



Educating Compassionate  
and Creative Global Citizens

# SCHOOL WATCH

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

**May 2016 Edition**

**Dear Oak Park Community Member,**

We are writing you to provide information and to request your input about a possible new school bond measure that may be placed on the November 2016 ballot. Because the Oak Park community and its schools have been linked from the beginning, your attention to this is of the utmost importance. As stakeholders in the community, you recognize that the quality of your school system is tied to our shared quality of life and the value of your home.

Oak Park Unified has had the support of the community for bonds in the past. Funds from Measures C6 and R were used to make needed repairs to all of our schools, including new roofs, plumbing and electrical upgrades, and to infuse technology into classrooms, all of which has helped make Oak Park USD a world-class school system. Those bonds also allowed us to modernize Brookside and Oak Park High School. To see what has been accomplished under Measures C6 and R, we invite you to explore this website [www.opusd.org/bonds](http://www.opusd.org/bonds).

Nearly ten years later, we are at a point where Oak Hills, Red Oak, and Medea Creek schools require major repairs to basic infrastructure as well as upgrades. A year ago, we formed a Needs Assessment Committee comprised of teachers, administrators, board members, and parents to evaluate our school facilities, safety, and technology and to develop a report outlining the needs. To view this report, please visit this website [www.opusd.org/needs](http://www.opusd.org/needs). In summary, this report found that our most critical needs at the schools are to:

- Replace or repair old roofs, plumbing, electrical, heating and air conditioning systems where needed;
- Update instructional technology, for improved student learning in core subjects;
- Provide classrooms and labs for career-technical education to prepare students for college and jobs;
- Provide facilities and equipment needed to support quality instruction in music and the performing arts; and
- Replace aging portable classrooms that are expensive to repair with new, modern classrooms.

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The work highlighted in the needs assessment plan can be accomplished with a new bond measure that would replace an expiring bond for a significant tax rate savings. One of our older bonds will expire next year, and we can replace that bond (which costs \$82 per \$100,000 of assessed home value) with a less expensive bond (\$60 per \$100,000 of assessed home value) yielding a net tax rate reduction of \$22 per \$100,000 of assessed home value. This new bond would provide approximately \$60 million in funds and make the District eligible for possible state matching funds of an additional \$10 million to modernize the three schools and complete facilities repairs and improvements on all of the others.

The OPUSD Board of Education will be making a decision about this potential bond measure at their June meeting, which if approved by the Board, will appear on the November ballot. The measure would require 55 percent voter approval to pass. Before the final drafting of the measure and before the decision is made to move forward with it or not, we would appreciate your input. Please take a few moments to provide some feedback by filling out a survey on our website at [www.opusd.org/surveyofneeds](http://www.opusd.org/surveyofneeds).

Maintaining our schools and keeping them safe are top priorities for the Board of Education. We are proud of what we have accomplished together in Oak Park, making our schools some of the best schools in the state. With your help we will continue to innovate and serve the Oak Park community with a school system worthy of our children, families, and community.



**Dr. Tony Knight**  
Superintendent



**Allen Rosen**  
President, Board of Education



**Nick Johnson**  
Parent, Community Member, OPUSD Needs  
Assessment Committee



**Lori Getz**  
Parent, Community Member, OPUSD Needs  
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