



PRESS RELEASE

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Board of Education votes to place bond measure on November ballot

FRESNO, CA – The Fresno Unified Board of Education voted tonight to place a \$280 million bond on the November 2010 ballot to address the facilities needs of the Fresno Unified School District.

“Our Board’s action to move forward with a bond reflects our commitment to improving and repairing Fresno Unified schools,” said FUSD Superintendent Michael Hanson. “Even more so during these challenging times, we must press forward to ensure that all our students have access to high-quality schools.”

The ballot measure proposes to improve school campuses in every neighborhood of the district, without raising the current authorized tax rate, by:

- Upgrading and improving all Fresno Unified schools
- Supporting the work of the district to prepare career-ready graduates
- Investing in renovation and repair of all schools
- Continuing classroom technology upgrades
- Addressing the dropout issue by investing in alternative and continuing education facilities

“This bond is about investing in the basics and is an important next step in implementing the district’s Facilities Master Plan,” said Nick Yovino, a member of the community-led Facilities Ad hoc Advisory Committee (FAAC).

The bond proceeds would be used to fund priority projects as identified in the Facilities Master Plan with:

- \$79 million to upgrade and improve elementary schools
- \$46 million to improve middle schools
- \$98 million to upgrade all high schools
- \$12 million for career technical education facilities
- \$16 million for school maintenance/repair and technology
- \$ 8 million for alternative/continuing education to address the dropout issue
- Funds for special education, joint use, site acquisition, and supplemental construction costs

To anticipate and plan for the future facilities needs of Fresno Unified, the district commissioned a group of community leaders on the FAAC to create a Facilities Master Plan. The FAAC spent two years analyzing data on the district's facilities use and condition, enrollment trends, and the educational needs of students and the district. In addition, the committee held more than 20 public meetings to gather input and guidance on the Facilities Master Plan.

Among many other issues, the Facilities Master Plan addresses major school facilities issues such as:

- The lack of clear school feeder patterns throughout the district;
- Excessive use of portable buildings;
- Wide variability in school size across the district;
- Schools not meeting facility condition and educational suitability standards; and
- The limited availability of choice programs and special education in some areas of the district.

In November 2009, the FAAC recommended to the Board of Education to consider a bond to fund priority projects in the Facilities Master Plan. While the plan identifies \$940 million in facilities needs, the \$280 million bond would address the top priority facility projects, while maintaining the current authorized tax rate.

The last bond passed in the district was Measure K in March 2001. That bond raised \$199 million to fund new school construction and facility improvements. The 10-year Measure K program included more than 1,000 facilities improvement and construction projects district-wide, designed to support student learning. As that source of funds runs out and school building needs remain, the Board acted to put a new bond before the voters; this one requiring no raise in current tax rates.

“We know that high-quality schools support a quality education for our students, which, in turn, contributes to the quality of our neighborhoods,” Hanson said.

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Education Center 2309 Tulare Street Fresno, CA 93721 Michael E. Hanson, Superintendent