

Santiam Canyon Bond Explanatory Statement

Official Statement:

Santiam Canyon School District serves students from the rural communities of Mill City, Gates, Detroit, Idanha, Marion Forks, the Little North Fork and surrounding areas. Santiam Elementary School and Santiam Junior/Senior High School have a combined enrollment of 570 students. In the past two years, enrollment has increased by approximately 40 students and projections are for continued growth.

Santiam Canyon Schools face challenges:

- School safety and security needs have changed.
- Instructional space for vocational and academic programs for junior high and high school students is limited.
- Built in 1954, our Junior/Senior High School is an overcrowded, outdated facility that has failing mechanical and structural issues. It was not designed for separation of middle and high school students, does not meet current safety standards and contains old hazardous materials such as asbestos.
- Santiam Elementary School enrolls 310 students in grades K-6 and is out of classroom space for additional growth or programs.

Community identified priorities:

In 2017, the District formed a Long Range Facilities Plan Committee that represented community members and school staff. A facility analysis was conducted by outside architects, engineers and school construction professionals.

The citizens' committee proposed a bond measure supported by the school board to fund the following capital projects:

- Enhance vocational and academic programs for junior high and high school students through expansion of hands on learning spaces.** The District has added student programming in recent years, with addition of industrial arts/shop classes, music and health occupations technical classes.
- Improve life safety and security.**
- Reduce overcrowding by constructing a new Junior/Senior High School to address overcrowding; replace a failing building, remove temporary portable classrooms.** This bond proposal would replace the classroom portion of the campus, leaving the Auditorium, Gym and Shop building.

- New cafeteria at the Elementary School to improve instructional schedules; currently lunch starts as early as 10:30 a.m. to fit all K-12 students in one cafeteria.**
- Construction of office, library, core education spaces, and an auxiliary gymnasium**

Replacement vs Repair: Expert recommendations are that the Santiam Junior/Senior High School classroom building is a better candidate for replacement compared to repair. The cost to repair this aging facility does not make sense due to the condition and educational adequacy of the building. It does not meet current safety standards and contains old hazardous materials such as asbestos. The District's innovative design and construction of the new classroom buildings is estimated to cost taxpayers 40% less than current standard school construction.

Bond funds can only be used for voter-approved projects: The principal amount cannot exceed \$17.9 million and bonds would mature in 25 years or less. Law prohibits the use of bond funds for any expense not listed on the ballot.

Citizen oversight for bond expenditures: A long-term citizen oversight committee would be appointed to ensure that all bond funds are used for the purposes approved by voters. Their role would include communicating project implementation to the public and overseeing spending.