

2011

Tahoma School District No. 409

Tahoma Public Information Office

TAHOMA CONSTRUCTION & REMODELING BOND MEASURE

A comprehensive presentation of facts related to the Tahoma School District's student housing needs.

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Introduction

Enrollment growth in the Tahoma School District has been constant, and sometimes rapid, during the past 25 years. As the community has grown, so has the school district's student population. The community's growth is there for all to see, as new neighborhoods have sprouted, businesses and services have expanded, and the transformation from rural to suburban continues. That growth also is apparent in Tahoma schools, which are at or very near their designed enrollment capacity. It is now time for the community to make a decision about how its schools will accommodate current and projected enrollment. The decision is not limited to facilities. Whatever choice the community makes will affect the quality of education for Tahoma students now and in the future. To help the community make an informed decision, the school district has assembled this guide to the issues and proposed solutions that are part of a construction and remodeling bond measure that will be submitted to voters on April 26, 2011.

The plan is the result of contributions from many people over the past three years. It is intended to take the school district into the year 2020. And like the plan that voters approved in 1997, it is presented with the expectation that future adjustments to facilities and programs will be needed to meet students' needs beyond 2020.

Recent Construction Bond History

In 1997, voters approved a \$45.5 million bond measure that led to construction of Tahoma Junior High School, expansion of Tahoma High School, remodeling of Shadow Lake Elementary School and Tahoma Middle School, and the addition of two science classrooms and a gymnasium at Cedar River Middle School. All of that work was designed to accommodate projected enrollment growth through 2005. Thanks to an adjustment authorized by the school board, the plan lasted longer than expected. Instead of creating a 600-student 9th-grade school, the school board approved a change that led to construction of the current Tahoma Junior High, which houses grades 8 and 9. The school was enlarged to have a capacity of 1,000 students. The district later added portable classrooms at the junior high and at other schools to accommodate student growth beyond the 2005 target date.

An independent citizen oversight group, called the Tahoma 2000 Committee, reviewed how the bond money was spent and received regular reports from project architects and district officials. At the conclusion of the project, committee Chairman Gary Habenicht said the district's patrons "got a handsome return on their investment" because the district built more classroom space than originally planned without exceeding the budget.

In 2001, voters rejected a bond measure to renovate school district athletic fields and to build a performing arts center at Tahoma High School. In 2004, voters rejected a bond measure to build a performing arts center at Tahoma High School.

In January 2008, the Tahoma School Board asked a group of parents, community leaders and school administrators to begin looking at ways to accommodate enrollment growth and facilities needs over the next decade. In September 2008, an architectural firm, DLR Group, was hired by the school district to work with the committee, known as the Community Relations Committee, to begin drafting formal proposals for adding classroom space, remodeling and updating schools as needed and addressing long-term building maintenance and safety issues. The committee recommended adding classrooms and making major upgrades and renovations to existing buildings to meet current and future enrollment and facilities needs. The school board since has authorized adjustments to the plan that are based on updated enrollment projections.

Twice in the past two years, the school board has considered asking the community to approve a major bond measure that would pay for facilities changes. On both occasions, the board decided to postpone going to a vote. The postponements were influenced by the economic recession and new enrollment projections that led the board to decide against expanding existing elementary schools and instead build an additional school.

The school board also authorized moving forward with a process called Educational Specifications. In this process, architects from DLR Group met with teams of teachers, administrators and parents to begin mapping how new or remodeled facilities can best meet the educational needs of students. The process began by looking at the educational specifications for Tahoma High School and Tahoma Junior High. A second "ed spec" process examined needs at the elementary school and middle-school levels. These

studies will be incorporated into the final planning for construction and remodeling upon passage of a bond measure.

On Nov. 9, 2010, the School Board unanimously voted to place a bond measure on the ballot for the April 26, 2011 election. It is designed to add permanent classrooms, reduce usage of portable classrooms, address long-term maintenance, safety and building upgrades and create facilities that will meet students' needs until at least 2020. The board also discussed appointing a citizen oversight committee for the bond measure. The Superintendent of Schools said he intends to issue a call for volunteers to serve on the committee upon passage of the bond measure. On Jan. 25, 2011 the school board set the bond request at \$125 million. The school district is eligible for an additional \$26.4 million in matching funds from the state school construction fund when the bond measure is approved by voters. The total project cost is set at \$154,700,000.

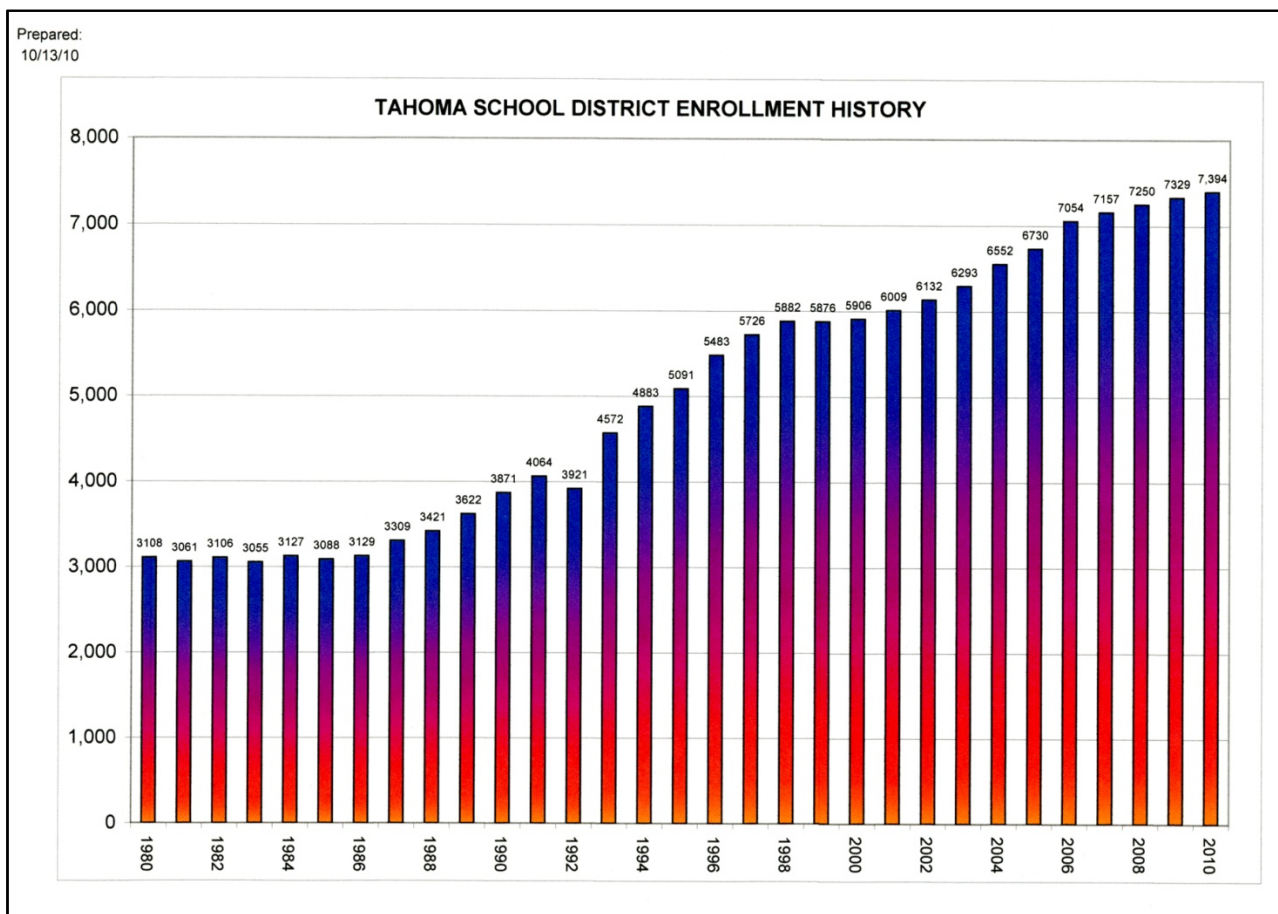
Throughout the planning process, the Community Relations Committee, School Board and district staff have emphasized the need to use tax dollars efficiently and to incorporate savings and additional funding sources wherever possible. Unfortunately, the state matching money that was included in the total project cost now appears to be temporarily unavailable. State construction money has been severely limited as part of spending reductions ordered by Gov. Gregoire in December 2010. When or if the state school construction matching funds will be available is not known.

The governor's decision came after the Tahoma School Board authorized going ahead with a bond measure. In January, the board discussed how to proceed without matching funds. The board decided to prioritize projects based on increasing classroom space and preserving buildings and infrastructure in need of major maintenance improvements. Projects that are not included in bond funding will be completed with state matching money when it becomes available. Details of the board's decision are presented later in this report.

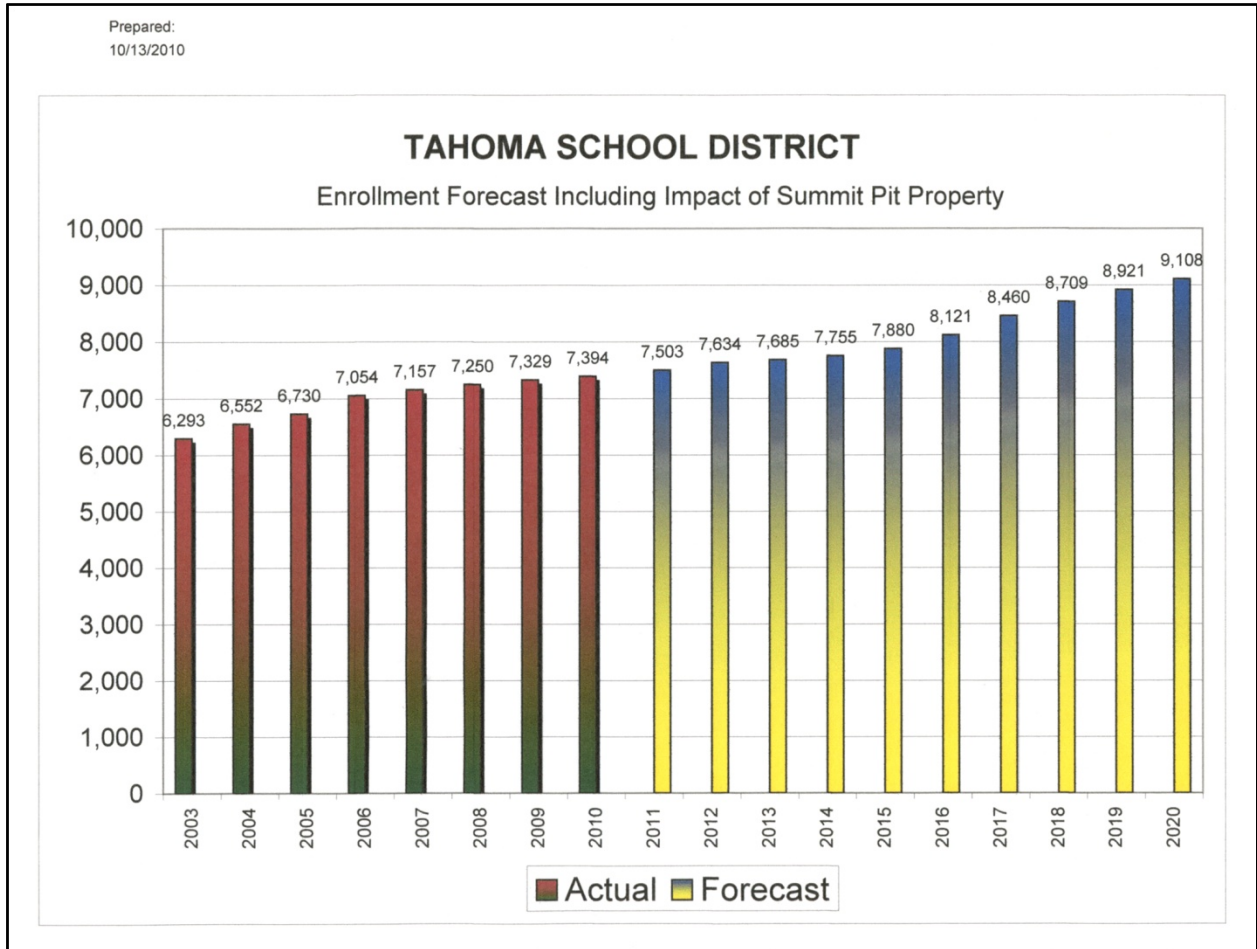
Demographics: Projecting enrollment through 2020

Enrollment growth has been a fact of life in the Tahoma School District since 1987, when the district began a steady upward climb from 3,309 students to the current enrollment of 7,300 students. The district has employed professional demographers for more than 20 years to analyze enrollment and create estimates that can be used for planning. Demographic projections have been remarkably accurate, which is why the School Board is pressing ahead with the 2011 bond measure. The latest demographic projection indicates that the school district will add 1,700 students above current enrollment by 2020. That means the district will have nearly tripled its student enrollment since 1987.

The following chart shows enrollment growth during the past 30 years:



This chart, prepared for Tahoma School District in October 2010 by demographers John Fotheringham and Keith Bigelow, illustrates anticipated enrollment growth through 2020, when the district will have about 1,700 more students enrolled than in the 2010-2011 school year.



This chart includes all anticipated growth factors, including birth rates and additional housing units built within the school district boundaries. The Summit Place (“Donut Hole”) development is included in this projection. Summit Place is projected to build 1,690 residential units, including 500 multi-family units. The demographers use a “student generation factor” of .5 students per single family home and .25 per multi-family unit to calculate the number of students that would come into the district as a result of new home construction.

Maximum capacity: When is a school considered full?

As enrollment rises, the school district must find ways to accommodate students either through adding classroom and support space or through alternative scheduling and facilities usage. The following table represents estimates of when enrollment exceeds identified school-building maximum capacity. Please note that reaching maximum capacity requires program changes that are described on pages 17 and 18. The numbers that are underlined indicate when enrollment is projected to exceed maximum capacity. For example, enrollment at Tahoma Junior High is projected to grow beyond maximum capacity by eight students in 2014. Elementary schools are expected to exceed their maximum capacities in October 2015.

Critical Timeline for Enrollment Exceeding Maximum Building Capacities

Grade level	Maximum Capacity*	Oct. 2011	Oct. 2012	Oct. 2013	Oct. 2014	Oct. 2015	Oct. 2016	Oct. 2017	Oct. 2018	Oct. 2019	Oct. 2020
Elementary (K-5)	<u>3460**</u>	3288	3325	3367	3377	<u>3506</u> (46)	<u>3600</u> (140)	<u>3733</u> (273)	<u>3835</u> (375)	<u>3908</u> (448)	<u>3980</u> (520)
Middle School (6-7)	1418	1165	1214	1213	1232	1207	1231	1343	1385	<u>1432</u> (14)	<u>1457</u> (39)
Junior High (8-9)	<u>1288***</u>	1244	1200	1249	<u>1296</u> (8)	<u>1314</u> (26)	<u>1362</u> (74)	<u>1361</u> (73)	<u>1391</u> (103)	<u>1492</u> (204)	<u>1524</u> (236)
High School (10-12)	1840	1686	1775	1736	1731	1733	1807	<u>1903</u> (63)	<u>1979</u> (139)	<u>1969</u> (129)	<u>2028</u> (188)

*The capacity and enrollment numbers are headcount and exclude Russell Ridge Center.

**Elementary capacity includes portable classrooms to be added at Rock Creek Elementary in fall 2011.

***Junior High capacity includes portable classrooms to be added in fall 2011.

What are the effects of overcrowded schools?

When schools increase enrollment and exceed design capacity by adding portable classrooms and other measures there is not a commensurate increase in lavatories, hallways, gymnasiums, lunchrooms, libraries, music rooms and other support facilities. The impact of having more students in a building than it was designed to accommodate must be taken into consideration.

For example, Tahoma High School houses about 25 percent of its students in portable classrooms but there has been no increase in support facilities. Such overcrowding creates significant logistical issues and presents additional safety challenges. Library space does not currently meet student needs, especially during the morning break, tutorial period, and during lunch periods when it is crowded with students sitting on the floor to eat lunch. Programming issues for the health and fitness classes will occur within five years due to the lack of available gymnasium teaching spaces. Specialty spaces such as offices and tutoring rooms are at capacity; so are smaller Special Education classrooms. Hallways are crowded. Similar examples of overcrowding impacts are found at other schools. Options for dealing with enrollment that exceeds maximum capacity are presented in subsequent sections of this report.

Proposed solutions

The 1997 construction and remodeling bond measure approved by Tahoma voters was designed to provide sufficient classroom space through the year 2005. The plan that guided development of the projects paid for by the bond measure clearly stated the need for subsequent construction to meet future enrollment growth. The school district has developed a plan to add classroom space and make necessary repairs and upgrades to existing buildings so that they adequately meet the educational needs of students through the year 2020.

The construction and remodeling plan is a product of many hours of research and thought by school district staff, architects and community members. The plan is designed to accomplish the primary goal of providing quality classroom and support spaces for students, maintaining buildings and equipment and keeping construction and remodeling costs to a minimum. The plan is intended to continue a path that began in the early 1990s with construction of Rock Creek and Glacier Park elementary schools and continued with the projects completed with the 1997 bond measure. It is a reflection of the changes in the community served by the Tahoma School District: responsible growth that maintains a high quality of life for the community, including its young people. There always will be a need to grow and improve school facilities and programs. The construction and remodeling plans outlined in this document are the most recent chapter in what will be a continuing story for the community, the school district and the young people who are preparing themselves for the challenges that lie beyond high school.

The following pages list each project included in the 2011 construction and remodeling bond measure. Because of the uncertainty of state matching funds, the projects are divided into two sections. The first section lists projects that will be completed by using funds from the bond measure. The second section includes projects that will be completed upon receipt of state matching funds. Each project's cost estimate is listed. The estimates were made by DLR Group architects and include all anticipated costs, including design work, permitting fees, insurance, and construction estimates. A third funding source, impact fees from construction of new homes in the school district, also is listed. Impact fees traditionally have been used by the district to purchase portable classroom buildings. The fees alone are insufficient to build new schools or pay for major additions.

Classroom and support space additions

Proposed solutions to deal with rising enrollment are listed below. The proposals are divided into projects that would be paid for by the April 26 bond measure and projects that would begin when state matching funds become available.

Bond measure-funded projects:

- **Lake Wilderness Elementary School:** The existing school was built in two main phases, in 1959 and 1986. The school is a one-story structure connected by outdoor “breezeways” that link two separate school buildings, each with its own office, library and multipurpose room. The site also hosts 19 classrooms in portable buildings for preschool and general education classes. The Tahoma Community Relations Committee examined two main options: remodeling the existing buildings or constructing a new school on the upper playfield and then removing the existing school to make way for new playfields, parking and bus lanes. The latter option was chosen because it would create one school building that can be designed to meet current education needs and energy efficiency standards. It also permits planners to improve some of the site’s current shortcomings, including traffic flow, parking and playground inadequacies.
Enrollment capacity: 840. Square footage: 86,800. Cost: \$34.5 million
- **Fifth elementary school:** A school for grades kindergarten-5 would be built on district-owned property adjacent to Tahoma Junior High on Summit-Landsburg Road. The school would share many of the design features of the new Lake Wilderness Elementary School, which saves money on design costs.
Enrollment capacity: 864. Square footage: 83,680. Cost: \$35.8 million.
- **Tahoma High School addition and remodeling:** The high school would add new permanent classroom space and remove many of the school’s 19 portable classrooms. Several areas of the school would be reconfigured to permit more flexible use of classrooms and to provide meeting areas for groups of students and teachers. Science rooms and the library would be changed to accommodate current technology. More science rooms would be built to accommodate increasing demand resulting from new state graduation requirements, which increase science credit requirements by one-third. The auto shop building would be refurbished and more space would be created for Career and Technical Education classes, which meets new state graduation requirements. An auditorium would be built to provide space for school plays, concerts, lectures, meetings and other education program uses. There is no auditorium in the existing high school; a multipurpose room/gymnasium is used for performances. Traffic circulation would be improved.
Enrollment capacity: 1,937. Square footage added: 47,175. Cost: \$33.1 million.

- **Tahoma Junior High addition, remodeling:** Three classrooms and two science labs would be added, along with rooms for special education, physical education, and teacher planning and conferences. A plaza outside the cafeteria/commons would be covered for student use. Changes would be made to the library, locker rooms, and main office. The changes would create space for an additional 250 students.
Enrollment capacity: 1,428. Square footage added: 20,061. Cost: \$12.3 million
- **Rock Creek Elementary:** Extensive maintenance work would include replacement of exterior siding and roofing. HVAC system controls would be replaced, along with floor coverings and the gym floor.
Enrollment capacity: 900. Square footage added: none. Cost: \$3.3 million.
- **Glacier Park Elementary:** Exterior siding would be replaced. HVAC system controls would be replaced, along with floor coverings and the gym floor.
Enrollment capacity: 852. Square footage added: none. Cost: \$2 million.
- **Shadow Lake Elementary:** Existing portable classrooms would be replaced with new portables. The gym floor covering would be replaced. The playfield would be renovated.
Enrollment capacity: 576. Square footage added: none. Cost: \$600,000.
- **Central Services Center:** Exterior siding and roofing would be replaced.
Cost: \$700,000.
- **Cedar River Middle School:** Exterior siding and roofing would be replaced, except in those areas that are scheduled for removal or remodeling.
Cost: \$2.7 million.
- **Transition Program:** The program serves special-needs students who are making the transition from high school to independent or assisted living. It is currently housed in portable classroom buildings formerly used by Maple Valley High School. The program would be relocated to the site of the new elementary school, adjacent to Tahoma Junior High.
Cost: \$3.1 million.

Projects that would begin when state matching funds are awarded:

- **Cedar River Middle School:** An expanded cafeteria/commons will be built. The cafeteria/commons would provide adequate space for lunches, assemblies and educational uses that require a large space for group activities. Portable classrooms will be replaced with permanent rooms. New plumbing, including refurbished lavatories, carpeting and paint also would be part of the school's upgrades.
Enrollment capacity: 796. Square footage added: 7,210. Cost: \$10.4 million.
- **Tahoma Middle School:** The school was remodeled in 2005 but not all areas were included in the renovation. Areas still in need of upgrades are locker rooms, the band room, athletic fields, parking, and the gymnasium (which needs a center curtain so that more than one activity can be held at the same time.)
Enrollment capacity: 679. Square footage added: none. Cost: \$4.3 million.
- **Russell Ridge Center:** Three new double-room portables would be purchased. The campus would be moved to the site of the historic Maple Valley Grade School (former Transportation Center site) on SE 216th Way.
Enrollment capacity: 135. Square footage added: none. Cost: \$1.4 million.
- **Historic Maple Valley Grade School building:** The three-story brick building would be preserved for current and future uses by installing a new roof and reinforcing upper floors. It is used by the school district's technology support staff and the Maple Valley Historical Society museum.
Cost: \$1.1 million.
- **THS athletic fields:** Improvements to athletic fields would make them more usable by installing artificial surfaces on the baseball and softball fields. Except for the football field, all of Tahoma High School's athletic fields have grass or bare dirt surfaces. Drainage problems exist at the baseball field that makes it unusable at times during the baseball season. Field usage could increase by installing artificial turf. The existing football stadium would be improved through the addition of a roof to the visitors' seating area, a permanent concession and restroom building on the east (visitors) side of the field and expansion of the press box.
Cost: \$5.3 million.
- **Portable classroom buildings:** Purchase of new portable classrooms throughout the district would be made by using local construction impact fees. Portables would continue to be part of all school campuses to provide flexibility in dealing with enrollment and program changes.
Cost: \$3.1 million.
- **Central Services Center:** New HVAC controls and equipment would improve energy efficiency.
Cost: \$1 million.

2011 construction and remodeling summary

Projects funded by April 26, 2011 bond measure, impact fees

The projects listed in the table below would be paid for with funds raised through the sale of \$125 million in bonds. The bonds would be repaid over a 20-year period by district taxpayers. These projects were chosen for bond funding because they will provide additional classroom and support spaces for students and will pay for major maintenance projects that will protect and extend the life of existing buildings.

Project	Bond funding	Project completion
Glacier Park	\$2,000,000	2012
Rock Creek	\$3,300,000	2012
CRMS roof & siding	\$2,700,000	2012
CSC roof & siding	\$700,000	2012
Shadow Lake	\$600,000	2013
LWES	\$34,500,000	2013
New Fifth elementary	\$35,800,000	2013
Transitions Program	\$3,100,000	2013
TJHS	\$12,300,000	2014
THS	\$33,100,000	2015
Total	\$128,100,000	
Minus impact fees	-\$3,100,000	
Bond amount	\$125,000,000	

Projects when state matching funds become available

Except for portable classrooms, the projects included in this table will not begin until state matching funds are received. The total project cost, including bond-funded projects, is listed at the bottom of the chart. Portable classrooms are being purchased with construction impact fees charged to new home construction in the school district.

Project	Project costs	Estimated project completion
Russell Ridge Center	\$1,400,000	To be determined
CRMS expansion	\$10,400,000	To be determined
TMS improvements	\$4,300,000	To be determined
THS fields	\$5,300,000	To be determined
Maple Valley Historic Grade School	\$1,100,000	To be determined
CSC improvements	\$1,000,000	To be determined
Portables	\$3,100,000	To be determined
Total	\$26,600,000	
Less anticipated state match	-\$26,500,000	
Additional impact funds needed	\$100,000	
Total project cost	\$154,700,000	

Bond cost for property owners

Property owners in the Tahoma School District will repay bonds that are sold to finance the construction and remodeling projects described in this publication. The repayment period stretches over 20 years. In some cases, bonds can be retired early or refinanced to take advantage of lower interest rates. Estimating the cost to property owners is done in the interest of full disclosure but it should be noted that the estimates are based on current conditions and could change. Historically, individual tax rates have gone down over time as the community's assessed valuation rises.

The following estimates are for a five-year period, beginning in 2012:

- **Average tax rate, 2012-2016:** \$1.41 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.
- **Average cost per year:** For a home valued at \$300,000, the average annual cost is \$423, or \$33 per month, \$1.16 per day.

Here is the formula to compute the cost to property owners:

Use the assessed valuation provided by the King County Assessor. Divide that number by 1,000. Multiply the answer by \$1.41 to find the estimated annual payment for the bond measure.

Example: King County values Home A at \$300,000. Divide \$300,000 by 1,000, which equals 300. Multiply 300 by \$1.41, which equals \$423, the amount of taxes Home A would be assessed for the bond measure in a given year.

Looking ahead: What happens if the bond passes?

Successful passage of the \$125 million bond measure on April 26 would permit the school district to begin selling bonds in June 2011. Money raised from that bond sale would be used to begin detailed planning and design for the new Lake Wilderness Elementary School and the new fifth elementary school. Replacement of deteriorating siding and roofing also would begin at Rock Creek Elementary, Cedar River Middle School and the Central Services Center. Siding would be replaced at Glacier Park Elementary, which received a new roof in 2010. Design work and construction of other projects, such as Tahoma Junior High and Tahoma High School, would follow (see chart, page 13).

Projects that will be paid for with state matching funds will begin as soon as state money becomes available.

It may become necessary to take immediate steps to house students at Tahoma Junior High School and Tahoma High School. Portable classrooms or scheduling adjustments might be used to provide temporary solutions until permanent classroom space can be constructed.

Looking ahead: What happens if the bond fails?

The immediate result of a bond failure would be to analyze how and when to begin changing school operations to best accommodate more students than education facilities and programs are designed to serve. There are a number of potential options available, up to and including adoption of a multi-track (year-round) school year. The following are potential options in the event of a bond failure:

Maximize building usage with year-round multi-track scheduling

Instead of having all students attend school at the same time, the multi-track system would divide students into three or four groups that would attend school on varying schedules. The most common multi-track system uses four tracks: students attend school for 45 days and then have 15 days off. There is always one track, or group, of students on a 15-day break in this system, which means only about three-quarters of the total student population is in school at the same time. Planning would begin soon after a bond failure, with implementation beginning when other options are exhausted.

- **Pros:** The multi-track system provides maximum usage of school buildings and reduces the number of students on campus.
- **Cons:** Families with more than one student could have children assigned to different tracks, which means vacation periods and activities would not align. There also are maintenance issues, staffing complexities, conflicts with athletic and activity schedules, and reduced ability to provide comprehensive programs, particularly at the secondary level.

Significantly change programs

At the elementary level, eliminate all-day kindergarten to make rooms available for half-day classes; convert the music classroom into a general education classroom.

- **Pros:** More classroom space is available for kindergarten students attending half-day classes and for general education students by using specialty rooms (music or stage areas) for classrooms.
- **Cons:** Moving elementary school music from a specialized room and instead hosting music on a rotating basis in regular classrooms would be noisy and disruptive to adjacent rooms; eliminating all-day kindergarten reduces education choices for students.

At the secondary level, reduce elective and/or academy classes at the high school to make room for required classes. There are fewer options at the junior high other than reducing electives and advanced subject offerings along with special programs for struggling learners in order to create more general education classes. The middle school learning model, which uses team teaching, could be replaced with a traditional six-period system so that more classrooms would be in use at a given time.

- **Pros:** Additional space for required classes could be created by eliminating specialized and elective classes.
- **Cons:** Adding more students to existing classrooms will result in fewer elective class choices for junior high and high school students because of the need to provide additional general classes that accommodate more students. College-bound students would have fewer choices for college preparatory and advanced classes.

In addition to impacts to existing programs, there are new program needs that would be difficult to meet without expanded facilities. For example, the high school needs to add four science classrooms to support the increase in the science graduation requirement for the Class of 2016, which will be required to take at least three years of science (compared to two years now). The school also needs more space to provide Career and Technical Education courses and programs required by the state for the Class of 2016 and beyond.

Changing the middle school education model could affect the learning opportunities now provided to students in grades 6 and 7 and makes the transition from elementary school to junior high school more difficult than the current team-teaching system, which has proven to be very successful.

Increase class sizes

This option would work better in some classes and schools than in others, depending upon the physical size of the classroom and the subject being taught. Many classrooms are currently at maximum sizes.

- **Pros:** Students have a seat in class.
- **Cons:** Hallways and classrooms become more crowded, creating stress on facilities and on student behavior; support facilities, such as lavatories, libraries and lunch rooms, are not adequate to handle the number of students using them; as class sizes increase, teachers have less time to spend with each student individually.

Increase “traveling teachers”

This is an option that would work best in grades 8-12, where students attend classes by subject in a three-period day. “Traveling teachers” could occupy classrooms that are not being used by students during teacher planning periods, allowing the classroom to be used by students during each period of the school day.

- **Pros:** Additional use of classroom space.
- **Cons:** The junior high already uses classrooms during nearly every period as well as traveling teachers, so there is little opportunity to increase classroom usage. Traveling teachers have limited opportunities to set up rooms in preparation for the subject they teach. Tahoma High School currently has five traveling teachers who move between two to three classrooms for their teaching assignment. The ability to teach quality Classroom 10 lessons is dramatically reduced in a traveling teacher arrangement.

Election date: April 26, 2011
Official ballot title and language

PROPOSITION NO. 1
TAHOMA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 409

GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS - \$125,000,000

The Board of Directors of Tahoma School District No. 409 adopted Resolution #2011-1 concerning this proposition for bonds.

The proposition authorizes the District to construct a new elementary school, replace Lake Wilderness Elementary, renovate and expand Tahoma Junior High and Tahoma High School, and make certain capital improvements to other facilities of the District to issue \$125,000,000 of general obligation bonds maturing within a maximum of 20 years; and collect excess property taxes annually to repay the bonds, as provided in Resolution No. 2011-1. Should this proposition be: APPROVED? REJECTED?

Voter registration information

Persons wishing to register to vote or those who need to change their voter registration from a former address can contact King County Elections by phone or on the Web.

Elections Web page: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/elections/registration.aspx>

Electronic registration:

<https://wei.secstate.wa.gov/osos/secure/pages/Onlinevoterregistration.aspx>

King County Elections phone contact: 206-296-VOTE (8683)