



GARFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

COMMUNITY INPUT SESSION

JANUARY 7, 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During this month's Coffee with the Principal, the OUSD Facilities Planning and Management Department shared an update on the Garfield Measure Y Bond Project and explained why the project team is proposing a shift in approach. As design work progressed, it became clear that renovating the existing buildings would not adequately meet current educational standards or the needs of early childhood programs. Required structural upgrades mandated by the Division of the State Architect (DSA), combined with the age of the building, significantly increased costs and limited what could be achieved within the existing structure. In addition, a renovation approach would require students to be relocated into temporary portable classrooms during construction, adding further cost and complexity.

After pausing to reassess, the Department conducted extensive research, including reviewing recently built elementary schools and evaluating multiple design and construction options. Through this process, the team determined that a full-site redevelopment would provide the greatest long-term benefit to Garfield students, families, and the surrounding community while allowing students to remain on campus during construction.

If approved by the OUSD Board, the proposed project would replace the existing school with a new, larger campus that expands early childhood education, creates modern learning environments, and strengthens campus safety. The new school would support preschool through fifth grade, allowing children to enroll earlier and remain at Garfield for additional years. The design includes modern classrooms, dedicated art and music spaces, a library, a family resource center, and a multi-purpose room suitable for school and community events. Safety improvements include a single controlled entry point, inward-facing classrooms, and a secure campus layout.

The project also includes enhanced outdoor learning and play spaces, as well as a partnership with the City of Oakland to incorporate the adjacent field into the school site. This collaboration aims to create a safe, gated green space that can serve both the school and the broader neighborhood, reinforcing Garfield's role as a community hub while improving overall safety and access to outdoor space.

The proposed scope expansion requires an increase beyond the original project budget but does not reduce or reallocate funding from any other Measure Y bond projects. The Department has secured an additional \$18 million through partnerships with Oakland's Children Initiative and First 5 Alameda County, leaving a remaining funding gap of approximately \$14.8 million. District leadership shared that potential funding sources are available, including the Facilities Capital Improvement Fund, Developer Fees, and State reimbursement funds, and emphasized the importance of community advocacy to prioritize this investment.

BUDGET

The total budget for the project is \$70.7 million. A proposal to increase the project budget to \$103.5 million in order to expand the project scope was introduced during the meeting. The construction budget and mandatory soft costs will be determined once the project scope is finalized.

NEXT STEPS

- **January 15, 2026:** The project expansion proposal will be introduced during the Facilities Committee Meeting.
- **February 9, 2026:** The project expansion proposal will be heard during the Measures B, J, and Y Independent Citizens' School Facilities Bond Oversight Committee Meeting.
- **February 19:** The Facilities Committee will vote to move forward the scope expansion budget request to the full Board.
- **February 25:** OUSD Board will vote on approval to allocate funds from the Facilities Capital Improvement Fund.

