

Puyallup School District Bond Election FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions

The following are some frequently asked questions about the proposed \$273 million school bond measure that will appear on the November 5, 2019 Special Election ballot.

What is a school bond?

A bond pays for capital projects such as new school construction, renovation, replacement, and other school improvements. The last voter-approved school bond in 2015, for example, paid for construction of the new Dessie F. Evans Elementary, rebuilding of Firgrove, Sunrise, and Northwood elementary schools on site, and a remodel of Pope Elementary.

What criteria did the Bond Advisory Committee use for recommending bond projects for a future bond package?

- 1) Safety and Security
- 2) Building conditions
- 3) Educational programs
- 4) Regional Plan
- 5) Projected growth
- 6) State match availability

What are the projects on the November 5, 2019 school bond proposal?

If approved, the district shall make the following capital improvements:

Puyallup High School

- Safety and security focus
- Consolidate campus to “one building”
- Add capacity to accommodate 2,000 students
- Added parking and vehicular access
- Improve health fitness/athletic facilities
- Program improvements: CTE, Special Education, Science
- New library, expanded commons, expanded admin and student services
- New main gym, auxiliary gym, weight room, locker rooms

Rogers High School

- Safety and security focus
- Connect the existing buildings and provide new fencing at the main entry and campus perimeter that encloses exterior circulation
- 13 new general education classrooms
- New Special Education facilities, science labs, nursing and photography

- Added storage and seating capacity to the auditorium
- Expanding the existing physical education facilities with the addition of an auxiliary gym, weight room, restrooms, and 6 new tennis courts

Emerald Ridge High School

- Safety and security (one building)
- 15 general classrooms
- 2 science rooms
- Expand the commons
- Digital Media Center (new library)
- Conference rooms, storage, restrooms, and support spaces as part of the classroom addition
- Auxiliary gym, weight room, gymnastics facility
- 2 new tennis courts

Walker High School

- New addition: 12,500 SF
- New science lab, library space, art room remodel
- Addition includes commons/cafeteria
- New entrance vestibule, video buzz-in system
- CTE spaces, photo lab, espresso student store, health/fitness facility
- Health fitness covered structure

When will the projects be completed?

Emerald Ridge and Walker High School are scheduled for completion by September 2022. Puyallup and Rogers are scheduled for completion in September 2023.

How is a school bond different from a school levy?

A supplemental school levy helps fund daily operations that are not funded by the State. The levy funds may include classroom teachers, instructional aides, nurses, textbooks and learning materials, reasonable class sizes, support technology arts, music, athletics, maintain school playground and playfields, heating, plumbing, health, safety, fire-alarm, and security systems.

Why does the school district need a school bond election now?

Puyallup School District considers student safety and security as its highest responsibility. The district currently maintains three comprehensive high schools and one alternative high school that are overcrowded, experiencing growth, have aging infrastructure, and need modernization and improved security.

What are the election requirements?

The bond requires a 60 percent supermajority to pass. Voter turnout must be at least 40 percent of the previous general election.

What is the cost?

If the new bonds are approved by voters, the 2020 estimated tax rate would increase by 37 cents. However, because the existing bonds are being reduced, the total bonds tax rate would decrease from \$2.75 to \$2.44 which is a difference of -31 cents.

If the bonds are approved, the total tax rate in 2020 (including bonds and levies) is estimated to increase from \$4.31 to \$4.35 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation which is a **difference of 4 cents**. The owner of a home valued at \$300,000, for example, would pay about \$1,305 per year in school property taxes, or \$108.75 per month.

Year	Existing Bonds	New Bonds	Total Bonds	Capital Levy	Technology Levy	Operating Levy	Total Tax Rates
2017	2.07	-	2.07	-	0.07	3.79	5.93
2018	1.62	-	1.62	-	0.06	3.49	5.17
2019	2.75	-	2.75	-	0.06	1.50	4.31
2020	2.07	0.37	2.44	-	0.06	1.85	4.35

Are some residents eligible for tax exemptions?

Yes. This program is available to citizens who are at least 61 years old on December 31 of the year they apply or retired from regular gainful employment by reason of a disability, with an income of \$40,000 or less. Exemptions must be renewed once every six years unless there is a change in status or income. Proof of income is required in addition to the information requested on the application form. Proof of disability is also required. The Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer's Office administers this program. Applications are available online or by contacting the Senior Citizen and Disabled Person Exemption Department hotline at (253) 798-2169 or may be picked up at the [Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer's Office](#).

How can I learn more?

Visit the [Puyallup School District website](#).