



West Bloomfield SCHOOL DISTRICT

2024 Operating Millage Renewal Facts

What is this renewal seeking?

This is asking voters for authorization to renew the current operating rates for the non-homestead and hold harmless millage.

Is this a tax increase?

No. This would keep taxes at their current operating rates for the non-homestead and hold harmless millage.

What is the difference between a bond and an operating millage?

A bond proposal is how a public school district asks its community for authorization to borrow money to pay for capital improvements. Voter-approved bond funds may be spent on projects described in the proposal. Funds raised through the sale of bonds cannot be used on operational expenses such as employee salaries and benefits, school supplies, and textbooks. Bond funds must be kept separate from operating funds and must be audited by an independent auditing firm.

An operating millage is just that - funds for day to day operations. The WBSD operating millage pays for:

- Teachers
- Counselors
- Social Workers
- Bus drivers
- Mental health programs
- School safety
- Educational programs

What is a non-homestead millage?

The non-homestead millage proposal is only for non-homestead properties, like commercial, business, rental properties, vacant land, and second-home property owners. This portion does not impact homeowners. The ballot measure is to renew the 18 mills that are levied on non-homestead properties.

Who Pays the 18 Mills on the “Non-Homestead” property tax?

There is no tax increase to homeowners. The 18 mills are what is called a “non-homestead” property tax. This means businesses and those owning rental properties pay this tax. The average taxpayer, who lives in the home they own, does not pay this non-homestead tax. Both the non-homestead and the hold harmless components are renewals at the current rate.

What is a hold harmless millage?

When Proposal A passed in 1994, the state set a minimum level of per pupil funding for all school districts. Some districts, like West Bloomfield, already spent more than that agreed upon minimum. So, the state allowed districts like West Bloomfield to levy a “hold harmless” millage with voter approval to stay at their funding rate per pupil when Proposal A passed.

Will my tax rate increase if this proposal is passed?

There is no tax increase to homeowners; this is a renewal at the current levels.

How much of the district’s budget does this represent?

This funding source represents approximately 17% of our general fund budget.

What happens if this does not pass?

WBSD would need to cut 17% of its budget for it to be structurally balanced. You see, the State assumes all school districts are levying 18 mills on non-homestead property. If we do not, WBSD would not receive the full per-pupil allocation from the state. The operating millage is a component of the Foundation Allowance, which is the district's largest source of revenue.

Why is the State involved in my school taxes?

Many people don't realize that Proposal A fundamentally changed how schools are funded. Prior to Proposal A, all taxes raised for schools stayed local. Since Proposal A passed in the 1990s, the majority of our school taxes (18% non-homestead and 6% homestead) go to the State and are redistributed to school districts in a per pupil allocation. Bonds and sinking funds are exceptions to this general rule; those are local taxes that stay local.

Why is this on the ballot now?

WBSD collects its school taxes in the summer. By holding this election tied to the Michigan presidential primary election, the millage will be renewed ahead of the summer, resulting in no funding loss to the district if passed by voters. This timing also ensures the district does not have to incur the cost of a separate election.

What 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)?

Where can I read the State School Aid Act?

[https://www.legislature.mi.gov/\(S\(jc0bpjizral3k2q4gcevy4uz\)\)/mileg.aspx?page=GetObject&objectname=mcl-388-1622a](https://www.legislature.mi.gov/(S(jc0bpjizral3k2q4gcevy4uz))/mileg.aspx?page=GetObject&objectname=mcl-388-1622a)

How do I register to vote?

Visit the [Michigan Voter Information Center](#) to register to vote online. You can register at any time up to 8 p.m. on Election Day at your city or township clerk's office. If you're registering another way, your [voter registration application](#) must be received or postmarked at least 15 days before the election. For assistance in obtaining the address of your local clerk, visit: [Michigan.gov/vote](https://michigan.gov/vote).

Who pays for the distribution of factual material related to this proposal?

Costs are paid for by West Bloomfield School District, 5810 Commerce Road, West Bloomfield, Michigan 48324.