



BOND PROGRAM UPDATE



Fall 2005

Finishing projects and preparing for a long winter's nap is often the norm when fall arrives, but not for the Dallas County Community College District! We are moving ahead with multiple bond program construction projects, meeting with members of the community and literally unveiling the future for the citizens of Dallas County.

In May 2004, Dallas County voters approved a \$450 million bond program for the Dallas County Community College District; that facilities master plan includes new buildings on all campuses, plus five new locations in either underserved or fast-growing areas of Dallas County, with some expansions or safety and Americans With Disabilities Act upgrades throughout DCCCD's facilities as well. These new facilities will offer credit and continuing education classes, plus services such as career development and workforce development programs. In this newsletter, we share our progress with you.

A sign of the times

DCCCD enriches lives and builds community every day by serving students, citizens, government and area businesses. Extending that outreach to persons who live in either underserved or fast-growing areas of Dallas County is one of the goals of our bond program; that effort becomes reality through five new education campuses that will put higher education in reach (quite literally) for many area residents.

Before ground can be broken, land must be purchased and signs are raised, marking the location for future growth and prosperity. We started last spring to launch our education campuses program with a celebration in Garland, sharing the day with community, chamber and governmental representatives who welcomed the new Eastfield College-North Campus, near downtown Garland.

Since that initial ceremony, district representatives have purchased a site and unveiled the new location (and a sign, of course!) for the North Lake College-North Campus, which will serve residents in Coppell. Several dignitaries attend that event in September, including Doug Stover, mayor of Coppell; State Rep. Jim Jackson; and Jeanne Hooker, chair of the Coppell Chamber of Commerce.

The property is located at the southeast corner of State Highway 121 and Sandy Lake Road in Coppell, and DCCCD trustees approved an agreement with Billingsley 121 Coppell Ltd. to purchase the undeveloped 35.8-acre parcel for \$8,656,870. The site will provide significant exposure because of the growing population in that area. The purchase of this land signals continuing progress for both the Dallas County Community College District and the Irving/Coppell area, says Jerry Prater, chair of the DCCCD Board of Trustees, and it represents an educational and community partnership that will help our system enrich lives and build community.

Since fall 2004, a number of realtors have researched locations for the new education campuses. Property bought in the Coppell area represents the second parcel of undeveloped land purchased under the bond program for DCCCD'S sites; the district recently bought several parcels in Pleasant Grove for the new Eastfield College-South Campus, and officials are closing those transactions with sellers in December.

Other new campuses will be located in south Irving and west Dallas.

More



Opinions count

Before the first shovel of dirt is moved for each of DCCCD's education campuses, the district is seeking suggestions and comments directly from each community by scheduling a forum and then follow-up focus groups to learn what programs and services best fit that area's needs. In October, for example, the second of six focus groups for the new Eastfield College-North Campus was held for senior adults. Montclair Estates Retirement Community hosted the session, and DCCCD representatives gathered feedback about future programs and services that may be offered at the downtown Garland center.

Both Eastfield and North Lake colleges held initial community forums within 10 days of their sign unveilings (in July and September, respectively) to involve area residents in the planning process and to ask them to participate in focus groups as the work progresses at each education campus.

A coordinated effort

This fall, three firms were hired to perform management services for DCCCD's 2004 bond construction program: Aguirre + 3D/I; Austin Commercial/Con-Real; and DMJM Inc. Each firm has been assigned projects for several colleges and will oversee those institutions' bond construction projects. They have completed an extensive orientation with the district; have learned about the DCCCD Board of Trustees' goals and priorities; have received instruction on the system's commitment to diversity; and have been briefed on the colleges' roles in the design and planning process throughout the life of the bond construction program, which touches hundreds of projects at all DCCCD locations throughout Dallas County.

What's next?

A picture truly is worth a thousand words, and we are building a bond program website which the general public can visit early next year. Look for more details and a web address in our next newsletter.

Each of the colleges – Brookhaven, Cedar Valley, Eastfield, El Centro, Mountain View, North Lake and Richland – has established campus committees for key construction projects. Others have visited community colleges in Texas or in other states to gather ideas for classrooms, laboratories, student areas and other facilities that will enhance learning. Allied health and science buildings, workforce and continuing education facilities, technology and performing arts buildings, and other key construction projects are slated for design and completion throughout the county. Parking, remodeling, ADA compliance and the education campuses complete this ambitious bond program.

The general obligation bond program is a key investment in the future of Dallas County, the state of Texas and the nation. The need is great, and taxpayers have responded. They understand that the economic viability of Texas hinges on an educated and competitive workforce. DCCCD will continue to address those needs through its \$450 million bond program and with the support of the communities who are served. If you have questions or comments, please contact me by phone at (214) 860-2125 or send an e-mail to jcarreon@dcccd.edu. I look forward to hearing from you!



Dr. Jesus "Jess" Carreon, Chancellor