

**TUSTIN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**FACTS ABOUT MEASURE L**  
**ON THE NOVEMBER 4 BALLOT**

**On July 28, 2008, the Tustin Unified School District Board of Education voted to place a Proposition 39 General Obligation Bond Measure – Measure L – on the November 4 Ballot.**

**The ballot question reads as follows:**

“To improve student learning, provide safe and modern schools, and qualify for State-matching funds, shall Tustin Unified School District repair/replace deteriorated roofs, plumbing, lighting and electrical systems, modernize science labs, upgrade educational technology in classrooms, libraries and labs, improve school safety-security, replace aging portables with permanent classrooms, and upgrade inadequate classrooms/school facilities, by issuing \$95,000,000 in bonds at legal rates, with mandatory audits, independent oversight, no administrator salaries, and all funds benefiting Tustin schools?”

**FACTS ABOUT MEASURE L:**

In 2002 local voters approved a bond measure to rehabilitate 20 of our oldest schools in Tustin. Since then neighborhood schools have been repaired and renovated on time and within budget, leveraging local funds to access millions of dollars in state funding to reduce the cost of upgrades to local taxpayers.

While well maintained, all of our schools continue to age and need attention. Every day thousands of Tustin students attend classes in buildings over 45 years old. Two of our high schools in particular—Foothill and Tustin high schools – remain deteriorated and outdated. Measure L authorizes school facility improvements so Tustin children have safe, modern school facilities with the technology needed to prepare for future jobs.

Measure L will:

- Provide comprehensive facility upgrades at 45-year-old Foothill High School and 52-year-old Tustin High School
- Upgrade educational technology in classrooms, labs, and school libraries
- Modernize science labs to meet advanced course requirements for college and university admission
- Repair deteriorated roofs, plumbing, lighting, heating, and electrical systems
- Rehabilitate outdated classrooms and school facilities for improved instruction
- Improve safety and security on school campuses

**Taxpayer protections are REQUIRED BY LAW.** NO funds can be used for administrators’ salaries. An independent Citizens’ Oversight Committee and annual audits are MANDATORY to ensure funds are spent properly. The longer we wait to make improvements, the more expensive it will be.

**Legally, ALL Measure L funds must stay local to benefit Tustin neighborhood schools.**

For more information, please contact Mark Eliot by email at [meliot@tustin.k12.ca.us](mailto:meliot@tustin.k12.ca.us) or by phone at (714) 730-7339. For more information on Measure G, visit [www.TUSDMeasureG.org](http://www.TUSDMeasureG.org).

## Age of Tustin Unified Schools as of 2008

Thirty years old or older - 19

Forty years old or older - 15

Fifty years old or older - 5

50 Years and Older - 5		
	Age	Year Built
Tustin High School	52	1956
Tustin Memorial Academy	52	1956
Loma Vista	51	1957
Guin Foss	51	1957
Benjamin Beswick	50	1958

40 to 49 Years Old - 10		
	Age	Year Built
Columbus Tustin	49	1959
Barbara Benson	48	1960
C.E. Utt	46	1962
Foothill	45	1963
Marjorie Veeh	45	1963
Helen Estock	44	1964
Arroyo	43	1965
C.C. Lambert	43	1965
W.R. Nelson	43	1965
Hewes	42	1966

30 to 39 Years Old - 4		
	Age	Year Built
Robert Heideman	39	1969
Jeane Thorman	36	1972
A.G. Currie	36	1972
Hillview High	33	1975

## TUSTIN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT MEASURE L

## TUSTIN UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT'S 2008 SCHOOL BOND

### **What is Measure L?**

Measure L is a local school bond measure that will authorize \$95 million to make critically needed repairs and upgrades to Tustin neighborhood schools. If approved by voters, Measure L will authorize school facility improvements—especially at two of our local high schools, Tustin and Foothill high schools, so local children have safe, modern school facilities with the technology needed to prepare for future jobs. All Measure L funds will stay local to benefit Tustin neighborhood schools and students.

### **Why is Measure L needed?**

Six years ago local voters approved a bond measure to rehabilitate 20 of our oldest schools in Tustin. Since then neighborhood schools have been repaired and renovated on time and within budget, leveraging local funds to access millions of dollars in state funding to reduce the cost of upgrades to local taxpayers. But all of our schools continue to age and need attention. Every day thousands of Tustin students attend classes in buildings that are 45 or more years old. Two of our high schools in particular—Foothill and Tustin high schools—remain deteriorated and outdated. Based on need and the input of parents, teachers, staff and the community, a specific plan has been developed to complete the next level of renovations to the schools. Measure L reflects this plan.

### **How will Measure L funds be used?**

#### Measure L will:

- Provide comprehensive facility upgrades at 45-year-old Foothill High School and 52-year-old Tustin High School
- Upgrade educational technology in classrooms, labs, and school libraries
- Modernize science labs to meet advanced course requirements for college and university admission
- Repair deteriorated roofs, plumbing, lighting, heating, and electrical systems
- Rehabilitate outdated classrooms and school facilities for improved instruction
- Improve safety and security on school campuses

### **How is this measure different from the District's last bond, Measure G?**

In 2002, nearly 70% of voters in Tustin Unified School District passed Measure G, a school facilities bond measure to rehabilitate 20 of our oldest neighborhood schools. Measure G facility projects were completed on time and within budget, leveraging local funds to access millions of dollars in state funding to reduce the cost of upgrades to local taxpayers. Although Measure G helped fund critical repairs, significant upgrades are still needed. Measure L renovation projects are the most economical, prudent, responsible way to address our neighborhood school facility needs. For detailed written reports on the use of Measure G funds, contact the Tustin Unified School District at (714) 730-7305.

### **Will all TUSD schools receive attention? Which schools will benefit from Measure L?**

Tustin Unified has newer state-of-the-art schools in Tustin Ranch and West Irvine, including Beckman High School and Pioneer Middle School. These schools have been funded by local Mello Roos taxes on residences in those areas, which can cost homeowners many thousands of dollars a year.

Measure L is to renovate the older schools in the rest of the District so that they can provide an equal educational curriculum in the same manner as in these newer schools. Thousands of students attend school every day in buildings that are 45 or more years old.

Two of our high schools in particular—Foothill and Tustin high schools—remain deteriorated and outdated. They will receive priority attention. Each will get \$32 million in school facilities improvements. Additional school upgrades are planned at our local middle and elementary schools. Approximately \$31 million will be used at Columbus Tustin, Currie, Hewes and Utt middle schools and the dozen elementary schools in the older part of the district on items such as supporting class size reduction and enabling equity in educational instruction as site feasibility and funding allow. ALL Measure L school facility improvements will provide Tustin children with safe, modern school facilities, including the technology needed to prepare for future jobs.

### **Is Tustin High being relocated?**

No, the TUSD Board has determined that the current Tustin High location will remain the permanent location of Tustin High School. Efforts to move Tustin High to a new location met with significant funding difficulties. The cost to build a new high school is much greater than the cost of modernizing the current Tustin High School campus. Also, renovating the current campus can begin right away, whereas building a new school could not start for several years. Modernizing the current campus is simply the most economical, prudent and responsible way of meeting the needs of Tustin High area students.

### **When will work begin at the schools?**

Once Measure L passes, work will accelerate to make improvements to our schools. Upgrades will be completed in priority order, starting with health and safety issues first.

### **Will Measure L improve classroom instruction?**

Yes, upgrades to existing classrooms and improved science and computer laboratories will enhance instruction and the teaching and learning environment. Improved electrical service will allow students and teachers to better access technology. Without Measure L funds, the money earmarked for educational programs may have to go toward facility repairs.

### **How much will Measure L cost taxpayers?**

The cost to homeowners will be about \$24 per \$100,000 of assessed property value. (*Assessed* value should not be confused with market value. The *assessed* value of property may be much lower than its market value.) This property tax payment is deductible on federal and state income tax returns.

### **How long will the bond improvements last?**

We expect that students will be using the new and renovated facilities, such as the new science centers at Foothill and Tustin high schools, 50 years and more from now just as they are using buildings built 50 years ago every single day. Bonds are generally paid off in 25 years.

### **Doesn't using bonds cost us more money in the long run?**

With continued inflation expected in the costs of many raw materials due to the growing economies in China, India and elsewhere, we will spend less on interest than we would spend in higher costs if we waited. Bonds will save us money in the long run, and our students and schools need improved facilities now.

### **What about ongoing maintenance?**

Tustin Unified School District's maintenance staff works hard to maintain our local school facilities with limited resources. Bond money cannot be used for regular maintenance, but only for lasting renovations and improvements to our schools. TUSD fully funds regular maintenance out of its operating budget each year as provided by the state budget. However, the types of repairs and need for renovation that we are currently facing are far beyond the scope and means of regular maintenance efforts. Everyday thousands of Tustin students attend classes in buildings that are 45 or more years old. By law, bond-funded school improvement projects must be enduring capital assets.

### **Will businesses share in the cost of the measures?**

Yes, both commercial and residential property will help pay for Measure L.

### **What about administrative costs? Shouldn't the school district cut administrative costs before asking voters to support a bond measure?**

Measure L funds will *only* support schools within Tustin Unified School District. The scale and size of the needed upgrades go beyond the scope of the school district's operating budget. Making cuts to administration or salaries would not provide adequate resources for needed upgrades – the **ONLY** way to fund needed TUSD facility upgrades is through a local voter-supported facilities bond measure.

### **How can we be sure that Measure L money will be spent properly?**

TAXPAYER PROTECTIONS ARE REQUIRED BY LAW. An independent Citizens' Oversight Committee will ensure funds are spent properly. Past members of the Measure G Citizens' Oversight Committee have given Tustin schools very positive reviews of its management of Measure G funds. The Citizens' Oversight Committee members have included architects, engineers, taxpayer advocates, accountants, city treasurer, senior citizens, and homeowners from all neighborhoods contributing to Measure G. **NO** money can be used for administrators' salaries. Passage of Measure L will qualify our neighborhood schools for state-matching funds, leveraging local taxpayer dollars further. Measure L will be deductible on your income taxes.

### **How well do Tustin Schools use our tax dollars? By what standard?**

TUSD engaged the widely-respected firm School Services of California, Inc., to review the financial condition of the Tustin school district. Here were some of their findings:

- Tustin operates a “lean administrative model” at both school and district levels “in all measures of administrative staffing efficiency.”
- Ten Tustin schools score top rating of “10” in statewide testing – all others are above average when compared to schools with similar populations.
- “The District’s budget is on extremely firm ground, due to solid fiscal management and a conservative philosophy that gathered reserves during good times to help in tough times.”
- Tustin is one of the few districts that did not have to consider elimination of class size reduction in dealing with this year’s state budget crisis, due to careful financial planning.
- The quality of education provided by Tustin schools are among the best in the state, and many families buy homes in our neighborhoods so that their children can go to our high quality schools, which supports our home property values.

### **What about other sources of funding--like the lottery?**

By law, lottery funds must go directly into classroom instruction and cannot be used for facility repairs, renovation or construction. Lottery funds, although minimal, have provided a welcome supplement to the school district budget, supplementing the purchase of much needed materials and equipment. But lottery funds comprise about 2% of the school district's budget. The District has made every effort to secure these and other available funds from state, local and private sources. Passage of Measure L will qualify TUSD for state-matching funds when they become available, further reducing the cost of essential school upgrades to local taxpayers.

### **Doesn't the STATE provide funding for facility upgrades?**

Very little state funding is available to support local school upgrades. In order to access state funding, school districts **MUST** generate local matching funds by passing a bond measure. Passing a local bond measure is the only way to qualify for additional state funding. There are no other sources of funding for major facility upgrades.

**I don't have children in the schools. How will Measure L benefit me?**

Quality schools contribute to a quality community. Resale values of homes in our community are directly affected by the quality of our neighborhood schools. Good schools protect property values.

**What is a General Obligation Bond?**

A general obligation bond is a financing mechanism for the funding of capital projects such as repairing and renovating local schools (including Tustin Unified schools), as well as public hospitals, libraries, police and fire stations, and other public facilities. A bond is repayable from taxes and guaranteed only by the credit and taxing power of the issuer. G.O. Bond funding has become the accepted way for public agencies in California to make capital improvements.

**What will happen if Measure L doesn't pass?**

As schools age, the need for improved facilities and more classroom space will grow. Delaying repairs and upgrades will increase future construction costs. State-matching funds available to communities that *have* passed bond measures, may be exhausted and no longer be available.

**Who gets to vote on Measure L?**

All registered voters who reside within the area served by our older schools are eligible to vote on Measure L. To pass, Measure L must receive support from 55% of the voters who vote in the November 4 Presidential Election. October 20 is the last day to register to vote in this election.

**What if I have more questions?**

For more information, please contact Mark Eliot by email at [meliot@tustin.k12.ca.us](mailto:meliot@tustin.k12.ca.us) or by phone at (714) 730-7339. For more information on Measure G, visit [www.TUSDMeasureG.org](http://www.TUSDMeasureG.org).