



## PUBLIC SCHOOL BONDS EXPLANATION

### **Ballot Question**

#### **PUBLIC SCHOOL BONDS**

Shall Fairfax County, Virginia, contract a debt, borrow money, and issue capital improvement bonds in the maximum aggregate principal amount of \$360,000,000 for the purposes of providing funds, in addition to funds from school bonds previously authorized, to finance, including reimbursement to the County for temporary financing for, the costs of school improvements, including acquiring, building, expanding and renovating properties, including new sites, new buildings or additions, renovations and improvements to existing buildings, and furnishings and equipment, for the Fairfax County public school system?

### **Explanation**

This referendum asks Fairfax County voters whether the County government should be authorized to contract a debt and issue bonds in the maximum principal amount of \$360,000,000 for a range of planned improvements to the County's public schools. If a majority of voters approves this referendum, then the County would be allowed to issue bonds to fund school facilities as described in the ballot question. Current plans for the use of the proceeds of bonds that may be authorized by this referendum are set forth below. These specific plans may be altered, but in any case the bonds can only be issued for purposes described in the ballot question.

Virginia law permits the County government to borrow money to buy land and construct projects by issuing general obligation bonds, which are sold to investors and repaid over time with County revenues. Money received from the sale of bonds is used as a source of funding for many County facilities. Bond financing permits the costs of those County facilities to be repaid over a period of years. However, before the County may incur a general obligation debt, the County voters must authorize the County to borrow those funds.

The County currently plans to use the proceeds of bonds authorized by this bond referendum to fund the construction of new schools, planning and designing of projects, supervision of construction, adding onto and renovating existing school facilities, and making other physical repairs and improvements. More specifically, current plans for the proceeds of bonds that may be authorized by this referendum are to:

- Plan and/or construct two new elementary schools at locations to be determined,
- Relocate one modular building,
- Construct capacity additions at three existing high schools, and
- Plan and/or construct renovations of ten elementary schools and two middle schools.

These projects are intended to address needs created by increases in student enrollment, as well as to improve the learning environment within those schools that have become outdated, both technologically and instructionally. The School Board is committed to reducing the school renovation cycle County-wide from an average of 37 years to 25 years or less.

These projects will increase the capacity of school buildings County-wide by more than 4,400 students in the aggregate and are expected to reduce the number of temporary or portable classrooms by approximately one hundred. The renovation projects will upgrade the life safety, environmental, electrical, security, and telecommunications systems of each building. The improvements will bring aging school facilities into full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and recently updated federal and state storm water quality and quantity requirements. The improvements will provide updated site features including, where practicable, additional parking, sport field upgrades, additional site lighting and improved traffic patterns. These upgrades also will increase energy efficiency and improve the overall environmental sustainability of school facilities. The School Board is committed to protecting and enhancing the community's investment in its schools, which have an enrollment of more than 185,000 students.

**This explanation was prepared, printed, and made available at  
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