

## **Bond Oversight Committee tours Wharton DLA, receives program update**

HISD Bond Oversight Committee members toured the new Wharton Dual Language Academy during their quarterly meeting Tuesday, getting an inside look at the building that opened its doors to students just four months ago.

Wharton Principal Jennifer Day and HISD Construction Services Senior Manager Meredith Smith led the group around the colorful building, making stops in classrooms, science and computer labs, and art and music rooms, as well as the cafeteria, gym, and library.

The Bond Oversight Committee is an independent citizens' committee tasked with monitoring the bond program, ensuring revenues are spent appropriately, and evaluating program risks and controls. The group meets quarterly.

HISD Construction Services General Manager Andreas Peeples provided the group with a program progress report, noting that school construction across the district was 85 percent complete. Just four bond schools — Lamar, Bellaire, Northside, and Austin high schools — remain under construction as part of their original scope of work.

Peeples reported that all four projects are making good progress. Significant tilt-wall construction is has been done at Austin, bringing that project to 35 percent complete. At Bellaire, the first phase of the project — parking lots and underground site detention — is 99 percent complete.

Construction at Lamar is 65 percent complete, with the new school set to open its doors to students for the first time in August 2019. Northside is 84 percent complete with work outlined under the project's original scope concluding this summer.

Additionally, realignment projects continue across the district, with major construction at seven campuses — Westbury, Waltrip, Wisdom, Washington, Yates, and Milby high schools and Pilgrim Academy. These are new, board-approved projects that were not part of the original scope of work but are funded by surplus bond funds.

The oversight committee also heard updates on the financial status of the 2012 Bond Program, as well as district outreach efforts and minority- and women-owned business enterprise participation rates, which continue to track above board-established goals.