

## **Frequently Asked Questions Moraga School District**

### **How are Moraga School District schools doing?**

Moraga School District (MSD) schools are among the best in the State, with the quality of education in Moraga recently ranked in the top 10 among all communities in California. Parents and community members alike tell us that MSD schools help to improve the quality of life in our Town and protect the value of our homes.

### **What is the state of MSD classrooms and school facilities?**

Upgrades and repairs have been made to our schools in recent years, however needed improvements and updates remain. The District is currently undertaking a Facilities Master Planning process to take stock of the state of our facilities and has identified the need to improve classroom safety, update athletic facilities, repair leaky roofs, and fix unsafe windows. Additionally, our middle school does not have a multi-use room, indoor lunch area, or gathering place for students, and Kindergarten classrooms are becoming overcrowded.

### **How do aging facilities impact day-to-day classroom instruction?**

Research shows that student learning and belonging is greatly improved by the quality of local classrooms and school facilities. Moreover, leaking roofs and unsafe windows can pose growing health and safety concerns for MSD students. Additional upgrades and repairs will improve Moraga schools so that classrooms and labs reflect the value our community has placed in local education.

### **How has the District assessed current classroom and facility needs?**

To identify facility improvements needed at each of MSD's schools and to prioritize improvements based on urgency and importance, the District is currently undertaking a Facilities Master Planning process by architects and school construction experts. This planning process will update and expand upon the work of our previous Facilities Master Plan crafted in 2015, which formed the basis of the District's first phase of improvements, completed thanks to voter support for Measure V in 2016.

### **How does MSD plan to address needed repairs and improvements at our local elementary schools and middle school?**

Because the State does not provide funding for facilities, local schools cannot maintain quality educational programs without a local funding source. That's why voters in Lafayette and Orinda have recently passed school improvement bond measures to support their schools. Measure D would allow MSD to complete identified improvements and ensure Moraga students can keep pace and are prepared to compete in high school and college.

### **Specifically, how would Measure D be used to complete needed improvements?**

If approved by voters, funding from Measure D could be used to:

- Upgrade science, technology, and engineering classrooms and labs
- Replace leaking roofs and unsafe windows
- Prevent classroom overcrowding
- Update classrooms and classroom technology for 21<sup>st</sup>-century learning
- Repair and replace aging plumbing and electrical systems

### **How do I know funds from Measure D would be used responsibly?**

MSD has been a good steward of public funds and has the lowest tax rate in the County. By law, Measure D would require accountability protections, including:

- All funds would be controlled locally and could not be taken away by the State
- By law, no money could be used for administrators' salaries
- An independent citizens' oversight committee and mandatory annual audits would ensure all funds are spent as promised
- A detailed project list outlining the specific use of funds would be required

### **Will all funds from Measure D benefit Camino Pablo Elementary, Los Perales Elementary, Donald Rheem Elementary, and Joaquin Moraga Intermediate only?**

Yes. All funds generated by Measure D would stay local for our local MSD schools only and could not be taken away by the State.

### **May funds from Measure D be used for administrator salaries and pensions?**

No. By law, no funds from Measure D may be used for operating expenses, including administrator salaries and pensions.

### **I don't have children attending local schools. How does this impact me?**

Even if you do not have school-age children, funding quality education can help improve the quality of life in the community and protect the value of our homes.

### **How much would Measure D cost?**

Measure D would provide \$52 million for repairs and upgrades to our local elementary schools and middle school and is estimated to cost \$30 per each \$100,000 of a property's assessed (not market) value per year, while bonds are outstanding.

### **What is the difference between assessed value and market value?**

The cost of bond measures is based on the assessed value of properties. The assessed value of a property is based on the original purchase price and may not increase by more than 2% a year, while the market value tends to grow at a much faster rate based on market conditions. Thus, the assessed value is usually much lower than the market value, especially if a property was purchased long ago at a much lower price than it could be purchased for today. It is this lower assessed value upon which the cost of Measure D is based.

**Are senior exemptions available?**

State law does not allow for exemptions to be applied to bond measures. However, because the cost of a bond measure is based on the original purchase price of a home, older residents who have lived in their homes a long time have the lowest assessed values and will pay the least toward the cost of a bond measure.

**How would Measure D benefit local parks and athletic fields?**

The playfields in our schools are the only parks and fields available to all Moragans. Measure D would improve the safety and accessibility of those fields so that our entire community can continue to benefit from them in the years to come.

**Didn't we just pass a measure to fund our schools?**

In March 2020 with the passage of Measure M, local voters renewed existing parcel tax funding for our schools. Parcel tax revenues invest in ongoing expenditures like teachers and academic programs and are not used to fund facility improvements. Measure D would provide dedicated one-time funding for updating our classrooms and facilities for teachers and students.

**Didn't we already pass a bond measure to improve our schools?**

In 2016, local voters approved Measure V bond funding to improve our schools, but that funding was only ever intended to complete Phase I improvements. Those Measure V funds have since been used across all our school campuses on needed improvements. With Phase I improvement completed or underway, the District is now turning its attentions to plans to complete needed Phase II repairs and upgrades at our local schools.

**How can I share my thoughts or learn more?**

Planning for the future of our local schools is a community-wide endeavor. If you have questions or input that you would like to share, please don't hesitate to reach out to Superintendent Julie Parks at [jparks@moraga.k12.ca.us](mailto:jparks@moraga.k12.ca.us).