

Questions and Answers



What is a bond?

Bonds are the way school districts fund new construction and technology projects. State law requires a supermajority vote, or at least 60 percent approval, for a bond to pass.

Is this a new tax on my property?

No. As promised, the 2009 bond keeps a tax rate no higher than \$1.96 per \$1,000 of assessed property value that was approved in the 2003 bond.

What projects are included in this bond?

The 2009 bond includes replacement or renovation of Finch and Westview elementary schools on the northwest side of Spokane, and Jefferson and Hutton elementary schools on the south side. It also includes modernization of the Ferris High School campus; upgrades to technology throughout the district; major upgrades to nine elementary schools' roofs, air systems, and flooring; field improvements at all high school athletic sites; and safety and security upgrades at all schools, as well as smaller improvement projects throughout the district.

How were the 2009 bond projects chosen?

Potential projects for the 2009 bond were chosen after a year-long study that included an independent architectural and engineering review of all sites; a demographic study by Eastern Washington University; input from the district's own architects, engineers and maintenance staff; and meetings with individual site administrators, staff and parents. The district then held six community forums throughout the city to collect public input on the proposed projects. With all this information, the board of directors will finalize the project list and bond date in December 2008.

I don't see my school on this list. What's in it for me?

EVERY Spokane Public Schools student would benefit from this bond. All schools would receive computer and technology upgrades, additional security cameras or building improvements (like new flooring, upgraded lighting, office remodels or playground equipment) – needs that are determined annually by each school's staff and parents.

What happens if the bond doesn't pass?

Without the bond dollars, Spokane Public Schools would do no major construction. There would be no regular building improvements, and no security or technology upgrades. Funding for essential building and technology needs would have to come from the district's general fund budget, creating serious budget challenges for all district programs.

Why are we being asked to fund both a levy and a bond?

Levies pay for things like educational programs, staff and supplies. They are a way for local communities to supplement state funding, which falls short of providing for all that is required. Bonds are the way for local communities to remodel schools and keep technology current for students. Both bonds and levies are needed to maintain a quality school system for students.

Is this the right time to be asking the community for funding?

Spokane citizens have a history of strong support for public education. With their votes, Spokane community members have shown that they trust Spokane Public Schools when it comes to maintaining and upgrading school facilities. A consistent investment in our schools ensures that future generations will not be burdened with more than their fair share of keeping our schools safe and up-to-date.

