

Bond Election - Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a bond?

A bond is a voter-authorized funding mechanism that enables a school district to incur debt to finance one or more of the following:

- *Acquisition or lease of sites*
- *Construction or renovation of school buildings*
- *Improving school grounds and District facilities*
- *Purchasing pupil transportation vehicles*

Principal and interest on the debt is repaid over time through residential and business property taxes.

2. Why consider a bond election, given current economic challenges?

WESD has critical facility project needs throughout the District. Delaying such projects could increase the severity of the need and the eventual cost to address it. In some instances, safety could even be jeopardized.

3. Who will decide if WESD will have a bond election?

The District-wide School Facility Planning Council will present their recommendations to the WESD Governing Board in late May/early June 2010. At that time, Board members will determine if they will call for a bond election.

4. If approved, how will the bond funding be used?

The District-wide School Facility Planning Council is recommending that bond funding be used to address high-priority capital projects throughout the District, including

- *Construction of a new building(s) on the Lookout Mountain Elementary School campus and the subsequent demolition of existing buildings*
- *Major renovation of Arroyo Elementary School facilities;*
- *Major renovation of Tumbleweed Elementary School facilities;*
- *Repairs to correct structural, electrical, and/or mechanical deficiencies at various sites and facilities;*
- *Bus replacement*

Please refer to the document, "Washington Elementary School District #6 Bond Project Recommendations, District Facility Council, March 2, 2010" for specific details.

5. Will construction and renovations be "green?"

Yes, construction and renovations will be accomplished in an environmentally conscious manner. WESD is committed to being ecologically, fiscally and socially responsible; implementing "green" designs, materials and systems will yield reduced operational costs and healthier environments for student and staff, as well as community members, who use the facilities.

6. How were the potential bond projects determined?

The bond election recommendation is the culmination of over two years of research, analysis and planning by the five WESD Regional School Facility Planning Councils,

each of which is comprised of parent, staff and community members. Since September 2007, each regional council has accomplished the following:

- *Studied the concepts of high-performance schools, energy conservation and “green” school buildings;*
- *Researched and documented basic data about each school and campus in the region, i.e., size, enrollment, energy usage, capacity;*
- *Reviewed educational specifications for schools;*
- *Reviewed anecdotal information regarding the condition of school buildings in the region, as well as building and maintenance assessment data for each structure;*
- *Reviewed the District’s current Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan, with particular focus on schools in the given region;*
- *Learned about capital funding sources and school improvement bonds;*
- *Identified and prioritized capital projects within the given region that could be funded through a future bond;*
- *Applied the WESD Capital Improvement Plan Priority System to ensure consistency in the prioritization process.*

Each regional council met in early 2010 to finalize their prioritized list of potential bond projects. A detailed compilation of WESD Bond Project Recommendations, including both site- and District-level proposals, was forwarded to a District-wide School Facility Planning Council, which met on February 16 and March 2, 2010. The 15 members of the District-wide council reviewed and unanimously approved the recommendations.

7. Why are school buses included as part of the proposed bond election?

Arizona statute specifies that proceeds from the authorization of school improvement bonds may be used to purchase pupil transportation vehicles. WESD currently has 22 buses that are at least 15 years old and 18 buses that have been driven at least 150,000 miles. (Some of the buses fall into both categories.) District buses transport a minimum of 6,410 students per day, traversing an average of 8,400 miles per day. On any given day, 15 to 17 buses require some type of service, 3 to 5 of which are likely to need major repairs.

The bond recommendation allocates \$3 million for the replacement of 22 old, worn-out buses with new buses that are safer, more dependable, less expensive to maintain, more fuel efficient and more environmentally friendly.

8. Are there other funding sources that could be used to support repair/renovation of school facilities?

In 1998, Arizona established Building Renewal funding for the purpose of maintaining the adequacy of existing school facilities in the state; however, Building Renewal has not been a reliable funding source. Since its inception, and according to its funding formula, WESD was to have received a total of \$55.3 million in Building Renewal funds; of that, the District has received only \$21.6 million. Of the approximately \$18 million in

*Building Renewal funds that WESD was supposed to have received during the past three years (\$6 million per year), **none** has been received.*

9. How did WESD use the funding that was authorized by voters in the District’s 2001 bond election?

In November 2001, voters authorized WESD to sell up to \$64 million in school improvement bonds. The District has received all proceeds from the 2001 authorization; to date, with the exception of a small amount that is held in reserve for emergency projects, the funds have been expended, and the originally designated bond projects have been completed, as indicated in the recap, below:

Project Description	Total Expended / Planned	School(s)
Original Voter Authorization - November 2001	\$64,000,000	
Major Construction for School Improvements and Classroom Additions (Improvements include roofing, HVAC, electrical, door replacement, carpet.)	\$44,695,729	Mountain View, Sunset, Cholla, Mountain Sky, Royal Palm, Cactus Wren, Abraham Lincoln, Maryland, Arroyo, Palo Verde, Sunnyslope, Desert View, Orangewood, RE Miller, Desert Foothills
Kitchen Remodels and Improvements through June, 2008	\$3,356,203	John Jacobs, Lookout Mountain, Tumbleweed, Sunset, Sweetwater, Sunburst, Arroyo
General Health and Safety Projects	\$150,499	Transportation, Alta Vista, Abraham Lincoln, Royal Palm
Infrastructure - Technology-related (local and wide area network)	\$2,236,895	Mountain View, Sunburst, Lookout Mountain, Palo Verde, General district wide projects (<i>multiple infrastructure and technology projects were completed over the last several years utilizing dollars from a previous bond authorization</i>)
Purchase of School Buses	\$392,776	Serves all schools
Warehouse and Material Management Center / District Administrative Center	\$2,932,857	Serves all schools
District Service Center - Transportation, MIS, Food and Nutrition Services	\$8,688,960	
Contingency for Emergencies	\$1,485,570	

10. If approved, how will the bond election impact my property taxes?

If the bond authorization is approved, the impact to a homeowner whose home value is \$100,000 will be approximately \$100 per year for a period of five years. After that time, previous debt will be paid in full and the amount per year will decrease slightly.

11. What will happen if the bond doesn't pass?

If the bond doesn't pass, the recommended capital projects will have to be delayed, unless alternate funding sources can be identified. As indicated in FAQ #2, delaying such projects would likely have negative repercussions.