

Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District (LGSUHSD) Frequently Asked Questions

How are our Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District schools doing?

Los Gatos and Saratoga High Schools have a reputation as two of the highest-performing high schools in the entire state and nation. Both high schools in the Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District offer a wide variety of unique and rigorous academic programs taught by award-winning teachers that prepare students for success at the top colleges and in challenging careers. In fact, parents and community members alike tell us that our local high schools set our communities apart and are a key contributor to high local property values and a strong sense of community.

How has local funding supported our schools?

More than a decade ago, local voters approved Measure A, a \$49 annual parcel tax that provides dedicated, locally controlled funding to support innovative academic programs and attract and retain qualified teachers in local high schools. Measure A has helped the District maintain a wide array of academic offerings, including robotics, rigorous AP courses and award-winning music, arts and athletics programs. This source of funding is set to expire unless renewed.

Has Measure A ever been increased?

No. Measure A was first approved in 2011 as a \$49 annual parcel tax and has not been increased since.

Has that created challenges in attracting and retaining high-quality teachers?

Yes. While the cost of living and of providing an excellent education has continued to increase, locally controlled revenue for our high schools has remained stagnant, meaning that LGSUHSD teacher compensation has not kept pace with similar districts. Los Gatos and Saratoga are among the most expensive communities in the country, and local teachers cannot afford to live here. As a result, our schools have been losing top teacher talent to neighboring districts and more affordable communities.

How does LGSUHSD plan to address the challenges facing our local high schools?

The LGSUHSD Board of Trustees is currently exploring options to help local funding keep pace with the rising costs of providing a quality education. One option currently being explored is a ballot measure to renew the District's expiring local parcel tax, with a modest increase to the \$49 rate first approved more than 10 years ago.

How exactly would a renewal measure support LGSUHSD's teachers and academic programs?

Funding from a renewal measure could continue to be used to support key District initiatives, including:

- Attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers and school staff
- Maintaining strong core academic programs and high-quality science, math, technology, robotics, engineering and AP courses

- Providing programs that prepare students for college and future careers
- Supporting high student achievement
- Ensuring teacher salaries are competitive with surrounding districts

Would fiscal accountability provisions be included?

Any renewal measure would include the same fiscal accountability provisions already in place with the current Measure A:

- All proceeds would be controlled locally and could not be taken away by the State
- None of the money raised could be used for administrators’ salaries or pensions
- Independent citizens’ oversight and mandatory annual audits would ensure funds are spent as promised
- Senior citizen homeowners would continue to be eligible for an exemption from the cost

Would senior citizen homeowners be exempt from the cost?

Yes. Senior citizens homeowners would continue to be eligible for an exemption from the cost of the measure.

Would all funds benefit Los Gatos and Saratoga high schools only?

All funds from a potential measure would benefit local public high schools only. No funds could be taken by the State or used for other purposes.

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

Even if you do not have school-age children, quality local schools help keep our community and property values strong.

How does LGSUHSD’s parcel tax rate compare to those in similar districts?

Of the nearly 30 school districts in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties with a local parcel tax, LGSUHSD has the lowest rate.

District	Parcel Tax Rate	Annual Adjustment
Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District	\$49	No
Jefferson Elementary School District	\$68	No
Saratoga Union School District	\$68	No
San José Unified School District	\$72	No
Redwood City School District	\$85	No
Campbell Union High School District	\$85	No
Union School District	\$96	No
Bayshore Elementary School District	\$96	Yes
Fremont Union High School District	\$98	No
Pacifica School District	\$118	No
Jefferson Union High School District	\$118	No
Millbrae School District	\$125	No

La Honda-Pescadero Unified School District	\$130	No
Cabrillo Unified School District	\$150	No
Mountain View-Whisman School District	\$191	No
Ravenswood School District	\$196	Yes
Burlingame School District	\$256	No
Woodside School District	\$290	Yes
Belmont-Redwood Shores School District	\$292	Yes
Brisbane School District	\$297	No
San Carlos School District	\$334.60	No
Los Gatos Union School District	\$335	Yes
Loma Prieta Joint Union School District	\$348	No
San Mateo-Foster City School District	\$451.23	Yes
Portola Valley School District	\$471	No
Lakeside Joint School District	\$647	No
Los Altos School District	\$892	Yes
Palo Alto Unified School District	\$836	Yes
Menlo Park City School District	\$1,452.14	Yes

What would happen if this source of funding expired?

If Measure A funding expires, our schools’ core academic programs will suffer, including critical curriculum in science, math, technology, and engineering. Without competitive salaries to incentivize teachers, our district will lose high-quality educators, and students will be left without access to the programs and skills needed for their success in college or future careers.

How can I be a part of this process?

Planning for the future of education funding in our local high schools should be a community-driven process. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Tricia Zarevich at tzarevich@lgsuhdsd.org or (408) 354-5980. We also encourage you to visit our website at <https://www.lgsuhdsd.org/about-us/local-funding> to take our community priorities survey and make your voice heard.