

School Bonds*

Digest by the Ballot Simplification Committee

Status: Final Digest

On: Thursday, August 4, 2016

Members: Packard, Anderson, Fasick, Fraps, Jorgensen

Deadline to Request Reconsideration: 11:30 a.m. on Friday, August 5

The Way It Is Now: The San Francisco Unified School District (School District) builds, maintains, upgrades and repairs its facilities. The funds come primarily from voter-approved bond measures, local parcel taxes and developer fees. The San Francisco Board of Education oversees the School District and appoints a superintendent of schools, who is responsible for day-to-day administration of the district.

Under State law, before a school district can issue general obligation bonds, voters must be given a list of school facilities that will benefit from those bond funds. State law also requires school districts issuing those bonds to create an independent citizens' oversight committee and to conduct annual, independent audits. State law prevents school districts from using bond funds for teacher and administrator salaries or operating expenses.

The Proposal: Proposition ____ would authorize the School District to borrow up to \$744,250,000 by issuing general obligation bonds. These funds may be used to repair and upgrade any School District site to:

- address health and safety risks by making seismic upgrades, improving accessibility for people with disabilities, fixing damaged buildings and removing hazardous materials;
- construct new schools;
- repair and replace major building systems, including electrical, heating, water, sewer, lighting, security and fire sprinkler systems;
- modify building interiors, such as classrooms, and exteriors, such as playgrounds, fences and gates, fields and bleachers, and landscaping;
- add or expand existing classrooms or school buildings and make technology upgrades;
- build or renovate common, administrative or athletic areas such as kitchens, theaters, auditoriums, gymnasiums, locker rooms and offices;
- replace temporary classroom facilities with permanent structures;
- incorporate environmentally sustainable design in the outdoor areas at certain sites; and
- perform other work necessary to comply with any applicable codes or regulations.

The School District may use up to \$100 million of bond funds to renovate or construct classroom, rehearsal or performance spaces for the District Arts Center, including relocating the Ruth Asawa School of the Arts. The School District may also use up to \$5 million to fund construction of below-market-rate housing for teachers and other education professionals.

The School District would create an independent citizens' oversight committee to report to the public about the use of bond funds. The Board of Education would also conduct an annual, independent audit regarding the use of these bond funds.

**Working title, for identification only. The Director of Elections determines the title of each local ballot measure; measure titles are not considered during Ballot Simplification Committee meetings.*

Proposition ____ would authorize an increase in the property tax to pay principal and interest on the bonds. This measure requires the approval of 55% of the votes cast.

A "YES" Vote Means: If you vote "yes," you want the School District to issue up to \$744,250,000 in general obligation bonds to improve, repair and upgrade School District sites, and to construct new school facilities.

A "NO" Vote Means: If you vote "no," you do not want the School District to issue these bonds.