

NOVATO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

CITIZENS' OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

BACKGROUND

Proposition 39, approved by California voters in the November 7, 2000 general election, provides that the governing board of a school district may pursue the authorization and issuance of bonds by a 55% vote of the electorate. As a result of the passage of Proposition 39, language was added to the Education Code addressing the requirement to establish a Citizens' Oversight Committee to monitor and audit bond proceeds to ensure they are spent only on school and classroom improvements, and not for any other purpose.

On August 7, 2001, the Novato Unified School District Board of Trustees voted to place a 55% school facilities bond (Measure A) on the November 6, 2001 ballot.

GUIDELINES

With the passage of the Measure A school facilities bond, the Novato Unified School District Board of Trustees established and appointed members to a Novato Citizens' Oversight Committee, or "Committee." The Committee reports directly to the Board of Trustees. Per Proposition 39 guidelines, the Citizens' Oversight Committee was established within sixty days of the date that the Board of Trustees entered the election results into its minutes.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Committee is to:

- inform the public concerning the expenditure of bond revenues
- ensure bond revenues are expended only for the purposes described in the Measure A ballot language
- ensure no funds are used for any teacher or administrative salaries or other school operating expenses

As a Board appointed committee, all Committee proceedings are open to the public and notice to the public is provided in the same manner as the proceedings of the Board of Trustees. The Committee issues regular reports on the results of its activities. Minutes of the proceedings of the Committee and all documents received and reports issued are a matter of public record and are made available the internet website maintained by the district. A report is issued at least once a year.

Individuals appointed to serve on the Committee must be aware of the duties and responsibilities of the Committee. The Committee shall meet at least quarterly and Committee members shall be available to attend the Board meeting(s) when performance and financial audits are presented.

Duties:

Duties of the Committee include, but may not be limited to, the following:

1. Performance Audit – Receive and review copies of the annual performance audit of the bond funds prepared by an independent auditor hired by the District to ensure that bond funds are expended in accordance with the voter approved bond measure. Annually report to the Board of Trustees on the finding of the performance audit, including recommendations as needed.
2. Financial Audit – Receive and review the annual financial audit of the sale and expenditure of bonds prepared by an independent auditor hired by the District to ensure that the allocation of funds are in line with the expenditure plan for the bond. Annually report to the Board of Trustees on the findings of the financial audit, including recommendations as needed.
3. Inspect school facilities and grounds to ensure that bond revenues are expended in a compliant manner.
4. Receive and review copies of deferred maintenance proposals and plans developed by Novato Unified School District.

5. Review efforts by the school district to maximize bond revenues by implementing cost-saving measures that can include:
 - Mechanisms designed to reduce the costs of professional fees
 - Mechanisms designed to reduce the cost of site preparation
 - Recommendations regarding the joint use of core facilities
 - Recommendations regarding the use of cost-effective and efficient reusable facility plans
6. Progress / Final Report – Prepare annual written interim reports to the Board of Trustees, and prepare a written final report to the Board of Trustees at the completion of the entire modernization effort.

Note: The Board of Trustees of the district shall, without expending bond funds, provide the Committee with any necessary technical assistance and shall provide administrative assistance in furtherance of its purpose and sufficient resources to publicize the conclusions of the Committee.

Committee Membership Terms and Composition:

The Committee shall consist of ten members. Each member will serve for a term of two years without compensation. After appointed to a two-year term, Committee members who wish to be appointed for a second two-year term shall reapply to the Board of Trustees for consideration, but Committee members may serve for no more than two consecutive terms

- Person active in a business organization representing the business community of Novato
- Person active in a bona fide taxpayers' association
- Person active in a senior citizens' organization
- Parent/guardian of a child enrolled in the district
- Parent/guardian of a child enrolled in the district *and* active in PTA
- Parent/guardian of a child enrolled in the district *and* active in a School Site Leadership Team
- Members of the community at-large

In order to provide an overlap of Committee members for continuity, no more than half of the current Committee members may be appointed for a second two-year term.

Applicants must reside within the boundaries of the Novato Unified School District. No employee or official of the Novato Unified School District shall be appointed to the Committee. Additionally, no vendor, contractor, or consultant of the Novato Unified School District shall be appointed to the Committee

Replacing a Committee Member:

The term of a Committee member will end and a new Committee member will be named by the Board of Trustees if one or more of the following events occur:

- a. the Committee member submits a written resignation
- b. the Committee member misses three Committee meetings and a vote is taken by the Committee to request that the Board of Trustees replace the member

A Committee member who no longer serves as a representative of the designated group for which they were appointed to represent (e.g. ceases to be active within a taxpayers' organization, or ceases to have a child enrolled in Novato Unified School District) shall be allowed to complete his or her term.

Within 60 days of being notified of a Committee vacancy, the Board will appoint a new member, following the same application/nomination/interview process as noted above, to complete the term of the vacancy.