



Sebastopol Union Elementary School District

Frequently Asked Questions Handout

Although it appears that our local schools are in good shape based on the achievements by our students, our classrooms and facilities need significant repairs and improvements. Faced with aging classrooms and the need to bring school facilities up to current standards, the Sebastopol Union Elementary School District has placed Measure N on the November 2024 ballot that will modernize and renovate our 2 local schools.

The following information is provided to assist voters in understanding the facts behind Measure N and how its passage will affect the District and our community.

What is Measure N?

Measure N is a \$24.0 million general obligation (G.O.) bond program. This measure is intended to address the needs of the student population through modernization and renovation projects at the District's two schools: Park Side Elementary, serving grades TK-4, and Brook Haven, serving grades 5-8.

What is a General Obligation (G.O.) bond?

G.O. bonds fund projects such as the renovation of existing classrooms and school facilities, as well as construction of new schools and classrooms. Similar to a home loan, G.O. bonds are typically repaid over 25 to 30 years. The loan repayment comes from a tax on all taxable property - residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial - located within the District's boundaries.

Why did the District place Measure N on the ballot?

Our schools are outdated, and major upgrades and renovations need to be made. While facilities have been well maintained, old classrooms and facilities must be upgraded since many do not meet 21st century educational, technological, and safety standards. With that being said, a local school improvement measure would allow the District to improve the quality of the school facilities and education provided to local children.

Why can't the District meet its facilities needs with its current budget?

Today, the scope of improvements needed at the Sebastopol Union Elementary School District is far more than the current funding sources available. The per-pupil funding the District receives from the state is intended to be used for the day-to-day business of educating children, not for the costs of upgrading, modernizing, and repairing facilities.

How did the District come up with the project list for Measure N?

Over the last couple of months, with input from staff, teachers, parents, and an architect, the District has prepared a School Facilities Needs Analysis. The Needs Analysis identifies the major repairs and upgrades that need to be made.

District Office

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"Elevating Excellence for All"

Park Side Elementary School

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Brook Haven Middle School

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Specific projects identified include:

- Repairing or replacing leaky roofs
- Replacing temporary portables with permanent classrooms
- Constructing/modernizing outdated classrooms, restrooms, and other facilities
- Replacing outdated heating, ventilation, and cooling systems
- Replacing deteriorating plumbing systems

What will the passage of Measure N mean for our students and the community?

Measure N will provide our students with a better learning environment by making repairs and upgrades to existing classrooms and school facilities; many of which are also used and available to the community, such as the libraries and playing fields.

What will happen if Measure N does not pass?

If the measure does not pass, our classrooms and school facilities will continue to deteriorate. In addition, funds that would otherwise go to classroom instruction will be needed to make critical safety repairs and improvements at each school. Consequently, major repairs will need to be postponed, and as a result, will likely be more expensive to make.

What will Measure N cost?

The tax rate per property owner is estimated to be \$29 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation per year (Do not confuse assessed valuation with market value. Assessed valuations are the value placed on property by the County and are almost always lower than market values). Check your property tax statement for your current assessed valuation.

How can I be sure that bond funds will be spent on improving the District's local schools?

By law, all bond funds must be spent locally and cannot be taken by the state. Furthermore, an independent citizens' oversight committee will be established to ensure that bond funds are properly spent. By law, there must be annual audits and no bond money can be used for teacher or administrative salaries.