



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Orange County Voters to Decide on \$300 Million School Bond in Upcoming Election

ORANGE COUNTY, N.C. (September 26, 2024)—Voters in Orange County, NC, will decide on a \$300 million school bond in the upcoming election. Early voting will start on October 17, 2024, and election day will be November 5, 2024. If approved, this bond will provide essential funding for Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (CHCCS) and Orange County Schools (OCS), focusing on key projects over ten years to address critical school renovation needs.

An approved bond would primarily focus on building educationally adequate, safe, and updated learning environments for students and staff in both school districts. The bond will also target reducing operational and structural inefficiencies, such as high utility and maintenance costs associated with aging facilities. Additionally, the bond aims to reduce the overall age of school facilities, ensuring that schools are better equipped to meet the demands of contemporary education.

"This bond represents a crucial investment in the future of our schools and community," said Jamezetta Bedford, Chair of the Orange County Board of Commissioners. "This bond will ensure that our students and staff have safe, healthy classrooms and instructional spaces updated to current basic standards and that our schools can operate more efficiently. "

Planned Key Projects and Benefits for CHCCS and OCS

If voters in Orange County approve the bond referendum this fall, CHCCS and OCS will receive the necessary funding to undertake several significant projects.

Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools

- Replacement of Carrboro Elementary
- Replacement of Estes Hills Elementary
- Replacement of Frank Porter Graham Elementary

Orange County Schools

- Replacement Elementary School
- Replacement of Orange Middle School
- Major renovation/addition project

If approved, the \$300 million bond will be distributed, with \$175 million going to the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools and \$125 million to the Orange County Schools. The split is roughly in line with student enrollment and is based on the costs of major projects and high-priority needs.

The approval of the bond could increase the Orange County property tax rate by \$34.10 per \$100,000 of valuation, starting in July 2025. For a home valued at \$400,000, this would add approximately \$136.40 to the annual property tax bill.

The Orange County School Bond Education Committee emphasizes the importance of voter participation in this critical decision. The bond will be the very last item on the 2024 General Election ballot, located on the backside of the ballot. Sample ballots are available at <https://www.orangecountync.gov/SampleBallots>

How the Bond Will Appear on the Ballot:

Orange County School Bonds

(For Orange County Schools and Chapel Hill – Carrboro City Schools)

Additional property taxes may be levied on property located in Orange County in an amount sufficient to pay the principal of and interest on bonds if approved by the following ballot question.

Shall the order authorizing \$300,000,000 bonds plus interest to pay capital costs of providing school facilities and paying related costs and providing that additional taxes may be levied in an amount sufficient to pay the principal of and interest on the bonds, as adopted by the County’s Board of Commissioners on June 18, 2024, be approved, in light of the following:

(1) The estimated cumulative cost over the life of the bond, using the highest interest rate charged for similar debt over the last 20 years, would be \$480,360,000.

(2) The estimated amount of property tax liability increase for each one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) of property tax value to service the cumulative cost over the life of the bond provided above would be \$34.10 per year.

YES NO

Orange County, NC Election Information

- **Early Voting:** In-person early voting for the 2024 general election begins on Thursday, Oct. 17, 2024, and ends at 3 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 2, 2024.
- **General Election:** Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 5, 2024.
- **Absentee Voting:** Any North Carolina registered voter may request and receive a mail-in absentee ballot. No special circumstance is needed. You may request your absentee ballot now through October 29 for the November 5, 2024, election.

Voters are encouraged to verify their registration status, locate their polling places, and review sample ballots through the Orange County Board of Elections website:

<https://orangecountync.gov/1720/Elections>

For more detailed information about the bond and the proposed projects, visit <https://orangecountyschoolbond.com>.

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About the Orange County School Bond Education Committee

The Orange County School Bond Education Committee is committed to providing accurate and impartial information about the 2024 School Bond Referendum. The committee aims to educate the public on the bond's facts, ensuring that voters can make an informed decision.

Contact:

Orange County School Bond Education Committee

Contact Information: Kristin Prelipp, kprelipp@orangecountync.gov, 919-245-2322