



[LOG IN](#) [SUBSCRIBE](#)

The Modesto Bee

Part of the McClatchy Media Network

[News](#) [Local Sports](#) [Opinion](#) [California](#) • [Biz Beat](#) [Obituaries](#) [Jobs/Recruiting](#) [Personal Finance](#)

EDUCATION

Modesto school board OKs consolidated oversight of 2018, 2022 bond measures. What's it mean?

BY DEKE FARROW

UPDATED MARCH 07, 2023 4:38 PM





A Measure L campaign sign stands outside the Modesto Teachers Association office on Coffee Road last fall. DEKE FARROW
jfarrow@modbee.com

Modesto City Schools needs district residents for its bond oversight committee — but for the time being, not as many as it might have.

Rather than start from scratch, MCS has elected to have the bond oversight committee responsible for Measures D&E — the elementary school bond issuances approved by voters in 2018 — also oversee [Measure L](#). The latter, a \$198 million bond measure to improve high school facilities, won narrow approval on the November ballot.

Tim Zearley, the district’s associate superintendent in charge of business services, told trustees at their meeting Monday night that because expenditure of Measure D&E and Measure L proceeds will overlap for a period of time, having one consolidated committee “is in the best interest of the district and most administratively efficient.” The trustees unanimously approved the action.

TOP VIDEOS

See highlights from Modesto Christian's Open Division boys basketball win

But requirements of the state education code mean the current Measure L's D&E committee can't simply begin overseeing Measure L, too.

The code requires that a citizens oversight committee have at least seven members, including a parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the school district and a second parent or guardian who also is active in a parent-teacher organization, such as the Parent Teacher Association or school-site council. (Three other required members include representatives of the business community, a senior citizens group and a taxpayers organization. The remaining two are at-large community members.)

Modesto City Schools actually includes two districts — one K-8, the other high school — with a common Board of Education and administration. So the consolidated committee would need to have parents representing both.

The D&E committee last met in January, Zearley said, and two members resigned at that time. Also, “only one parent has both an elementary and high school student, so at a minimum, we would need to add a high school parent active in a school organization,” he told *The Bee* by email.

There will be a need to bolster the consolidated committee's ranks further because the trustees requested it have a minimum of 10 members. Also, Zearley told the board, district bylaws say oversight committee members, who began their work in June 2019, may serve two consecutive two-year terms.

“So we're coming up on four years for the existing committee members. ... but the education code allows for *three* consecutive two-year terms,” he told trustees. He told *The Bee* that district staff may ask the board to update the committee bylaws to match education code.

Board President Chad Brown replied to Zearley that if the district does not use the third-term provision allowed by the education code, “we are going to be approaching a time when we will need to have a massive reconstruction of this committee to find new community members to fill those seats.” Zearley agreed.

Brown indicated that if bylaws are changed to allow a third two-year term, that buys the district some time for that committee reconstruction. “We need to put a message out to the public that if you are interested in serving on this bond oversight committee that will cover both D&E and Measure L, there are opportunities,” he said, “and if you are interested but now is not the right time, keep it in mind because come two years from now, we will be seeking at least six more individuals to fill that committee.”

For now, “we will need to seek three at-large members to meet the board’s suggestion of a minimum 10-member committee,” Zearley told The Bee.

And he said the district will update its website soon to allow interested community members to apply for committee membership.

This story was originally published March 7, 2023, 1:07 PM.

RELATED STORIES FROM MODESTO BEE

ELECTIONS

Science labs, stadiums, plumbing, pools — lots of wants, needs on Measure L to-do lists

OCTOBER 14, 2022 5:00 AM



DEKE FARROW



Deke has been an editor and reporter with The Modesto Bee since 1995. He currently does breaking-news, education and human-interest reporting. A Beyer High grad, he studied geology and journalism at UC Davis and CSU Sacramento.

Take Us With You

Real-time updates and all local stories you want right in the palm of your hand.



MODESTO BEE APP →

VIEW NEWSLETTERS →

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Start a Subscription