



## **Measure 20-220 would...**

Address growth and instructional needs by constructing or improving classrooms and common areas, improve safety and security systems, update technology, address critical capital needs, and build a new community gymnasium.

# **FERN RIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT 28J**

## **BOND FACT SHEET**

Visit the District website at: <http://www.fernridge.k12.or.us/bond/> for more information

### **What Is A Bond?**

Bonds are issued, when approved by voters, to finance capital projects.

### **What Can Bond Funds Pay For?**

Bonds funds can only be used for projects listed on the ballot; bond funds can't pay for staff or day-to-day operating costs.

### **What Would The Bond Cost?**

If approved by voters, Measure 20-220 is not expected to increase the tax rate that property owners are currently paying, which is \$2.19 per \$1,000 of assessed value, or about \$18.25 per month for each \$100,000 of assessed property value.

The rate could decrease depending on interest rates, growth from new homes and businesses, and other factors.

### **When Would The New Bonds Expire?**

The new bonds would be issued in 2014 and would expire in 25 years or less.

The Fern Ridge School District is seeking a \$26.67 million facilities bond in the May 20, 2014 primary election to replace Elmira Elementary School, renovate other school facilities, and improve technology and safety throughout the District. If approved by voters, Measure 20-220 would replace the 1997 levy that is expiring soon, and is projected to result in **no increase to the school bond tax rate that property owners currently pay.**

## **Why Go For A Bond? Why Now?**

In October 2012 the Fern Ridge School District initiated the development of a comprehensive, community-based, long range facility plan. The purpose of the plan is to help serve as a guide for assessing the need for facility improvements and capital investments including repairs, modernization, upgrades and new construction.

In February 2013 the Long Range Facility Planning Committee was formed; the Committee met six times over five months and assessed the District's existing facilities, examined enrollment projections, reviewed different educational models, and gathered input from the community. Information was reviewed from architects, engineers, staff, students, and community members on the potential scope of work needed to:

- **Increase and improve instructional spaces**
- **Make improvements to campus safety and security**
- **Invest in technology**
- **Address critical capital needs, and**
- **Create facilities more readily available for community use**

In October 2013 the School Board received a report from the Long Range Facilities Planning Committee with a recommendation that the District initiate a plan that targets safety, technology, a positive educational environment and critical capital repairs, through select projects in the next three years. On February 18, 2014, the School Board voted unanimously to place a \$26,670,000 bond measure before the community on the May 20, 2014 ballot.

**ELECTION DAY IS TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2014**

**✓ DON'T FORGET TO VOTE--Last day to Register is April 29<sup>th</sup>**

## **What Would Ballot Measure 20-220 Include?**

**Replace most of Elmira Elementary on same site, with construction steps that allow students to remain on site.**



*Built in 1949, Elmira Elementary School represents some of the greatest needs in the District. Estimates to make critical capital repairs are equal to 72% of the cost to replace the facility at the same size. When you add space for full-day kindergarten beginning in 2015, the existing facility simply does not make financial sense in which to continue to invest.*

*The newer front office and library building will remain and undergo light renovations, but the remainder of the school will be replaced over two phases during the course of a single school year, so students can remain on site during the work. Steps will be taken to separate the work activity to ensure safety and a positive learning environment during the construction.*

**Expand and renovate Veneta Elementary to allow supervision from front office, an enclosed library, additional classrooms, a cafeteria and kitchen, and to move bus traffic out of the main parking lot.**

*Veneta Elementary School will undergo a transformation focused on safety and meeting needs due to growth. Classrooms will be added to replace existing portables and accommodate for full-day kindergarten beginning in 2015.*

*Getting out of remote portables, separating the bus loop from the parking lot, enclosing the library, and reconfiguring the office to face the street will all improve safety at the school. Adding a cafeteria and prep kitchen will free up the gymnasium to meet new state standards for increased physical education minutes.*



**Renovations at Fern Ridge Middle School to library, office, and associated spaces for safety, acoustics, and student learning.**



*Fern Ridge Middle School continues to serve its student body well in its current configuration. The primary improvements at this site will include relocation of the office to face the parking lot to provide better supervision, as well as seismic strengthening at the main structure. The library will also be enclosed to better meet the needs of programs using that space.*

## **Expand and renovate Elmira High School to include a second gymnasium and meet Title IX criteria.**



*Elmira High School has many needs, but the community-based committee took a hard look at them and made a lean recommendation for the most critical priorities so as to keep the overall bond amount affordable.*

*The recommendation of a second gymnasium will serve not only the needs of high school students and athletes but will also alleviate the impact to all of the community schools and programs by providing critically needed space.*

*The school must also meet Title IX criteria by expanding the girl's support facilities to be equal to those for the boys. Minor renovations will also occur at the high school to accommodate these additions.*

## **Address student safety and security, including seismic work, at all sites.**

*Safety improvements at all sites top the list of needs, especially given the most recent events at Fern Ridge Middle School. This goes beyond just a reaction to a single event but includes an overall approach to improving the environment by addressing line of sight, hardening of the perimeter, better access control, expansion of the existing camera systems, and reducing opportunities for bullying and vandalism.*

*Seismic remediation will also be performed at all of the facilities based on a recent structural assessment of the buildings and a prior state-sponsored evaluation.*

## **Acquire technology to support classroom instruction and technology infrastructure.**

*Technology continues to play a critical part of the learning environment. While the District makes annual strides in the availability and access to these tools, wireless access in all buildings, improved student computers and labs, and teaching aids for audio and video in the classroom still remain on the to-do list in order to be competitive with neighboring school districts and provide comparable opportunities for all Fern Ridge students. Improvements to the phone and intercom systems address not only the technology requirements but also add to the investment in student and staff safety.*



## **Improve, repair, and develop facilities and site to preserve remaining assets and systems and plan for growth.**

*Additional capital investments in roofs, mechanical systems, and parking lots will ensure that the buildings continue to serve the community at least as long as Elmira Elementary School already has.*



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q: How can you go out for a bond and there be no tax increase?**

A: *This bond would replace the bond approved by voters in 1997, so property owners would pay the same tax rate that they are currently paying.*

**Q: Are both of the elementary schools really overcrowded?**

A: *Yes. Veneta Elementary is already using two portable classrooms and the state mandated requirement of full-day kindergarten beginning in 2015 will further impact Veneta Elementary and bring Elmira Elementary beyond capacity. The bond would add classrooms at both sites to address both current and projected needs.*

**Q: Does this plan address potential growth?**

A: *Yes. Since both elementary schools are at capacity, a primary element of this plan is to address that issue. The middle school and high school have capacity to grow.*

**Q: Why not just repair Elmira Elementary—why replace it?**

A: *Elmira Elementary is 65 years old. To address all the needs there, it would cost about 72% of building new, yet would only extend the life of the school for another 20-25 years. A new school would last 75-80 years and could address many more modern educational needs.*

**Q: Why not re-open Noti or Central Elementary?**

A: *Re-opening a smaller sized elementary school would not be cost effective. For example, there are only 40 students in grades K-5 that currently live within the Noti boundary. In addition, the Noti property is currently listed for sale, and part of Central is being leased to a local theater group.*

**Q: Why not go to one elementary school?**

A: *That idea was examined by the Long Range Facility Planning Committee. Elementary schools can lose connectivity with students and the community when they become large. With anticipated growth, we could easily get to 800 students in one facility. By investing in both facilities, we would have room to grow and could accommodate 400-450 students at each site.*

**Q: If you are creating more space, but bond funds can't be used on salaries, how are you going to staff the new space?**

A: *The classrooms being built are either replacements or are preparing us for state mandated full-day kindergarten and projected growth.*

**Q: What would be the potential ways the community could use the new facilities?**

A: *The new gym is a space that could be easily accessed by the community, built in a way that allows for easy access without compromising the security of the entire building. Likewise, the new commons area and kitchen at Veneta Elementary would be a similar space, built on the front (SW side) of the school for easy access to community groups after school and in the summer.*

**Q: Couldn't we do less right now?**

A: *The Long Range Planning Committee assessed needs totaling more than \$67 million. The bond projects total \$26.7 million and would implement only the highest, most critical priorities.*

**Q: What happens if we do not fund this plan?**

A: *The District Facilities Committee reviewed needs in several areas – safety and security, capital needs, technology, and growth – to determine the highest priorities in each area that could be funded by the District's operational budget. All other needs would have to be deferred. For example, in an area like growth, options such as reconfiguring grade levels or purchasing portable classrooms will have to be considered.*

**Q: How is this bond measure different from the past?**

A: *The District took more time in planning and involved more people. The Long Range Facilities Planning Committee started their work in early 2013 to create a plan that will guide future decision-making based on community input and support. More emphasis was put on protecting the investment in our existing facilities and making strategic additions to protect the investment in our students, and the percentage of dollars being spent on new athletic spaces has decreased significantly.*