Los Banos Unified School District

2026 Facilities Bond Measure

Frequently Asked Questions

What is this process all about?

Los Banos Unified School District (LBUSD) Schools serve an essential Community need. On a daily basis, approximately 11,242 students participate in engaging and rigorous learning experiences at one of the District's sixteen school campuses: one transitional kindergarten center, nine elementary schools (Charleston, Grasslands, Henry Miller, Lorena Falasco, Los Banos, Mercey Springs, Volta, R.M. Miano, and Westside Union), two junior high schools (Los Banos and Creekside), two high schools (Los Banos and Pacheco), one independent study campus (Crossroads), and one continuation high school (San Luis). LBUSD has two key priorities: to ensure academic success for every student and to make sure that our schools are healthy, safe, accessible, secure, technologically current, well maintained, and equipped to provide LBUSD students with the *very best* educational setting possible. We are constantly planning for continuous repairs and upgrades of our schools – this process invites our stakeholders to collaborate with us to shape the future of our neighborhood schools.

Why now?

Most schools were built 40+ years ago and no longer meet modern health and safety codes, are not accessible for students with disabilities, or were built so long ago that underground clay and cast-iron pipes, along with other infrastructure, are failing, resulting in gas leaks, water leaks, sewage backups; last year alone there were 95 roof leaks. Moreover, there are 157 portable classrooms 20+ years old. Many are falling apart, have structural damage and water leaks that lead to mold, and are expensive to keep repairing. And last BUT not least, we continue to have an overcrowding problem. To fund identified needs, we are exploring all available options, including our own existing budget, state and Federal funding, private grants, and other sources of support. We are also considering asking our community to support a school bond measure on the November 2026 ballot. While NO decisions have been made yet, this study process is a priority for us this school year.

Isn't there a facilities budget for ongoing school maintenance?

Facilities staff work hard to maintain our neighborhood schools and keep them in good working condition with limited resources. However, the types of upgrades that the District's current needs assessment has identified go far beyond the scope and means of regular school maintenance budgets. An ongoing investment in infrastructure is critical to help ensure the academic success for every student attending our schools**.**

What are LBUSD's most critical school facility NEEDS?

- **Remove** hazardous materials like asbestos and lead pipes, where encountered
- **Provide** modern labs and career technical facilities and equipment so students are prepared for college and in-demand careers in agricultural sciences, engineering, technology, and skilled trades
- **Upgrade** older schools so they meet current health codes, building safety codes, and provide proper access for students with disabilities
- **Repair/Replace** deteriorating roofs, plumbing, gas lines, sewer lines, and electrical systems where needed
- **Keep** computer systems and instructional technology up-to-date
- **Create** modern, multi-use classrooms to support hands-on science instruction and learning-by-doing

How do improved facilities result in improved instruction?
Safe, modern school facilities are essential to improving the quality of LBUSD schools. ALL students deserve to learn in quality classrooms and school facilities. There's a direct relationship between quality school facilities and student achievement. Studies show that students and teachers perform best in safe, modern classrooms and schools with up-to-date technology. **Unfortunately, our facilities do not match the exceptional teaching and learning happening at our local LBUSD schools.** Without needed facilities and education technology upgrades, the local quality of education will deteriorate over time. For students to succeed in high school, college, and careers, they must be skilled in the use of today's technology and have a solid background in science, math, and engineering. Updated classrooms and school facilities will make this possible.

How are LBUSD facilities improvements funded?
CURRENT SCHOOL BUDGETS ARE LIMITED. With limited resources, LBUSD staff continually work hard to maintain our school facilities and education, and keep them in good working condition for thousands of students and staff members. However, the reality is that the types of repairs, renovations and upgrades we need go far beyond the scope and means of regular school budgets. Accordingly, we are exploring all available options to fund identified needs, including our own existing budget and state and federal funding. We are also considering asking our community to support a school bond measure on the November 2026 ballot. Passing a local school bond is the most common way California communities fund the upgrades we need. **NO decisions have been made yet.**

Wasn't the Lottery or Proposition 30 supposed to fix our schools?
Unfortunately, restricted Lottery funds can only be used for classroom instruction, not technology or facility upgrades. Moreover, the money our school district receives from the Lottery each year comprises less than 0.4% of our annual General Fund Budget.

How can the community be assured that bond money will be spent properly?
Taxpayer protections are REQUIRED. Any bond approved by voters would include strict accountability measures. ALL funds raised stay LOCAL to support LBUSD school facility improvement. Funds CANNOT be taken by the State or spent on administrators' salaries, benefits, or pensions. An Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee, mandatory independent financial audits, and annual reports to the community are required to ensure funds are spent as promised.

Doesn't the State provide funding for school facility upgrades?
Very little. While State funding has at times been available to support TK–12 school upgrades, it is unreliable and insufficient to meet the District's identified needs. Moreover, in order to access State funding, school districts must generate local matching funds by passing a local facilities bond. Passing a local bond is also the only way to qualify for additional State funding if and when it becomes available. There are no other adequate sources of funding for major facility upgrades of this scope.

I don't have children or they are grown and gone. Why should I pay attention to this process?
Good schools improve the quality of life in our community and protect the value of our homes. Home resale values will benefit as our neighborhood schools are improved. The longer we wait to complete needed repairs, the more expensive it will be.

If voters approve the bond, when will the work begin?
If the District moves forward with a bond measure and voters approve it, the District would immediately focus on addressing the most critical facilities needs. A schedule for funding projects will be developed so that they can be completed on time and within budget.

What is a school facilities bond and what can it pay for?
A school facilities bond measure can ONLY be used to fund public school facility and technology improvements (capital projects, not maintenance or regular operations). Key facts about a Proposition 39 school facilities bond:

- Requires 55% voter approval to pass
- PROHIBITS use of funds for operations, salaries, or pensions
- REQUIRES independent financial and performance audits on all bond proceeds
- No revenue generated by the local bond can be taken away by the State
- All funds are locally controlled and spent exclusively on LBUSD facilities

Will this bond help replace the end of life/expiring portables still currently in use at our schools?
Yes. **There are __ portable classrooms at our schools that are more than 20 years old.** They are deteriorating and past their useful life. It is more expensive to keep repairing these units than to replace them. We need additional funding to replace these portables with modern, permanent classrooms.

Will businesses share in the cost of a potential bond measure?
Yes, commercial, industrial, and residential property owners will be subject to assessment.

How much would the proposed bond cost?
No decisions have been made yet. A $98 million bond translates to about $45 dollars per year for every $100,000 of assessed valuation for property owners. The assessed valuation refers to taxable value, not the market value of your home.

Who would be able to vote on the potential measure?
All registered voters within the Los Banos Unified School District boundaries would be eligible to vote on this ballot measure if it is placed on the November 2026 ballot.

Has a final decision been made to place this measure on the ballot?
No. The District is currently in a community engagement and study phase. NO decisions have been made yet. LBUSD is working hard to educate the community on what is at stake, and is actively listening to community input before any final decisions are made. Your feedback matters!