

BOARD OF EDUCATION

A Message from Board President—James Foreman, Jr.



Ardmore City Schools will have a bond election on April 3, 2018. You may ask yourself, what's in it for me? You may no longer have children in school or you may be retired. Why should you care? My name is James Foreman and I serve on the Ardmore City Schools Board of Education. I am also retired and I don't have any children attending Ardmore Schools. But as a citizen, I care about my community, which includes our schools and the future of the City of Ardmore. Schools are what holds up a community. Great schools increase property values, decrease crime and encourages families and other residents to stay engaged in the community. For me, I don't pay taxes for education to support my own children, I pay them to support everyone.

Ardmore is growing. Just look around at the many construction projects and businesses coming in. It's an exciting time to be an Ardmoreite. It is also an exciting time for Ardmore City Schools. We are working hard to prepare our students for the 21st century in spite of the budget shortfalls in this state. Our students will be the future leaders of this community we love. Maybe they will be our artists, doctors, lawyers, teachers, scientists, nurses, plumbers, chefs, hairdressers, lab technicians, IT specialists, bankers, restaurant owners, electricians, carpenters and business people, just to name a few. Together we can make this community and our school district the best.

In November of 2017 our community stepped up and passed our bus bonds, allowing the district to completely replace our aging bus fleet over the next few years. Ten new buses will arrive in August, just in time for next school year. Even though we were disappointed with the loss of the other bond issue, falling short by only 33 votes, it has not dampened our spirits.

As a board, we reviewed our long-range plan and made some changes in the timeline for projects needed around the district. The two top projects on the bond would be Jefferson Elementary and a new performing arts center. We determined that giving Jefferson a gymnasium like Charles Evans and Lincoln was a priority and was moved up in the long-range plan.

While we are at it, we also wanted to give Jefferson a new secure front entry, parking and a separate bus loading area like they have at the other elementary schools. We are working with local architect Elizabeth Windel on the new design. I think you will agree with us that it is a great design for Jefferson's unique neighborhood. We continue to feel that a performing arts center is also a major priority not only for our school district, but for our community. Thank you to those of you who took the time to contact a board member or our superintendent in support of a performing arts center project. We are proud to bring this back to you as well.

A little over three years ago, I was contacted by some concerned citizens in the community who encouraged me to run for the school board. I felt it was important for the district to refocus on serving children, teachers and the community. While serving on the board, I hope to challenge old assumptions and make a positive difference. I hope you will join with me to continue moving our school district forward.

This bond would be structured to maintain the current tax level of 25 mills, projecting no tax increase.

- ⇒ Jefferson Gymnasium Project
- ⇒ Performing Arts Center
- ⇒ Water Mitigation at Charles Evans
- ⇒ Replacement of the outdoor walkway canopies at AHS.
- ⇒ Renovation of AHS cafeteria restrooms
- ⇒ School Vehicles to include a Driver's Ed car

Please join me and vote on April 3rd.