



EANES INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

601 Camp Craft Rd.
Austin, Texas 78746-6512
supt@eanesisd.net

Phone: 512.732.9001
Fax: 512.732.9005
www.eanesisd.net

Nola H. Wellman, Ph.D.
Superintendent

December 14, 2011

City of West Lake Hills
Mayor Dave Claunch
911 Westlake Drive
West Lake Hills, TX 78746

Dear Mayor Claunch:

It is my understanding that members of the City Council have expressed individual concerns regarding sound at Westlake High School's Chaparral Stadium. In the almost forty years since Chaparral Stadium was built, it has included a public address system that broadcasts sound for safety purposes and to direct activities on the field. The District has only received a few complaints regarding sound in that time period, which have been addressed individually. However, we are very cognizant of our role as a member of the West Lake Hills community and strive to remain good neighbors with our taxpayers.

In an effort to respond to this recent input, we have identified several ways in which the sound system at Chaparral Stadium can be refined. To that end, attached for your information is a memorandum from David Poole, Director of the Westlake Community Performing Arts Center. In this memorandum to me, Mr. Poole proposes making several changes to the procedures regarding the sound system in Chaparral Stadium, as follows:

- Reprogramming the master volume default settings for the sound system. The announcer microphone setting would be set at a modest level for small events (less than 300 attendees). The default setting would disable the ability to play music through the system, and the District would determine which events require music and additional volume from the announcer.
- Enlisting the services of audio consultants to test and clean all aspects of the sound system, including the angle of the main loudspeakers.

Mayor Dave Claunch
Page 2
December 14, 2011

I have already authorized Mr. Poole to take action on these recommendations, including approving a significant financial expenditure to address the concerns. I am very pleased with Mr. Poole's efforts in this area, and am happy to provide these recommendations as the District's solutions to the issues that you and I discussed in our meeting on December 7, 2011.

As you know, the District has a sign permit application pending before the City Council, requesting a variance to Chapter 32 ("Signs") of the City's Code of Ordinances for improvements to the Chaparral Stadium video display board. As expressed in my separate correspondence regarding that application, I request that the City Council evaluate the District's sign permit application appropriately, within the realm of the sign ordinance and variance process for sign approval. It would be inappropriate to link the sound issues related to the stadium's public address system with the sign permit application, particularly since the video display board at the Stadium does not produce sound. The City's sign ordinance does not contemplate any review of sound issues, and the City has no authority to regulate sound in its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

I hope you recognize that Eanes ISD and I will work in good faith to make improvements to the sound system within the District's budget constraints. Ultimately, the sound system will need to be replaced for the most effective improvement in sound quality. In the meantime, we will continue to monitor and refine the Chaparral Stadium sound system for the benefit of our community.

Sincerely,



Nola H. Wellman, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Attachment

cc: Members, Eanes ISD Board of Trustees



EANES INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

David H. Poole
Managing Director, Westlake Community Performing Arts Center

4100 Westbank Drive • Austin, TX 78746 • (512) 732-9297 • FAX (512) 329-6179 • www.eanesisd.net

November 30, 2011

Dear Dr. Wellman:

In light of the recent concerns brought to my attention by members of the West Lake Hills City Council regarding the sound system in Chaparral Stadium, I would like to recommend several procedural changes.

The audio mixer located in the stadium press box is manufactured by Ivey and is computerized in nature. The settings are "fixed" internally and may not be adjusted by the user unless a simple controller is plugged into the audio rack inside the announcer's room. This controller has volume controls for each input (announcer microphone, CD player, ipod, field microphone, etc.). There is also a master volume knob. To clarify, when the controller is disconnected, the system reverts back to pre-determined default settings. Currently, the default settings have the announcer's microphone and CD player at a volume level higher than necessary for small crowds.

My first recommendation would be to reprogram the default settings of the mixer to allow ONLY the volume of the announcer microphone to be turned up. This microphone would be adjusted at a modest level appropriate for 300 attendees. The ability for the user to play music over the sound system would be disabled. With the purchase of the Ivey software, my staff could make these changes. The controller would remain disconnected and locked in a safe location except on the occasions where large crowds are projected to be present in the stadium (ie. Varsity football games, playoff games, track meets, etc.) The athletic director is the appropriate person to make the decision when the event requires pre-recorded music and additional volume from the announcer. During these events, a designee could reconnect the controller and override the default settings.

To my knowledge, the stadium sound system has not been serviced by an audio contractor in quite some time. I recommend that we enlist the services of BAI (audio consultants) and Big House Audio (audio/video contractor) to test and clean all aspects of the system. Additionally, the angle of the main loudspeakers should be checked and adjusted appropriately. The ideal time to accomplish this work would be at the completion of the video board installation.

Although we have received only a few complaints over the past ten years, this sound system will soon reach the end of its useful life. My final recommendation is to have me work with BAI to discuss and possibly develop a design for a sound system for Chaparral Stadium that might be more in keeping with our efforts to be good community members. This project could be placed on a proposed list of future bond projects.

Thank you for your consideration.

David H. Poole
Director, Westlake Community Performing Arts Center

Cc: Darren Allman, Athletic Director, Eanes ISD
Cc: Les Reddin, Executive Director of Bond Projects and Construction