



Modern Learning and Other Improvements — Possible Options

Modernizing Schools: Information & Possible Options

Why is PPS considering a school construction bond?

PPS school buildings are aging and in many cases worn out. Roofs and pipes are leaking, electrical systems are inadequate for today's technology, and earthquake resistance is far below current seismic safety standards. In addition, schools need more classroom variety — from large lecture halls to smaller breakout spaces for effective teaching and learning. A bond measure would allow the district to remedy building deficiencies and to modernize learning environments to support student achievement and prepare students to compete in the 21st century and beyond.

Can a school construction bond also pay for teachers and operational support?

No. A school construction bond can only be used for major renovations or replacement of school buildings. PPS gets state and federal funding to operate the schools (hire teachers, purchase textbooks etc.) as well as from a local option levy, which is a local property tax dedicated to the operation of Portland schools. PPS has not had school construction bond funding for more than 10 years.

What does a school construction bond pay for?

School bonds typically pay for a blend of full rebuilds of some schools and targeted improvements at others.

Full rebuilds address all of the deficient systems and significantly redesigns and rebuilds a school.

- ▶ It creates flexible spaces for learning and other improvements that support student achievement.
- ▶ It is cost-effective. For example, the estimated cost of seismic upgrades needed at Portland schools would be \$422 million if done as stand-alone work but only \$206 million if done as part of full modernizations.

Targeted improvements include physical and educational improvements.

- ▶ **Physical improvements** include upgrading building systems (heat, electrical, plumbing, fire safety) and building structure (accessibility, roofs, windows, exterior improvements).
- ▶ **Educational improvements** include upgrading classroom and other instructional spaces including libraries, computer labs, art rooms and performance spaces, as well as upgrading science labs, technology and security.

Other costs pay for required reserves, materials and labor cost escalation, bond issuance costs and improvements to buildings where students attend school while their school is renovated.

Where do the four bond options come from and what happens next?

PPS engaged in a series of community listening sessions July-December 2011 and then took the following steps:

- ▶ The **Advisory Committee** met December - April to update the school district's long-range plan for its buildings. The committee included educators, parents, maintenance experts, industry experts and community leaders. The group analyzed building conditions, enrollment forecasts, seismic threats, accessibility needs and the impact of modernized classrooms on student achievement. The group also recommended that the community engage in a series of bonds over time to upgrade PPS schools.
- ▶ **Advisory Committee** then considered and refined options for what an initial bond package would contain. That citizens committee included members from the advisory committee and new members. PPS used this group's guidance to develop the options described in this hand-out.
- ▶ **The broader community** is now being asked at a series of

meetings May 22-24, and in an online survey, to weigh in on whether to go forward and if so, to share their views on bond package options.

- ▶ **The school board** would then refer a specific bond package to voters that would describe which schools and what types of improvements would be made and how much it would cost the average property owner.
- ▶ **Voters** who live in the school district would ultimately vote on a bond. Any subsequent bond would also need voter approval.

What are the criteria that the citizens' group prioritized?

The Bond Development Committee helped PPS establish priorities that the broader community should consider for the first in a series of bonds. PPS staff identified sample schools that met each priority.

- ▶ **Priority A**
Some schools are more vulnerable to earthquake damage than others, including schools with two or more stories and those with structurally deficient roofs. Some schools need accessibility improvements such as elevators and ramps. All of those needs would be addressed in schools that are rebuilt. **All of the schools recommended under this option are in poor seismic condition and need access upgrades.**
- ▶ **Priority B**
Schools identified under this priority have the ability to leverage public or private dollars or other support. For example, Concordia University provides student teachers, and mentors at Faubion K-8, which is next door to the campus. This partnership could also become a funding partnership. In a number of schools, City of Portland urban renewal districts and Federal New Market Tax Credit zones could provide public dollars.
- ▶ **Priority C**