

## **Fontana Unified School District Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

### **How are schools in Fontana Unified School District (FUSD/District) performing?**

FUSD schools have adapted to changing and challenging circumstances the past two years in order to continue providing a quality education to local students. Over 35,000 local students receive high-quality, well-rounded education in our 46 schools (1 virtual). FUSD serves an area encompassing over 40 square miles of San Bernardino County.

Our success is rooted in our community of dedicated teachers, staff and parents who are committed to serving our students from preschool to adult education. FUSD schools focus on core academics, innovative classroom programs and career pathways that help to ensure each child has an equal opportunity for success. Our nationally recognized schools are known for their fast growth in student achievement and our students learn in an educational environment that prepares them for high school, college and careers.

### **What is the current state of FUSD classrooms, labs and school facilities?**

To help ensure that students have a safe and effective learning environment, our schools need basic repairs and upgrades. While some of our schools are newer, more than half of FUSD school sites are over 30 years old and 16 of our schools are 50 years old or older. Many of our schools do not meet today's evolving education standards. That is why our District has recently revisited our Facilities Master Plan, which has identified over \$1.1 billion in needed repairs and maintenance to preserve health and safety standards and to ensure that all our students have equal access to high quality educational facilities.

### **Specifically, what are the facilities needs at FUSD schools?**

FUSD schools have aging infrastructure that was not built to meet the needs for 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching and learning environments. Many of our schools have outdated security and safety features, including aging electrical and fire safety systems, as well as many portable classrooms that are over 30 years old and have only one or two electrical outlets and limited high-speed internet access making them inadequate for today's learning environment. Upgrades are needed for math and science classrooms, and computer technology to help improve student learning and achievement.

In addition, rapid population growth in the north part of our District has put pressure on the capacity of our local public schools and 2 new school sites are needed meet the education needs of our community and prevent overcrowding.

### **Are FUSD schools well maintained?**

Our District maintenance team works hard to take care of our aging classrooms and school facilities by keeping up with minor repairs and maintenance. Unfortunately, the significant upgrades and improvements needed at our more than 50-year-old schools are beyond what can be accomplished by our maintenance team and funded by the District's regular maintenance budget. The State of California provides very limited funding for school upgrades and improvements and most State funding requires local matching funds.

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

FUSD has carefully assessed the needs at each District school site and worked with school architects to prioritize and plan improvements to provide our students with the safe, modern and effective learning environment they need to succeed. To keep pace with academic standards and improve student safety

and security, Fontana Unified School District is considering placing a local school improvement bond measure on the November 2022 general election ballot.

**Specifically, how would local school improvement funding be used?**

If approved, bond funds could be used to:

- Repair leaky roofs and remove asbestos, lead paint and mold
- Keep schools safe and secure
- Provide early childhood classrooms for all children under 4 years old at every school site by 2025
- Prevent overcrowding by providing additional schools and classrooms
- Help provide effective learning environments in classrooms to help prepare students for 21st century jobs and careers
- Build or upgrade science, technology, engineering and math labs

**Does the State provide funding for school improvements?**

No, the State does not provide dedicated funding for school facility improvements. The limited State funding available for facility upgrades requires local matching funds, usually provided by a local school improvement bond measure. If a FUSD school improvement bond measure was passed, it might help the District to obtain State matching funds.

**I am concerned about the growing enrollment at my school. How would a bond measure help?**

Thanks to our academic efforts, programs and growing student achievement, we are retaining students and attracting new families to our schools. A school improvement bond measure would allow the District to provide sufficient classrooms, science labs and school libraries to prevent overcrowding in our schools.

**Would fiscal accountability protections be included in this school improvement measure?**

Yes, a potential school improvement measure would require mandatory fiscal accountability elements, including:

- No money from a bond measure would go towards administrators' salaries or pensions
- All money raised by measure would stay local to support our students and could not be taken away by the State
- A Citizens' Oversight Committee and independent audits would be required

**Could the State take away funding from a measure?**

No. All funds generated from a school improvement bond measure would stay local to support FUSD schools. The State would not be able to take away any of those funds.

**How much would a potential measure cost?**

While no final decisions have been made, a potential bond measure could generate up to \$349 million for District school facilities projects and would cost the typical property owner within the District approximately \$150 per year, or about \$60 per \$100,000 of assessed (not market) value per year in property taxes, while bonds are outstanding. If the bond measure is placed on the ballot, more specific details on the bond program repayment cost will be provided in the ballot materials provided to all District voters.

**What is the difference between assessed value and market value?**

The cost of school improvement bond measures is based on the assessed value of properties within the District. The assessed value of a property is based on the original purchase price and, if the property is not sold or improved, 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. In FUSD, the assessed value of the typical single-family home is much lower than the current market value. The typical single-family home in the District currently has an assessed value of approximately \$260,000 compared to market values often priced well over \$500,000. Assessed values are especially low if a property was purchased long ago at a much lower price than it could be purchased for today. It is this lower assessed value upon which the repayment (tax) cost of a bond measure is based.

**When would the potential school improvement bond measure appear on the ballot?**

The Fontana Unified School District is considering placing a school improvement bond measure on the November 2022 general Statewide election ballot.

**How can I be sure funds from a potential school improvement measure will be spent as authorized by the voters?**

An independent citizens' oversight committee comprised of local residents must review the use of all funds from a potential school improvement bond measure and report their findings to the public at least once each year. Annual independent audits of all bond funds are mandatory. All documentation on the expenditure of bond funds is available for public review.

**Will businesses be paying their share?**

Yes. All taxable properties within FUSD would pay the taxes for bond repayment for our schools, including businesses.

**May funds from a potential school improvement bond measure be used for administrator salaries and pensions?**

No. By law, no funds from a potential school improvement bond measure may be used for District operating expenses, including administrator salaries and pensions.

**I don't have children attending local schools. How does this impact me?**

Whether or not you have school-age children, the quality of local schools impacts the quality of life in our community and local home values. Academic research has shown that high quality local schools support demand for homes and help keep property values strong.

**Who gets to vote on a potential school improvement bond measure?**

All registered voters residing within Fontana Unified School District will be eligible to vote on the potential school improvement bond measure.

**How can I find out more?**

We welcome your feedback and questions as we consider options to address the District's facilities needs. For more information or for questions, visit [fUSD.net/PotentialMeasure](https://fUSD.net/PotentialMeasure) or email [FUSDInformation@fUSD.net](mailto:FUSDInformation@fUSD.net).