

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is a bond?

A. A bond is a loan that is issued by a local government agency to finance long-term construction projects. Union County would sell bonds over a period of time to finance the renovations and additions that our schools need. Bonds are the most cost-effective method to finance school facilities.

Q. Why do we need bonds to renovate schools?

A. School renovation and construction projects are very expensive to fund at one time. Bonds spread the cost of major capital improvements over a number of years. This is similar to securing a mortgage on a home and spreading the cost of home buying over a period of years.

Q. What's included in the bond project list?

A. The \$54 million bond will fund seven projects—renovations, additions and safety repairs at six schools and a new transportation facility.

Porter Ridge Middle, Porter Ridge High, Sun Valley High, Monroe High, Piedmont High and Western Union Elementary will receive additional classrooms and much needed repairs and upgrades. The bond proposal also includes money to address safety repairs, renovations for heating and cooling systems, enlarging cafeterias and additional workspace for teachers.

The current transportation facility on Venus Street was built in 1980. It is 28,000 square feet and is shared with the maintenance department. A new transportation facility will provide an additional 50,000 square feet with space for maintenance and repair bays, storage and parking for buses. Currently, there are six maintenance bays for the entire bus fleet. The new facility will have at least 16 maintenance bays. Funding will also address safety and system upgrades for the transportation department.

Q. What happens if the bond doesn't pass?

A. The Board of Education will have to work with the county to develop an alternate plan to address overcrowding, larger class sizes, aging facilities, and ADA renovations. Other schools waiting for Capital Improvements will be delayed.

Q. If the bond passes on Nov. 8, when will construction projects begin?

A. Construction projects will begin in early 2017. A production calendar will be available to follow the progress of each project.

Q. How were the projects selected for the 2016 school bond?

A. The Board of Education recommended these projects to the BOCC after a comprehensive list failed. These 6 schools were identified based on Enrollment Forecasts and McKibben data through 2025-26. Western Union, SVHS, PRMS, PRHS, Piedmont HS, and Monroe HS will soon exceed current school capacities causing overcrowding, larger class sizes and possible capping.

Q. My child's school is not on the list, why should I be concerned with renovations, additions and a new transportation facility?

A. Union County residents value quality schools and adequate learning environments. When school capacities are properly managed and planned for, it benefits the entire county. Previous bonds were approved for new schools/renovations between 2000 and 2009. Supporting this bond allows UCPS to increase school capacity in high growth areas and creates county wide stability through 2025-26.

Q. How will community members and school stakeholders be engaged in bond projects?

A. Each school with a bond project will have a Project Advisory Team that will participate in the planning and design of the additions and renovations. This team will consist of parents, community members, students, teachers and administrators.

Q. If the bond passes, will my taxes increase?

A. Union County will decide if there is a tax increase. If taxes increase, the projected amount is 1.6 cents per \$100.00 of value. For every \$1,000, it is 16 cents. For example, if you have a house that is worth \$100,000, then your tax increase for this portion of the bond is approximately \$16 annually.

Q. When is the vote for the school bond?

A. Nov. 8, 2016. If you have questions about registering to vote, visit www.co.union.nc.us/Government/BoardofElections.