



PROTECT OUR TRADITION
OF EXCELLENCE

VOTE APRIL 4, 2023

Operating Referendum Information



A Tradition of Excellence



Our students are leaders who challenge themselves to grow and achieve academically, pursue their passions, navigate change, learn continuously and contribute to the common good. We are committed to reaching our mission for all students.

Our talented staff members drive positive student outcomes every day.

Our campuses are hubs for the community, with programming, services and events that welcome residents of all ages.

Our tradition of excellence depends on an operating referendum to preserve the programs and services that define Shorewood.

A Crisis in Public Education



Lack of State Funding

- The state legislature has frozen increases in state aid for public schools over the last two years; per student spending lags inflation by \$3,200
- The percentage of special education expenses reimbursed by the state has declined by more than 40% - creating an annual multi-million dollar funding gap for the Shorewood School District
- Schools cannot depend on increasing enrollment alone to adequately fund operating budgets
- Without more state funding, a voter-approved operating referendum is the only option to increase revenue



Why Are Residents Voting on a Referendum?

Without increases in state funding, a voter-approved operating referendum is the only option to increase revenue:

- To maintain the academic, arts and authentic learning experiences that prepare students for the future
- To attract and retain top-notch staff and compensate them for their skills and experience
- To build needed financial reserves
- To continue to host recreational and enrichment programs that connect our community



Increasing Expenses



- Expenses are on the rise, for heating, property insurance, equipment, school supplies and more.
- Similar to other districts, more than 80% of the District's budget is invested in staff compensation and benefits.
- With nationwide teaching shortages, our commitment to competitive compensation is critical to preserving the quality teaching and learning in Shorewood.



Financial Stewardship



The District provided a 4.7% compensation increase for our valued staff while also **reducing expenditures by over \$1 million last year** to balance the budget.

Budget balancing strategies included:

- Reduced class sections based on current enrollment
- Reduced administrative staffing
- Decreased spending on materials and supplies
- Reduced spending on outside vendor/service contracts
- Revised healthcare premium distribution
- Added open enrollment seats

Financial Stewardship Going Forward



- The District will not rely on the operating referendum alone to maintain financial health.
- The District is committed to:
 - Aligning staffing to changes in the student population
 - Finding strategic solutions to contain increases to growing expenses, such as healthcare
 - Enrolling an increasing percentage of resident students
 - Leveraging donors and outside resources

The Budget Bottom Line



Preserving the student experience is our top priority.

Even with established short-term and long-term budget balancing strategies that prioritize student programming - and improve our financial position - the state funding shortfall will require significant reductions across the District.

Without an operating referendum, we project a gap of \$25 million over the next five years.

What Is the Proposed Solution?



- On **Tuesday, April 4, 2023**, residents will vote on a non-recurring operating referendum that would provide the district with an additional \$5.5 million in funding in each of the next five years.
- This funding is critical to supporting our students, our staff, our community services and our financial position for future years.

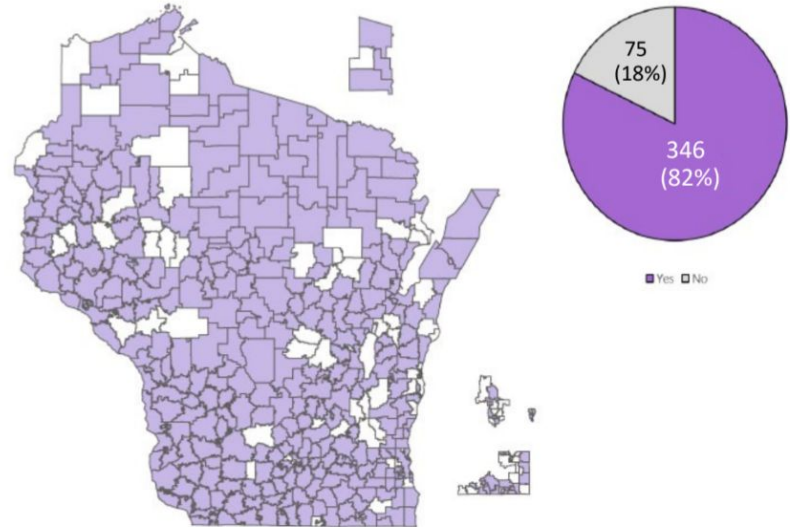


We Are Not Alone



- **Over 80% of Wisconsin school districts have pursued an operating referendum to cover funding needs.**
- 83% of the operating referenda presented to voters have passed since 2018.
- In 2022 & 2023, close to 100 of 421 WI school districts pursued an operating referendum. This is an increasing trend.

Operational Questions Asked *(since 1992)*



Financial & Property Tax Impact



Good schools maintain property values.

The property tax impact of the referendum is estimated to be \$123 per \$100,000 of assessed value.*

*Projections are based on current projections, fluctuations are possible.



April 4 Ballot Language

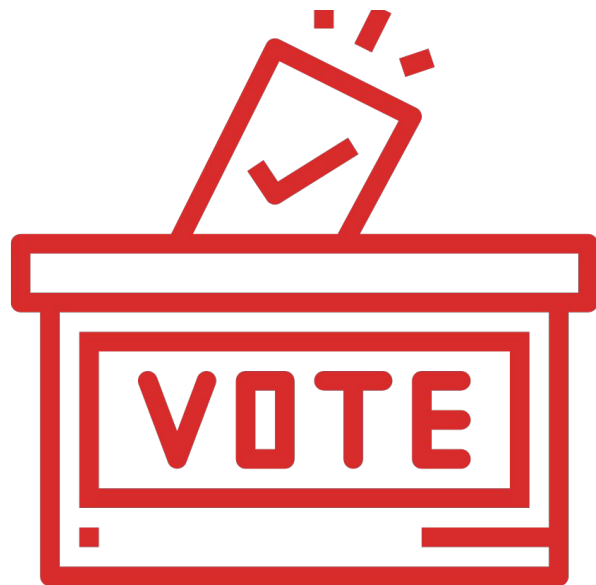
Shall the School District of Shorewood, Milwaukee County, Wisconsin be authorized to exceed the revenue limit specified in Section 121.91, Wisconsin Statutes, by \$5,500,000 per year beginning with the 2023-2024 school year and ending with the 2027-2028 school year, for non-recurring purposes consisting of operational and maintenance expenses, including salaries, benefits, and instructional and extra-curricular programming?





EARLY VOTING OPPORTUNITIES

- Registered voters in Wisconsin may vote early by mail by requesting an absentee ballot.
- Residents may also vote in-person before election day.
- For early voting information, visit **myvote.wi.gov**





LEARN MORE!

*Scan the QR code with your
mobile device or visit:*

www.shorewood.k12.wi.us





Thank You!

Questions?

WE ARE NOT ALONE. Did You Know?

- Over the years, more of the responsibility for funding schools has moved from the state to local property taxpayers, via operational referendums.
- **Over 80%** of school districts in Wisconsin have already pursued at least one operational referendum to cover their funding needs.
- **92** Wisconsin school districts have pursued an operational referendum in 2022 and 2023. **76** of them passed.
- Taking a longer view, Wisconsin school districts have put forth **295** operational referendums to taxpayers since January 2018. Of those, 184 non-recurring and 62 recurring referenda passed—or approximately **83%**.

