

# Board Member Questions and Answers

Prior to Nov. 25, 2023, Finance Committee Meeting

## **Agenda Item 4.1: Consider Approval of the Qualification-Based Proposal and Bid in the Amount of \$4,958,000 plus Applicable Taxes as Submitted by Franken Construction for Cochiti Elementary School Classroom Addition**

What is Cochiti's current enrollment capacity?

Enrollment is 196 & capacity is 354

Is the current building at 100% capacity? If not, what is its capacity?

Capacity is 354. The new boundary with the closure of Duranes will add 144 students.

The anticipated 2024 student enrollment of 376 is based on what factors? How certain are you of this number (376)?

The proposed attendance area/boundary will have 376 students.

According to the last census what is the growth in the elementary age group in the north valley?

The proposed Attendance Boundary (students living within the boundary) is 376. The school is currently at 55%.

As there are going to be an anticipated 169 more students attending Cochiti in 2024 how is it that only 4 classrooms are needed as that would translate to 42 students in each of the 4 new classrooms? Does this mean that there are currently empty classrooms or classrooms with very low numbers? Where are art & music classes currently held?

The school currently has 19 permanent building classrooms and eight portable classrooms (six of which are being moved from the site to prep for the upcoming construction project.) The new construction project will add four regular classrooms, one music, and one art-designed classroom.

Does the construction cost include the relocated playground cost?

No, but the total project budget does. Another vendor, not Franken, will complete the playground relocation work.

How many of the portables are currently being used as classrooms?

Six portables will be removed to allow for construction, and two will remain as a swing space during construction. Then, those two portables will be removed when construction is complete. There will be no portables staying on this campus.

Please explain the use of ESSR funds for this construction(rationale)? This is a very high per square foot cost (\$602 per sf) WHY? This is almost triple what it was a few years ago! Is the fact that only one company provided a bid a factor in this high per sf cost or are there other contributing factors? Is the fact that only one company provided a bid a factor in this high per SF or are there other contributing factors?

The cost per square foot is high, but everything is high these days. With all that ails the construction industry post-COVID (i.e., labor shortages, inflation, supply change issues), prices have continued to rise. The project has two things going against it that probably impacted cost: 1) it is small (8,236 SF), so there is little economy of scale, and 2) the short construction time dictated by the ESSER fund spending deadlines. We did talk to PSFA to see what costs per square foot they were seeing, and they thought this looked great. They are seeing \$800-\$900 depending on how remote the project is.

The fact that there was only one bidder, unfortunately, is becoming more common and may have added a little to the price. Three other general contractors had pulled plans but did not submit a bid for whatever reason. They probably already had enough work or couldn't get subs lined up. We did speak with Franken to see how comfortable he was with his bid. He actually felt very good about his bid because, with the exception of the electrical sub, Franken had more than one sub submit a price. This is a positive sign in the industry because of late, there has typically been one or no subs bidding.

#### **Agenda Item 4.3: Consider Approval of October 2023 Inter-Function Transfers for Grant Budget**

As the budget alignment is being done to fully cover the salary & benefits for the Title III program manager the question is how was this salary previously covered?

Title III funds

#### **Agenda Item 4.4: Consider Approval of October 2023 Intra-Function Transfers for Grant Budget**

What was the total cost for the NAEHCY conference including registration & all travel expenses and how many APS staff attended?

\$15,471.78 for conference registration, hotel, flights, and estimated travel reimbursements. Seven staff members attended the conference.

#### **Agenda Item 4.7: Consider Approval of Statement of Equipment to be Taken Out of Service for July 1-31, 2023**

Of the 105 Smart Boards taken out of service how many were replaced?

All the boards were replaced. As new boards are being delivered, Salvage picks up the old smart boards for disposal.

## **Agenda Item 4.12: Consider Approval of District Purchase or Expenditure that Equals or Exceeds \$250,000–Plumbing Services On Call**

The previous 3 year spend was \$8.6 million & is projected to be \$7.5 million for the next 3 years, so what is leading to this decrease? Why are we using ESSR funds for this spend? What percentage of the \$7.5 million are capital, SB9 & ESSR funds?

We have used ESSER money for large domestic water re-piping projects, which are allowed under ESSER funding guidelines. The projects, which began a couple of years ago, will be completed this year, which is why the proposed cost has decreased. About 90 percent of the funding will come from capital and SB9 funds, with about 10 percent coming from ESSER funds.

In general, families would like to know why more ESSR funds were not used to help current students as far as doing all APS could do to catch their children up as it concerns all the learning they missed out on and instead being used on construction, plumbing etc.? Families who can't afford private tutoring, lack access to academic resources, are those whose children are showing the effects of school doors being closed on them, while those families who had access to a myriad of resources see their children performing at higher levels than those in lower socioeconomic brackets, as that is what assessments & graduation rates are showing, correct? The greatest learning loss this group of students has ever faced at the hands of adults who made this terrible decision & fought to close the school doors on the children to whom the schools were created for! Adults who made these decisions know who you are and families are saying APS should have ensured these federal funds would benefit our students in their academic journey! And their question is why not? Our children are worth it!!!

Only a small portion of the ESSER funds were used on facilities. This use of funds aligns with the proper use of ESSER funds for several reasons. Clean air and water, along with safe buildings, are essential to the foundation of learning in the classroom. Studies show that students who do not have access to clean air, water, or safety perform at lower levels of learning than peers in other facilities. Adequate air and water quality are integral to maintaining a safe and conducive learning environment. By using nonrecurring ESSER funds to upgrade these facilities, schools can ensure compliance with building standards and upgrade facilities at a faster pace with the availability of these funds. A comfortable and healthy learning environment contributes to improved focus and concentration among students. Clean air and water can positively impact cognitive function and academic performance. Investing in these areas can create a more conducive atmosphere for effective teaching and learning. Additionally, investing these funds in building upgrades improves systems and is likely to be more energy-efficient and reduce health issues among students and staff. Using ESSER funds as one-time funding to upgrade facilities aligns with the broader goal of creating safe, healthy, and supportive learning environments essential for our students' overall well-being and academic success.