



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NOTE TO EDITOR: Download the [full report and "Report Card" graphic here](#).

**Seventh Annual School Bond Transparency Report Card
Shows Countywide Improvement**

Who Made the Grade? Report shows average transparency score was 86%; National School District most improved; Fallbrook, Encinitas Union School Districts fall short

SAN DIEGO – August 26, 2019 – School may just be starting, but report cards are out! [San Diego Taxpayers Educational Foundation \(SDTEF\)](#) is proud to release its **7th Annual School Bond Transparency in San Diego County Report**. Also known as the **"Transparency Report Card,"** it is a key component in sharing with San Diego County taxpayers how clearly districts are reporting how hard-earned tax dollars are being spent. The report card holds districts accountable and forthright with spending.

San Diego Taxpayers Educational Foundation is the non-partisan educational programming arm of the [San Diego County Taxpayers Association](#), conducting studies and research to support the Association's efforts.

"School bonds can be seen in nearly every election cycle, and for taxpayers to continue supporting these measures, we need to know school districts are fulfilling their promises," says Haney Hong, president and CEO of the San Diego County Taxpayers Association. "Those who are open and transparent about their spending are in a better position to earn voters' trust in the future."

Report Card Shows Improvement in Region-Wide Transparency

The grade book shows improved transparency scores throughout the region. Of the thirty school districts in San Diego County with active facilities bond programs, only

twenty-three have sufficient data to earn a letter grade. The twenty-three districts with scores in the *Transparency Report Card* have demonstrated general improvement in performance since 2018. Here are some key findings:

- The average transparency grade of the school districts with active bonds has increased from 90.6% in 2018 to 91.8% in 2019.
- Only Fallbrook Unified High School District and Dehesa School District failed to meet at least 70% of the criteria examined.
- Twenty out of twenty-three school districts (86%) met over 85% of the categories compared with nineteen districts in 2018.
 - **Honor Roll:**
 - Most improvement was seen from National School District with a 20% increase from 2018.
 - Solana Beach School District also saw a gain of 12%.
 - Chula Vista Elementary School District saw a gain of 8%.
 - **Needs Improvement:**
 - Fallbrook Unified High School District for failing the criteria threshold. See above.
 - Encinitas Union School District had the biggest slide in rating from 92% in 2018 to 72% this year.
 - Dehesa School District had a 12% loss.
- Twelve districts had perfect scores, representing a four-district increase from 2018.

How School Districts are Rated?

The *Transparency Report Card* compiles the existence of information since its first release in 2013, then, summarizes the information made available by school districts and its Independent Citizens Oversight Committee, and assigns each district a percentage grade. The *Transparency Report Card* only makes note of the existence of the criteria examined and does not comment on the quality of the material available or the ease of access.

Districts are rated on the accessibility and timeliness of key reports and information on their bond programs including lists of project descriptions, progress and itemized expenditures, ICOC members, contact information and committee vacancies, posting of ICOC meeting agendas and minutes, bond fund annual reports and annual audits, and archives of annual reports.

To view the complete *School Bond Transparency Report Card*, please visit www.sdcta.org.

ABOUT THE SAN DIEGO TAXPAYERS EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

San Diego Taxpayers Educational Foundation (SDTEF) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation founded in 1988 with the purpose of conducting studies and research for the support and benefit of the San Diego County Taxpayers Association. SDTEF mission is to conduct fiscal and economic research and analysis of governmental revenue and expenditure policies in San Diego County, as well as educate San Diegans on these important issues through for-credit and not-for-credit educational programs. More information can be found at <https://www.sdcta.org/foundation>.

ABOUT THE SAN DIEGO COUNTY TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

San Diego County Taxpayers Association (SDCTA) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization, dedicated to promoting accountable, cost-effective and efficient government and opposing unnecessary new taxes and fees. For the last 73 years, SDCTA has served as “*San Diego’s Taxpayer Watchdog Group*” by educating the public and helping to save the region’s citizens millions of dollars. Public opinion polls consistently rate SDCTA as the most “influential” and “trusted” public policy institution in San Diego. The 150 member-strong organization is led by President & CEO Haney Hong. SDCTA envisions a future where San Diego citizens receive a better return on investment in public assets and services. For more information, please visit www.sdcta.org, [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or call 619-234-6423.

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