



Santa Maria-Bonita School District
Souza Center, 708 South Miller Street
Santa Maria, CA 93454

LEARN MORE at www.SMBSD.org

Questions + Answers: School District Facilities Assessment Project

Traducción al ESPAÑOL:
www.SMBSD.org o llame al **(805) 928-1783**

What is this school facilities assessment project all about?

As part of our commitment to maintaining the quality of education in neighborhood schools, Santa Maria-Bonita School District has conducted a full assessment of our school facilities needs—including our pre-school and grades K-8 classroom structures, equipment, and educational technology, and student support facilities at every site. This assessment is part of a larger process to ensure quality schools for the families and community we serve. We are also keenly aware that good schools protect property values.

Why now?

Santa Maria-Bonita schools are SEVERELY OVERCROWDED. This problem is a growing threat to maintaining the local quality of education. Our 19 elementary and junior high schools house thousands of elementary and junior high school children. They are in constant use and bursting at the seams. We are responsible for maintaining quality schools. We cannot afford to wait any longer to take action.

What is the evidence of need?

- ▶ Virtually EVERY classroom and workspace at EVERY school is used every day.
- ▶ Demand for instructional space is so high that one school uses the cafeteria stage as a classroom. Another uses the staff lounge. Another uses the library—and the librarian moves from room to room.

- ▶ Most student support staff (school counselors, instructional specialists etc.) share desks and meeting space. Some use storage rooms, custodial closets or the principal's office for meeting space.
- ▶ Recess is packed, with 500 or more children on playgrounds and lines to use the restrooms.
- ▶ Serving lunch takes 2-3 hours and 5-6 cycles—groups of children have only 20 minutes to line up, be served, eat and exit the cafeteria before the next group of children must enter.

Relief is needed. Constructing additional classrooms will help protect the local quality of education.

How will additional classrooms and facilities upgrades improve instruction?

Studies show that overcrowding is one of the biggest obstacles to student success. We strive for teaching and learning excellence in every educational setting. Our goal is to provide all children with access to the education and technology to be successful in high school, college, and in good-paying jobs and careers of the future. Safe, modern schools with adequate space and technology are essential to student success.

What about funding?

Our school district makes every effort to use resources wisely. But with limited help from the State, our severe overcrowding problem is getting worse. We need to work together to protect the local quality of education.

To that end, we are exploring all options—including State matching funds and private grants. As part of this process we are also exploring the feasibility of seeking community support for a local school bond. School bonds are the most common way to fund the upgrades we need.

Isn't there a facilities budget for ongoing school maintenance?

Our school district maintenance and operations staff work hard to keep our schools safe and in adequate working condition. But with 19 severely overcrowded school sites in constant use, our facilities needs far exceed the standard funding allotment we get for school facilities maintenance.

Can't the Lottery help? Wasn't the Lottery supposed to fix our schools?

Lottery funds can only be used for classroom instruction, not school construction or facility upgrades. Even if we could use Lottery funds, the funding we receive from the Lottery each year is less than 2% of our annual General Fund Budget. Thus, Lottery funds alone are simply not enough to meet our needs.

If the District does pursue a local school bond, when will it make that decision?

NO decisions have been made yet. District leaders are seeking YOUR INPUT first, before critical decisions are made. To qualify for the June 2014 election, the District must file its resolution calling for an election by late

January. To qualify for a November 2014 election, the deadline will be late May.

Have there been other SMBSD school bonds? If so, when was the last bond?

Our school district strives to be prudent and responsible, making every effort to spend taxpayer dollars wisely. In the past, we have secured millions of dollars in grant funding to construct needed classrooms and school facilities, without burdening local taxpayers. (Others in Santa Maria, but not our school district, have pursued and passed local revenue measures.)

Who makes the final decision on a local school bond?

Your local School Board must take action to call for a bond election. Ultimately, the VOTERS of Santa Maria-Bonita School District would have the final say when they cast their ballots on such a measure.

Who would be eligible to vote on a local school bond?

All registered voters within the Santa Maria-Bonita School District would be eligible to vote.

Where can I go for more information?

For more information, visit us on the web at www.smbdsd.org OR contact SMBSD Assistant Superintendent Matt Beecher at **(805) 361-8130** or via email at MBeecher@SMBSD.net



SANTA MARIA-BONITA SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Facilities UPDATE

To Maintain the Quality of Education and Safety in Santa Maria Neighborhood Schools



PARENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS: YOUR INPUT IS IMPORTANT TO US.

Place
1st Class
Stamp
Here

Santa Maria-Bonita School District
Souza Center
708 South Miller Street
Santa Maria, CA 93454

Attn: Phillip Alvarado, Superintendent



November 2013

Dear Parents, Neighbors and Concerned Citizens of Santa Maria,



The Santa Maria-Bonita School District (SMBSD) is committed to ensuring that every child attending our 15 elementary schools and four junior high schools receives a quality education. We believe in starting early (beginning in pre-school) to prepare children for college, good paying jobs and successful careers.

Every day I see and hear evidence of student success in our classrooms. But maintaining high standards has become more challenging due to our ever-increasing enrollment.

We have a severe overcrowding problem in Santa Maria-Bonita elementary and junior high schools. Our schools have grown by 2,300 children in the past five years – without adding an additional school. Fifteen hundred (1,500) more students are expected by 2017.

As SMBSD Superintendent and a lifelong Santa Maria resident, I hope you will make your voice heard as we explore potential solutions and our School Board prepares to make decisions for the future.

Please return the attached response card by December 12th or use our website to share your opinions. Expressing your views will enhance this important community conversation. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Phillip Alvarado

Phillip Alvarado
Superintendent, Santa Maria-Bonita School District

SANTA MARIA-BONITA ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS ARE SEVERELY OVERCROWDED.

The Facts:

Our schools were built to house 11,625 students.

Current enrollment is 15,544 and growing.

We've grown by 2,300 children in the past five years—without adding an additional school.

1,500 more students are expected by 2017.



Your opinions matter!

Please rank these school facilities priorities in order of their importance to you (1 = most important, 10 = least important).

- ▶ Build new classrooms to relieve severe overcrowding.
- ▶ Construct a new junior high school to accommodate projected growth.
- ▶ Improve school safety - e.g. security lighting, fencing, smoke detectors, and alarms.
- ▶ Modernize, repair and renovate classrooms and labs.
- ▶ Complete upgrades to keep pace with 21st Century educational technology.
- ▶ Rehabilitate old, deteriorated roofs, floors, plumbing, lighting and electrical systems.
- ▶ Improve energy efficiency and reinvest the savings into instruction.
- ▶ Upgrade pick-up and drop-off zones to improve safety and traffic flow.
- ▶ Repair playfields, blacktop, play equipment, and other safety hazards on school grounds.
- ▶ OTHER:

COMMENTS/QUESTIONS:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

SCHOOLS MY CHILDREN ATTEND/ATTENDED _____

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