of heating and air conditioning district-wide. The cost estimate for upgrades at both the elementary and Junior-Senior High School ranged from \$2,197,565 to \$2,708,547.

With higher than anticipated cost, the board requested additional information from Johnson Controls as well as sought a review of the current boiler system at Ashland Jr-Sr High School by American Boiler. Both Johnson Controls and American Boiler provided information on the current systems in place and concluded that at the minimum, both the pipes and boilers would need to be replaced before the district faced a catastrophic failure. With additional information, the board narrowed the project scope based on, building usage, the age of equipment, and identifying the greatest need.

Additionally, the USD #220 school district was approved to issue \$1,728,724 through Qualified Zone Academy Bonds, which allows school districts to borrow money at a 0% or a nominal interest rate because the purchaser receives a tax credit in lieu of interest. This is a temporary program based on annual reauthorization in Kansas.

To stay within the scope of approved funding with the QZAB, the focus of upgrades will begin at the Jr-Sr High School with input from Johnson Controls, the board, and administration. Current facilities upgrades being discussed includes new windows and panels; installation of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems in classrooms, library, cafeteria, kitchen, gymnasium, and shop; improvements to existing doorways; as well as new seating in the gym.

By accepting the QZAB funds now, the district will be able to take advantage of the 0% interest rate to move forward with the upkeep of district facilities without having to pass a bond. It will allow the board to be proactive in upgrading major mechanical systems and equipment that were originally installed in 1962 when Ashland Jr-Sr High School was built.

USD #220 must continue to be committed to maintaining and improving our structural foundation including, buildings, operating systems, technology, and transportation needs as we move forward.

Ultimately, we are responsible for being good stewards of our facilities and resources on behalf of the community to ensure we can provide for the future educational needs of our students.

Mr. Jamie Wetig, Ed.S.
Superintendent