

# MEASURE "L"

## Measure to Build a New High School, Reduce Overcrowding, and Support Career Pathways Fact Sheet/ Q&A

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**Q. What is Measure "L"?**

- A. Measure "L" is a general obligation bond school improvement measure on the November 8, 2016 ballot that will:
- Allow the District to sell up to \$110 million in bonds to build and reconfigure its high school and middle school
  - Increase classroom technology infrastructure
  - Upgrade vocational education facilities to prepare students for college and careers
  - Provide a local match, making the District eligible to receive a potential \$13 million in state matching grants

**Q. Why has the McFarland USD Board Voted to Place Measure "L" on the November 8, 2016 Ballot?**

- A. Over the years, the District has utilized limited resources available to address its school facilities needs from the bottom up. Initially, given the age of our schools, repairs focused primarily on basic safety and infrastructure including, plumbing, electrical, and structural improvements. Next, the District invested in student support facilities to support McFarland's rich history in sports and need for student enrichment. Most recently, with the last bond program, the District built a new elementary school to address growth, reduce class sizes and improve academic achievement. Now the greatest needs exist at the high school and middle school. McFarland High, originally designed to support 600 students, today serves over 900 and is projected to continue increasing. Measure "L" will seek to reduce overcrowding while also providing the necessary facilities to support a 21<sup>st</sup> century education.

**Q. What are General Obligation (GO) Bonds?**

- A. GO bonds are a form of borrowing made by the District. The District repays the GO bonds from ad valorem property taxes that are collected within the District, typically over 25-30 years. GO bond funds can only be used to pay for buildings and other infrastructure projects, including construction, and modernization, as approved by District voters.

**Q. How would the GO bonds be repaid?**

- A. GO bonds are repaid from a tax levied on all taxable property within the District's boundaries. The amount of the tax is determined by the assessed value of a property (not market value).

**Q. How much would it cost?**

- A. The proposed Measure "L" would cost property owners an estimated \$240 a year per \$100,000 of assessed property value.

**Q. Would all funds be used exclusively for McFarland USD schools?**

- A. Yes! Measure "L" funds would be dedicated only for uses benefiting McFarland USD schools, as approved by District voters.

**Q. Is now a good time for a bond measure?**

- A. The District has conducted various planning and public discussions regarding its facilities needs, including student overcrowding. Measure "L" is an important part of the District's plan to address these critical needs. A community survey of registered voters indicated that over 85% of respondents would support a potential measure. What's more, many surrounding districts in the Valley have successfully passed similar school funding measures.

**Q. What safeguards does the community have to ensure monies are not misused?**

- A. State law requires a detailed list of projects be presented to District voters. Only projects identified on the project list may be funded from the Measure. Bond funds cannot be spent on administrator or teacher salaries. The District is also required to perform an annual audit of bond expenditures. Lastly, Measure "L" requires the formation of an oversight committee of community representatives to prepare and provide an annual expenditure report to the public.

**Q. What happens if the proposed measure fails?**

- A. Measure "L" requires 66.7% of voter approval for passage. If it fails, critical improvements will have to be delayed and our school facilities needs would continue to increase over time along with potential costs. In some cases, projects will have to be paid from other District funding sources that could otherwise be used for academic programs and operations.

**Q. We have a lot of school facility needs; will Measure "L" address them all?**

- A. The funds generated by Measure "L" cannot meet all of the District's facilities needs as they are extensive. Measure "L" is expected to address high priority overcrowding issues at the high school.

**Q. What about other sources of funding?**

- A. The General Fund is budgeted in large part from the State to cover educational programs and other ongoing costs of running our schools, including teacher salaries. The General Fund does not account for major school construction needs. Additionally, State lottery funds are primarily restricted for educational purposes. Utilizing Measure "L" funds as a local match, the District will also apply for State grants and matching funds in order to maximize total available funding for our school capital needs.

**Q. Who can vote on Measure "L" on November 8<sup>th</sup> election?**

- A. All registered voters who live within the boundaries of the McFarland USD are eligible to vote on Measure "L". The last day to register to vote for the November 8<sup>th</sup> election is October 24. You can register to vote at: <http://registertovote.ca.gov/>

**Q. Where can I find additional information?**

- A. Please send questions about the McFarland USD school funding program, Measure "L" to the superintendent's office at \_\_\_\_\_@mcfarland.k12.ca.org