

Hanford Elementary School District



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January 17, 2020

RE: Measure H, on the March 3, 2020 ballot, for the Hanford Elementary School District

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Hanford Elementary School District has been providing dedicated and rigorous educational services to the children of Hanford since the formation of the District. Currently, the District educates 5,900 students at the District's 11 schools. The support of our parents and guardians is instrumental to the success of our students. In order to further the achievement of our students, we want to provide the children with every resource available which includes 21st century standards.

Some of our facilities have recently been constructed and/or modernized, and the result of the work completed so far has been a great benefit for our students. However, more work needs to be done to provide excellent facilities throughout our District. Thus, the District and Board of Trustees decided to place Measure H, a school improvement general obligation (G.O.) bond measure, on the March 3, 2020 ballot to modernize and renovate our aging schools.

Over the last several months with input from staff, teachers, parents, community leaders, and an architect, the District has prepared a School Facilities Needs Analysis. The Needs Analysis identifies the major repairs and upgrades that need to be made.

Specific types of projects identified include:

- Modernizing/renovating outdated classrooms, restrooms, and school facilities.
- Upgrading inadequate electrical systems.
- Improving student access to computers and modern technology.
- Replacing aging temporary portables with permanent classrooms.
- Making health, safety and security improvements, including fire alarms, lighting, fields, grounds and parking lots.

The attached Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) handout is provided to assist parents, guardians, and voters in understanding the facts behind Measure H and how its passage will affect the District, our children and the community. This letter and attached FAQ handout are provided for your information.

Sincerely,



Joy Gabler
District Superintendent



Greg Strickland
Board President



April Silva
HETA/CTA Union President



Ron Riso
CSEA President



Hanford Elementary School District

Measure H - Frequently Asked Questions Handout

Although it appears that our elementary schools are in good shape based on achievements by our students, our classrooms and facilities need repairs. Faced with aging classrooms and the need to bring school facilities up to current standards, the **Hanford Elementary School District has placed Measure H on the March 3rd, 2020 ballot**, which would replace existing portables with permanent classrooms, modernize and renovate our aging school facilities. The following information is provided to assist voters in understanding the facts behind Measure H and how its passage will affect the District and our community.

What is Measure H?

Measure H is a \$23.0 million general obligation (G.O.) bond program. This measure is intended to address the needs of the student population through modernization and renovation projects at the District's schools.

What is a G.O. bond?

G.O. bonds fund projects such as the renovation of existing classrooms and school facilities, as well as construction of new schools and classrooms. Similar to a home loan, G.O. bonds are typically repaid over 25 to 30 years. The loan repayment comes from a tax on all taxable property - residential, commercial, agricultural and industrial - located within the District's boundaries.

Why did the District place Measure H on the ballot?

Some of our facilities are outdated and upgrades and renovations need to be made. While facilities have been well maintained, old classrooms must be upgraded since many do not meet 21st century education and technology standards. A local school improvement measure would allow the District to improve the quality of the school facilities and education provided to local students.

Why can't the District meet its facilities needs with its current budget?

Today, the scope of improvements needed in the Hanford Elementary School District is far more than the current funding sources available. The per pupil funding which the District receives from the state is intended to be used for the day-to-day business of educating students and not the cost of upgrading, modernizing, and repairing facilities.

How did the District come up with the project list for Measure H?

Over the last several months with input from staff, teachers, parents and community leaders, the District has prepared a School Facilities Needs Analysis. The analysis identifies the major repairs and upgrades that need to be made. The full analysis can be found at the District office.

Specific types of projects identified include:

- Replace aging temporary portables with permanent classrooms
- Improving student access to computers and modern technology
- Upgrading inadequate electrical systems
- Modernizing/renovating outdated classrooms, restrooms and school facilities
- Making health, safety and security improvements

Are other funding sources available to complete the District's projects?

On the March 2020 ballot voters will have the opportunity to vote on Proposition 13. If approved, school districts throughout the state could be eligible for up to 65% of the costs of modernization projects, and up to 55% of the costs of new construction projects.

What will the passage of Measure H mean for our students and the community?

Measure H will provide our students with a better learning environment by making repairs and upgrades to existing classrooms and school facilities; many of which are also used and available to the community.

What will happen if Measure H does not pass?

If Measure H does not pass, our classrooms and school facilities will continue to not meet 21st century standards in all of the schools' facilities. In addition, funds that would otherwise go to classroom instruction will be needed to make critical safety repairs and improvements at our schools. Major repairs will need to be postponed and as a result will likely be more expensive to make.

What will Measure H cost

The tax rate per property owner is estimated to be \$24.00 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation per year. (Please do not confuse assessed valuation with market value. Assessed valuations are the value placed on property by the County and are lower than market values). Check your property tax statement for your current assessed valuation. For example, if your house is assessed at \$100,000, your tax bill for the year would be \$24.00, or \$2.00 per month.

How can I be sure that funds will be spent on improving our local elementary schools?

By law, all funds have to be spent locally and cannot be taken by the state. Furthermore, an independent citizens' oversight committee will be established to ensure that bond funds are properly spent. Also, by law, there must be annual audits and no bond money can be used for teacher or administrative salaries.

