A Decade of Progress to Build 21st Century Schools

This is the tenth annual report to the community by the Citizens’ Bond Oversight Committee. Over the last decade, the Long Beach Unified School District has made tremendous strides in building and modernizing its campuses—all with the goal of creating the best possible learning environment for the 21st Century.

During the past fiscal year 2017-18, construction quickly began at the first six schools to be modernized to accommodate updated heating/air conditioning systems. Over the next several years, a total of 51 schools will see these updates, which are a direct response to the mandate of voters who approved the $1.5 billion Measure E bond initiative in November 2016. Another voter mandate—keeping young people off the streets—is also being addressed, with upgrades to auditoriums and athletic facilities for after-school programs.

Bond funds from both Measure K and Measure E are also being used to re-build and create new classroom buildings on several high school campuses, including Jordan, Renaissance, Sato, and Millikan.

The committee takes an active role in visiting construction sites, monitoring expenditures and ensuring that bond funds are used as intended by voters. We are proud to affirm the independent financial auditor’s conclusion that LBUSD deserves the highest possible rating for fiscal responsibility for the sixth year in a row.

Walter Larkins, Chairperson

Air Conditioning Projects Begin

During the 2017-18 fiscal year, work began on the first six LBUSD schools to be modernized with new central air conditioning. In September 2018, the projects were completed at Kettering, Riley, Rogers, Cleveland, Stephens and Garfield schools.

In the next several years, a total of 51 more campuses will be modernized with air conditioning, and other upgrades.

Major Project Highlights

Renaissance High School is Reborn—Again
The oldest high school in Los Angeles County (outside the City of Los Angeles) has been renovated now for the fourth time. The latest iteration of the compact downtown Long Beach campus is a $40 million makeover for Renaissance High School for the Arts, which has occupied the site since 2004.

Jordan High’s Rebuilding Progresses
The last year has seen major progress on the Jordan High campus, with new construction of Buildings 1400 and 1500, the band building and the auditorium all underway and scheduled for completion in 2019.

Educare Preschool Facility Opens
Located at Barton Elementary School, the new Educare preschool has opened to 159 children, from infants to five-year-olds.
The independent auditing firm of CliftonLarsonAllen, LLP completed a performance and financial audit covering Measures K and E activities from July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018. In December 2018, the Citizens’ Bond Oversight Committee reviewed and discussed the reports with the audit team.

There were no findings related to performance and financial audits, signifying that the school district was in compliance with all laws and regulations pertaining to Measures K and E.

This was the sixth consecutive year in which independent auditors reported no findings in their annual audit of the LBUSD school bond program.

Wilson and Poly high students are enjoying their newly refurbished auditoriums and stadiums, which now meet current earthquake and accessibility standards.

In addition, installation of all-weather tracks and fields are being completed at all comprehensive high schools and middle schools in the district. Some K-8 schools will also have their athletic facilities upgraded.
What is Measure K?

Measure K is a ballot initiative, approved by 71 percent of voters in November 2008, which makes available $1.2 billion from property taxes to build, renovate and improve schools in the Long Beach Unified School District. The funds come from issuance of a series of bonds to occur four to six times in about ten years.

Since the measure was approved, steady progress has been made to reconfigure and restore Long Beach Unified School District’s aging schools. The funds have paid for three new small high schools (McBride, Sato and Browning) and construction of a new swimming pool at Cabrillo High, renovation of the auditoriums at Poly and Wilson high schools and the rebuilding of Jordan High School.

Dozens of Measure K projects, identified as the most critical, have already been completed. These include district-wide wireless data communication, seismic retrofitting, accessibility upgrades, telecommunications systems upgrades, fire alarm/intercom/clock replacements, boiler replacement and outdated portable removal.

In addition, these funds paid for building Nelson Academy and the complete rebuilding of Newcomb Academy and Roosevelt Elementary.

What is Measure E?

In response to strong public support for repairing aging schools, the Long Beach Unified School District Board of Education approved the placement of Measure E, a $1.5 billion school repair and safety bond initiative on the November 2016 ballot. Approved by 75 percent of voters, Measure E funds:

**REPAIRS:** Many campuses were built 60 to 70 years ago and need important health and safety repairs. Also, buildings must meet handicap accessibility and earthquake standards, old restrooms and leaky roofs must be replaced, and further upgrades made to fire alarms and security systems, plumbing, electrical and other infrastructure.

**TECHNOLOGY:** To enable students’ future success, modern science and computer labs, libraries, and classroom technology will be funded.

**AIR CONDITIONING:** When temperatures rise, schools with inadequate or no air conditioning are forced to send students home due to overheated classrooms. By installing modern energy efficient air conditioning systems, LBUSD will help improve learning by making sure classrooms are always comfortable and ventilated.

**SAFETY:** Improving indoor and outdoor recreational areas, including fields, gyms and swimming pools, will allow after-school programs to be expanded and provide supervised activities designed to reduce gang involvement and increase graduation rates.