



Measure MM Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is Measure MM all about?

Our neighborhood elementary schools – Ashley Falls, Carmel Del Mar, Del Mar Heights, Del Mar Hills Academy, Ocean Air, Sage Canyon, Sycamore Ridge, and Torrey Hills – have provided local children with an exceptional education, consistently ranking among the best in the state. **However, they are aging, some are overcrowded**, and the current state of these facilities is now threatening our local quality of education.

Two schools west of I-5 built in the 1960's have grown dilapidated after constant use over more than half a century. On the east side of the school district, dramatic enrollment increases are causing overcrowding. All schools are aging and ALL need attention. Without Measure MM, DMUSD's outstanding instructional program and reputation for exceptional teaching and learning will suffer.

How will Measure MM help?

Measure MM provides a prudent plan to address Del Mar Union School District's most critical facility needs. **NO other funding currently exists to properly upgrade our schools.**

Measure MM will:

- **Repair/Replace** deteriorated school roofs, plumbing, HVAC, lighting, and electrical systems
- **Renovate** classrooms for science, technology, engineering, art and math instruction
- **Improve** school safety and security
- **Upgrade** technology infrastructure to keep pace with 21st century learning
- **Reconstruct** Del Mar Heights School and modernize Del Mar Hills Academy, west of I-5
- **Construct** and equip a new school in East Pacific Highlands Ranch to relieve overcrowding

Will Measure MM improve instruction?

YES! Our local schools strive for teaching and learning excellence in **every** educational setting. Safe, modern school facilities and technology are essential to student achievement. As school facilities and classroom technology are improved, teaching and learning will benefit. Without Measure MM funds, the money earmarked for educational programs may have to go toward facility repairs. This also reduces the funding that supports our small class sizes and retains our quality teachers.

Our kids deserve better schools. They need 21st century facilities to prepare for high school, college and careers. Studies show that students and teachers perform better in safe, modern classrooms and school facilities.

What happens if there is no funding to rebuild, repair, and/or renovate existing schools?

The District does not have sufficient funds to address school facilities needs, including construction and renovation of aging District school facilities as set out in the Facilities Master Plan. The District needs to remove old portables immediately and replace them with new portables, which would cost approximately \$350,000 each. Absent other funding sources, this cost would come directly from the District's General Fund and threaten the quality of our outstanding educational program. Simply put, in order to maintain a balanced budget, the District would have no choice but to raise class sizes and reduce teaching and support staff.

What about other funding?

Our school district makes every effort to use resources wisely. But with limited help from the State, the burden is growing to adequately repair and upgrade our aging school facilities and classroom technology. The State does not provide funding for school facilities improvement or reconstruction. The District's fiscal reserve remains at minimum levels after the Great Recession when it was spent down to make up budget shortfalls, retain our teachers and maintain low-class sizes. With State funding no longer available for school facilities, and repair and renovation costs mounting as schools continue to age, the District has exhausted all funding options with the exception of seeking support from our local community to help us protect the local quality of education here in the DMUSD community. School bonds are the most common way to fund the upgrades we need.

Why now?

District facilities staff work hard to maintain our neighborhood schools and keep them in good working condition with limited resources. However, the upgrades that the district's current needs assessment have identified, particularly in the areas of deteriorating facilities and new construction to reduce overcrowding, go far beyond the scope and means of regular school maintenance budgets. We must act now to maintain our ability to provide local children with an education that adequately prepares them for high school, college, and the careers of the future.

What about ongoing school maintenance? Doesn't the District have a facilities budget?

Yes. Our district maintenance and operations staff work hard to keep our schools safe and well maintained. The current scope of needs, including reconstructing Del Mar Heights School, modernizing Del Mar Hills Academy, constructing a new school in East Pacific Highlands Ranch, upgrading classroom technology infrastructure, renovating classrooms for science, technology, engineering, art, and math instruction, replacing outdated roofs and electrical systems, and installing new technology far exceeds our available allotment for school facilities maintenance.

Doesn't the STATE provide funding for facility upgrades?

Very little. In the past, State funding has been available to support local school upgrades but especially now, we cannot count on this uncertain source of funding. Moreover, in order to access state funding, school districts MUST generate local matching funds by passing a local school bond measure. Passing a local school bond is the ONLY way to qualify for additional state funding. There are no other sources of funding for major facility upgrades.

What about the Lottery funding? Wasn't it supposed to fix our schools?

Unfortunately, Lottery funds can only be used for classroom instruction, not technology or facility upgrades. Moreover, the money our school district receives from the Lottery each year comprises a tiny percentage of our annual General Fund Budget. Lottery funds alone cannot fund the extensive upgrades and reconfiguration projects that our schools need.

Will businesses share in the cost of Measure MM?

Yes, both commercial and residential property owners will be subject to assessment.

If voters approve Measure MM, when will the work begin?

Once the plan is approved, the District will immediately focus on the most critical needs. A schedule for funding projects will be developed so they can be completed on time and within budget.

I don't have children or they are grown and gone. Why does this matter to me?

Good schools are the foundation of any healthy, thriving community. Good schools make our neighborhoods desirable places to live and support our property values.

How much will this project cost?

The \$186 million bond translates to about \$29.25 per year for every \$100,000 of assessed valuation. The assessed valuation refers to taxable value, not the market value of your home. The taxable value of your home or business will depend on when you purchased it.

How can we be assured that Measure MM money will be spent properly?

Taxpayer protections are REQUIRED. Every penny from this measure will benefit DMUSD schools. The funds will be controlled locally and cannot be taken away by the state. This measure requires independent citizens' oversight and reports to the community to ensure the funds are spent as promised. None of the money from this measure can be used to increase salaries, benefits or pensions for administrators, teachers, or any other school employees.

What is the actual question that voters will be asked to decide on in November?

"To improve Del Mar neighborhood elementary schools, repair/upgrade/reconstruct deteriorated school facilities, plumbing, roofs, electrical systems, renovate classrooms supporting science, engineering, math, arts instruction; improve safety/security and technology infrastructure; and construct/equip a new elementary school; shall Del Mar Union School District issue \$186 million in bonds at legal rates, raising \$10.4 million annually over 32 years at approximately 3 cents per \$100 of assessed value, with independent citizens' oversight, mandatory audits, all money for Del Mar K-6 schools?"

Why do we need a school in east Pacific Highlands Ranch?

Between 2016 and 2022, it is estimated that 2,500 homes will be built in the east Pacific Highlands Ranch area. Those new homes are currently estimated to generate 500+ new students within our District. Currently, there is no District school in that area and families may face a drive of 30 – 45 minutes (during high traffic periods) to reach their nearest assigned schools, which are 2.5 miles and 3.4 miles away from their homes. Existing assigned schools do not have the capacity to absorb the students that will be generated from the east Pacific Highlands Ranch area.

What happens if the school in Pacific Highlands Ranch is not built?

The District does not have funds for new construction of the proposed Pacific Highlands Ranch school to address future student enrollment needs. To accommodate the anticipated growth in the Pacific Highlands Ranch area, the District currently projects the need to add ten portables at Sycamore Ridge School and four portables at Ashley Falls School, encroaching on existing playground space and placing significant pressure on the educational facilities at those schools.

Have there been other Del Mar Union School District school bonds? If so, when was the last bond?

Our school district strives to be a model of financial responsibility, making every effort to spend taxpayer dollars wisely. In 2012, Measure CC, a \$76.8 million bond for DMUSD facilities and schools, was narrowly defeated. Our needs since have only grown.

How can I learn more about DMUSD school facilities?

The District's Facilities Master Plan can be viewed here <https://www.dmusd.org/Page/8602>.

Who makes the final decision on a local school bond?

The locally elected Del Mar Union School District Board of Trustees is the legal entity that can place a measure on the ballot. Ultimately, Del Mar Union School District REGISTERED VOTERS will have the final say when they vote for or against Measure MM on the November 2018 ballot.

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

All within the Del Mar Union School District who register by October 22, 2018 would be eligible to vote on Measure MM.

Where can I go for more information?

For more information, please email us at YesOnMM2018@gmail.com or visit our website at YesOnMM4DMUSD.org or visit the DMUSD website at dmusd.org.