

# Bonds & Overrides

*Providing a world-class education  
where our Arizona Legislature won't*



**SAVE OUR  
SCHOOLS**  
Strong Schools,  
Strong State

## What are bonds and overrides?

Bonds and overrides are voter-approved initiatives that generate additional tax revenue to fund projects and operations for local school districts and community colleges. Bonds and overrides are tools that our local communities can use to provide funds for their local schools above and beyond what the state provides.

## Why are bonds and overrides important?

- ★ **Arizona's economy needs strong public schools, and that takes resources.** Our homegrown workforce must be well-educated in order to compete regionally, nationally and internationally, and businesses must have a strong worker pool to hire from in order to want to locate in Arizona. Study after study demonstrates that [adequate per-pupil funding improves student outcomes](#) in every situation, which means properly funded public schools create a well-educated population. This in turn strengthens our state economy, raises wages, and maintains property values. In 2021, most bonds and overrides [added under \\$300 to the average homeowner's bill](#), making them one of the best investment values around.
- ★ **Bonds and overrides provide badly needed resources.** Arizona's education spending has not kept up with other states. In 2019, our per-pupil investment in public schools was [only 66% of the national average](#), placing us [48th in the nation](#). Many public schools now rely on bonds and overrides to provide [the most basic services, such as teachers](#). We can't expect our public schools to provide a world-class education without resources!

## What's the difference between a bond and an override?

Bonds are purchased by investors for a specific dollar amount. They pay for longer-term projects, such as building schools, buying buses, or replacing HVAC systems or roofs. Bonds are repaid over a set period of time.

Overrides allow a district to increase its budget by up to 15% for seven years to support classroom activities like teaching, learning, and operations.

Two types of overrides voters may see are:

- Maintenance and operations overrides, which are more common and used for operational expenses such as teacher salaries and student programs.
- District additional assistance overrides, which bolster capital funding and often help cover technology, books and other equipment expenses.

Overrides are approved for a term of 7 years. If an override is not renewed, the amount decreases by one-third in the 6th year and two-thirds in the 7th year, so many school districts will ask voters to approve a renewal in year 4 or 5 of an override to maintain a consistent level of funding.

## **I'm only one person. Why does my vote matter?**

Every vote counts! Over the last several years, dozens of bond and override elections across the state passed or failed by the tiniest of margins. In 2019, six bonds and overrides didn't pass, including two from the Dysart Unified School District, by a margin of just hundreds of votes. [Three out of four voters stayed home.](#)

In Arizona, school funding is among the lowest in the nation and has not kept pace with inflation. Bonds and overrides are critical for helping schools afford everyday expenses like teacher salaries, building renovations and full-day kindergarten. If bonds and overrides fail at the ballot, schools must make difficult decisions on how to operate with less funding, and which essential programs and services for children they must cut.

## **What should I look for on my ballot?**

Override questions will appear on your ballot as "budget increase, yes" or "budget increase, no." (While it says increase, it may actually be a continuation from a previous override, not an actual increase on your tax bill.) Bond questions will appear on your ballot as "bond approval, yes" and "bond approval, no." Vote **YES** on all measures!

**Our kids are counting on us to support public education!**

**Learn more about how  
strong schools make a strong state  
at [SOSArizona.org](https://SOSArizona.org)**