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## **Shorewood Board Approves Operational Referendum for April 4 Ballot**

*Voter-approved referendum would help district protect student programs and retain staff*

SHOREWOOD, WI — At its Tuesday meeting, the Shorewood School Board approved an operational referendum question that will appear on the ballot April 4, 2023.

The question asks voters to approve a non-recurring operational referendum that would provide the district with an additional \$5.5 million in funding in each of the next five years. These funds would be used to protect the tradition of excellence the Shorewood School District is known for, including its robust student programs and services and ability to retain and attract high-quality staff.

“Due to a lack of adequate funding from the state and a funding formula that places more of the responsibility for funding schools on local property taxpayers, we must join numerous districts across the state in asking voters to approve an operational referendum,” said Dr. JoAnn Sternke, Interim Superintendent. “The bottom line is that our district’s revenue will not be enough to meet the increasing expenses of advancing our mission and achieving equity, growth, and excellence for all without this support.”

Increasing numbers of Wisconsin school districts have turned to operational referendum questions in recent years to raise their revenue limits. Districts are now facing the second year of \$0 increases to per-pupil funding from the state, paired with increasing costs and the challenges of retaining and recruiting top-quality educators.

Costs due to inflation have outpaced revenue in recent years—a trend that is expected to only increase the next five or more years. The Shorewood School District’s per-pupil revenue caps have lagged inflation by about \$3,200 per student since 2009. This trend equates to \$5.5 million in lost revenue this year alone for the district.

With an approved referendum, the district’s total levy is projected to increase by \$2.4 million in the 2023-24 school year. If property values remain the same, the property tax impact of the referendum is estimated to be \$123 per \$100,000 (or \$369 per \$300,000) of assessed fair market property value.

For more information on the district’s needs and the question on the ballot Tuesday, April 4, please visit [www.shorewood.k12.wi.us/apps/pages/referendum](http://www.shorewood.k12.wi.us/apps/pages/referendum).

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