

Frequently Asked Questions

East Side Union High School District

How is East Side Union High School District doing?

Student achievement in East Side Union High School District continues to rise. In fact, student graduation rates in the past five years have improved, exceeding state and county averages. Today, more than 4 out of 5 East Side Union High School District graduates go on to college within two years of graduating. Last year alone, more than 1,200 graduates went straight to San Jose State.

Why do our schools need local funding?

We can be proud of the excellent education and continued improvement in our local high schools, yet funding is inadequate. The State is an unreliable funding partner in providing quality education to our students. To protect strong academic programs, continue preparing students for college and careers and keep quality teachers in the classrooms, we need stable, locally-controlled funding.

What is the potential local parcel tax measure?

To protect the quality of education in our local high schools, the East Side Union High School District Board of Trustees is considering placing a \$49-\$79 local parcel tax measure on an upcoming ballot. A local measure would provide stable, locally-controlled funding for our schools that could not be taken away by the State. The Board is still reviewing all options and has not made any final decisions.

What would the local measure provide for our students?

Although no final decisions have been made, a local measure could:

- Maintain career and technical education pathways for college and career success in more than 19 areas including computers, engineering, science, arts, multi-media, business marketing and management
- Maintain 21st century science, technology, engineering, math, reading and writing instruction
- Protect and enhance hands-on science programs, including computer science, biology, bio-tech, chemistry, physics, physiology, forensics, web tech design, robotics and space tech engineering
- Maintain college preparation programs and resources for all students
- Provide career-development and vocational job-training programs
- Protect arts and music, and keep school libraries open
- Protect counseling to help students with academic planning for college and careers
- Attract and retain high quality teachers and staff

Could funds be taken away by the State?

No. All funds would stay local to support East Side Union High School District schools, and no funds could be taken away by the State or go to other communities.

How would I know that funds would be spent appropriately?

The measure would require an independent citizens oversight committee and annual audits to ensure that funds are spent as promised. By law; none of the funds could be used for administrator salaries.

Would a measure help prepare students for college and future careers?

Yes. Living in the heart of Silicon Valley, we know that our students deserve a chance to learn the necessary skills to succeed in that world. This measure would protect our science programs, including computer science, biology, bio-tech, chemistry, physics, physiology, forensics, web tech design, robotics and space tech engineering. In addition, this measure would help to provide 21st century instruction that will better prepare students for college and careers, helping them to compete in a global economy that has higher standards than ever before.

How much would the local measure cost?

No final decisions have been made, but the Board is considering a measure that would cost property owners \$49-\$79 per parcel per year, which would provide \$6,011,880-\$9,692,622 for our schools every year.

Could senior citizens receive an exemption?

Yes. Senior citizens, many of whom are on fixed incomes, may be exempt from the cost of the measure. To obtain an exemption, senior citizen homeowners age 65 and over may obtain an exemption by contacting the school district.

Would a measure prevent teacher and staff layoffs?

Yes. A measure would help to prevent the layoff of 132 teachers, counselors, librarians and staff.

Does the District have a good track record for fiscal responsibility?

Yes. For nearly a decade, the East Side Union High School District has been considered a model of fiscal prudence by outside auditors.

Would charter schools receive a portion of the revenue?

Yes. Revenue from a school parcel tax measure would be distributed to benefit local students equally in all schools.

Is it only homeowners who pay the cost or do businesses pay as well?

All taxable parcels of land within the East Side Union High School District would pay the assessment for our schools, including businesses. This assessment would appear on property tax bills.

Who would be eligible to vote on this measure?

All registered voters who live in the East Side Union High School District boundaries would be eligible to vote on the measure.

Didn't we pass a bond measure for our schools? Why does the District need another measure?

In 2008, 2012 and 2014, local voters overwhelmingly approved bond measures for our high schools. These measures provided essential funding to repair and improve our classrooms, libraries and school facilities. By law, however, bond measures can only be used for facilities and cannot be used to protect academic programs or support teachers, counselors and staff. A local parcel tax measure would provide locally-controlled funding that could directly support classroom instruction and academic programs.

What is the difference between a parcel tax and a bond measure?

A bond measure and parcel tax measure are used for different purposes—a bond measure can *only* fund facility upgrades and improvements, and cannot be used for operating costs or programs. No bond funds can be used for hiring or retaining teachers or staff. A bond requires 55% voter approval to pass. Revenue from a parcel tax, however, may be spent on any identified instructional or school need, including teachers and academic programs. A parcel tax requires 67% voter approval to pass.

What if I have more questions?

If you have more questions, please contact Superintendent Chris D. Funk at parceltaxinfo@esuhsd.org

