

Bond Comments

I'd like to start with expressing my gratitude to those from the community that served on the Bond Planning Committee and dedicated various evening of your family time, to guide the bucket 3 work and project outcomes.

Of course, the most significant work was led by Supt. Dr. McDaniel and his team and then the contracted firms that brought their expertise to the table. Thank you because we have needed this bond for a long time. Addressing the needs of an ever-changing district is a continuous, never ending job.

Following a time of decreased enrollment in parts of our district and increased enrollment in other parts, in 2018 we embarked on what we called the Pathway to greatness. Knowing there was no immediate option for a bond the board supported the superintendent in making some major changes to our attendance zones. And at that time this board and administration committed to the following guiding principles in the decision-making process.

- *We believe our top priority must be serving students equitably, rather than maintaining under-enrolled facilities.*
- *We believe families deserve high-quality educational opportunities in 21st century learning environments.*
- *We believe that every district facility should be used for a positive community purpose.*
- *We believe in keeping neighborhoods together.*

South OKC has been for many years and continues to be the densest population of OKCPS students. To quote the recent work of the RSP Firm, "the majority of OKCPS students reside south of the river in the US Grant feeder pattern."

Although we all believe in the principles that were set forth, in order to provide the quality education our students deserve we made the difficult decision to take our students out of the communities their families have chosen to live in, and transport them into neighboring communities, when they lived blocks away from their neighborhood school.

This bond proposal creates the path for truly transformational changes for the future of OKCPS students. It is not the end all, but it is a much-needed step in achieving our guiding principles when we address the needs of our ever-changing school district. It also creates an amazing opportunity to engage our OKCPS Alumni and community members.

As a member of the OKCPS board it is my role to represent the voice of my community/constituency and to ensure that our policies and procedures reflect that. Keeping in mind the guiding principles that were already established, I had the opportunity to hear from a few community members.

First from the Shidler Elementary community. What a passionate, diverse group of champions we have in the Shidler community! The loudest realization was simply To quote Ms. Sally Goins of Faithworks, “ Shidler Elementary was not just 4 walls but a true hub of hope for the entire community.”

As a member of this board, my commitment is to ensure we uphold our guiding principle of keeping our neighborhoods together and that all facilities be used for a positive community purpose. There is not a greater purpose than to keep Shidler elementary school IN the communities it serves.

Last week I had the opportunity to hear from an amazing group of alumni, the Capitol Hill Class of 65. I heard their love for their alma mater, I heard their investments in today’s Capitol Hill Students, I heard the memories, not just about the building, but what it meant to be a Southsider and most importantly what it meant to be from Capitol Hill High School. I also heard how they would love to see Capitol Hill recognized as the Southside Powerhouse it once was. But, what made my heart jump for joy, was to hear how they wanted to be a part of celebrating the memories of diverse generations from the Hill.

No one wants to see our beautiful building and all its memories demolished. However, we all want the 21st century learning environments our future deserves. And the two should not be exclusive of each other.

Again, as a member of this board, my commitment is to ensure we uphold our guiding principle of: We believe families deserve high-quality educational opportunities in 21st century learning environments. While we honor the voices of community, alumni and families. Because I heard many ideas from the Class of 65 about how to preserve the memories of the diverse generations of Capitol Hill Alumni, my commitment is to ensure that all these stakeholders have the opportunity to be at the table when we come back to discuss design options for a new crown jewel of South OKC, Capitol Hill High School.

And finally, growing up in the Hispanic culture, we always knew all the adults were there to protect and watch over all the children. It was not a matter of this is my child or this not my child, rather we will care for and watch all children in our proximity. Today the community of OKC is counting on OKCPS to provide those high-quality educational opportunities in 21 century learning environments all across our city. Whether they be in an OKCPS school or an OKC Public Charter School. And again, this bond is only the first step in achieving the goals of our established principles.

I am optimistic our city believes in the future of our students and in the investment we need in our schools.

Thank you.