



Planning for the Future of Locally Controlled School Funding

A Community-Driven Plan for Funding for Teachers and Academic Programs at Current Tax Rates

AUSD Is Considering Renewal Tax Measure to Attract & Retain Qualified Teachers & Sustain Strong Academic Programs, Without Increasing Rates

Expiring Funding for Teachers & Academic Programs

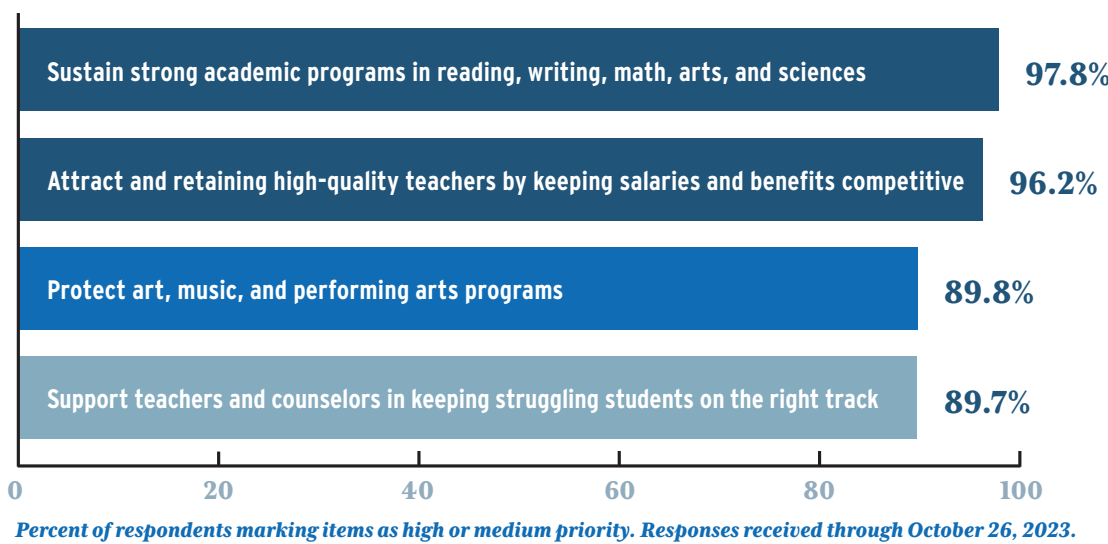
Parents and community members alike tell us that excellent teachers and good schools are part of what makes Alameda a great place to live. AUSD is committed to providing high-quality education and ensuring that every student is prepared for the next stage of their life, wherever it may take them.

Alameda has a long tradition of funding its schools through parcel tax measures. These sources of funding account for approximately 20% of the current AUSD budget. This allows AUSD to attract and retain quality educators as the cost of housing and living continues to rise in our community. It also helps the District provide educational technology, support career technical education, and sustain strong programs in science, technology, engineering, arts, and math, preparing high school students to compete at the top colleges and in the 21st-century workforce.

Without these sources of funding, the District could be forced to consider cuts, salary rollbacks, and layoffs up to \$24 million annually. Because of that, the District has been exploring options to renew these taxes without increasing rates.

Your Priorities for Maintaining High-Quality Neighborhood Schools

In September, the District mailed you a survey asking you to share your school funding priorities for a potential tax measure to help plan for the future. With over 400 survey responses tallied, here is what the District heard are the top community priorities for neighborhood schools:



Potential Tax Measure to Renew School Funding at Current Rates

AUSD is actively considering renewing its local parcel tax funding. Currently, the District relies on two existing revenue sources to support quality schools and attract and retain excellent teachers.

At its November 14 meeting, the AUSD Board of Education will consider placing a measure on the March 5, 2024 ballot that would consolidate these two sources of funding into a single measure without increasing current taxes. The measure under consideration would not be a new tax but would simply replace the two older measures that are set to expire with one measure, levying \$0.585 per building area square foot, capped at \$15,998 per parcel and \$598 per vacant parcel, raising the same amount of local funding without increasing current tax rates.

This potential tax measure could continue to provide locally controlled funding to be allocated by the Board to help AUSD maintain quality schools by:

- Sustaining strong academic programs in reading, writing, math, arts, and sciences
- Attracting and retaining high-quality teachers and school employees by keeping salaries and benefits competitive
- Supporting teachers and counselors in keeping struggling students on the right track
- Preparing students for 21st-century jobs and careers
- Protecting art, music, sports, and performing arts programs

Fiscal Accountability and Local Control

The local school funding renewal measure could continue existing fiscal accountability requirements, including:

- All funds would be controlled locally and could not be taken away by the State
- Independent citizens' oversight and mandatory annual audits could be required
- Senior citizens and individuals with disabilities could be exempt from the cost – current exemptions may need not reapply

Frequently Asked Questions About Local School Funding

How has local funding supported our schools?

Alameda has a long tradition of funding its schools through parcel tax measures. These sources of funding account for approximately 20% of the current AUSD budget. This allows AUSD to attract and retain quality educators as the cost of housing and living continues to rise in our community. It also helps the District provide educational technology, support career technical education, and sustain strong programs in science, technology, engineering, arts, and math, preparing high school students to compete at the top colleges and in the 21st-century workforce. Without these sources of funding, the District could be forced to consider cuts, salary rollbacks, and layoffs up to \$24 million annually.

How could AUSD ensure a stable funding source for quality schools?

In order to help ensure a stable funding source for Alameda schools while maintaining quality education, AUSD is actively exploring options to renew our local parcel tax funding. Currently, the District relies on two existing revenue sources to support quality schools and attract and retain excellent teachers. While no final decisions have been made, the District is considering a measure that would consolidate these two funding sources into a single measure.

How exactly would a potential measure support AUSD schools and students?

If approved by local voters, this potential tax measure could continue to provide locally controlled funding to be allocated by the Board to help AUSD maintain quality schools by:

- Sustaining strong academic programs in reading, writing, math, arts, and sciences
- Attracting and retaining high-quality teachers and school employees by keeping salaries and benefits competitive
- Supporting teachers and counselors in keeping struggling students on the right track
- Preparing students for 21st-century jobs and careers
- Protecting art, music, sports, and performing arts programs

How would accountability be part of a potential measure?

Any future parcel tax measures could include the same fiscal accountability as past measures. All funds would be controlled locally and could not be taken away by the State. Independent citizens' oversight and mandatory annual audits could be required. Senior citizens and individuals with disabilities could be exempt from the cost – current exemptions may need not reapply.

How much would a potential tax renewal measure cost?

While no final decisions have been made, the District is considering a measure that would consolidate these two funding sources into a single measure without increasing tax rates. The measure under consideration would not be an additional tax. Instead, it would combine and replace Measures B1 (.32/square foot) and A (.265/square foot), to levy \$0.585 per building area square foot, capped at \$15,998 per parcel and \$598 per vacant parcel. This measure would maintain the current levels of school funding currently provided by the measures it is replacing.

You're Invited

At our upcoming board meeting, the AUSD Board of Education will consider placing a parcel tax renewal measure on the March 2024 ballot. This meeting is open to the public and will include time for public comment.

What: AUSD School Board Meeting

When: Tuesday, November 14 at 6pm

Where: Alameda City Hall
2263 Santa Clara Avenue