



NEWS FROM WEST BLOOMFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT

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For Immediate Release

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WBSD Operating Millage Renewal on February 27 ballot

The West Bloomfield School District Board of Education has unanimously approved placing an operating millage renewal proposal on the February 27, 2024 presidential primary ballot.

For school districts, the Per Pupil Foundation Allowance is funded by locally raised property taxes AND State school aid payments. The revenues for the State school aid portion of the Foundation Allowance are derived from a mix of taxing sources, including but not limited to, a statewide property tax of 6 mills on all taxable property. The revenues for the local property tax portion of the Per Pupil Foundation Allowance are derived from a local property tax of not more than 18 mills on non-homestead property. Additionally, the few Michigan school districts like West Bloomfield School District that have a Per Pupil Foundation Allowance of more than \$9,608 for fiscal year 2023/24 are authorized to levy such amount of the 18 mills (that has been approved by the voters) against homestead property as is necessary to hold themselves harmless to obtain the Foundation Allowance. Non-homestead property does NOT include primary residences, but homestead property does.

For fiscal year 2023/24, West Bloomfield School District's Per Pupil Foundation Allowance is \$10,235, which exceeds the \$9,608 threshold, so the School District is authorized to levy not more than 18 mills on non-homestead property and not more than the 4.6587 hold harmless mills previously approved by the voters on homestead property. However, for fiscal year 2023/24, the School District needed to levy only 3.1426 mills (of the 4.6587 mills authorized) against homestead property to hold itself harmless to obtain the Foundation Allowance.

The School District's ballot proposal would renew: (a) the 18 non-homestead mills (rolled back to 16.7127 mills) that were approved by the voters on February 25, 2014; (b) PLUS the 2 non-homestead mills (rolled back to 1.9840 mills) that were approved by the voters on May 14, 2021 (for a sum total of 18.6967 non-homestead mills); and (c)

SEPARATELY the 5 hold harmless mills (rolled back to 4.6587 mills) that were approved by the voters on February 25, 2014. The roll backs referenced above are by operation of the "Headlee" amendment to the Michigan Constitution of 1963.

If the voters do not renew these non-homestead and hold harmless operating millages, the State WILL NOT increase its State school aid payments to make-up for the loss of the locally raised property tax revenue. Consequently, the School District would not receive its full Per Pupil Foundation Allowance until the voters reauthorize these non-homestead and hold harmless operating millages.

Here is the actual ballot language:

West Bloomfield School District Operating Millage Renewal Proposal

This proposal will allow the school district to maintain the number of mills required to be levied for the school district to receive its revenue per pupil foundation allowance and renews millage that will expire with the 2024 tax levy.

Shall the currently authorized millage rate limitation of 18.6967 mills (\$18.6967 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all property, except principal residence and other property exempted by law, and 4.6587 mills (\$4.6587 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) against principal residences, qualified agricultural property, qualified forest property, supportive housing property, property occupied by a public school academy, industrial personal property and commercial personal property, in West Bloomfield School District, Oakland County, Michigan, be renewed for a period of 10 years, 2025 to 2034, inclusive, to provide funds for operating purposes; the estimate of the revenue the school district will collect from combined property taxes authorized herein if the millage is approved and levied in 2025 is approximately \$13,371,684 (this is a renewal of millage that will expire with the 2024 tax levy)?

The ballot proposal calls for a non-homestead tax rate of 18.6967 mills. While the School District can only levy 18 mills on non-homestead property each year, the portion of the millage above 18 mills will protect the School District from potential Headlee rollbacks in the future.

Superintendent Bazzi said that the operating millage renewal proposal will affect the educational program of every West Bloomfield student. "In short, we can continue moving the West Bloomfield School District forward with no change in the current tax rate for primary residence homeowners."

Superintendent Bazzi said that the school district will be producing factual materials and making community presentations to explain the various components of the election proposal. "We want to make sure members of our community understand that all registered voters can vote on the proposal even though the non-homestead ballot proposal applies primarily to businesses and second homes. We will work diligently to address any questions members of the community may have before the vote which the Board of Education has scheduled for February 27 as that date reduces election costs for the district."

Key points:

- This is not a tax increase. This is a renewal of an existing millage.
- This makes up approximately 17% of our budget
- There is an [Operating Millage Renewal FAQ](#) on the district website that contains facts about the ballot proposal

Paid for by West Bloomfield School District, 5810 Commerce Road, West Bloomfield, Michigan 48324.

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