

Northern Humboldt Union High School District

2755 McKinleyville Avenue, McKinleyville, CA 95519-3400
TELEPHONE: (707) 839-6470 • FAX: (707) 839-6477

KENNY RICHARDS, Ed.D.
District Superintendent

BRIAN STEPHENS, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent
for Business

September 9, 2010

RE: Measure Q, on the November 2, 2010 ballot for the Northern Humboldt Union High School District

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Northern Humboldt Union High School District has been providing dedicated and excellent educational services to the students of our communities since the formation of the District in 1894. Currently, the District educates an estimated 1,730 students and operates five schools, Arcata, McKinleyville, Six Rivers Charter, Pacific Coast, and Tsurai High Schools in the Northern Humboldt region. It is through the hard work and dedication of teachers and staff that directly contribute to the education, success, and learning of our students.


Although it appears that our high schools are in good shape based on achievements by our students, our classrooms need significant repairs. Some of our school's facilities are outdated and upgrades and renovations need to be made. While facilities have been well maintained, our schools do not meet 21st century education and technology standards. Faced with aging classrooms and the need to bring school facilities up to current standards, the District and Board of Trustees have decided to place Measure Q, a school improvement general obligation (G.O.) bond measure, on the November 2, 2010 ballot to modernize and renovate our aging schools.

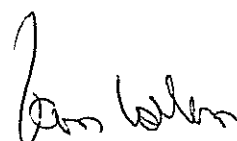
Over the last several months with input from staff, teachers, parents, community leaders, and the District architect, the District has prepared a School Facilities Needs Assessment. The Needs Assessment identifies the major repairs and upgrades that need to be made.

Examples of the specific types of projects identified include:

- Upgrading technology and inadequate electrical systems
- Modernizing libraries and media centers
- Modernizing classrooms and shop areas
- Improving physical education fields and facilities for school and community use
- Making health, safety, and handicapped accessibility (ADA) improvements
- Constructing a performing arts center for school and community use
- Improving energy efficiency throughout the District

The attached Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) handout is provided to assist parents and voters in understanding the facts behind Measure Q and how its passage will affect the District, our students and the community. This letter and attached FAQ handout are provided for your information only.

Sincerely,

Kenny Richards
District Superintendent


Dan Collen
Board President

Northern Humboldt Union High School District

Frequently Asked Questions Handout

Although it appears that our high schools are in good shape based on achievements by our students, our classrooms and facilities need repairs. Faced with aging classrooms and the need to bring school facilities up to current standards, the Northern Humboldt Union High School District has placed Measure Q on the upcoming November ballot that will modernize and renovate our aging high school facilities.

The following information is provided to assist voters in understanding the facts behind Measure Q and how its passage will affect the District and our communities.

What is Measure Q?

Measure Q is a \$25.8 million general obligation (G.O.) bond program. This measure is intended to address the needs of the student population through modernization and new construction projects. In addition, this measure will make major facility improvements like improving student access to computers and modern technology; modernizing and upgrading library media centers, classroom renovations, improving energy efficiency by installing solar panels; making health and safety improvements; upgrading inadequate electrical systems; and improving physical education fields and facilities for school and community use.

What is a general obligation (G.O.) bond?

G.O. bonds fund projects such as the renovation of existing classrooms and school facilities, as well as construction of new schools and classrooms. Similar to a home loan, G.O. bonds are typically repaid over 25 to 30 years. The loan repayment comes from a tax on all taxable property - residential, commercial, agricultural and industrial - located within the District's boundaries.

Why is the District placing Measure Q on the ballot?

The District operates five high schools, Arcata, McKinleyville, Six Rivers Charter, Tsurai , and Pacific Coast High Schools. Some of our school's facilities are outdated and upgrades and renovations need to be made. While facilities have been well maintained, our schools do not meet 21st century education and technology standards. Measure Q will allow the District to improve the quality of education provided to local students.

Why can't the District meet its facilities needs with its current budget?

Today, the scope of improvements needed in the Northern Humboldt Union High School District is far more than the current funding sources available. The per pupil funding which the District receives from the state is intended to be used for the day-to-day business of educating children and not the cost of upgrading, modernizing, and repairing facilities.

How did the District come up with the project list for Measure Q?

Over the last several months with input from staff, teachers, parents, community leaders, and the District architect, the District has prepared a School Facilities Needs Assessment. The Needs Assessment identifies the renovations and upgrades that need to be made.

Examples of the specific types of projects identified include:

- Modernizing outdated classrooms, library media centers and restrooms
- Making health and safety improvements
- Improving physical education facilities and fields for school and community use
- Improving technology and upgrading inadequate electrical systems

What will the passage of Measure Q mean for our students and the community?

Measure Q will provide our students with a better learning environment by making repairs and upgrades to existing classrooms and school facilities; many of which are also used and available to the community. In addition, if the bond passes, money will be able to go back into the general fund to keep money in the classrooms.

What will happen if Measure Q does not pass?

If Measure Q does not pass, our classrooms and school facilities will continue to deteriorate. In addition, funds that would otherwise go to classroom instruction will be needed to make critical safety repairs and improvements at each school. Repairs will need to be postponed and as a result will potentially be more expensive to make in the future.

What will Measure Q cost?

The tax rate per property owner is estimated to be \$19.00 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation per year or approximately \$3.00 per month for the average homeowner. (Do not confuse assessed valuation with market value. Assessed valuations are the value placed on property by the County and are almost always lower than market values). Check your property tax statement for your current assessed valuation.

Is now the right time for the District to ask voters to support Measure Q?

The School District conducted a facilities needs assessment that shows the District has significant facility needs. As a result, the School Board authorized a voter opinion survey to assess support for a potential bond measure to improve its facilities. Survey results indicate a majority of the voting community believes the District has facility needs and would support a general obligation bond measure for the District at this time.

How can I be sure that Measure Q funds will be spent on improving our local schools?

By law, all bond funds have to be spent locally and cannot be taken by the State. Furthermore, an independent citizens' oversight committee will be established to ensure that bond funds are properly spent. Also, by law, there must be annual audits and no bond money can be used for teacher salaries.