

SCHOOL VIEWS

ELECTION 2022



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Message from the Superintendent

Dear families and friends ~

Welcome to 2022. I hope your time during Winter Break together with loved ones was restful and rejuvenating. This new year is already off at a fast pace.

Our school routines are getting closer to normal with in-person music concerts, a regular season of sports, and volunteers helping out on our campuses. Of course, the pandemic is still with us. Precautions remain important, but the look and feel of our schools is coming closer to what it was like pre-pandemic.

You will see in this issue of School Views the role local property owners play through school levies in providing a full and rich learning experience for our almost 9,300 students. Both local levies expire this year.

The current Educational Programs and Operations Levy fills the 12% gap between what the state funds and what it really takes to help every student succeed.

Many of the caring adults we are honored to have working in our schools are funded totally or in part by this local levy. State funding models say a district the size of Snohomish would employ half as many learning assistants, or paraeducators, as we have on campuses every school day helping children learn. Those additional staff members are funded by the local levy. Check out this issue's story on all the ways these critical members of our district team make a difference in the lives of our students.

A February 8 ballot proposal asks voters to consider the Educational Programs and Operations Replacement Levy to keep the funding gap filled. The chart at right shows more examples of how local levy dollars have a similar impact.

Also on the February 8 ballot, is a request to consider the Replacement Levy for Technology, Safety and Facility Improvements. Even with the most meticulous attention to regular maintenance and prompt repairs, any homeowner understands that over time parts of their home begin to wear out. That is no different with public schools. The proposal includes dollars to replace roofing, upgrade heating and ventilation systems, install and expand security cameras at every school, as well as continue funding for the technology students need to become successful adults.

Please see the story inside that outlines more about the proposals. There is even more information on our website at www.sno.wednet.edu/2022levies.

It is my honor to serve as your Superintendent. I welcome your questions about the proposed replacement levies or other school topics.

Sincerely,
Dr. Kent Kultgen

Examples of Levy-Funded Jobs in Snohomish School District

	Funded by State	Funded by Local Levies	Total with Local Funding
Learning assistants for student learning and safety	15	+14.5	29.5
Psychologists for academic supports	0.2	+10.1	10.3
Custodians to keep 15 schools clean and safe	36.3	+4.5	40.8
Nurses to support student health	1.4	+10.9	12.3
Security (including SROs and security staff)	1.7	+2.3	4

Assisting student learning

inside and out of the
classroom



High-Rise Engineer, Official Runner and Tub Marines are a few of the jobs that learning assistant Sue Sporrong “hires” interested students to do at Little Cedars Elementary.

Her jobs program — the Wolverine Workers — helps children learn about being part of a community and the value of teamwork. High-Rise Engineers retire the American flag each afternoon. An Official Runner carries important communication from the school office to classrooms, and Tub Marines ensure lunch boxes return to their owners’ classroom.

“I treat this just like a business owner would for any job,” Sporrong explained. Students learn life skills as they complete applications, undergo interviews and after being hired, spend time training for their duties.

Learning assistants like Sporrong help provide individualized instruction and support to students. Also known as paraeducators or classroom support staff, these caring adults wear many different hats and their interactions with students vary. For some it is helping students safely crossing intersections while walking to school. For others it is sitting side-by-side in the classroom with individual students.

Centennial Middle School’s Julie Wolfe provides individualized support

for students wrestling with social and communication issues. “I start each day with the thought ‘what can I be for them today so that at the end of the day we can both say today was a good day,’” Wolfe explained.

Many learning assistants began supporting students as parent volunteers when their own children were young. “Part of the reason I pursued this career was to give back to Snohomish schools where my son could not have had a better experience,” said Connie Hellmund, who serves students in the English Language Learner (ELL) program. “I hope with my help and the help of others like me that more kids get to experience what my son did.”

Learn more about the work of learning assistants (paraeducators) at www.sno.wednet.edu/news.





REPLACEMENT LEVIES



PLEASE VOTE BY FEBRUARY 8, 2022



Both the Educational Programs and Operations Replacement Levy and the Replacement Levy for Technology, Safety and Facility Improvements expire at the end of 2022.

These levies help fill the gap between what the state funds and what it really takes to provide a full and rich learning experience in safe and secure schools for Snohomish School District's almost 9,300 students.

Proposals to replace both expiring levies will be on the February 8, 2022 ballot.

These are not new taxes. Our community has a long history of supporting our schools and filling the gap. Like many of us, Snohomish School District is feeling the pinch of increasing costs for just about everything from cleaning supplies to textbooks. We also invest in staffing to ensure ample caring adults are in our schools keeping children safe and learning successfully.

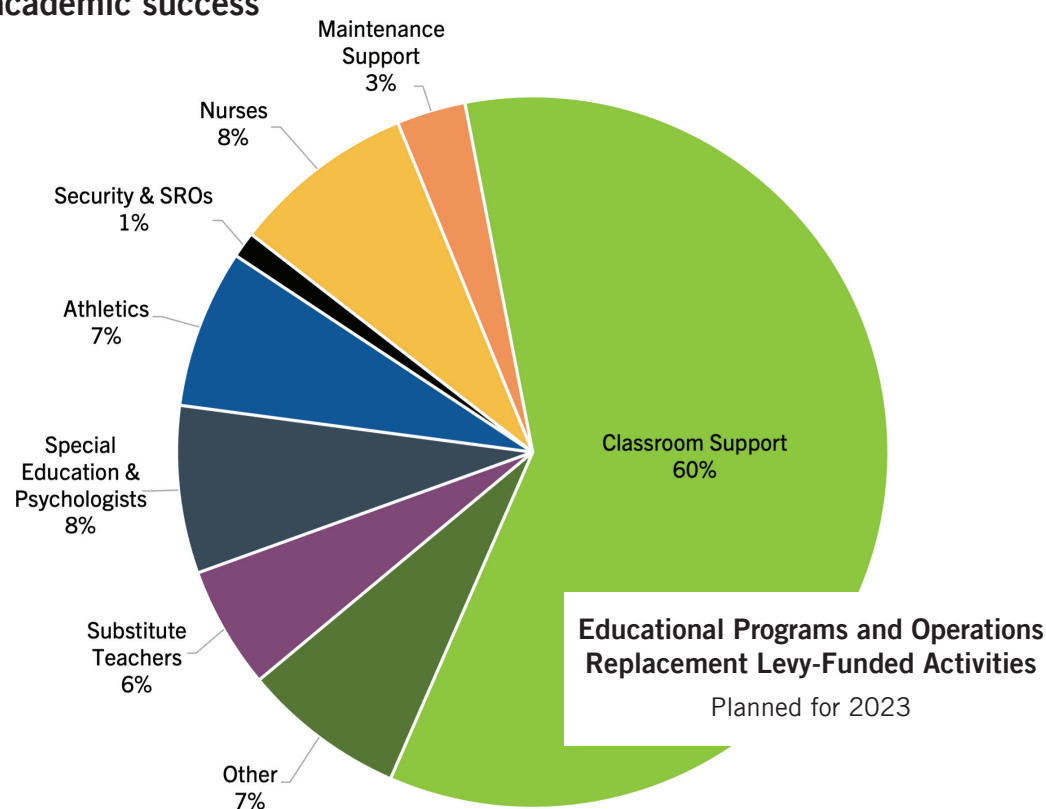
Proposition 1

Educational Programs and Operations Replacement Levy

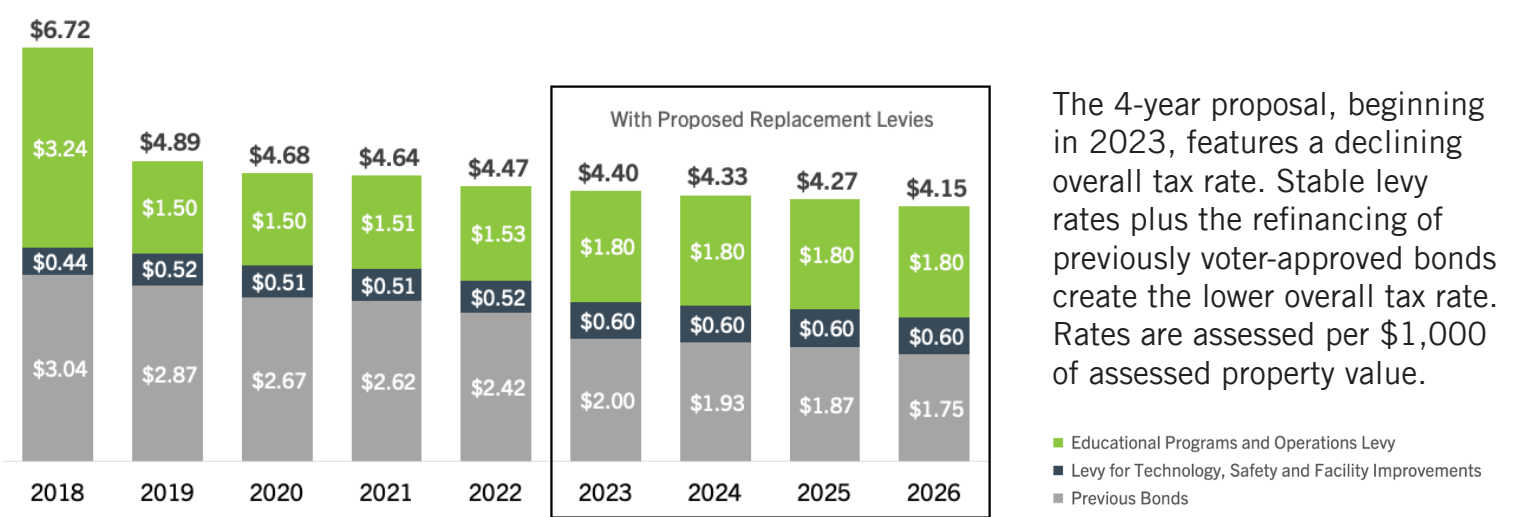
- Fills the 12% funding gap to support student learning with more caring adults on school campuses including counselors at every school and almost twice as many learning assistants (paraeducators) than the state provides
- Provides academic support for all students
- Helps students connect with their education through athletics, performing arts, clubs and other activities for stronger mental health and academic success

What would the proposed local Educational Programs and Operations Replacement Levy fund if it is approved?

The local Educational Programs and Operations Replacement Levy funds essential school support staff such as learning assistants (paraeducators), psychologists, nurses, substitute teachers and security, as well as athletics, performing arts, clubs, and other activities for stronger mental health and academic success of students.



What do the proposed replacement levies cost?



The 4-year proposal, beginning in 2023, features a declining overall tax rate. Stable levy rates plus the refinancing of previously voter-approved bonds create the lower overall tax rate. Rates are assessed per \$1,000 of assessed property value.

Proposed Educational Programs and Operations Replacement Levy

Tax Year	Estimated Annual Rate/\$1,000	Levy Amount
2023	\$1.80	\$24,545,000
2024	\$1.80	\$26,999,000
2025	\$1.80	\$29,698,000
2026	\$1.80	\$32,668,000

Proposed Replacement Levy for Technology, Safety and Facility Improvement

Tax Year	Estimated Annual Rate/\$1,000	Levy Amount
2023	\$0.60	\$8,183,000
2024	\$0.60	\$9,001,000
2025	\$0.60	\$9,901,000
2026	\$0.60	\$10,891,000

Property Tax Exemptions

Some senior and disabled homeowners may be eligible for a property tax exemption, based on income. For details call the Snohomish County Assessor's Office at 425-388-3540 or visit their website at <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/328/Property-Tax-Exemptions>.

Election Information

Residents can register to vote online up to a week before the February 8, 2022 Election Day or in person up to Election Day. For more information, visit the Snohomish County website at <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/3972/Register-to-Vote-or-Update-Registration>.

Proposition 2

Replacement Levy for Technology, Safety and Facility Improvements

- Maintains school buildings and support facilities including replacing roofs, siding and upgrading heating and ventilation (HVAC) systems
- Improves safety including acquiring and upgrading security cameras, and improving school parking lots, elementary play areas and portable classrooms
- Continues local dollars for the technology our students need to be successful in school and on whatever path they choose to follow after graduation



What would the Replacement Levy for Technology, Safety and Facility Improvements fund if it is replaced?

Even with the most meticulous attention to regular maintenance and prompt repairs, every homeowner understands that over time parts of their home begin to wear out. That is no different with public schools.

Overdue facility improvements

Unfortunately, failure of the 2020 bond proposal has put replacing and restoring worn out systems and infrastructure on the back burner. Older systems such as roofs, heating and ventilation systems, and siding are at or nearing the end of their useful life. At this time, more than 50 projects are under consideration and include each school and support facility in the district.

Improved safety and security

Safety is always foremost in the minds of Snohomish school leaders. They constantly assess school buildings and grounds for student safety.

Security of those buildings is also important to ensure the community's investment in its schools is protected. If the proposed Replacement Levy for Technology, Safety and Facility Improvements is approved, new security cameras will be installed or upgraded at every school. The proposal also includes improvements to parking lots, playgrounds and portable classrooms.

Tools for student success

Children today must reach higher expectations to successfully enter the workforce. To prepare them for their future, Snohomish schools must have the tools in place to meet those expectations. Technology is one of those areas where skill expectations are high. The proposed replacement levy will continue funding the purchase of computers, online curriculum and technical support for students and their teachers. As the pandemic continues, these tools continue to be a lifeline for students.

Learn more about the proposed replacement levies at www.sno.wednet.edu/2022levies



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More savings for taxpayers

as second bond
refinanced



For the second year in a row, Snohomish school leaders saved local taxpayers money by refinancing an existing school construction bond.

This time \$818,990 will be saved over the next two years until the newly refinanced bond is paid off. These savings are on top of almost \$23.7 million saved in 2020 with the refinancing of an earlier existing bond. Unprecedented low interest rates made both of these savings possible.

These reduced bond collections and stable proposed levy tax rates contribute to an overall declining tax rate for Snohomish School District property owners.

Bonds are similar to a home mortgage. Typically, bonds are used to pay for new school construction and/or large renovations of existing facilities. 2004 bond projects included construction of Glacier Peak High School and Little Cedars Elementary. Projects approved by voters in 2008 included replacing Machias and Riverview elementaries and Valley View Middle School, completing the Snohomish High School renovation and expansion project, renovating Centennial Middle School and the Parkway Campus and building the Snohomish Aquatic Center.

Learn more at www.sno.wednet.edu/news.

 **Please vote by February 8, 2022**

Did you know the majority of people who live in the Snohomish School District do not have school-aged children? The purpose of School Views is to let our community know about the programs, events and activities happening in their Snohomish School

District. To reduce the cost of postage, we have not mailed to a mailing list, but use a bulk mailing process that delivers to every residential customer on a carrier's route.