



Portland Public Schools Bond Measure: Seismic safety in PPS Buildings

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Portland Public Schools is the largest public school district in Oregon, with 95 school buildings and more than 47,000 students. PPS buildings average 65 years in age; most were built in the 1920s, 1940s and 1950s, long before earthquake safety standards were in place. Only two schools have been built since such standards were implemented.

Seismic safety is a high priority for PPS. Since 1995, the school district has evaluated and retrofitted school buildings across the district — allowing for safe exit from buildings in the event of an earthquake. The \$548 million school facilities bond on the May ballot would bring nine school buildings up to modern standards and the increase structural integrity of five others.

Seismic work to date

PPS has evaluated all schools and other buildings using national seismic guidelines.

A facilities bond — passed by voters in 1995 — included more than \$47 million of seismic safety improvement work at 53 schools. Projects included constructing new lateral support walls, anchoring interior walls to roofs and reinforcing brick exteriors.

In 2009, PPS replaced roofs at nine school buildings — significantly increasing seismic safety. Roofs built to modern construction standards help stabilize the entire building by anchoring interior and exterior walls to a common structure.

What's next?

If approved, the proposed bond will continue the retrofit work, with 12 percent of the proposed funding dedicated to seismic safety.

Full earthquake-safety retrofits will occur at Cleveland, Jefferson and Roosevelt high schools, Faubion, Marysville, Laurelhurst and Rigler K-8 schools, and a new sixth-grade wing at West Sylvan will be built to current seismic structural code. Beverly Cleary K-8's Fernwood campus also will receive seismic retrofit work.

In addition, the school district will fully or partially replace roofs at four schools, which substantially increases earthquake safety.

Seismic improvements to almost all buildings are part of Portland Public Schools' long-range modernization plan. Even schools with roof upgrades may need other seismic work.

More information about the school facilities bond 26-121 is available online at

<http://www.pps.k12.or.us/departments/schoolmodernization>

The \$548 million bond measure would have a rate of about \$2 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value, costing the median homeowner approximately \$300 a year or \$25 a month (half would pay more, half less). That rate continues for six years, then drops to about 15 cents per \$1,000 of TAV for a period no longer than 20 years.

Updated with new information on April 7, 2011