



Prop. X work about to start

By CARLOS RICO, The Daily Transcript
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Construction work to modernize 12 schools in the South Bay Union School District begins this week thanks to Proposition X, a \$59.4 million bond measure passed by voters in November 2008.

"The community recognizes that schools bring a value to them, even if they don't have children in our district," said Scott Buxbaum, assistant superintendent of business services for the school district.

Seven of the 12 schools will be completely modernized, while the other five will get minor repairs like improvements on bathrooms, windows and sewer lines.

Bayside Elementary in Imperial Beach will break ground on its project Tuesday.

Work includes repairs and upgrades to electrical, plumbing and fire alarm systems; the HVAC system; playgrounds; bathrooms; the auditorium; classrooms; and the kitchen. The campus will also improve accessibility and ramps in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act standards.

Originally built in 1956, Bayside Elementary will also receive improvements to improve safety, including removing asbestos and other hazardous materials; installing public announcement systems and clocks; and additional security measures like more fencing and monitoring systems.

At Oneonta Elementary, which was built in 1959, new electrical and plumbing systems will be installed, and upgrades to the HVAC systems, restrooms, the auditorium, classrooms, the playground, kitchen and security systems will take place. Also, the school's roof will be repaired and replaced in some places.

Other schools undergoing renovations are Berry, Central, Emory, Imperial Beach, Mendoza, Nestor, Nicoloff, Pence, Sunnyslope and West View Elementary.

All the classrooms will be equipped with interactive white boards and 30 laptops will be purchased so that students can have a better learning experience.

"Getting new technology for the school was a big part of Proposition X," Buxbaum said.

The schools will also be getting new computer labs. Buxbaum said all the whiteboards and computers should be installed by this December.

The VIP Village Preschool Facility, Education Center, Facilities/Transportation Facility and the Purchasing/Child Nutrition Facility will also get improvements under Prop. X.



The measure needed 55 percent voter approval, and received 76.4 percent. All the funds used for the projects are coming from bonds issued to the school. The district will receive \$17 million in state matching grants and South County taxpayers will also foot the bill.

All of the \$59.4 million will go toward improvements at the schools and facilities, with none toward teacher or administrative salaries. An independent oversight committee is reviewing how the money is spent.

So far, the bond program has received \$19 million, which will go toward the Bayside and Oneonta projects, and the installation of whiteboards and computers.

The South Bay Union School District serves 8,352 students in the Imperial Beach, San Ysidro and South San Diego communities.

SGI Construction Management is the company in charge of the overall bond projects, while Barnhart Balfour Beatty will be the general contractor on the first seven school projects. The architect for all seven schools is Westberg + White Inc.