



OCSB

2024 School Referendum – Event Kit Talking Points

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[Headline]

2024 Orange County School Board Referendum

Event Talking Points

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What is A Bond Referendum?

- A bond referendum allows the government to borrow money to fund large-scale projects, such as upgrading school facilities.
- In a bond referendum, voters decide if the government can raise money by issuing general obligation (GO) bonds.
- A GO bond is a way for the government to borrow money at a low interest rate. In this instance, Orange County would promise to repay the debt with interest over time.
- In North Carolina, municipalities need voter approval to issue these bonds.

Understanding the Orange County Bond Referendum

- The Orange County School Board Referendum proposes a \$300 million bond to fund improvements to school facilities and educational support programs.
- If the bond is approved, funds will be divided between Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools (approx. \$175 million) and Orange County Schools (approx. \$125 million).
- The split in funding is based on the cost of major projects and high-priority needs identified via a consultant-led study.
- Each school district has identified its highest-priority projects that will be made over a period of several years.

Why is This Needed?

- The average age of school buildings in Orange County is about 42 years old. Many buildings and their systems (heating, cooling, electrical) are outdated and have surpassed their useful life.
- Aging buildings and systems lead to high maintenance costs and less effective learning environments.
- In some cases, it's more cost-effective to replace rather than repair outdated facilities.

Financial Details

- The bond is projected to cost Orange County property owners \$34.10 per \$100,000 of their assessed property value.
- For example, someone who owns property valued at \$300,000 would see an increase of about \$102 per year in property taxes.
- The increase could go into effect once at the beginning of the repayment period or could be phased in over time based on when funding is needed for particular projects.

Funding Alternatives

- If the bond referendum isn't approved by Orange County voters, the County can still make some school improvements, but they will likely be limited.
- Without the bond, the County could use traditional borrowing paths, called limited obligation bonds, to fund school improvements. However, these methods would only allow borrowing a third of the total cost of repairs and replacements currently needed.

How to Vote

- The bond referendum question will appear on the ballot during the upcoming general election.
- The referendum will be located on the back of the ballot at the bottom.
- Only registered Orange County residents will be able to vote for or against the referendum.
- Every vote counts and will help shape the future of our schools and communities.
- For a sample of the general election ballot, visit [insert microsite URL].