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Contact: Patty Ducey-Brooks

Phone: 619-481-9817

**Taxpayers Association Grades the Graders:
Watchdog Group Releases 2025 School Bond Transparency Report
Card**

*Association encourages taxpayers to assist in the essential task of bond oversight and
program assessment*

San Diego, CA (October 14th, 2025) – With the school year in full swing, districts across San Diego County are now under the microscope for their openness in handling bond funds. Today, the San Diego County Taxpayers Association (SDCTA) unveils grades for 23 local K-12 and community college districts in its 13th annual School Bond Transparency Report Card.

This yearly evaluation serves as a resource for ensuring responsible stewardship and oversight in education financing. It scrutinizes how districts disclose the allocation of bond proceeds approved by voters, giving residents straightforward insights into whether campaign commitments are met. The assessment spotlights effective strategies, flags potential issues, and rates districts based on elements like the public availability of budget details and project updates. Ultimately, it builds community confidence, guarantees efficient use of public resources, and promotes stronger management in California's school systems.

Like last year, SDCTA continued to involve the taxpayer representatives from each district's Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC) in the review of transparency. Doing so further empowered our representatives on these CBOCs and created opportunities for them to assess their respective districts. Having these specific CBOC members, a group of dedicated individuals who are well-immersed and experienced in the topic of school bond transparency, contribute to the information collection and grading process only enhances the integrity of the report card.

Among the 23 districts with ongoing bond initiatives, the average rating—excluding the three lowest performers—stood at 90 percent, equating to an “A-”. This marks an uptick from the prior year's 86.86 percent average, signaling broader improvements in disclosure practices. Districts earning flawless A+ marks in 2025 are:

- **Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District**
- **Grossmont Union High School District**
- **San Diego Unified School District**
- **San Ysidro School District**
- **Vista Unified School District**



Those achieving near-top scores include **Cajon Valley Unified School District, La Mesa-Spring Valley School District, Oceanside Unified School District,** and **Palomar Community College District,** all with “A” grades. Lowest performers this year include **Borrego Springs Unified School District** with an “F”, as well as **Chula Vista Elementary School District, Fallbrook Union High School District, Lemon Grove School District,** and **National School District,** all receiving “D+” or “D” grades.

Notable highlights from the 2025 scorecard:

- The biggest leap forward came from **Sweetwater Union High School District,** advancing from an “F” to a “B” with 21 points out of 25, boosting from a failing mark to 84 percent. They greatly improved the public availability of information including annual reports, audits, and CBOC meeting agendas and minutes.
- The steepest decline was seen in **Chula Vista Elementary School District,** dropping from an “A-” to a “D+” with just 17 points out of 25, falling to 68 percent.

[CLICK HERE to view all of the grades within the 2025 School Bond Transparency Report Card](#)

It should be noted that the scope of this study evaluates only the transparency and not the quality of bond programs, measuring the existence of public information needed for taxpayers to assess the overall performance of school bond programs. Each district was evaluated across 25 criteria, including the timeliness and accessibility of reports, consistently listing expected vacancies in its CBOCs, posting meeting minutes, whether annual financial audits are both conducted by independent auditors and publicly available, and the presence of specific, detailed updates on bond-funded projects.

Upon completion of the grading, SDCTA sent each district a copy of the rubric containing their grade to offer them the opportunity to provide any justification or possible correction to a markdown. Districts were given two weeks to respond before grades were finalized. The purpose of granting this opportunity is to ensure that the grades SDCTA releases are truly accurate to each district’s transparency. Points were awarded back to school districts on a case-by-case basis upon review of the additional materials. However, the SDCTA emphasizes that the spirit of the Transparency Report Card is to assess a district’s transparency over the course of the year – not just prior to the release of grades. The SDCTA values day-to-day business practices that reflect an authentic intent to be transparent with the taxpaying public, and so last minute provisions were approached with careful consideration.

San Diego County Taxpayers Association (SDCTA) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization, dedicated to promoting accountable, cost-effective, and efficient government and opposing unnecessary new taxes and fees. Since 1945, SDCTA has served as “San Diego’s Taxpayer Watchdog Group” by educating the public and helping save the region’s citizens millions of dollars. Public opinion polls consistently rate SDCTA as the most “influential” and “trusted” public policy institution in San Diego. For more



information, please visit www.sdcta.org, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, call 619-234-6423, or email info@sdcta.org

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2025 SDCTA School Bond Transparency Scorecard	BUSD Borrego Springs Unified School District	CVUSD Cajon Valley Unified School District	CUSD Carlsbad Unified School District	CVESD Chula Vista Elementary School District	DMUSD Del Mar Union School District	EUSD Escondido Union School District	FUHSD Fallbrook Union High School District	GCCCD Grossmont- Cuyamaca Community College District	GUHSD Grossmont Union High School District	LMSVSD La Mesa- Spring Valley School District	LGSD Lemon Grove School District	MCCCD MiraCosta Community College District	NSD National School District	OUSD Oceanside Unified School District	PCCD Palomar Community College District	SDUSD San Diego Unified School District	SDUHSD San Diego Union High School District	SYSD San Ysidro School District	SBSD Solana Beach School District	SBUSD South Bay Union School District	SWCCD Southwestern Community College District	SUHSD Sweetwater Union High School District	VUSD Vista Unified School District
Citizen's Bond Oversight Committee																							
1. Link to CBOC site	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
2. CBOC Bylaws	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CBOC Member Representation	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
4. CBOC Vacancies/Expected Vacancies	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
5. Agenda/Minutes of Recent Meeting	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
6. 4 or More Meetings Held	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
7. Annual Report, Audits, and Meeting Minutes for past 3 years	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
8. CBOC Contact Information	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Program Management																							
9. Full Bond Measure Text	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
10. Project Information	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
11. Expanded Performance Audit or 3rd Party Construction Performance Review	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y
Financial Management																							
12. Bond Rating	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y
13. List of Project Expenditures	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Annual Audit																							
14. Current Audit Available	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
15. Response to Findings	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
16. CBOC Participation in Auditor Selection Process	Unknown	Y	Y	Unknown	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Unknown	Unknown	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Unknown	Y
17. CBOC Input in Audit Scope of Work	Unknown	Y	N	Unknown	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Unknown	Unknown	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
18. CBOC Audit Review	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Annual Report																							
19. Current Year Budget Breakdown	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y
20. Outline of Year's Accomplishments	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
21. Status of Bond Program	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
22. Current Annual Report Available	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
23. CBOC Members listed	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
24. CBOC Contact Information in Report and Website	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
25. CBOC District Information	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Points out of 25	13	24	22	17	22	21	17	23	23	24	17	23	16	24	24	23	23	25	23	19	21	21	23
2025 Transparency Grade	F	A	B+	D+	B+	B	D+	A+	A+	A	D+	A-	D	A	A	A+	A-	A+	A-	C+	B	B	A+
2024 Transparency Grade	F	B+	B	A-	B	B+	C	A+	A+	A	C	A+	F	A-	A	A+	A	A+	B	C	C	F	A-
2023 Transparency Grade	F	A-	B+	A+	A-	B	C+	A+	A+	A	D	A+	N/A	A-	B+	A+	A	A+	B+	B	A	D	A-