

Delano Union School District 2024 Bond Measure Frequently Asked Questions

How are schools in Delano Union School District doing?

Delano Union School District (DUSD) serves approximately 6,200 students in Transitional Kindergarten (TK) through 8th grade and strives to provide students with a high-quality education, preparing them for high school and beyond. Teachers and staff strive to deliver a supportive learning environment that models a strong, positive work ethic, sparks an attitude of inquiry and enthusiasm for learning, and enables students to become productive and responsible citizens.

Students in DUSD just completed a successful academic school year with many accomplishments and celebrations, including First Place in the 2024 Scripps Kern County Spelling Bee, qualifying for the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington DC; KCSOS STEAM Olympiad participants secured over 60 awards clinching more than 14 first-place titles; the Morningside track team clinched the Valley Championship in the 4x400 meter event; and so many more celebrations!

What challenges is DUSD facing?

We're proud of the high quality of education in Delano schools, but some of our schools were built over 70 years ago and need repairs and upgrades to meet current academic and safety standards. For our students to be prepared for high school, college and careers, they should be skilled in the use of today's technologies and have a solid background in science, technology, engineering, arts and math.

The Facilities Assessment and Implementation Plan, adopted in 2019, includes projects such as replacing deteriorating portable classrooms with permanent classrooms, renovating classrooms to support flexible learning environments, and upgrading classroom technology to meet current learning standards.

What are the options for repairing and upgrading aging local school facilities?

To maintain Delano elementary and middle schools and provide safe and modern classrooms for local students, the Delano Union School District Board of Trustees unanimously voted to place a \$41.8 million school facilities bond measure on the November 2024 ballot. If approved, this measure will provide locally controlled funding for school facility improvements. The bond measure will cost homeowners approximately \$25 per \$100,000 of a property's assessed value (not market value), annually, while bonds are outstanding. It is projected that the new measure will not increase the current tax rate for the District's outstanding bonds.

If approved by 55% of local voters, the school facilities bond measure could:

- Upgrade classrooms, libraries, music and arts classrooms to support student learning
- Update and improve fire safety systems, school security and emergency communications systems
- Enhance instructional technology in classrooms for student learning
- Repair or replace leaky roofs, heating and cooling systems and outdated plumbing
- Improve accessibility for students with disabilities

Is there any other way to update our schools?

The district has very few options when it comes to making the necessary renovations and upgrades our schools need. The State has been an unreliable partner in funding and provides very limited funding for facilities improvements.

A school facilities bond measure would provide local funding to address the facilities needs at our local schools. In addition, if passed, the measure would help our schools qualify for approximately \$7 million in State-matching funds – funds that could otherwise go to other communities. Our district has, and will continue to, apply for funding from the State if and when it becomes available.

Will fiscal accountability protections be included in this measure?

Yes, a school facilities bond measure requires mandatory fiscal accountability, including:

- All funds raised by this measure are required to be spent only to improve neighborhood schools and no funds can be taken by the State
- The measure requires independent citizens’ oversight and mandatory annual audits to ensure the money is spent as promised
- By law, no funds may be used for administrators’ salaries or pensions

Haven’t we already passed a bond measure?

It has been almost 25 years since DUSD passed the last bond measure. In 2000, voters approved Measure B, a \$45 million bond to fund school facilities modernization and construction projects. While the District has previously completed school construction and improvement projects with these bond funds, there are now many projects that need funding as identified in the facilities plan. To fund the needed school facilities improvements, the Board has placed a new \$41.8 million bond measure on the November 2024 ballot with a plan to maintain the bond tax rates.

How much will the measure cost?

If passed by voters, the bond measure will generate approximately \$41.8 million to upgrade local schools and will cost taxpayers approximately \$25 per \$100,000 of a property’s assessed value (not market value), per year, while bonds are outstanding.

How does the District plan to maintain tax rates while generating an additional \$41.8 million in school facilities improvement funds?

Bonds issued under the election of 2000, Measure B, which was previously approved by District voter, are being paid down each year, and the tax rates for these bonds are projected to decrease over time. The District plans to issue new bonds only as the Measure B bonds are paid down. Therefore, the new bond payments are offset by the reduction in projected tax rates for the Measure B bonds, enabling the plan to maintain the total tax rates for DUSD bonds.

What is the difference between assessed value and market value?

The cost of bond measures is based on the assessed value of properties. The assessed value of a property is based on the original purchase price and may not increase by more than 2% a year, while the market value tends to grow at a much faster rate based on market conditions. Thus, the assessed value is usually lower than the market value, especially if a property was purchased long ago at a lower price than it could be purchased for today. It is this lower assessed value upon which the cost of a bond measure is based.

Who can vote on the measure?

All registered voters residing within Delano Union School District will be eligible to vote on the measure.

How many votes are needed to win?

The measure will need to be supported by 55% of those who vote on it in order for it to pass.

How can I register to vote or learn more about voting?

You can register to vote at www.registertovote.ca.gov. To find out more about voting in this election, please contact the Kern County Registrar of Voters at (661) 868-3590.

How can I find out more?

We welcome your feedback and questions as we work to meet current facility needs. To share your opinions or to ask questions, please contact Superintendent Rivera at info@duesd.org.