



MARCH 2009 SCHOOL BOND FACTS

Important Dates:

- Ballots mailed to homes:
February 20, 2009
- Election Day:
March 10, 2009

Reduced School Bond Prioritizes Most Urgent Needs

A Snoqualmie Valley school bond for \$27.5 million will appear on the March 10, 2009 election ballot.

This bond focuses on the most immediate and critical needs of our school district – safety upgrades and repairs to existing buildings and systems, plus relief to crowding at Mount Si High School. With sensitivity to current economic uncertainties facing our community, the cost of this bond is significantly reduced (from \$189-\$200 million in the past three near-miss bonds down to \$27.5 million.) It provides a near-term solution for urgent needs while long-term planning continues.

This \$27.5 million bond will fund two important initiatives:

- **The majority of this bond (\$22.1 million) will maintain the safety and structural integrity of school buildings and systems throughout the district.**

Improvements are needed to nearly every school building, to protect our community's investment and ensure the safety of students. These improvements will also save the district money in the long-run. Ongoing repairs to systems reaching the end of their functional life spans must currently be paid through the district's General Fund — which is facing a significant deficit heading into 2009-10. Eliminating the need for ongoing repairs will help to free up operating funds for other obligations such as: classroom support, materials, books, classroom teachers, utilities, fuel, food, etc. Over time, the list of critical repairs and upgrades needed has grown and the urgency has heightened to adequately sustain our schools.

- **The remaining portion of this bond (\$5.4 million) will help alleviate overcrowding at Mount Si High School starting next year.**

By adding six double-modular units (12 classrooms) to the high school campus, this bond will increase classroom capacity for up to 360 students. Because Mount Si High School is located on a floodway, the only suitable location for modular classrooms is where its six tennis courts are currently located. Given the significant use these courts receive as outdoor classrooms for physical education programming, the School Board agreed to retain this programming and relocate the courts on an adjacent practice field across Meadowbrook Way. Maintaining appropriate class sizes, which will be possible with additional classrooms in this bond, is a priority for optimal learning. Meanwhile, planning also continues on creative ways to alleviate congestion to common areas at the high school.



**SNOQUALMIE VALLEY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

www.svsd410.org

February 2009



MARCH 10, 2009 ELECTION DATE

Goals of this Bond —and why it looks so different

After three near-miss bond attempts in 2007 and 2008, it was time for a different approach that more voters might be more willing to support. Current realities of our school district and region also guided the approach of this bond:

- New housing construction has slowed significantly.
- Enrollment growth has slowed from 6-7% to 2% (see chart below).
- There is growing uncertainty around the recession.
- The impact that Washington State's budget deficit will have on education funding is still unknown.

Given these uncertainties and recognizing financial pressures facing our community, a goal of this bond is to reduce the costs significantly and take care of the most urgent needs at hand. The slower enrollment growth has created an opportunity of a bit more time before new schools are necessary. This bond therefore takes a stepped-approach to facilities planning: it is a *first-step*, immediate solution to ensure the bare necessities for our schools...while long-term planning continues.

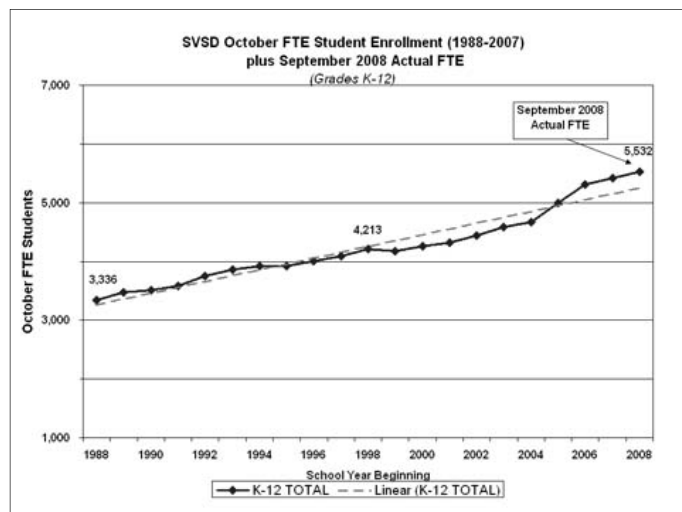
Snoqualmie Valley Student Enrollment Reality—

Slower growth (about 2% now) allows more time to determine the best solution for our students and community.

The fact remains that we are still growing, and our students will need additional schools in the future.

The current bond — at a lower net tax rate than taxpayers paid for school bonds in 2008 — clears the way to address future facilities needs in a future bond.

SVSD K-12 Enrollment History



Long-term Facilities Planning Continues...

There is a sense of urgency around elements in this current bond — immediate needs that cannot wait. Looking forward...the fact remains that our student population is still growing and we will need extra building capacity as projected in earlier bonds. In the coming months, a committee will re-visit several options, explore new ideas and determine the feasibility of each in light of our evolving realities, as directed by the School Board. With this “gift” of extra time (per our slowed enrollment growth,) we will work to identify the best direction for our schools and growing community. Next steps regarding the long-term facilities planning process are outlined on the district website at www.svsd410.org.

This publication is intended to provide factual information related to the Snoqualmie Valley School District's March 10, 2009 bond election.

BOND ELECTION REQUIREMENTS

School Bond Election Validation

Our State Constitution requires a 60 percent "yes" vote – a so-called "super-majority" – to pass bond elections.

In addition, the total voter turn-out must equal 40 percent of the voters who cast ballots in the most recent General Election.

Following the record 84% voter turn-out in our district last November, this means 7,254 voters must participate to validate the March election. And, **4,353** "yes" votes will be needed to pass this bond election.

Every vote counts.

Tax Exemptions for Seniors & Disabled

Homeowners age 61 or over, or those permanently retired due to disability, and who earn less than \$35,000 can qualify for a **complete exemption** from all local voter-approved property taxes, including all school bond and levy taxes. In addition, the assessed value of your home is frozen at the time you qualify.

A simple call may reduce your taxes! Call the King County Assessor's Office for details and application forms at **206-296-3920**, or visit their website at www.metrokc.gov/assessor and click on **Exemptions** on the left side.

Please take the time to mail in your ballot by:

MARCH 10, 2009

Thank you!



Snoqualmie Valley Schools
P.O. Box 400
Snoqualmie, WA 98065

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98065

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