



Fairfax County, Virginia

# Bond

Referendum

▶ **Facts**

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**Election Day** is Tuesday, November 5, 2013.

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## ▶ VOTING INFORMATION

A school bond referendum will be on the general election ballot Tuesday, **November 5, 2013**. Polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Residents of Fairfax County may vote if they are 18 years of age or older on Election Day and have registered to vote 22 days prior to the elections (by October 14, 2013).

For more information about registering or voting, call **703-222-0776** or go online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/eb](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/eb).

## ▶ WHAT IS A BOND?

The sale of municipal bonds is a form of long-term borrowing that spreads the cost of major capital improvements over the years facilities are used. This method of financing ensures that current and future users help pay for the improvements.

## ▶ WHY ARE BONDS NEEDED?

The building and renovation of schools are not financed through the school system's operating funds, but through bonds. Similar to an individual or a family obtaining a mortgage on a residence to spread the cost of home buying over a number of years, bonds spread the cost of major capital improvements over a number of years.

If approved, these bonds will probably be sold to large investment banking syndicates that will have to competitively bid for them. Once bought, they are typically resold to financial institutions, which then sell them to investors.

## ▶ WHY A REFERENDUM?

The law requires that voters approve bonds since they are a future obligation for taxpayers. As long as debt service costs do not increase significantly as a percentage of combined general fund disbursements, the county's bonded debt will not be a contributing factor to any increase in local taxes.

## ▶ HOW WILL PASSAGE AFFECT THE COUNTY'S BOND RATING?

Of the nation's more than 3,000 counties, Fairfax is among only 39 that have the highest credit rating possible for a local government from all three rating agencies:

- Aaa from Moody's Investors Service.
- AAA from Standard & Poor's.
- AAA rating from Fitch Investors Service.

Because of these ratings, Fairfax County's bonds always sell at exceptionally low interest rates.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors controls all county bond sales within financial guidelines drawn to ensure that the coveted triple-A bond ratings are not jeopardized.

## ▶ WHICH SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS ARE INCLUDED IN THE 2013 BOND?

### ▶ New Construction

Eastern Fairfax (Bailey's area) Elementary School	\$ 20,877,062
Route 1 (Richmond Highway area) Elementary School	\$ 21,169,348

**New Construction Subtotal: \$ 42,046,410**

### ▶ Capacity Enhancement

(Additions and other modifications)

Tysons Area Elementary School Addition (Westbriar)	\$ 7,195,000
South Lakes High School Addition (planning)	\$ 1,048,000

**Capacity Enhancement Subtotal: \$ 8,243,000**

### ▶ Renovation

#### Elementary School Renovation

Terraset (Construction)	\$ 20,096,695
Haycock (Construction)	\$ 16,534,618
Ravensworth (Construction)	\$ 15,485,170
Woodlawn (Construction)	\$ 19,252,107
Forestville (Construction)	\$ 14,944,600
North Springfield (Construction)	\$ 17,278,345
Springfield Estates (Construction)	\$ 14,900,197
Keene Mill (Construction)	\$ 16,947,180
Bucknell (Construction)	\$ 14,537,345
Cherry Run (Planning)	\$ 657,628
Waynewood (Planning)	\$ 691,475
Stratford Landing (Planning)	\$ 736,929
Newington Forest (Planning)	\$ 613,643
Hollin Meadows (Planning)	\$ 714,896
White Oaks (Planning)	\$ 930,271
Mount Vernon Woods (Planning)	\$ 930,610
Belle View (Planning)	\$ 963,854

**Elementary School Renovation Subtotal: \$156,215,563**

#### Middle School Renovation

Thoreau (Construction)	\$ 35,244,029
Rocky Run (Planning)	\$ 3,368,766

**Middle School Renovation Subtotal: \$ 38,612,795**

#### High School Renovation

Langley (Construction)	\$ 67,744,613
Herndon (Planning)	\$ 4,546,144
Oakton (Planning)	\$ 4,573,431

**High School Renovation Subtotal: \$ 76,864,188**

### ▶ Infrastructure Management

Technology Upgrades	\$ 4,000,000
Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Upgrades	\$ 2,500,000
Roof Replacement	\$ 6,000,000
Athletic Infrastructure	\$ 2,500,000
HVAC Replacement	\$ 7,250,000
Security Enhancements	\$ 1,003,044
Asphalt Paving	\$ 1,375,000

**Infrastructure Management Subtotal: \$ 24,628,044**

### ▶ Site Acquisition

South West County High School Site	\$ 10,000,000
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**Site Acquisition Subtotal: \$ 10,000,000**

**Project Subtotal \$ 356,610,000**

**\*Unspent Proceeds from Prior Bond Issues \$(109,110,000)**

**Bond Cost \$ 2,500,000**

**REFERENDUM TOTAL \$ 250,000,000**

\*Unspent proceeds from prior bond spending authorization reflects unused authority resulting from cumulative project cost savings in multiple prior bond referenda. These savings allow FCPS to request less bonding authority for projects currently identified for funding.

## ▶ HOW WERE THE PROJECTS SELECTED?

Each year, the School Board and staff members work with the community to develop an updated five-year capital improvement program (CIP) for schools. To develop the CIP, the school system assesses changes in expected enrollments, academic programs, and facility conditions to determine priorities for new construction, renovations, and other capital facility projects. The School Board then evaluates the affordability of these school needs against other countywide requirements to determine how many of the highest priority school projects should be included in the bond proposal.

Several factors were considered in determining which schools to include in this year's bond referendum, including:

- Sustained high enrollment and/or growth experienced in the past several years.
- Continued need for temporary classrooms.
- Schools located in high growth areas as defined by the Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan.
- Strong growth at the kindergarten and primary grade levels.
- Demographic characteristics.

## ▶ WHO USES OUR SCHOOLS?

Students and citizens use Fairfax County schools. Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) works with the Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services and with the Fairfax County Park Authority to ensure that school facilities and athletic fields are available to the public after school hours.

The following are examples of how school buildings are used.

### **Students**

During the school year, approximately 181,000 students use FCPS facilities daily for academic and extracurricular activities.

### **Community**

Most of the public meeting places available in the county are FCPS facilities. In many cases, these facilities are provided free of charge to organizations such as homeowners associations, 4H, scouting groups, county employee organizations, and cultural and civic groups. In addition:

- Over 180,000 events occurred in school facilities last year.
- 164 schools are used as polling places for general elections.
- 137 schools serve as sites for Fairfax County's School Age Child Care (SACC) program.
- FCPS Office of Food and Nutrition Services provides some 171,000 senior citizen meals annually at 38 school sites.
- 95 religious and cultural organizations used FCPS facilities for regularly scheduled activities last year.

### **Neighborhood and Community Services**

The Fairfax County Department of Community and Recreation Services is the largest "outside" user of FCPS facilities. The result is an outstanding recreation program at minimum cost to Fairfax County taxpayers. For example:

- Last year, more than 250,000 individuals participated in recreation activities—the vast majority using FCPS facilities.

- Community groups used 244 school gymnasium courts during the past year for recreational basketball, volleyball, and other indoor activities.
- 550 school athletic fields, representing 68 percent of all the fields available in the county, were used in last year's recreation program.
- Eight schools were used as teen centers during the school year.

### **Park Authority**

More than 29,000 citizens attended classes, camps, and Rec-PAC programs run by the Park Authority in FCPS facilities last year.

### **Adult and Community Education**

Enrollment in FCPS Office of Adult and Community Education classes totaled nearly 36,000 last year.

## ▶ WHY ADD MORE CLASSROOMS?

Recent significant increases in student enrollment have pushed some schools well beyond capacity. Since the 2006-07 school year, enrollment has increased by more than 17,000 students and continued strong growth is anticipated. These increases have been due to demographic, economic, and other factors that will likely continue to affect enrollment in FCPS for the next five years.

Construction money is included in the bond for two new elementary schools, one in the Bailey's (Eastern Fairfax) area and one in the Richmond Highway (Route 1) area. Also included are two capacity enhancement projects which provide construction funds for Westbriar Elementary School addition in the Tysons Corner area and planning funds for an addition to South Lakes High School.

## ▶ WHY RENOVATE OUR SCHOOLS?

The School Board is committed to protecting the community's investment in schools and other buildings, which have a combined present value approaching \$5.2 billion.

Not only do these facilities wear out over time, but they also become outdated, both technologically and instructionally. FCPS, therefore, renovates its schools to ensure that students, countywide, have effective and efficient learning environments.

Construction funding for the renovation at Langley High School is included in the bond as well as planning funds for the renovations of Herndon and Oakton High Schools. The bond also includes construction and/or planning funds for the renovations of two middle schools and seventeen elementary schools.

Fairfax County public schools are expected to be usable for 20 to 25 years from the date of construction. Renovations undertaken at the end of that period extend the useful life of the school building another 20 years. Renovations also help to relieve crowding by providing additional classrooms and spaces for required small group and specialized instruction. Schools are renovated in a sequence determined by published rankings of priority need. These priorities are established by independent professional assessments of each school's physical condition.

Examples of the other completed renovation improvements include: upgrading basic systems such as heating, air conditioning, lighting, and plumbing; remodeling media centers; upgrading science and technology laboratories; refurbishing general classrooms; upgrading wiring for multimedia devices; and providing upgraded furnishings and equipment, where appropriate.

## WHY INCLUDE FUNDING FOR PLANNING?

The 2013 school bond referendum includes planning money for renovations at Herndon and Oakton High Schools, Rocky Run Middle School, and eight elementary schools. Putting funds for project planning into one bond issue and actual construction money into a later bond issue allows timely implementation of the projects without committing the county's bonding authority for construction costs earlier than necessary. Some projects need added time for land acquisition; other projects may require complicated construction designs or lengthy government approval procedures. With preplanning, such complicated projects can be completed earlier than they otherwise would have been, had planning and construction been authorized concurrently.

## WHAT WILL THE INFRASTRUCTURE COMPONENT ACCOMPLISH FOR SCHOOLS?

Although our schools are maintained in an exceptional manner, there are many components that do not have a life cycle capable of lasting 20 or more years between construction and a renovation. The infrastructure component is dedicated to these essential elements of the facilities in order to maintain them in a safe manner. The primary funding is devoted to the two most critical aspects of a school—the mechanical system and roofing. In addition, funding is included for Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) upgrades, technology upgrades, parking lot asphalt repair, security enhancement, and athletic infrastructure replacement.

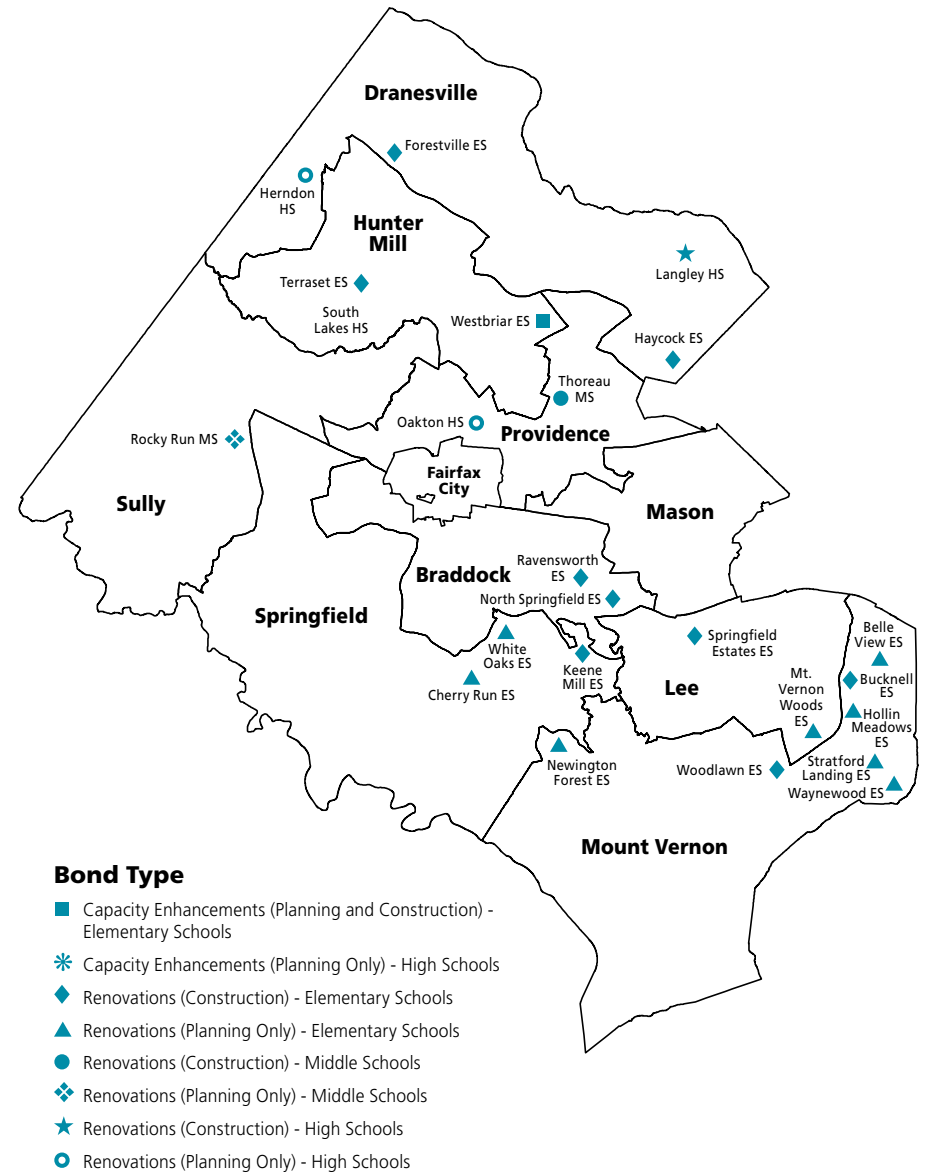
## ARE THERE OTHER REQUIREMENTS?

The cost of providing staff members to maintain quality control over contractor work on all projects funded by this bond proposal is included in the contractor's bonded costs. The estimated expense to underwrite and issue bonds is reflected in the bond referendum total as well.

## HOW WILL PASSAGE AFFECT YOUR TAX RATE?

If approved, the bonds will be sold when needed to meet cash requirements for projects included in this referendum. To ensure that Fairfax County's coveted triple-A bond ratings are not jeopardized, the Board of Supervisors' financial guidelines provide that the annual cost of the county's debt service (principal and interest payments) be no greater than 10 percent of annual combined general fund disbursements. The Board of Supervisors also maintains the county's net long-term debt at, or below, 3 percent of the total market value of taxable property in the county. As long as debt service costs do not increase significantly as a percentage of combined general fund disbursements, the county's bonded debt will not be a contributing factor to any increase in local taxes.

# Bond Referendum 2013



## **FAIRFAX COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD**

**Ilryong Moon**

Chairman  
Member at Large

**Tamara Derenak Kaufax**

Vice Chairman  
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Mount Vernon District

**Jane K. Strauss**

Dranesville District

**Ted Velkoff**

Member at Large

**Will Ashe**

Student Representative

## **FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Dr. Karen Garza**

Superintendent

To find out more about the bond referendum, you may go to the Fairfax County Public Schools website at [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu) or call the FCPS Department of Communications and Community Outreach at **571-423-1200**.

# **BondReferendumFacts**