



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
October 27, 2022

Live Oak, Texas — Earlier today in a press release, Texas Governor Greg Abbott announced a transfer of money to support public safety initiatives including to fund \$400 million in safety measures for Texas school districts. Since May, there have been no funds provided or allocated from the State directly to school districts. Currently, there is no other information available to guarantee how much a public school district would receive or when.

The last time the State invested in state-wide school security was in 2019 after the Santa Fe incident. The Legislature passed a bill to add \$9.72 per student per year, about \$50 million per year to cover approximately 1,026 independent school districts with 5,300,000 students and 5 billion square feet of school space. For Judson ISD, this equated to about \$250,000. School districts in Texas have historically relied on local, taxpayer dollars from their annual operating budgets, fund balance, and voter-approved bond elections to provide safety and security features like secure entryways, visitor identification systems, access card readers, central lockdown systems, bulletproof film for doors and windows, fire alarms, fencing, lighting and surveillance cameras. Local funds can also cover additional police officers, police cars, and drug/vapor dogs.

Judson ISD continues its commitment to keep its students and staff in safe learning environments and to address gaps as they are identified. Local taxpayers approved a bond election in 2016 which included about \$1.6 million for security upgrades on some campuses such as security vestibules, perimeter fencing, and fire alarms. Recent investments from the district's fund balance included installing perimeter fencing and basic access control at the most vulnerable campuses. The district is currently contracting with a national firm with specialized expertise to conduct a comprehensive security audit of every district facility. The firm has only 12 facility assessments left to complete, and its final report should be available by December 2022.

Judson ISD has Proposition A on the November 8th ballot that addresses current safety and security projects. These projects have been identified since the internal facility assessment was completed in 2020. The District's Growth and Planning Committee studied and prioritized the list of projects and proposed \$302 million on the November 2021 bond. That bond was unsuccessful, so Judson ISD continued to meet with the committee to create a new recommendation to the Board of Trustees for a November 2022 bond election. Proposition A includes the same list of safety and security projects, except at a new cost reflecting the increase in construction and inflation escalation over the last year. A secure vestibule entryway at one campus can cost a district around \$360,000. The cost of installing and upgrading camera security systems at all of our facilities is around \$3,000,000.

Dr. Jeanette Ball, Superintendent— “Governor Abbott has not provided any guidance on how much money a district will or could receive, whether it will be provided based on enrollment or as a competitive grant program, which means only select districts would receive funds. The press release



JUDSON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

does not indicate when the funds would be received. Our commitment is to diligently continue the work of closing any and every gap to make our schools as safe as they can be with the funds we have available. If our bond proposal passes, we intend to begin projects listed in Proposition A as soon as possible.”

For more information on the governor’s announcement, please visit www.gov.texas.gov/news.

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About Judson ISD

Judson Independent School District is a Pre-K through 12th grade public school district in the San Antonio area. Prior to its current form, the district was known as Judson Rural School District No. 8. The rural district was created on June 25, 1958, by the Bexar County School Board and combined the existing districts of Converse, Kirby and Selma. The new district was named after Moses Campbell Judson. Today, Judson ISD serves over 23,000 students within the incorporated cities of Converse, Kirby, Live Oak, San Antonio, Selma, and Universal City. Judson ISD produces excellence throughout all campuses and builds strong connections with the community. The district earned a B rating from the Texas Education Agency and is constantly working on innovative ways to enhance the learning for its students. Judson ISD believes in providing a strong foundation for early learners by offering full day Pre-Kindergarten programs beginning at 3 years old. Being a district of choice provides Judson families to customize their own educational experiences through the multitude of programs the District has to offer. For more information, visit www.judsonisd.org

It is the policy of Judson Independent School District not to discriminate on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, sex, marital or veteran status, disability (or relationship or association with an individual with a disability), genetic information or other legally protected status in its programs, services or activities as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. In addition, the District also provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination on the basis of disability: Director of Guidance and Counseling. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX and all other non-discrimination policies: Executive Director of Human Resources. 8012 Shin Oak. Live Oak, TX. 78233. (210) 945-5101.