



Orono Public Schools
News Release

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**Orono School Board Unanimously Approves Resolution
Asking Voters to Renew Technology Levy**

Long Lake, MN, May 12, 2022 – As part of the school district’s long-range financial and program planning, the Orono School Board unanimously approved placing a request for voters to renew the district’s technology levy on the November 8, 2022, general election ballot.

Technically called a Capital Projects Levy, the levy generates approximately \$1.2 million annually that is dedicated to supporting technology in classrooms and throughout the district. Because the request is a straight renewal of an existing levy, there will be no tax increase for property owners if approved by voters.

“This technology levy brings in critical funding that supports how our teachers teach and how our students learn,” said Board Chair Bob Tunheim. “Our residents recognize how important technology is in today’s schools, which is why they originally approved this levy funding in 2002 and then renewed it in 2011. Because it’s a 10-year levy, it will be on this fall’s ballot for renewal once again, with no tax increase to residents.”

If the levy renewal is approved by voters in November, the funding would support three main areas:

- **Classroom learning and support:** the tools and teacher training to support Orono excellence in teaching and learning and ensure Orono students are ready for the future
- **Reliable access:** regularly updated networks, systems and software to support classroom teaching and learning
- **Security and technical support:** ensuring a secure internet environment, campus security and visitor management systems, and technology support staff

If voters do not approve the renewal, the district would be faced with \$1.2 million in budget cuts, which would impact teachers, programs and technology districtwide.

“Best practice in technology is to have a sustainable and predictable replacement cycle for the tools, networks and systems that our teachers need and our families expect,” said Dr. Kristine Flesher, Superintendent. “Renewing this 10-year technology levy would enable us to maintain the technology tools that are integrated into our classrooms, replace aging technology systems districtwide, and maintain both cyber and physical security for the safety of our students.”

A recent community survey also identified several points of resident pride in the schools:

- 94% rate the quality of Orono Schools as excellent or good
- 89% believe the ability for students to use computers and other technology effectively and efficiently is absolutely essential or very important
- 96% believe Orono Public Schools increase property values in the community
- 94% believe they receive a good value for their investment in our schools

District staff will now prepare informational materials about the tech levy renewal request so residents are aware and can make an informed vote on November 8. Questions can be directed to info@orono.k12.mn.us.

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Orono Public Schools serves 2,800 students in grades K-12 from the communities of Independence, Long Lake, Maple Plain, Medina, Minnetonka Beach and Orono.