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James L. Henderson, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

Connecting for Success: Every Child, Every Classroom, Every Day

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ms. Deborah Antoine, Public Relations

dantoine@holmesccsd.org or (662) 854-3447

Citizens for the **VOTE YES** School Bond Referendum off to a great start

LEXINGTON, Miss. – **Citizens for the VOTE YES School Bond Referendum** hosted a kick-off meeting for volunteers and selected community leaders on Friday, August 30th in the Agape @Harvester Restaurant 20735 Highway 12, Lexington, MS to galvanize support for the first-ever passage of the county's school bond. Nearly 50 people turned out ready to learn about the bond and to volunteer their energy and support to the crucial sub-committees campaigning for an historic passage of a school bond—something not seen in Holmes County for more than 50 years!

Steering Committee Co-chairs Holmes County Circuit Clerk Earline Wright Hart and *Straight Talk* radio host Zelpha Montgomery Whatley gave inspirational speeches to the attendees encouraging them to use their influence to convince their fellow citizens to vote for the referendum.

Attorney Jim Young of the Young Law Group brought the information everyone had been awaiting: the cost to homeowners for the up to \$18.4 million bond. Mr. Young presented multiple calculations based on home values and car ownership, including the following:

- For homes with \$30,000 tax roll value, the tax increase will be approximately 23¢ per day
- For homes with \$65,000 tax roll value, the tax increase will be approximately 34¢ per day
- For homes with \$100,000 tax roll value, the tax increase will be approximately 45¢ per day

These calculations include the assumption of ownership of a vehicle valued at \$15,000. For most county residents, the average increase is 27¢ per day.

Superintendent of Schools, Dr. James L. Henderson followed the attorney's presentation with a presentation describing the potentially three new schools: PreK–8 elementary school in Durant serving up to 900 students, a 9th grade Center for 350-400 students and a 10th-12th grade High School serving 650-700 students. He repeated the urgent and historic statement, "No school bond measure has received community approval in the past 50 years, according to our research. *It's That Time!* to invest in the future of our children. Our children deserve the best!"

Between now and Election Day November 5th, the Steering Committee and school employees will get the word out that there is no increase in taxes for renters/non-homeowners, residents age 65-and-older with home value less than \$75,000, or disabled persons. Moreover, 80% of the residents who see a change to their taxes will experience an average cost of only 27¢ per day—which translates to less than \$100 per year.



Ms. Whatley led everyone through a timeline of tasks that need to be done over the next two months before sending them to work with their group chairs on Finance, Media, Community Leaders, Schools, Youth, Speakers Bureau and *Get Out the Vote* sub-committees. The room vibrated with the buzz of energetic discussion and ideas of how to proceed.

It was clear that everyone present felt the excitement of bringing new schools to the county to improve the futures of the area's children.

Media organizations in need of more information are asked to contact Ms. Deborah Antoine, Media Spokesperson by email: dantoine@holmesccsd.org, or call (662) 854-3447.

