

The Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act Referendum

Public Question #1 on the November 6 NJ General Election Ballot

Public question #1, the *Securing our Children's Future Bond Act*, seeks voter authorization for the State of New Jersey to sell up to \$500 million in bonds to expand career and technical education facilities, enhance school security and improve drinking water safety at New Jersey schools.

The funds generated by the sale of the bonds would include:

- \$350 million for K-12 school security projects, and expansion of career and technical education shops, labs and classrooms at county vocational-technical schools
- \$50 million for career and technical education projects at county colleges
- \$100 million for school district drinking water improvements, like lead-abatement.

\$500 million



Investment in student health, safety and career preparation

The state will re-pay the bonds at a low interest rate over a period of up to 35 years. The state bonds are re-paid out of state revenues, not through local property taxes.

The bond funds will pay 75 percent of the cost of projects at county vocational-technical schools. The county would pay the remaining 25 percent of the cost.

What are county vocational-technical schools?

County vocational-technical schools are free public high schools, operated at the county level, to provide career-focused education and training for secondary students. Many of them also offer tuition-based career training programs for adults.

Why is the expansion of career and technical education important?

17,000



Unmet student demand at county vocational schools

- New Jersey has a serious skills gap. Companies cannot expand and prosper without a technically-trained workforce to fill current job vacancies and expected retirements. The bond act money would be for facilities and equipment at vocational schools to develop the state's future workforce.
 - Demand is growing for educational opportunities that prepare young people for well-paying careers that can be launched without a four-year college degree, with its high cost and student loan debt.
 - In 2017, county vocational-technical schools had to turn away almost 17,000 applicants because they had no space for them.
- Technology-driven career programs are expensive. Investing in facilities as a county-wide service for both high school and adult students saves local tax dollars.

How would the career and technical education money be used?

The career and technical education bond money will be used to expand and equip facilities for high-demand programs that address New Jersey’s skills gap in key industries.

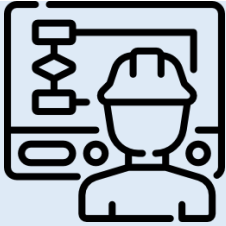
It will support new learning opportunities in fields like manufacturing, logistics and distribution, auto technology, aviation and drone technology, medical technology, welding, construction, and clean energy, and prepare students for these well-paying careers.

Priority will be given to programs with strong industry and college partnerships that prepare people for careers, not just jobs, and help them earn high-level industry credentials and credits towards associate’s and bachelor’s degrees.

Where will I find the public question on the ballot and what will it look like?

Check the sample ballot you receive from your county Board of Elections to see where the public question is located.

40,000



Unfilled technical jobs

The public question will say

Do you approve the “Securing Our Children’s Future Bond Act”? This bond act authorizes the State to issue bonds in the aggregate principal amount of \$500 million. The money from the sale of the bonds would be used to provide grants to schools, school districts, county vocational school districts, and county colleges. Money from the grants would be used to build, equip, and expand facilities to increase career and technical education program capacity. Money would also be used for school security upgrades and school district water infrastructure improvement projects.

The interpretive statement will say:

This act would allow the State to borrow a total principal amount of \$500 million. This money would be used to provide grants to county vocational school districts and county colleges to construct and equip buildings to increase capacity in career and technical education programs. The money would also be used to provide grants for school security projects at kindergarten through grade 12 schools. The money would also be used to provide grants for school district water infrastructure improvement projects. Three hundred fifty million dollars would support county vocational school district projects and school security projects. Fifty million dollars would support county college projects. One hundred million dollars would support school district water infrastructure improvement projects

Where can I find more information on the Securing Our Children’s Future Bond Act?

You can read the bill authorizing the bond act and see its legislative history by going to the NJ State Legislature’s main page, <https://www.njleg.state.nj.us>, and typing S2293 in the bill search section on the right.

You can also find information on the bond act at www.careertechnj.org