

Ballot Label

To improve the quality of local schools; make health, safety and security improvements; modernize/ renovate/ construct classrooms, a kitchen, athletic and other school facilities; shall the Laton Joint Unified School District measure authorizing \$9,700,000 of bonds at legal interest rates be adopted, generating on average \$565,000 annually while bonds are outstanding at rates of approximately \$57 per \$100,000 assessed value, with annual audits, independent citizens' oversight committee, NO money for salaries and all money staying local?

Bonds – Yes

Bonds - No

Impartial Analysis

Voter approval of this Measure will authorize the governing board of the Laton Joint Unified School District (the "District") to issue and sell bonds in the maximum amount of Nine Million Seven Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$9,700,000.00), bearing interest at legal rates and with maturity dates within the legal limits. The bond proceeds may only be expended to construct, reconstruct, rehabilitate or replace aging and outdated school facilities, including the furnishing and equipping of school facilities or the acquisition or lease of real property for school facilities within the District.

The Bond Project List in Appendix A ("List") in the Measure describes the specific projects the District proposes to finance with proceeds from the sale of the bonds. The District may only use bond proceeds for the purposes specified in the Measure. The bond proceeds may not be used for any other purpose, including teacher or administrator salaries or other school operating expenses. Inclusion of a project on the List does not guarantee the project will be funded or completed.

This Measure would require annual independent performance and financial audits of the use of bond proceeds including annual reports to the governing board. In addition, a citizens' oversight committee will be established to ensure that bond proceeds are properly expended.

Information regarding the estimated tax rate to repay these bonds is found in the "Tax Rate Statement" prepared by the District. The projected tax rate is a best estimate and is based on projections from official sources including upon experience within the District. The actual tax rate necessary to pay the bond Measure may vary depending on factors identified in the Tax Rate Statement.

The Measure makes no change to existing law and must be approved by at least 55% of the eligible votes cast or the bonds will not be issued. This Measure was placed on the ballot by order of the governing board of the District.

s/ Diane Freeman
Kings County Counsel

Tax Rate Statement

An election will be held in the Laton Joint Unified School District (the "District") on November 5, 2024, to authorize the sale of up to \$9,700,000 in general obligation bonds. The following information is submitted in compliance with Sections 9400-9404 of the Elections Code of the State of California. Such information is based upon the best estimates and projections presently available from official sources, upon experience within the District, and other demonstrable factors.

Based upon the foregoing and projections of the District's assessed valuation, the following information is provided:

1. The best estimate of the average annual tax rate that would be required to fund this bond issue over the entire duration of the bond debt service, based on estimated assessed valuations available at the time of filing of this statement, is \$57 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation. It is currently expected that the tax will be collected until fiscal year 2058-59.
2. The best estimate of the highest tax rate that would be required to fund this bond issue, based on estimated assessed valuations available at the time of filing this statement, is \$60 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation. This rate is projected to apply beginning in fiscal year 2025-26.
3. The best estimate of total debt service, including principal and interest, that would be required to be repaid if all the bonds are issued and sold will be approximately \$19.8 million.

These estimates are based on projections derived from information obtained from official sources, and are based on the assessed value (not market value) of taxable property on the official tax rolls of the counties in which the District is located. In addition, taxpayers eligible for a property tax exemption, such as the homeowner's exemption, will be taxed at a lower effective tax rate than described above. Property owners should consult their own property tax bills and tax advisors to determine their property's assessed value and any applicable tax exemptions. The attention of all voters is directed to the fact that the foregoing information is based upon projections and estimates only, which amounts are not maximum amounts and durations and are not binding upon the District. The actual debt service, tax rates and the years in which they will apply may vary depending on the timing of bond sales, the par amount of bonds sold at each sale and actual increases in assessed valuations. The timing of the bond sales and the amount of bonds sold at any given time will be determined by the District based on the need for project funds and other considerations. Actual assessed valuations will depend upon the amount and value of taxable property within the District as determined by the assessors of the counties in which the District is located in the annual assessment and the equalization process.

s\ Lupe Nieves
Superintendent
Laton Joint Unified School District

Argument in Favor of Measure L

Our schools are the most important assets in our community and should be our number one priority. Quality schools increase student achievement, improve property values, prepare children for a productive future, and create greater neighborhood safety. Although our teachers and staff do a great job educating local children, classrooms, buildings, and athletic facilities/fields in the Laton Joint Unified School District need to be upgraded to provide students with the proper school facilities they need to succeed.

While our facilities have been well maintained, aging classrooms and facilities must be upgraded. Our schools are old and deteriorating, with our oldest, Laton High School, being constructed in 1907. A local school improvement measure would allow the District to improve the quality of the school facilities and education provided to local students. By investing in our schools, we can meet today's safety, technological, and educational standards as well as better our community.

If passed, Measure L will provide funding to make critical facility improvements at the District's three schools by:

- Modernizing/renovating outdated classrooms, restrooms, and school facilities
- Repairing or replacing leaky roofs
- Making health, safety, security, and accessibility improvements
- Upgrading inadequate electrical systems
- Improving P.E fields and facilities and play fields for school and community use

Measure L makes financial sense and protects taxpayers.

- By law, spending must be reviewed and annually audited by an independent citizens' oversight committee.
- All bond funds must be spent locally and **cannot be taken by the State.**
- Funds are required to be spent only on schools, not for administrator or teacher salaries.

Measure L upgrades and renovates classroom restrooms and other school facilities, improves the education of local children, and maintains the quality of our community. That's something we can all support. Please join us and VOTE YES ON MEASURE L!

s/ Lathale Gravance
Co-owner, Gravance Trucking
s/ Brian Habib
Co-owner of Los Primos
s/ Francisco Orbe
LCSD Board Member

s/ Ernest Buddy
Fresno County Supervisor
s/ Edward A. Garcia
Local Farmer/Director, LLC

Rebuttal to the Argument in Favor of Measure L

Laton Unified School District is again asking for residents and taxpayers to be saddled with another large sum for facility repairs and renovations.

The requested amount of the bond is over \$9.7 million dollars! Unfortunately, Laton Unified residents will be asked to repay a much greater sum for this bond over the years: **\$19.8 MILLION** due to interest and other fees.

Hard working residents should not pay over double in debt to rich bond holders with no transparency of costs and specific use of the funds being requested. This bond measure is vague and only states it will not be used for salaries. Maybe better teacher salaries would help the students more?

In 2018, a \$7 million bond was approved for renovations. Have there been any thorough accounting reports provided to those who are paying for it? If school buildings really need extensive repairs every 6 years, why aren't they included in annual budgeting?

With taxes and fees, the bond debt will be paid over 30 years and will amount to well over double the original amount.

Think wisely and refuse to pay what is not negotiated well.

Vote NO this time to Measure L!

s/ Kat McElroy
Vice Chair, Libertarian Party of Fresno County

Argument Against Measure L

How much election cheating are you willing to put up with?

What if it's for an allegedly good cause? Does that change your answer?

Do you know all the public officials with duties related to local measure elections? County supervisors, registrar of voters, county counsel, school board that resolves to put measures on the ballots. A lot of public officials, most of them getting salaries you could never dream of.

Are these public officials corrupt? All of them?

Then how do you explain that at every election they all look the other way or point fingers at each other saying that "It's not my job to enforce measure election laws?"

How is it then, that all these public officials, who you pay, combined, millions of dollars a year, have never (never means not once) put a local measure on the ballot that follows the law? <http://lpfresno.org/GrandJury2021>

The statutes regarding local measure elections apply to every county. How is it that every county, even Fresno, doesn't follow every law, as written? Who benefits? Certainly not you.

It's almost like it's a conspiracy. Because the public officials (school board) who start the ball rolling, violate every meaningful law with the knowledge, apparently, that all the other public officials will go along with their corruption.

There are too many broken laws to mention in 300 words, but you can check it out (<http://bit.ly/ElectionCheating>) for all the gory details.

Bottom line: All the public officials would rather have gullible voters force taxpayers, including themselves, to send every dollar they dream up to some government agency or another. It's more for them. Less for you.

Are you tired of been taken for a chump? Vote HELL NO! on Measure _ (\$19,800,000 tax).

Join us: <https://lpfresno.org/NoLatonSchoolBond>

s/ Kat McElroy

Vice Chair, Libertarian Part of Fresno County

Rebuttal to the Argument Against Measure L

Don't let the opponent mislead you. She doesn't have the facts, doesn't even live in our district and has submitted identical arguments against multiple school districts throughout California. Conspiracy theories from someone outside our district do not address our local issues nor solve local problems.

Measure L funds will go right where they're needed—to improve Laton schools and support local students. Quality schools are key to providing an excellent education, preserving property values, and maintaining our great community.

- The last bond measure passed by LUSD voters was in 2018. Funds from this measure went towards modernizing and renovating school facilities, as well as making health, safety, and accessibility improvements across the District. If successful, Measure L will continue to help bring all LUSD schools up to 21st century standards.
- Funds from Measure B were managed lawfully and properly through a Bond Oversight Committee which is audited annually.
- The State provides funding for teachers, administration and books, not for maintenance and renovation projects. Don't punish students for how the State chooses to provide funding. Measure L is the only solution to improve Laton Schools.

The District has been a responsible steward, routinely maintaining and fully utilizing classrooms and facilities. The time has come to reinvest in our community's greatest assets – local children and the schools they attend. Measure L is a carefully considered program that will improve Laton schools.

Our students deserve a quality education. Join us—vote YES on L.

s/ Brian Habib
Owner of Los Primos
s/ Lathale Gravance
Business Owner

s/ Francisco Orbe
LCSD Board Member
s/ Edward A. Garcia
Local Farmer/Director, Laton Lions.

Full Text**BOND AUTHORIZATION**

By approval of this measure by at least 55% of the registered voters voting on the measure, the Laton Joint Unified School District (the "District") will be authorized to issue and sell bonds of up to \$9,700,000 in aggregate principal amount, at interest rates not to exceed legal limits and to provide financing for the specific types of school facilities projects listed in the Bond Project List included below, subject to all the accountability requirements specified below.

ACCOUNTABILITY REQUIREMENTS

The provisions in this section are specifically included in this measure in order that the voters and taxpayers in the District may be assured that their money will be spent wisely. Expenditures to address specific facilities needs of the District will be in compliance with the requirements of Article XIII A, Section 1(b)(3), of the State Constitution and the Strict Accountability in Local School Construction Bonds Act of 2000 (codified at Education Code Sections 15264 and following.)

The Bonds may be issued under the provisions of the California Education Code (starting at Section 15100), under the provisions of the California Government Code (starting at Section 53506), or under any other provision of law authorizing the issuance of general obligation bonds by school districts. The Bonds may be issued in series by the District, from time to time, and each series of Bonds shall mature within the legal limitations set forth in the applicable law under which the Bonds are issued.

Evaluation of Needs. The Board of Education of the District (the "Board") has identified detailed facilities needs of the District, and has determined which projects to finance from a local bond. The Board hereby certifies that it has evaluated safety, class size reduction, enrollment growth, and information technology needs in developing the Bond Project List described below.

Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee. Following approval of this measure, the Board will establish an independent citizens' oversight committee, under Education Code Sections 15278 and following, to ensure bond proceeds are expended only on the types of school facilities projects listed below. The committee will be established within 60 days of the date when the results of the election appear in the minutes of the Board.

Performance Audits. The Board will conduct annual, independent performance audits to ensure that the bond proceeds have been expended only on the school facilities projects listed below.

Financial Audits. The Board will conduct annual, independent financial audits of the bond proceeds until all of those proceeds have been spent for the school facilities projects listed below.

Government Code Accountability Requirements. As required by Section 53410 of the Government Code, (1) the specific purpose of the bonds is set forth in this Full Text of the Measure, (2) the proceeds from the sale of the bonds will be used only for the purposes specified in this measure, and not for any other purpose, (3) the proceeds of the bonds, when and if issued, will be deposited into a building fund to be held by the Fresno County Treasurer, as required by the Education Code, and (4) the Superintendent of the District shall cause an annual report to be filed with the Board of the District not later than January 1 of each year, which report shall contain pertinent information regarding the amount of funds collected and expended, as well as the status of the projects listed in this measure, as required by Sections 53410 and 53411 of the Government Code.

NO TEACHER OR ADMINISTRATOR SALARIES

Proceeds from the sale of bonds authorized by this measure shall be used only for the purposes specified in Article XIII A, Section 1(b)(3), specifically the construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or replacement of school facilities, including the furnishing and equipping of school facilities, and the acquisition or lease of school facilities, and not for any other purpose, including teacher and administrator salaries and other school operating expenses.

STATE MATCHING FUNDS

The following statement is included in this measure pursuant to Education Code Section 15122.5: Approval of this measure does not guarantee that the proposed projects that are the subject of bonds under this measure will be funded beyond the local revenues generated by this measure. The District's proposal for the projects described below may assume the receipt of matching state funds, which, if available, could be subject to appropriation by the Legislature or approval of a statewide bond measure.

INFORMATION ABOUT ESTIMATES AND PROJECTIONS INCLUDED IN BALLOT

Voters are informed that any estimates or projections in the bond measure or ballot materials, including relating to estimated tax rates, the duration of issued bonds and related tax levies and collections are provided as informational only. Such amounts are estimates and are not maximum amounts or limitations on the terms of the bonds, the tax rate or duration of the tax supporting repayment of issued bonds. Such estimates depend on numerous variables which are subject to variation and change over the term of the District's overall facilities and bond financing plan, including but not limited to the amount of bonds issued and outstanding at any one time, the interest rates applicable to issued bonds, market conditions at the time of sale of the bonds, when bonds mature, timing of project needs and changes in assessed valuations in the District. As such, while such estimates and approximations are provided based on information currently available to the District and its current expectations, such estimates and approximations are not limitations and are not binding upon the District. In addition, the abbreviated and condensed statement of the bond measure presented to voters which is subject to a word count limitation imposed by State law does not limit the scope and complete meaning of the measure provided in this Full Text of Bond Measure and related ballot materials.

BOND PROJECT LIST

Scope of Projects. Bond proceeds will be expended on the modernization, renovation, expansion, acquisition, construction/reconstruction, rehabilitation, and/or replacement of school facilities of the District, including the furnishing and equipping of school facilities, at all current and future sites and properties.

School Facility Project List. The items presented on the following list provide the types of school facilities projects authorized to be financed with voter-approved bond proceeds. Specific examples included on this list are not intended to limit the types of projects described and authorized by this measure. The following types of projects are authorized at all existing sites of the District and all sites that may be acquired by the District in the future:

- Construct, modernize, renovate, replace and/or expand classrooms, restrooms, multi-purpose rooms, kitchens and food preparation areas, and other school facilities, including providing updated furnishings and equipment
- Repair or replace heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems
- Repair or replace deteriorating roofs
- Provide clean and safe classrooms, and a quality learning environment for current and future students
- Replace temporary portables with permanent classrooms
- Improve, and upgrade technology infrastructure, electrical systems and wiring for computers and Internet access
- Construct, repair or replace plumbing, electrical, sewer, septic and water systems
- Make health, safety, security and accessibility improvements
- Construct, repair, replace and/or upgrade outdoor areas, including physical education facilities, paved surfaces, turf, fields, grounds and outdoor areas, including playgrounds, shade structures, lighting and landscaping improvements, including irrigation

Incidental Expenses. Each of the bond projects described in this Bond Project List include the costs of furnishing and equipping such facilities, and all costs which are incidental but directly related to the types of projects described above. Examples of incidental costs include, but are not limited to: costs of design, engineering, architect and other professional services, facilities assessments, inspections, site preparation, utilities, landscaping, painting, bond project construction management, administration and other planning and permitting, legal, accounting and similar costs; independent annual financial and performance audits; a customary construction contingency; abatement, demolition and disposal of existing structures; the costs of interim housing and storage during construction including relocation and construction costs incurred relating to interim facilities; the preparation or restoration of construction, renovation or remodeling; rental or construction of storage facilities and other space on an interim basis for materials and other equipment and furnishings displaced during construction; costs of relocating facilities and equipment as needed in connection with the projects; interim classrooms and facilities for students, administrators, and school functions, including modular facilities; federal and state-mandated safety upgrades; addressing unforeseen conditions revealed by construction/modernization and other necessary improvements required to comply with existing building codes, including the Field Act; access requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act; and costs of the election; bond issuance costs; and project administration during the duration of such projects, as permitted by law.

Furnishing and Equipping. Each project is assumed to include its share of furniture, fixtures, equipment, architectural, engineering, and similar planning costs, program/project management, staff training expenses and a customary contingency for unforeseen design and construction costs. In addition to the listed projects stated above, the list also includes the acquisition of a variety of instructional, maintenance and operational equipment, including the reduction or retirement of outstanding lease obligations and interim funding incurred to advance fund projects from the list; installation of signage and fencing; payment of the costs of preparation of all facility planning, facility studies, assessment reviews, facility master plan preparation and updates, environmental studies (including environmental investigation, remediation and monitoring), design and construction documentation, and temporary housing of dislocated District activities caused by construction projects. The upgrading of technology infrastructure includes, but is not limited to, computers, projectors, portable interface devices, servers, switches, routers, modules, sound projection systems, printers, digital white boards, document projectors, telephone system, call manager and network security/firewall, wireless technology systems and other miscellaneous equipment.

Alterations to Scope; Acquisition of Real Property. The scope and nature of any of the specific projects described above may be altered by the District as required by conditions that may arise during the course of design and construction. In the event that a modernization or renovation project is more economical for or otherwise determined by the Board to be in the best interests of the District to be undertaken as new construction, this bond measure authorizes said new construction including land acquisition, relocation and construction at a new or alternative site, and/or demolition and reconstruction and/or repurposing on the original site, including an expanded site, and all costs relating thereto. For any project involving rehabilitation or renovation of a building or the major portion of a building, the District shall be authorized to proceed with new construction instead, if the Board determines that replacement and new construction is more economically practical than rehabilitation and renovation, considering the building's age, condition, expected remaining life, and other relevant factors.

In addition, this measure authorizes the acquisition of real property, including necessary rights of ways or other real property interests required to expand District facilities, to provide access to school or other District facilities, or to provide additional school or related facilities.

Interim Financing Included; Joint Use Projects Authorized. Authorized projects include paying and/or prepaying interim

or previously obtained financing for the types of projects included on the Bond Project List, such as bond anticipation notes, and includes prepayment of lease payments to acquire title to facilities and/or equipment previously financed. Projects may also be undertaken on a joint use basis with other public entities.

Bond Project List Not in Order of Priority; Board Determines Prioritization. Approval of this bond measure does not guarantee that the proposed projects will be funded beyond the local revenues generated by the measure. The District's capital needs currently exceed the amount of bonds the voters are being asked to authorize. The order in which particular projects are listed is not intended to suggest priority for funding or completion, and itemization of projects in the list above does not guarantee that all such projects will be undertaken. Project priorities will be determined by the Board. The ability of the District to undertake and complete the listed projects is subject to numerous variables including the adequacy and availability of sufficient funding sources. The District is unable to anticipate all unforeseen circumstances which may prevent some of the projects listed above from being undertaken or completed.

Interpretation. The terms of this bond measure and the words used in the Bond Project List shall be interpreted broadly to effect the purpose of providing broad and clear authority for the officers and employees of the District to provide for the school facilities projects the District proposes to finance with the proceeds of the sale of bonds authorized by this proposition within the authority provided by law, including Article XIII A, Section 1(b)(3) of the California Constitution, Education Code Section 15000 *et seq.* and the Strict Accountability in Local School Construction Bonds Act of 2000. Words used in the Bond Project List such as repair, improve, upgrade, expand, modernize, renovate, and reconfigure are used to describe school facilities projects in plain English but are not intended to expand the nature of such projects beyond what is authorized by law. As such, in accordance with legal requirements, the Bond Project List does not authorize, and shall not be interpreted to authorize, expending proceeds of the sale of bonds authorized by this proposition for current maintenance, operation or repairs.

Severability. The Board hereby declares, and the voters by approving this Bond Measure concur, that every section and part of this bond proposition has independent value, and the Board and the voters would have adopted each provision hereof regardless of every other provision hereof. Upon approval of this measure by the voters, should any part be found by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid for any reason, all remaining parts hereof shall remain in full force and effect to the fullest extent allowed by law, and to this end the provisions of this bond measure are severable.