



# News Release

July 1, 1998  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
(Richard M. Daniels)

**RE: \$1.51 BILLION BOND MEASURE TO REPAIR SAN DIEGO'S  
NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS OK'D FOR NOVEMBER 3 BALLOT**

Responding to a broad-based community plea to repair San Diego's neighborhood schools, the Board of Education today voted unanimously to place a \$1.51 billion bond measure on the November 3 general election ballot.

Meeting at Madison High School in Clairemont, the board adopted a bond measure resolution to fund urgent facilities needs for the district's 167 schools. Parents, teachers, principals, community and business leaders and residents spent the last 18 months identifying those needs as part of the largest public review of school facilities in the district's history.

"Our schools are in desperate need of repair," noted Ron Ottinger, board president. "Roofs are leaking, pipes are bursting and many classrooms cannot accommodate today's computer technology. We have playground equipment that needs to be replaced in order to meet safety standards and we have schools without standard libraries and science labs. The list goes on and on," he said.

The board action was taken on Alan Bersin's first day as superintendent of the 137,000-student school district, the eighth-largest urban district in the nation.

"The overriding mission of San Diego City Schools is to improve student achievement by supporting teaching and learning in every classroom," Bersin said. "This includes both facility repairs and instructional improvement. We can't raise student achievement when our school roofs are falling down. These are two sides of a single coin."

Today's action follows the June 23 board approval of the list of most urgent repairs and improvements needed at the district's existing 167 school sites. The needs were determined to be of the highest priority for funding and implementation as part of a 15-year facilities plan.

Ottinger said the bond measure is critical if students are to be provided a safe environment that supports teaching and learning.

(more)

## **\$1.51 BILLION SCHOOL BOND MEASURE SET FOR NOVEMBER BALLOT**

2-2

“Every school in the district will receive repairs and improvements,” Ottinger said. “Furthermore, the measure authorizes an independent oversight committee to make sure bond funds are spent as approved by voters.”

Voter approval of the bond measure would continue for another 25 years the existing property tax rate that otherwise would expire in 2003.

Supporting the school bond measure is the San Diego County Taxpayers Association.

“We’re proud of the role we played in developing the major repair and maintenance plan and the fact that it allows as much bond money as possible to be spent for classroom improvements, technology upgrades and school libraries for our children,” said Larry Nuffer, president of the taxpayers group.

Each school throughout the district will have a signed contract identifying the projects at that site that will be funded by the bond measure.

The list of repairs and improvements that will be considered by voters in November includes \$317 million for major repairs and code compliance items, such as new roofs, plumbing and playground equipment; \$209 million for technology improvements at all elementary and high schools; \$133 million to upgrade and build science classrooms at middle and high schools; \$84 million to expand or build libraries at 104 schools; \$70 million for future major repair and replacement items at existing schools; and \$481 million to build 13 new elementary schools and a new high school.

Other major items covered by the bond measure proposal include \$47 million to replace portable classrooms with permanent buildings at 20 schools; \$35 million for additional counseling, parent involvement, conference and special education facilities at 84 elementary schools; \$27 million to replace two temporary schools: Burbank and Mead; and \$18 million in major additions to Thurgood Marshall, Dana and Farb middle schools and Edison Elementary School.

“We worked together to identify and prioritize the repairs and improvements needed at our schools,” said Tad Parzen, a parent and member of both the San Diego Chamber of Commerce Business Roundtable for Education and the 31-member Facilities Review Public Working Committee that prioritized facilities needs on a districtwide basis. “Our goal is to repair our schools and to make sure they are maintained in the future. We want every school community to benefit from a successful bond measure.”

The highest priority is to eliminate the district’s \$258 million major maintenance backlog and to ensure that schools and classrooms are never allowed to deteriorate to a substandard level again. As a safeguard, the district recently approved a six-year major repair and maintenance plan that will fund the repair and replacement of systems and structures when they are no longer

(more)

## **\$1.51 BILLION SCHOOL BOND MEASURE SET FOR NOVEMBER BALLOT**

**3-3**

serviceable. Developed with the assistance of an advisory committee of chief financial officers, real estate and property management professionals, the plan nearly doubles the district's general fund allocation for major maintenance, from \$5.3 million in 1997-98 to \$10 million for 1998-99.

A key factor in winning business community support is the district's plan to appoint an independent oversight committee to oversee the spending of bond proceeds and the implementation of the major maintenance plan throughout the life of the bond.

"The Board of Education has met all the chamber's conditions for support of the bond measure," said Tyler Cramer, chair of the Greater San Diego Chamber of Commerce's Business Roundtable for Education. Cramer said he expects the full chamber board of directors to endorse the measure at its July 23 meeting.

Additional information can be obtained by calling the "Repair Our Neighborhood Schools" information line at 619-686-6764.

###