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**ABOUT:**

Farmington School Reporter is a publication of Farmington Area Public Schools, ISD 192. Please direct comments or questions to the district office at (651) 463-5013.

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## Farmington Schools Outline Budget Pressures as Levy Vote Approaches

Farmington Area Public Schools welcomed over 6,600 learners this fall to the 2025-26 school year. In his back to school message to families, Superintendent Jason Berg commented about how each school year brings fresh opportunities and highlighted the work staff have undertaken to support students.

Over the past year, teachers and support staff dedicated significant time to professional development required under Minnesota’s READ Act. The training is already strengthening literacy instruction at the elementary level, with new resources also being introduced in elementary and middle schools. This work represents one of the ways Farmington educators are responding to student needs while implementing new state mandates.

At the same time, the district continues to face financial challenges. Rising costs, new mandates, and state funding that has not kept pace with inflation have led to significant budget pressures. In recent years, Farmington has reduced spending, sought alternative funding sources, and used reserve funds to balance the budget. Budget adjustments have included:

- Restructured middle school schedules that eliminated elective offerings
- Ending career and technical partnerships such as MNCAPS and CTE programs through District 917 and Dakota County Technical College
- Increased fees across the district

Despite these steps, the district is still projecting a \$5-6 million deficit by the 2026-27 school year.

To help address this financial challenge, ISD192 residents will vote on an operating levy referendum on November 4, 2025. The proposal focuses on sustaining a strong, high-quality school system. If approved, levy funds would support:

- Class sizes that allow teachers to provide needed attention for students
- Literacy and math instruction
- Enrichment opportunities at the elementary level
- Middle and high school career pathway options that prepare students for the future

If the levy is not approved, district leaders have said additional cuts would be required. These could include:

- Higher class sizes across all grade levels
- Reductions in athletics, activities and music
- Elimination of literacy interventions
- Reductions in instructional and behavior support for classrooms
- Potential system changes such as a four-day school week or closing an elementary school.

“This November, every voter’s decision will shape the future of our schools and community,” Superintendent Berg said. “We encourage all residents to be informed and participate in this important election.”



### Levy Information Sessions

Residents are invited to learn more about the operating levy at one of the district’s remaining information sessions:

**MONDAY, OCT 6 - 7 P.M.**  
(Boeckman Middle School)

**THURSDAY, OCT 30 - 7 P.M.**  
(Virtual)

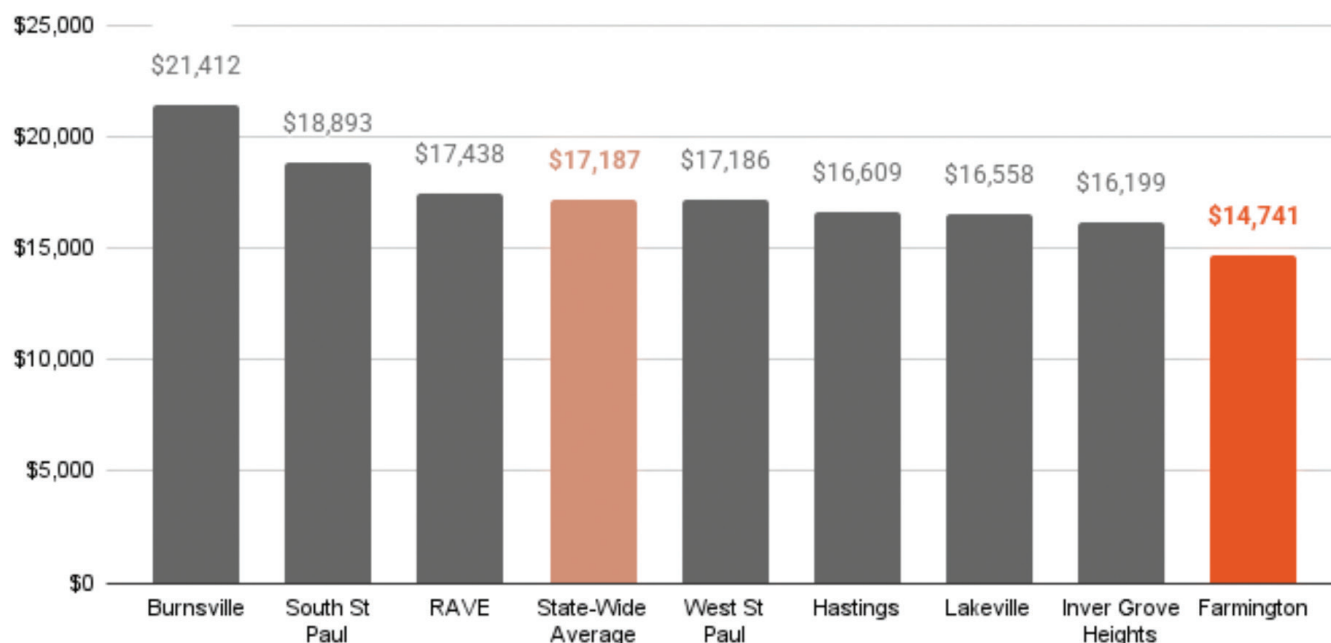
Links for the virtual session and additional details are posted on the district website:



# How District Funding Compares

Operating levies play a major role in how much revenue each district has to spend per student. As many districts receive additional local funds through operating levies, the result is less funding for Farmington Area Schools compared to neighboring districts and \$2,500 less than state average.

# Per Student Revenue Comparison



## Voter Eligibility

- To be eligible to vote, you must:
- Be a U.S. citizen
- Be at least 18 years old on Election Day
- Be a resident of Minnesota for 20 days
- Not currently be incarcerated for a felony conviction
- Not be under a court order that revokes your right to vote

Minnesota allows voters to register at the polls on election day. To learn more about voter registration, visit [MNVotes.org](http://MNVotes.org).

## Voter Information

### Absentee Voting (by mail or in person):

Available through Monday, Nov. 3

- Mail - Request a ballot online: [sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting](http://sos.state.mn.us/elections-voting)
- In-person -
  - ISD 192 District Service Center (20655 Flagstaff Ave) Mon.-Fri., Sept. 19-Nov. 3, 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
  - Dakota County Western Service Center (Apple Valley) Mon.-Fri., Sept. 19-Oct. 31, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Mon., Nov. 3, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
  - Dakota County Administration Center (Hastings) Mon.-Fr., Sept. 19-Oct. 31, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Sat., Nov. 1, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

**Direct balloting:** Begins Oct. 17 at locations listed above



**Absentee Voting** is now available through Monday, Nov. 3. Scan the code to learn more



**Election Day Voting** To find where to cast your vote on Election Day (Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2025) visit [MNVotes.gov](http://MNVotes.gov)

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# Estimated Tax Impact of Operating Levy

If approved, the 2025 operating levy would add an estimated \$44.50 per month (\$534 per year) in school-related property taxes for the owner of a \$350,000 home starting in the 2026-27 school year.

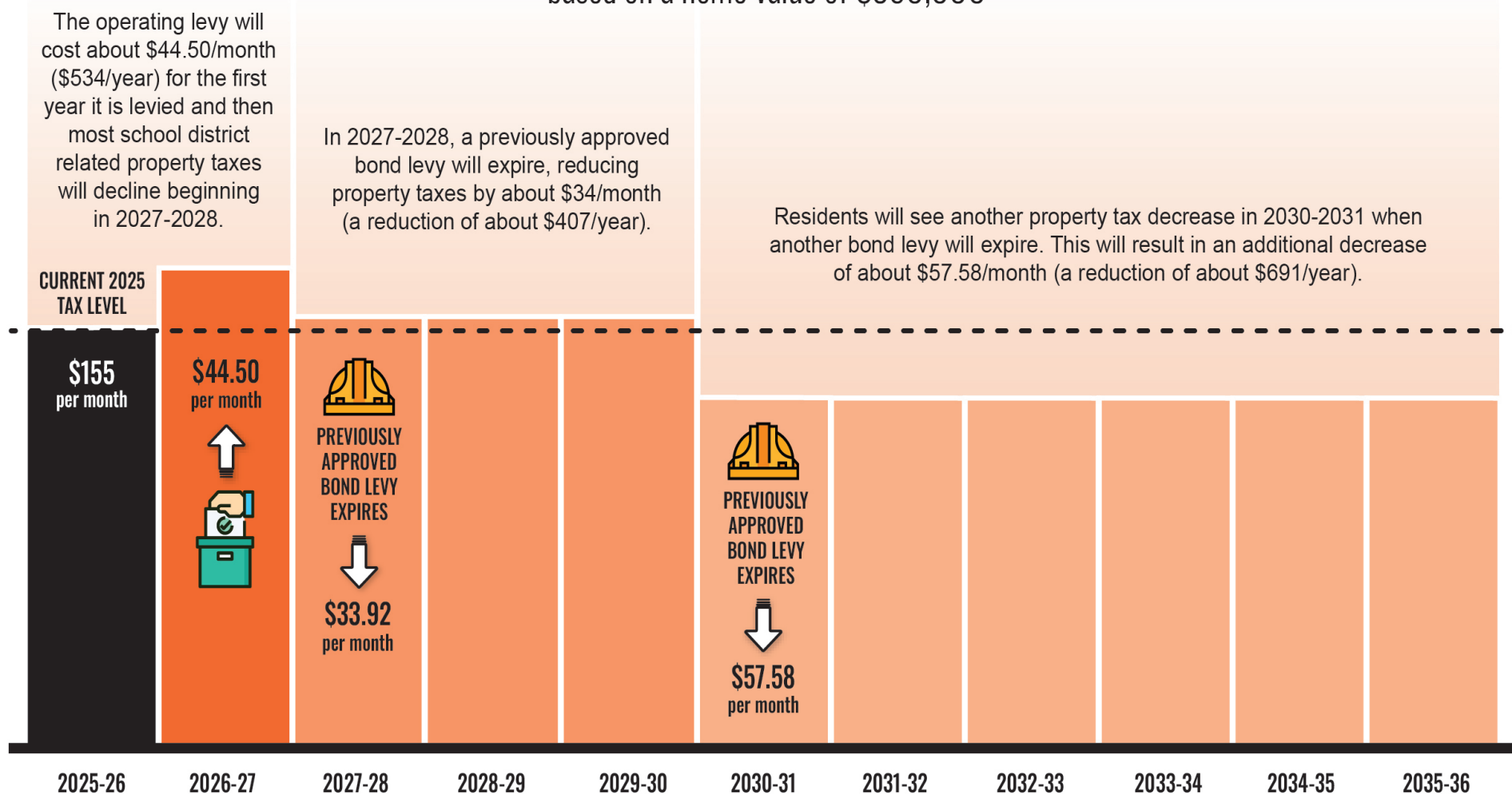
As previously approved bond levies expire in future years, the overall school district property taxes are expected to decrease.

- In 2027-28, a bond levy will expire, reducing taxes by about \$34 per month (\$407 per year).
- In 2030-31, another bond levy will expire, reducing taxes by about \$57.58 per month (\$691 per year).

The chart below provides a visual representation of these expiring levies and how it would impact the monthly property tax for a typical \$350,000 home.

## Farmington Area Public Schools Referendum 2025 Property Tax Impact

based on a home value of \$350,000



The proposed operating levy will generate about \$8 million per year for 10 years to fund district operations.



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# A Strong Start to the 2025–26 School Year

Farmington Area Public Schools kicked off the 2025–26 school year with a staggered start, with elementary learners, 6th graders, and 9th graders returning on September 2, followed by all other students on September 3. The two-day start allowed younger learners and those transitioning to new schools to settle in with extra support, including fun welcome activities at the middle schools and high school facilitated by older peers.

The first days of school were filled with excitement as students reconnected with old friends and met new ones. Volunteers, staff, and student leaders all played a role in welcoming learners and helping them navigate their new routines.

“From custodians who ready our buildings and grounds, to bus drivers, food service teams, paraprofessionals, teachers, and family members—every part of our community contributes to a successful start,” said Superintendent Berg. “We are all very excited for another great year in Farmington Area Public Schools.”





# Get Involved

**Community involvement is key to FAPS student success.**

Farmington Area Schools welcomes volunteers of all ages through school-based Parent Teacher Partnerships or Parent Ambassador Groups. Find contact information on each school's website at [farmington.k12.mn.us/our-schools](http://farmington.k12.mn.us/our-schools).

# 2024-25 Farmington High School Year in Review

Farmington High School had an outstanding 2024-25 school year, achieving success in classrooms, on stage, and in athletic competitions. From earning college credits and state tournament appearances to award-winning performances and innovative projects, our students demonstrated hard work, talent, and dedication. For a complete list of 2024-25 FHS accomplishments, scan here:



## ACADEMICS

Academic achievement was a hallmark of 2024-25 for FHS learners.

**92%**

Farmington High School graduation rate

**2,300+**

college credits earned through PSEO

**250**

student participants in Concurrent Enrollment classes

**59**

students recognized with AP Scholar or AP Scholars with Honor awards

**81**

students enrolled in college-level courses through MNCAPS



## Arts & Activities

FHS students earned top honors in robotics, theater, and more last year.

**Theater (below):** *Guys and Dolls* lit up the Boeckman stage with outstanding performances, lively music, and dazzling choreography.



**Robotics (below):** The FHS Robotics team won the Engineering Inspiration Award and returned to the World Championships in Houston.

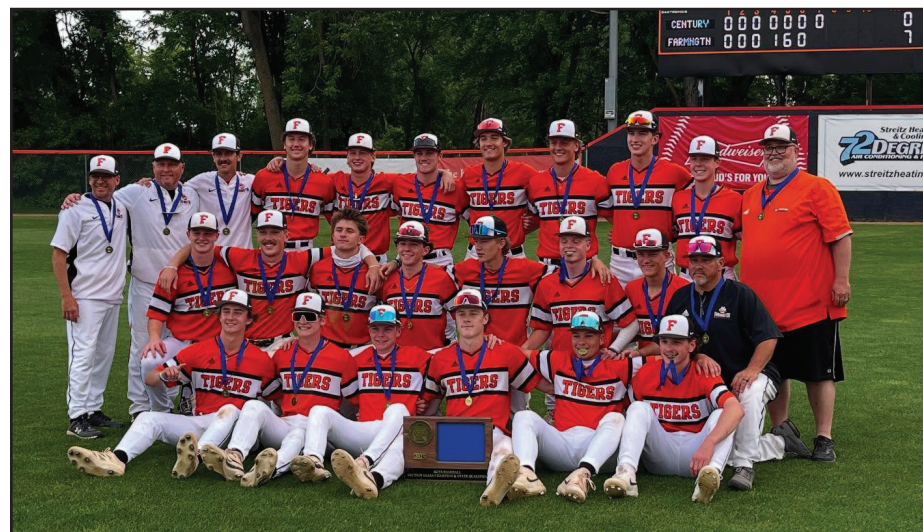


Students also earned top finishes in Science Olympiad, Debate, and Speech, and new opportunities like the Chess Team drew strong participation.

## Athletics

Farmington athletes delivered standout performances in 2024-25.

**Baseball (below):** Section 1AAAA champions, finishing 3rd at the State Tournament.



**Girls Hockey (below):** Section 1AA champions with a return trip to the State Tournament.



Other Tiger highlights included an 8th straight section title for Girls Cross Country, strong postseason runs in Softball, Wrestling, and Dance, and a record-breaking season for Boys Lacrosse.

# Community Ed Aquatics Makes a Splash

The Farmington Community Education Aquatics program continues to be a centerpiece of community activity, offering lessons, recreation, and training for swimmers of all ages.

This past summer, more than 620 swimmers took part in lessons. Since the program began in 1998, thousands of learners have gained water safety skills, while more than 200 local teens have held their first jobs at the pool. "It has been wonderful to watch them grow in confidence and develop lifelong skills like teamwork and responsibility," says Aquatics Coordinator Colm Griffin.

The program also provides adaptive swim lessons, serving students with mild disabilities in a supportive environment. Last year, 31 children participated in this program, which focuses on building confidence and safety in the water.

Beyond lessons, families enjoy open swim, private pool parties, and upcoming winter swim lessons, beginning January 11. With options year-round, the pool remains a place for fun, growth, and community connection.

Learn more at [farmingtonpool.com](http://farmingtonpool.com).

## Swimming Strong for 25+ Years



<b>25,676</b> swim lesson participants since 1998	<b>31</b> learners in adaptive lessons last year
<b>242</b> teen employees trained at the pool	<b>620</b> participants in summer 2025 swim lessons



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## Parenting Duo Bring Humor and Help to Farmington

Are toddler tantrums, potty training struggles, and big emotions wearing you down? You are not alone, and help is on the way. On October 23, Farmington High School will welcome Kristin Gallant and Deena Margolin, the duo behind the bestselling parenting brand Big Little Feelings.

Known for their science-based, judgment-free strategies, Gallant and Margolin have built a global community of parents navigating the ups and downs of raising young children. Through humor, real-life scripts, and practical tips, they help caregivers build connections and raise emotionally resilient kids.

This live event combines parenting advice with laughter and encouragement. Tickets start at \$10 for general admission, with a \$15 Meet & Greet upgrade available.

Scan to learn more and purchase tickets



# UPCOMING EVENTS

From concerts to community gatherings, here's what's coming up in the months ahead. For a complete list of district events, visit the district website:



### SCHOOL & DISTRICT

- **OCT 6** Levy Info Session, 7 p.m., Boeckman Middle School
- **OCT 7 & OCT 9** Conferences (all schools)
- **OCT 9** Early Release
- **OCT 10** No School (Elementary/Middle); Flexible Learning Day (FHS)
- **OCT 16- OCT 17** No School
- **OCT 30** Levy Information Session 7 p.m., Virtual
- **NOV 4** Election Day - No School (Elementary)
- **NOV 25** Early Release
- **NOV 26- NOV 28** No School
- **DEC 22- JAN 2** No School (Winter Break)

### PERFORMING ARTS

- **OCT 21** FTMB Indoor Concert, 7 p.m. at FHS
- **OCT 28** Fall Choir Concerts, 6 & 7:30 p.m.
- **NOV 3** Fall Band Concerts, 6:30 & 7:45 p.m.
- **NOV 10** DMS/BMS/FHS Bridging Concert, 7 p.m.
- **NOV 17** FHS Fall Jazz Concerts, 6:30 p.m.
- **NOV 21- NOV 23** Fall Play, Peter and the Starcatcher
- **NOV 24** FHS Vocal Jazz Café 6:30pm
- **DEC 8** Holiday Band Concerts
- **DEC 10** Holiday Choir Concerts

### COMMUNITY ED & FAMILY

- **OCT 24** Halloween Walk, 5:30-7 p.m., Dodge MS
- **OCT 25** Pre-K Open Gym, 10 a.m., TL&LC
- **NOV 21** Community Ed Blood Drive, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
- **DEC 1- DEC 5** Community Ed Book Fair, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
- **DEC 29- DEC 30** Community Ed Open Swim, 12-2 p.m., Dodge MS

## Now Enrolling for Classes!

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