

**La Mesa Spring Valley School District**  
**November 2020 Local Bond Measure**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

**How old are La Mesa-Spring Valley schools?**

Most of La Mesa-Spring Valley School District's (LMSVSD) schools are over 50 years old. In fact, seven of LMSVSD's schools are more than 65 years old, eleven are 50-60 years old, two are 35-49 years old, and only one is less than 35 years old. Schools built decades ago were built for a different era of education and to outdated safety and instructional standards.

**How many students attend LMSVSD schools?**

Over 11,500 preschool through eighth grade students rely on our local elementary and middle schools each day. While talented teachers and staff strive to ensure all students receive a quality education, aging school facilities impact student safety, security and learning. For example, enrollment at many local schools exceeds their capacity, and there are many deteriorating portable classrooms that have outlived their intended lifespan.

**What challenges have been identified at LMSVSD schools?**

Over the past two years, LMSVSD has been working with stakeholders to update the Facilities Master Plan to identify the improvements needed to provide our students with up-to-date, safe learning environments. Our team conducted a thorough assessment of all school facilities to identify the most urgent and high priority improvements. While local students continue to excel, our classrooms and school facilities are aging and require upgrades for safety and to keep pace with rising academic standards. Many of our schools were built more than 50 years ago and need repairs and upgrades to continue serving our students and community for decades to come. The [Facilities Master Plan](#) was approved by the LMSVSD Board of Education at a June 2020 board meeting and will be used as a guide for upgrades and improvements.

Our district maintenance team works hard to take care of our aging classrooms and school facilities by keeping up with minor repairs and maintenance. Unfortunately, significant upgrades and improvements needed at 50-year-old schools are beyond what can be accomplished by our maintenance team and funded by our regular maintenance budget. The State of California provides very limited funding for school improvements and most state funding requires local matching funds.

**What are the options for repairing and upgrading aging local school facilities?**

LMSVSD recently commissioned a survey of local residents that found 66% support for an investment in our aging local school facilities. In order to continue pace with academic standards and keep local students safe, the La Mesa-Spring Valley School District Board of Education unanimously voted to place Measure V, a local school improvement bond measure, on the November 2020 ballot that could generate up to \$136 million in locally controlled funding to repair and update local schools. Measure V would cost about \$24 per \$100,000 of a property's assessed value (not market value), or approximately \$73 per year for the typical homeowner.

If approved by 55% of local voters, Measure V would:

- Upgrade our older schools so they meet current health codes, building safety codes and provide proper access for students with disabilities
- Provide the modern classrooms, labs and technology needed to support high-quality instruction in science, technology, engineering, arts and math
- Repair or replace deteriorating roofs, plumbing, sewer and electrical systems where needed as well as remove hazardous materials like asbestos and lead pipes from older schools
- Improve student safety and campus security systems including, security fencing, locks and cameras, emergency communication systems, smoke detectors, fire alarms and sprinklers
- Provide the modern classrooms and facilities needed to support high-quality instruction in core subjects like reading and writing
- Upgrade classrooms and computer systems to keep pace with technology

**Does the State provide funding for school improvements?**

No, the State does not provide dedicated funding for school facility improvements. The very limited state funding for facility upgrades requires local matching funds usually provided by a local school improvement measure.

**Is this the right economic time to consider an investment in our school facilities?**

It has been almost 20 years since LMSVSD last passed a bond measure to improve local schools. Waiting will likely make these repairs more expensive to complete and will mean local students must wait years for urgent upgrades for safety and improvements needed to support quality academic instruction. With budget cuts on the horizon due to the recent economic downturn, a bond measure will provide a dedicated source of funding for facility improvements without taking money away from classroom instruction. In addition, lower interest rates and declining construction costs will likely make these improvements less expensive than they would have been a year or two ago. Investing in local school improvements will create local construction jobs and help stimulate the local economy. LMSVSD recently conducted a survey of local residents which indicated strong (66%) support for a proposed bond measure, even while acknowledging the current economic challenges experienced by some local residents.

**Has the LMSVSD already passed a school improvement bond measure?**

The last bond measure to improve LMSVSD schools was passed 18 years ago and those projects were completed long ago. That measure, Proposition M, was small for a district with 21 schools and only funded the most basic repairs needed at that time. Many neighboring school districts have passed several bond measures to improve local schools over the last 20 years.

**How much would Measure V cost?**

Measure V would provide approximately \$136 million to upgrade local schools and would cost about \$24 per \$100,000 of a property's assessed value (not market value), or approximately \$73 per year for the typical homeowner.

**What is the difference between assessed value and market value?**

The cost of bond measures is based on the assessed value of properties. The assessed value of a property is based on the original purchase price and may not increase by more than 2% a year while the market value tends to grow at a much faster rate based on market conditions. Thus, the assessed value is usually much lower than the market value, especially if a property was purchased long ago at a much lower price than it could be purchased for today. It is this lower assessed value upon which the cost of a bond measure is based.

**What if I rent my home and I do not own a property? How much would a school improvement bond cost me?**

The cost of a bond measure is paid by the property owner. If you rent your home and do not pay property taxes, there would be no direct cost to you resulting from a school improvement bond measure.

**Do businesses share in the cost of a school improvement bond cost measure?**

Yes, all property owners, including owners of commercial or industrial property, pay the cost of the bond measure based on the assessed value of their property. Because large businesses often have high assessed values, they often pay a significant portion of the cost.

**If Measure V is approved, how will funds be used?**

By law, a school improvement bond measure must include a detailed project list that describes how funds will be used. If Measure V is approved, funds may only be used for projects on the voter-approved list.

**How can I be sure funds from Measure V will be spent properly?**

An independent citizens' oversight committee comprised of local residents must review the use of all funds from Measure V and report their findings to the public each year. Annual independent audits of all bond funds are mandatory.

**May funds from Measure V be used for administrator salaries and pensions?**

No. By law, no funds from Measure V may be used for operating expenses, including administrator salaries and pensions. Funds may only be used to repair and upgrade local school facilities.

**I don't have children attending local schools. How does this impact me?**

Whether or not you have school-age children, the quality of local schools impacts the quality of life in a community and impacts local home values. Academic research has shown that good local schools create demand for homes and help keep property values strong.

**Who gets to vote on Measure V? How many votes are needed to win?**

All registered voters residing within LMSVSD are eligible to vote on Measure V. To be approved, a bond measure requires "yes" votes from 55% of the votes cast on the measure.

**How can I share my opinions or learn more?**

To share your opinions, priorities or to ask questions, please visit [www.lmsvschools.org](http://www.lmsvschools.org) or contact Jennifer Nerat, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services at [Jennifer.Nerat@lmsvschools.org](mailto:Jennifer.Nerat@lmsvschools.org) or 619.668.5700, Ext. 6391.