

# MEASURE R TEXT

## WEST CONTRA COSTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT CLASSROOM MODERNIZATION AND SAFETY UPDATE MEASURE

### BALLOT TEXT

To repair, upgrade neighborhood schools, shall West Contra Costa Unified School District modernize core classrooms; provide safe, secure school environments, including updated technology and air conditioning, that improve academic achievement and provide relevant career pathways for all students, by issuing \$575 million of bonds, at legal rates, averaging \$34.48 million annually while bonds are outstanding, at 6¢ per \$100 assessed value, with strict citizens' oversight, annual audits and all money for local schools?

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**THE FULL BALLOT LANGUAGE IS LOCATED AFTER THE ARGUMENTS FOR/AGAINST AND REBUTTALS BELOW.**

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### ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE R

Measure R represents an historic opportunity for us to provide locally-controlled funding that, by law, must be spent only on West Contra Costa schools. **Vote YES on Measure R** to support our local students and protect quality education and **repair, update, and modernize** West Contra Costa Unified schools to meet today's academic and safety standards and provide equitable school facilities for all of our students.

**Vote YES on Measure R if we want our children to succeed in college and careers they must have upgraded facilities that support science, math, engineering and technology instruction.**

However, many West Contra Costa Unified schools were built more than 50 years ago and need upgrades and critical repairs to meet today's academic and safety standards. Our students deserve the same educational opportunities as other students in the region. Measure R will upgrade our schools, provide AC/HVAC to most facilities and provide classroom technology to keep pace with newer schools in other top-performing districts.

**Vote YES on Measure R to:**

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- **Improve student safety** and campus security, emergency communications and fire safety systems
- Repair and upgrade aging classrooms and school facilities including **deteriorating roofs, plumbing, bathrooms and electrical systems**
- Provide the classrooms, labs and technology needed to support high-quality instruction in math, science, engineering and technology
- Ensure that West Contra Costa Unified can access State matching facility funds and **keep our taxpayer dollars within the District**
- Remove hazardous materials like asbestos and lead paint from older school sites
- Improve access to school facilities for students with disabilities

**Measure R includes strict fiscal accountability language!** Even if you don't have school-age children, supporting Measure R is a wise investment. Good schools improve our quality of life and **increase** our property values!

Join parents, teachers, business and community leaders in voting YES on Measure R!

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## REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE R

The District has failed to offer a specific plan for how this massive \$575 million will be used. It won't even commit to naming the specific schools that will be rebuilt. Contrary to its assertion, the fiscal safeguards are vague and insufficient to prevent past abuses from happen-ing again: **Vote No on Measure R.**

Why do we need protections? As just one example, the District mismanaged its budget and now faces a \$48 million budget crisis. Secondly, the District largely ignored recommendations made from an independent investigation more than three years ago, failing to implement any of the five most important budget recommendations. An independent third party verified that the District implemented only 33 of the 112 recommendations.

After spending \$1.6 billion on the construction program, the District now says that it needs at least another \$1 billion to finish.

The **District wastes taxpayer** money by;

- 1) **Overbuilding schools** and exceeding construction budgets; and

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## 2) Failing to control spending.

If the District had managed its finances better, it would have had more than enough money to -rebuild-every District school.

As its top priority, the District must first solve its financial crisis.

Until the District shows that it can execute its fiduciary responsibility with taxpayer money and until it has a specific construction plan, including safeguards, **Vote NO on Measure R.**

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### ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE R

We support public schools and we expect the District to deliver excellent value proposed school construction. **Measure R does not include adequate safeguards** for prudent stewardship of public funds.

For \$575 million, the District must commit both to follow a prioritized "critical need" school re-build list and then state what exactly will be done at each school. Instead, the District presents a laundry list of possibilities without specific commitments.

The District's previous extreme wastefulness is well-documented:

- The County Grand Jury found that the District's per square foot construction costs are **THREE** times the **state average**.
- The District spent more than \$200 million building one high school - for that money, it could have built two.
- The District spent \$23 million on a football stadium, prioritizing it over badly needed class- room reconstruction all around the District.

White the District spent wastefully, **taxpayers are currently paying off six previous school bond measures**. As of June 30, 2018, we owe **\$2.3 billion in principal and interest**, with maturity dates extending to 2054.

The District's extravagant spending means that the average homeowner now pays at least \$1,000 in property tax assessments for previous bonds annually. This bond will add another \$250 annually to your property taxes. Renters, those added costs are passed on to you.

The East Bay Times has called the cost of these construction bonds **"exceptionally high."**

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The District currently has a **\$48 million budget deficit**, showing that it cannot keep its own financial house in order. District management recently proposed rollbacks to some important transparency measures.

Does this sound like a District ready to manage a very complex construction program?

It's time we sent a clear message. **Vote NO** until the District demonstrates a commitment to delivering a specific cost-effective building program to voters.

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## REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE R

Measure R will continue to support all communities within West Contra Costa addressing **equity of facilities** for all of our students.

All monies spent through Measure R will be subject to **annual financial audits and oversight** by an independent Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee.

Without the passage of Measure R, the District will not be able to begin address more than \$1 billion in facility needs, and will not be able to access State matching Bond funds meaning that tax dollars from West Contra Costa residents would go to other communities.

The cost of construction continues to escalate in California and the region, and Measure R will allow the District to continue **to support building high quality schools** before costs increase even more! Yes on R is a smart investment in our schools.

Measure R will allow the District to provide schools that attract students and families to the area and ensure that our students have access to 21st Century Educational facilities. **Yes on Measure R will ensure that West Contra Costa is a destination district for education in the region with modern, safe, secure, and innovative schools.**

Yes on Measure R will provide **equity of facilities, create local jobs, opportunity for student and parent choice, safe and inviting schools, and transparent accounting of all bond funds.**

Yes on Measure R ensures our students will have the facilities they deserve and options in every neighborhood. Join parents, teachers, students, families, and local leaders and **vote Yes on Measure R.**

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## FULL BALLOT LANGUAGE

**WEST CONTRA COSTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT CLASSROOM MODERNIZATION AND SAFETY UPDATE MEASURE.** To repair, upgrade neighborhood schools, shall West Contra Costa Unified School District modernize core classrooms; provide safe, secure school environments, including updated technology and air conditioning, that improve academic achievement and provide relevant career pathways for all students, by issuing \$575 million of bonds, at legal rates, averaging \$34.48 million annually while bonds are outstanding, at 6¢ per \$100 assessed value, with strict citizens' oversight, annual audits and all money for local schools?

## PROJECT LIST

The Board of Education of the West Contra Costa Unified School District certifies that it has evaluated the District's urgent and critical school needs, including school and student safety issues, enrollment trends, class size reduction, student capacity, energy efficiency and information technology, seismic safety requirements, and aging, outdated or deteriorating school buildings in developing the scope of projects to be funded. In developing the scope of projects, the District has prioritized the key health and safety and sustainability needs so that the most critical school site needs are addressed. The District conducted an evaluation of its school sites, and this study concluded that if these needs were not addressed now, the problem would only get worse and more expensive to address in the future. In approving this Project List, the Board of Education determines that the District should:

- i) Upgrade classrooms to support the core academics of math, science, reading and writing.
- ii) Upgrade technology and science labs.
- iii) Provide safe and secure school sites.
- iv) Upgrade and install air conditioning to classrooms.
- v) Provide classrooms for job training to prepare students for the workforce.
- vi) Qualify for millions of dollars of State matching funds.
- vii) Adhere to specific **FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY** safeguards such as these:
  - a. Sacramento will be prohibited from taking any of the funds raised.
  - b. All expenditures will be subject to annual independent financial and performance audits.

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- c. No funds will be used for administrators' salaries or pensions.
  - d. All funds will be subject to local control and provide improvements at all of our schools.
  - e. An independent citizens' oversight committee will be appointed to ensure that all funds are spent only as authorized.
- viii)** Develop a method of using proceeds of the Bonds in part to provide for a tax rate stabilization fund with the County, to insure that target tax rates for property owners within the District on this and prior Bond Measures supporting the Bond Construction Program of the District can be stabilized.

### **Priority School Projects**

Prior to developing the Project List set forth below, the District has conducted a study, incorporated into the District's Long Range Facilities Master Plan (<https://www.wccusd.net/Page/6945>), to determine the most compelling capital needs among the District's schools. While any Project included on this Project List may be undertaken at any of the District's schools or sites, the District has identified 21 Priority Schools, taking factors such as facility age, years since the last improvements were made, ADA needs, student demographics, capacity and existing technology into account. The Priority Schools include the following:

Early Intervention and Elementary Schools: Cameron School, Chavez Elementary School, Collins Elementary School, Fairmont Elementary School, Grant Elementary School, Highland Elementary School, Lake Elementary School, Ohlone Elementary School, Olinda Elementary School, Riverside Elementary School, Serra/West County Mandarin School, Shannon Elementary School, Stege Elementary School, Valley View Elementary School, and Wilson Elementary School.

Middle Schools, High Schools and Adult Schools: Crespi Middle School, Hercules Middle School, Hercules High School, Kennedy High School, Richmond High School, and Alvarado Adult School.

The Board of Education intends to apply proceeds of the bonds to make improvements included on the below Project List at these Priority Schools and other schools of the District, taking into account the timing of bond issues, school schedules and the most vital needs of the District's students. The Project List was developed based on the District's Long Range Facilities Master Plan, and includes

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safety upgrades at all schools and the construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, furnishing and equipping of school facilities at any current or future site in the event of an unforeseen or catastrophic event.

The Project List includes the following types of projects:

## **School Construction, Renovation, Repair and Upgrade Projects**

**Goal and Purpose:** Schools will benefit from the modernization, renovation, repair, upgrade, construction, furnishing and equipping of deteriorating, outdated school buildings, science labs, classrooms, multipurpose rooms, technical education and school libraries and equipment, in order to ensure compliance with handicap accessibility requirements and that students and teachers have the resources they need to excel and students are prepared for college and the real world when they graduate, by undertaking the following:

- Repair, upgrade and replace worn-out leaking roofs.
- Replace existing wiring systems to meet current electrical and accessibility codes.
- Additional electrical service capacity to relieve currently overloaded electrical systems.
- Replace existing water, sewer, plumbing and storm drain systems to meet current codes.
- Upgrade aging and deteriorating school restrooms.
- Upgrade and equip classrooms, science and STEAM labs and multipurpose rooms and facilities.
- Comply with Federal and State-mandated Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) handicap accessibility requirements.
- Upgrade aging schools and replace old portable classrooms with new construction, including potential construction of one or more new schools or reconstruction of existing school sites, or portions thereof.

## **School Health, Safety and Security, Earthquake Safety and Energy Efficiency School Projects**

**Goal and Purpose:** To ensure that the learning process is not interrupted by gangs and drugs or juvenile crime, to maintain healthy students and improve daily attendance, to help attract and retain excellent teachers, and

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to deter vandalism, schools and school sites will benefit from a variety of health and safety projects, such as:

## Student Safety

- Install new security systems, such as security (surveillance) cameras, outdoor lighting, fencing, gates and classroom door locks.
- Remove or abate asbestos, lead paint, mold and other hazardous materials.
- Upgrade emergency communication systems.
- Upgrade fire alarm systems to automatic systems, repair and replace fire safety equipment, add sprinklers and fire safety doors.
- Upgrades to schools in order to meet handicap accessibility requirements.
- Replace/upgrade existing signage, bells and clocks.
- Upgrade and replace playground equipment and athletic fields to meet current safety standards.

## **Energy Efficiency—Returning Savings to the Classrooms.**

- Install energy-efficient systems, including windows, solar panels, energy-efficient heating, ventilation and cooling systems for cost savings and energy efficiency.
- Upgrade and install classroom air conditioning.
- Replace older ceilings, heating, ventilation, air conditioning and lighting systems with building code-compliant, energy-efficient systems.

## **District-Wide Wiring and Instructional Technology Projects For Effective Learning Environment and Job Training**

**Goal and Purpose: To upgrade technology, improve both current instruction methods and to expand job training programs by applying modern technology infrastructure:**

- Provide and maintain upgraded and updated technology, data and communication equipment.
- Upgrade and expand wireless systems, telecommunications and internet access.
- Upgrade and replace computers, hardware and software systems.
- Upgrade and replace classroom furniture, equipment and instructional aids.

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- Upgrade media and audio/visual equipment.
- Expand bandwidth to allow students greater access to the Internet.
- Construct new facilities and install up-to-date learning technology and equipment to be used in job programs.

Listed building, repair and rehabilitation projects and upgrades may be completed as needed. Each project is assumed to include its share of furniture, equipment, architectural, engineering, and similar planning costs, program/project management, staff training expenses and a customary contingency for unforeseen design and construction costs. In addition to the listed repair and construction projects stated above, the Project List also includes the acquisition of a variety of instructional, maintenance and operational equipment; the reduction or retirement of outstanding lease or capital facility note obligations, including interim funding incurred to advance fund projects from the Project List, or the reimbursement of the District for such reduction, as well as the refinancing of outstanding general obligation bond debt of the District and creation of a fund to stabilize tax rates levied on District property owners; the construction, reconstruction, remodeling, upgrading and furnishing of new classrooms or schools, if necessary, to serve students; the construction, reconstruction, remodeling, modernization, upgrading and furnishing of performing arts facilities and schools, which may include classrooms, practice rooms, art studios and galleries, a theater with stage, backstage, scene shop, costume shop, dressing rooms, lighting system, sound system, recording system, orchestra pit, public lobby, box office, and other related services, the acquisition of land and/or the construction, reconstruction, remodeling, upgrading and furnishing of administrative support spaces and district administrative offices; installation of signage and fencing; the payment of the costs of preparation of all facility planning, facility assessment reviews, facility master plan updates, environmental studies (including environmental investigation, remediation and monitoring) and construction documentation; gymnasium and athletic facilities and field upgrades; the acquisition or prepayment of outstanding ground leases, acquiring and leasing of real property for school facilities, including the purchase of leased facilities and the refinancing of outstanding lease obligations; acquiring or leasing of staff parking or transportation lots; paving of parking lots, play areas, and other ground surfaces at schools or school sites; acquiring and leasing of property for temporary housing of dislocated District activities caused by bond projects and the completion of projects authorized under the District's 2010 Measure D and 2012

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Measure E projects, previously approved by the voters. The upgrading of technology infrastructure includes, but is not limited to, computers, LCD projectors, portable interface devices, servers, switches, routers, modules, sound projection, card access systems, laser printers, digital white boards, document projectors, upgraded voice-over IP, call manager and network security/firewall, and other miscellaneous equipment and software. Any project on this Project List may be undertaken at any current or future school site, including Priority Schools. In the event an unforeseen catastrophic event occurs in the District, proceeds may be used for the construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, furnishing and equipping of school facilities at affected sites. The District will pursue the maximum amount of State matching funds available to complete the Projects.

In addition to the projects listed above, the construction, reconstruction, upgrading, repair and renovation of each of the existing school facilities may include, but not be limited to, some or all of the following: renovation of student and staff restrooms; upgrade of facilities to reduce fire risks; repair and replacement of worn-out and leaky roofs, windows, walls, doors and drinking fountains; demolition of unsafe schools or facilities; installation of wiring and electrical systems to safely accommodate computers, technology and other electrical devices and needs; resurfacing or replacing of hard courts, turf and irrigation systems and campus landscaping; building new and/or renovating existing gymnasiums and high school stadiums; upgrading or replacing inadequate libraries and multi-purpose rooms, or construction of new libraries and multi-purpose rooms; upgrading locker rooms; installing lunch shelters, artificial turf, and bleachers; improving sanitation and recycling; replacing and expanding parking lots; building a new stadium; installing interior and exterior painting and floor covering; installing covered walkways or shelters; adding administrative support spaces; upgrading school site kitchens; repairing rubberized play apparatus surfaces; demolition; and construction of various forms of storage and support spaces; upgrading classrooms; repairing, upgrading and installing interior and exterior lighting systems; and replacing outdated security fences and security systems.

The allocation of bond proceeds will be affected by the District's receipt of State matching funds and the final costs of each project. Approval of Measure R does not guarantee that the proposed Project or Projects within the District that are the subject of bonds under Measure R will be funded beyond the local revenues generated by Measure R. The District's proposal for the project or projects may

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assume the receipt of matching state funds, which could be subject to appropriation by the Legislature or approval of a statewide bond measure. In the absence of State matching funds, which the District will aggressively pursue to reduce the District's share of the costs of the projects, the District may not be able to complete all of the projects listed above. The budget for each project is an estimate and may be affected by factors beyond the District's control.

The final cost of each project will be determined as plans are finalized, construction bids are awarded and projects are completed. Based on the final costs of each project, certain projects described above may be delayed or may not be completed. Demolition of existing facilities and reconstruction of facilities scheduled for repair and upgrade may occur, if the Board determines that such an approach would be more cost-effective in creating more enhanced and operationally efficient campuses. Necessary site preparation/restoration may occur in connection with new construction, renovation or remodeling, or installation or removal of relocatable classrooms, including ingress and egress, removing, replacing or installing irrigation, storm drain, and utility lines, trees and landscaping, relocating fire access roads, and acquiring any necessary easements, licenses, or rights of way to the property. Proceeds of the bonds may be used to pay or reimburse the District for the costs of District staff when performing work on or necessary and incidental to bond projects. Bond proceeds shall only be expended for the specific purposes identified herein. In order to fund the projects and prior to the issuance of any bonds authorized by this Measure, the District may seek one or more waivers from the State Board of Education of the applicable bonding limit requirements of Section 15106 of the Education Code. The District shall create an account into which proceeds of the bonds shall be deposited and comply with the reporting requirements of Government Code § 53410.

As required by the California Constitution, the proceeds from the sale of the bonds will be used only for the provision of school facilities by construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, refinancing or replacement of school facilities, including the furnishing and equipping of school facilities, or the acquisition or lease or real property for school facilities, and not for any other purpose, including teacher and administrator salaries and other school operating expenses.

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The District will conduct an annual, independent performance audit to ensure that the funds have been expended only on projects included in the Project List set forth above.

The District will conduct an annual, independent financial audit of the proceeds from the sale of the bonds until all of those proceeds have been expended on projects included in the Project List set forth above.

Pursuant to Section 15772 of the Education Code, the Board will appoint a citizens' oversight committee and conduct annual independent audits to assure that bond proceeds are spent only on projects included in the Project List set forth above and for no other purposes.

**NO ADMINISTRATOR SALARIES. PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF THE BONDS AUTHORIZED BY THIS PROPOSITION SHALL BE USED ONLY FOR THE ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION, RECONSTRUCTION, REHABILITATION, OR REPLACEMENT OF SCHOOL FACILITIES, INCLUDING THE FURNISHING AND EQUIPPING OF FACILITIES, AND NOT FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE, INCLUDING PENSIONS, TEACHER AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR SALARIES AND OTHER OPERATING EXPENSES.**

**FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY. THE EXPENDITURE OF BOND MONEY ON THESE PROJECTS IS SUBJECT TO STRINGENT FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIREMENTS. BY LAW, PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL AUDITS WILL BE PERFORMED ANNUALLY, AND ALL BOND EXPENDITURES WILL BE MONITORED BY AN INDEPENDENT CITIZENS' BOND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE (EDUCATION CODE SECTION 15278 ET SEQ.) TO ENSURE THAT FUNDS ARE SPENT AS PROMISED AND SPECIFIED. THE CITIZENS' BOND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MUST INCLUDE, AMONG OTHERS, REPRESENTATIVES OF A BONA FIDE TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION, A BUSINESS ORGANIZATION AND A SENIOR CITIZENS ORGANIZATION. NO DISTRICT EMPLOYEES OR VENDORS ARE ALLOWED TO SERVE ON THE CITIZENS' BOND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.**