

The Regional District 13 Board of Education Building Committee met in special session on Thursday, April 9, 2026 at 7:00 p.m. remotely via Zoom.

Committee Members Present: Mr. Weissberg, Mr. Cross, Mr. Putnam, Mr. Overton, Mr. Giamatteo, Mr. Moore, and Mrs. Petrella.

Administration Present: Dr. Leggett, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Proia, Supervisor of Facilities and Grounds, and Mrs. Neubig, Director of Finance

O&G Associates present: Mr. Cravanzola, Mr. Lucarelli and Ms. Purcell

QA+M Associates present: Mr. Collier and Mr. Malik

STV present: Ms. Liska and Ms. Cahill

### **Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Approval of Agenda**

*Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cross, to approve the agenda as presented.*

*All in favor of approving the agenda as presented: Mr. Weissberg, Mr. Cross, Mr. Putnam, Mr. Overton, Mr. Moore, Mr. Giamatteo and Mrs. Petrella. Motion passed.*

### **Approval of Minutes – April 1, 2026**

*Mr. Cross made a motion, seconded by Mr. Giamatteo, to approve the April 1, 2026 Meeting Minutes as presented.*

*All in favor of approving the April 1, 2026 Meeting Minutes as presented: Mr. Weissberg, Mr. Cross, Mr. Putnam, Mr. Overton, Mr. Giamatteo, Mr. Moore, and Mrs. Petrella. Motion passed.*

### **Memorial Renovation/Expansion**

A. Review Phase III Bid Results

Ms. Purcell reviewed the construction bid results across multiple trade packages, giving an overview of the number of bidders per category, price ranges for each trade, and a plan to later compare lowest bids against the project budget

- Concrete received 5 bids with a base bid of \$1,733,000 ranging to \$2,34,000.
- Masonry had 6 bids with a low bid of \$2,272,666 ranging to \$3,043,000.
- Steel received 3 bids, ranging from \$3,206,000 to \$4,873,806.
- Architectural Casework had 2 bids of \$1,515,000 and \$1,548,000.
- 1 bid for Waterproofing/Air Barrier/Sealants of \$518,000.
- Firestopping had 3 bids ranging from \$245,563 to \$457, 777.
- 10 bids for Aluminum Entrances, Windows and Storefronts, ranging from \$2,641,000 to \$4,030,000.
- Acoustical received 6 bids ranging from \$688,914 to \$868,000.
- Drywall received 7 bids ranging from \$4,669,000 to \$6,579,000.
- 3 bids for Flooring, ranging from \$1,081,890 to \$1,410,567.
- Painting also received 3 bids ranging from \$366,470 to \$432,000.
- 3 bids for Tiling, ranging from \$737,000 to \$1,103,405.
- General Trades received 9 bids ranging from \$1,747,700 to \$3,110,900.
- Division 10 Specialties received 6 bids, with a base bid of \$511,000 to \$955,000. Division 10 specialties includes items like lockers, bleachers, marker boards, and tack boards. These were grouped into a separate bid package because they are not needed until later in the project timeline. Contractors were asked to hold their pricing for 90 days to 6 months, allowing flexibility if the contract isn't awarded immediately.
- Food Service Equipment received 3 bids, ranging from \$607,771 to \$672,200. It was identified that one food service bidder may be disqualified for not meeting bid bond requirements
- Final Cleaning received 3 bids ranging from \$81,912 to \$141,598.
- 7 bids for Fire Protection ranging from \$946,000 to \$1,562,000.
- Plumbing received 2 bids: \$3,681,800 and \$3,972,000.
- HVAC received 4 bids ranging from \$13,252,585 to \$15,432,000.
- Electrical received 3 bids ranging from \$5,500,000 to \$6,872,000. The lowest electrical bidder is pending further review. The next lowest bid (J.E. Shea Electric, Inc.) \$6,678,000 will be used for budgeting purposes at this point.
- Fire Alarm received 3 bids, ranging from \$361,000 to \$525,000.
- 7 bids received for Sitework, ranging from \$8,100,000 to \$9,535,735.

Ms. Purcell then reviewed Combination Bids, stating that most combination bids did not provide savings compared to selecting lowest individual bids.

- Concrete, General Trades, and Division 10 Specialties bid for \$4,172,000.
- General Trades and Drywall bid for \$7,493,000.
- 2 General Trades and Division 10 Specialty Combination bids: \$2,259,700 and \$2,793,450.
- Plumbing + HVAC bid (Ferguson) saved about \$17,000 compared to separate low bids; this bid was for \$16,917,000.
- General Trades and Sitework combination bid for \$10,520,925.

Mr. Weissberg asked whether any combination bids include alternates. Ms. Purcell clarified that most do not, but there is one exception: A voluntary alternate (#17) was included. It involves a change to the HVAC control system (switching to a Honeywell-based system).

Ms. Purcell reviewed low bidders and their pricing, while noting that roofing is still out to bid, so a budgeted placeholder value (\$2,162,298) is being used for now. The original January 2026 estimate showed the project as \$1.23M over budget. After factoring in planned deduct alternates, that overage was reduced to about \$32K over budget at the time of submission. The team created adjusted trade package budgets to act as a benchmark for staying within budget.

A working budget target is set at \$57,417,927. The total of the base bids is \$58,368,472, making the total \$950,545 over budget at this time. Ms. Purcell reviewed the cost-saving deduct alternates, which include switching decorative concrete to standard concrete, removing two secondary entrance canopies, downgrade countertops from solid surface to plastic laminate, about \$44,000 in savings, and accepting the HVAC alternate (Honeywell system), a credit of \$172,000. Applying these select deduct alternates reduces overage to approximately \$540,852. Ms. Purcell stated that there is no need to finalize these alternates immediately: Contractors can hold pricing for 2–3 months and decisions can wait until roofing bids are complete and scope reviews are finalized. The roof bid may also create a savings.

Mr. Cross noted that the mechanical (MEP) cost being used is Ferguson's combination bid (about \$16 million), which contributes significantly to the project's current budget overage. Mr. Cross suggested moving forward with contracts now to keep the project on schedule and begin value engineering discussions with contractors.

The design team raised serious concerns about the low electric bidder based on the concern the interpretation of the scope was not correct. Other contractors submitted similar bids, suggesting they interpreted the project scope consistently and the low bidder may have missed something or underbid.

Mr. Cross raised concerns with insulated wall panels and glazing work. Ms. Purcell confirmed that wall panels were originally tied to the window package, but roof-level fascia work has been separated and moved to the roofing package. Mr. Cross recommended to proceed with base bids only for now and not to make decisions on alternates yet. Mr. Cross suggested waiting for roofing bid results and for the Committee to have value engineering discussions.

Mr. Weissberg questioned if any alternates could influence which contractor is selected. Ms. Purcell explained she has only analyzed deduct (credit) alternates, not add alternates and that add alternates will not be used for selection decisions.

Mr. Weissberg also questioned how common Value Engineering (VE) is used on projects like this, and whether it is a common step. Ms. Purcell explained that VE (cost reduction through scope adjustments) is common on projects of this size. Significant potential savings are expected in HVAC and electrical systems, with a \$20M combined scope.

Mr. Putnam questioned a combined trade package bidding, specifically that Ferguson came in slightly lower by submitting a combined package. Mr. Putnam requested clarity on whether B-G might actually be lower on individual packages, but didn't realize combined bids would be considered. The design team clarified that the combined bid from B-G could not be accepted because it was submitted too late. Public bidding rules require strict adherence to timing and only the base bid can be considered valid. Any credits or adjustments must be handled after award via change orders. There is no negotiation or "best and final offer" process allowed under procurement rules. Additionally, the team can only exert leverage before contracts are executed.

#### B. Review Budget and Potential Alternates

The Building Committee then reviewed the list of alternates to determine what may be rejected and which alterations should still be included.

Alternate #1: North Parking Lot, with a cost of \$755,000 was rejected by the Building Committee.

Alternate #2: Change stamped/colored concrete to standard concrete, resulting in a potential savings of \$38,000. The Building Committee rejected this alternate, preferring to keep the original stamped/colored concrete design option.

Alternate #3: Playscape Area Rubber Surfacing: The Building Committee questioned the bid value as being unreasonably high for \$710,000. Members raised concern that accepting or rejecting this alternate could affect which contractor is considered the lowest bidder. Committee members proposed using scope review meetings to challenge the contractor on their pricing methodology and to understand why this contractor's alternates deviate significantly from peers.

Alternate#4: Interior Courtyard/Outdoor Classroom Design: The Building Committee did not discuss acceptance or rejection of this alternate.

Alternate #5: Front Entrance Canopies 3 &4: Removing the front entrance canopies is estimated to save \$199,693. The estimate is still considered uncertain, partly due to dependencies on roofing costs. The Committee agreed that no immediate decision is needed and it can be deferred for later consideration.

Alternate #7: Equipment Screens: Several committee members stated they do not want equipment screens.

Alternate#8+#9: Entrance Mats / "Walk-off" Systems: The Building Committee discussed specialized entry systems, with a preference toward mats or "water hogs" instead. Committee members noted this would be cheaper, easier and less expensive to replace, and provide adequate functional performance.

Alternate #10: Laminate Countertops: Switching the countertops from standard to laminate will provide a \$44,460 savings. The Committee members debated the durability of laminate, as some members expressed concern about water damage and long-term wear, especially in classrooms with sinks in every room. Others noted that laminate is standard in many schools and is generally acceptable.

The Building Committee reviewed the necessity of the front entrance canopies. Removing the canopies would save roughly \$199K. Mr. Weissberg viewed them as an important architectural feature and weather protection. Mr. Putnam agreed that the canopies should be removed only if needed to balance the budget. It was decided that the canopies will remain in the budget for now and this can be revisited later if budget pressure remains.

Alternate#11: Conferencing Technology This is a proposed Zoom-enabled conferencing system in a platform area. It was requested by the Board of Education for hybrid/public meetings. It could be added now or potentially later, although later installation may be more expensive due to electrical/rough-in work. Funding eligibility is uncertain depending on state/program classification. It was determined to keep as an optional alternate for now, with flexibility to decide later.

Alternate#12: Lightning Protection System

Alternate#13: Bi-Directional Amplification System This was noted as an end-of-project installation, with a goal of understanding how much it would cost (\$170,000).

Alternate#14: Gymnasium Projector & Screen, this was to be determined.

Alternate#15: Audio Enhancement System: The audio enhancement system was originally included in design. It is now partially reduced to a more cost-effective furniture-based ADA solution.

Alternate#16: 30 Year Extended Roof Warranty; open item.

Alternate#17: Voluntary System for HVAC (Honeywell): This change would result in a \$172,000 savings. Mr. Proia identified that the district currently uses a standardized building control system across facilities. Switching to a Honeywell system (even if it provides a \$172K savings) could create incompatibility with existing systems, fragmentation across buildings, and increased long-term operational complexity. This is still an open item.

The Building Committee agreed to move forward focusing on base bids only. No alternates or add alternates will be pursued at this time. O&G will start contractor scope review meetings immediately, evaluating bidders based on base scope performance and identifying misunderstandings in pricing, large discrepancies in alternate assumptions, as well as opportunities for cost refinement.

Ms. Purcell reviewed the Deduct alternates for completeness:

Switching Stamped / colored concrete to standard concrete: This is an estimated \$38,000 credit. It was initially proposed as savings, but *ultimately not accepted* as the Committee preferred keeping stamped concrete.

Front entrance canopies (three & four / side canopies): This is an estimated \$199,693 savings that remains in the base bid.

Changing solid surface countertops to laminate: This is an estimated \$44,460 credit. This also remains in the base bid.

HVAC controls (Honeywell/DDC voluntary alternate): This is an estimated \$172,000 credit. It was discussed as a potential savings, but not clearly accepted due to standardization concerns (district system consistency).

Overall, there is an estimated \$950,545 overage, including the estimated roofing bid as well as the higher electrical bid. Mr. Weissberg questioned what approach would be taken with the electrician. Ms. Purcell replied that they would bring in the second-low bidder (or next qualified bidder) for comparison. She would do a line-by-line scope comparison exercise that addressed what the low bidder included and what the second bidder included that the low bidder may have missed. Then, they would go back to the apparent low bidder and confirm they actually included everything and close gaps in scope (missing items, allowances, alternates, etc.).

The Building Committee discussed Ferguson's Combination Bid. It was determined that they would contract with Ferguson and then once contracted, they would once contracted, they will: review HVAC/electrical scope, identify substitutions or reductions, and try to recover budget overages. Ms. Purcell discussed B-G's late submission, which was \$30,000-\$35,000 lower than Ferguson's. However, it was iterated that due to the late submission, it cannot be accepted.

Mr. Weissberg questioned how contractors are incentivized to engage in VE discussions. O&G established that a partnership is created with contractors, in which contractors provide material solutions, equipment changes, or other possibilities to allow the job to proceed. Once prices are agreed upon, they are included in a change order, and it was recommended they would also be written into contracts.

The Building Committee will meet on April 22, in which the Committee should be prepared to award base bid contractors. Additionally, O&G should present cost-saving information from the contractors. It was noted that the roofing was originally scheduled to be by May 7, but it had to be delayed by a month from the date the addendum is issued.

### **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **Adjournment**

*Mr. Cross made a motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, to adjourn the meeting.*

*All in favor of adjourning the meeting: Mr. Weissberg, Mr. Cross, Mr. Putnam, Mr. Overton, Mr. Moore, Mr. Giamatteo and Mrs. Petrella. Motion passed and the meeting adjourned.*

Respectfully Submitted by Meghan Shortell-Fratantonio