

# WORKING **TOGETHER** — FOR A — **STRONG** FUTURE

## Referendum Information Session

*Your Voice Matters*



2026 REFERENDUM

**VOTE** NOV **3**





## **Dr. Monica Kelsey-Brown**

**Superintendent,  
Waunakee Community School District**



## **Steve Summers**

**Executive Director of Operations,  
Waunakee Community School District**



**WAUNAKEE**  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

# What To Expect Today

- 10-15 Minute Presentation
- Learning Opportunities
  - Academic Achievement
  - Operational Referendum
  - Capital Referendum
  - Tax Impact
  - Voting Information
  - Questions

WORKING **TOGETHER** FOR A **STRONG** FUTURE



# Mission, Vision, and Equity Statements

- **Mission Statement:** “Committed to Children...Committed to Community...Committed to Excellence”
- **Vision Statement:** The Waunakee Community School District is a collaborative learning community that works with students, staff, families, and the community to ensure that every student is ready for college and career; through a focus on data, research based best practices, and engagement with students to be active partners in their learning.
- **Equity Statement:** The Waunakee Community School District embraces the differences among our students, staff, and families. We work to provide a safe environment with access to resources, opportunities, and instruction for all students to reach their full potential in the classroom and beyond. We strive to create a culture of dialogue, acceptance, and inclusion. We are committed to engaging all students so that they may thrive academically, socially, and emotionally in an ever-changing multicultural society.



# Points of **Purple** Pride



650+ Staff  
15 Average Years of Experience  
27 Current/Past Kohl Fellowship Winners  
12 Teachers with National Board Certification



4,413 Students  
6 Schools  
6 4K Partner Sites



99.1% + Graduation Rate  
71.5% + HS students with 3.0+ GPA  
30 + National Merit Scholar finalists



Five Star Report Card  
High Academic Standards  
13 AP Courses  
22.2 + Average ACT Score



**#1**

**IN DANE  
COUNTY**

**WATKINS**  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

***Earned a Significantly Exceeds Expectations rating on the  
2024–25 Wisconsin State Accountability Report Card.***



# State Accountability Report Card

|                                    | 2020-21 | 2021-22             | 2022-23             | 2023-24             | 2024-25             | NEED |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------|
| Arboretum Elementary School        | 92.1    | 90.4 <sup>(-)</sup> | 86.6 <sup>(-)</sup> | 84.4 <sup>(-)</sup> | 85.2 <sup>(+)</sup> | ---  |
| Heritage Elementary School         | 85.7    | 79.6 <sup>(-)</sup> | 71.7 <sup>(-)</sup> | 72.5 <sup>(+)</sup> | 81.2 <sup>(+)</sup> | 2.8  |
| Prairie Elementary School          | 87.2    | 85.9 <sup>(-)</sup> | 86.2 <sup>(+)</sup> | 87.8 <sup>(+)</sup> | 87.5 <sup>(-)</sup> | ---  |
| Waunakee Intermediate School       | 91.5    | 89.1 <sup>(-)</sup> | 86.6 <sup>(-)</sup> | 88.4 <sup>(+)</sup> | 95.1 <sup>(+)</sup> | ---  |
| Waunakee Community Middle School   | 74.3    | 72.7 <sup>(-)</sup> | 69.8 <sup>(-)</sup> | 70.5 <sup>(+)</sup> | 76.9 <sup>(+)</sup> | 7.1  |
| Waunakee Community High School     | 80.3    | 78.4 <sup>(-)</sup> | 78.5 <sup>(+)</sup> | 76.8 <sup>(-)</sup> | 80.5 <sup>(+)</sup> | 3.5  |
| Waunakee Community School District | 83.0    | 80.7 <sup>(-)</sup> | 79.4 <sup>(-)</sup> | 78.9 <sup>(-)</sup> | 84.6 <sup>(+)</sup> | ---  |

## KEY

Significantly Exceeds Expectations (SEE)  
Exceeds Expectations (EE)  
Meets Expectations (ME)  
Meets Few Expectations (MFE)  
Fails to Meet Expectations (FTME)

(84-100)  
(71-83.9)  
(60-70.9)  
(49-59.9)  
(0-48.9)

*\* Performance category cut scores were increased beginning with the 2024-25 report cards.*

# Two Referendum Questions - What is on the ballot?

## \$10.5M & \$97.5M

### Operational Referendum: (Investing in People)

Would provide additional recurring authority for the district's annual operating budget to keep staff salaries and benefits comparable to Dane County school districts.

### Facilities Referendum: (Investing in Places)

Would authorize general obligation bonds for major facility improvements centered on Waunakee Community High School, the South Campus, and outdoor campus athletic facilities.



# Operational Referendum Overview - Investing in People

- Sole purpose would be to provide competitive compensation to all employee groups (inflation & compensation systems)
- The Board has directed Administration to draft a policy to lower annual amounts if the state budget provides resources to match annual budgetary expenditures.



# Operational Referendum - Comparables School Districts

The Waunakee Community School District spends below the regional average of our comparable districts.

The continuation of the \$2.1 million allows Waunakee Community School District to offer competitive salary/wage increases to all staff.

| School District         | Per-Student Spending |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Verona                  | \$19,476             |
| Middleton-Cross Plains  | \$17,160             |
| Sun Prairie             | \$16,966             |
| Monona Grove            | \$16,860             |
| <b>Regional Average</b> | <b>\$16,839</b>      |
| Stoughton               | \$16,605             |
| Mount Horeb             | \$16,461             |
| Oregon                  | \$16,398             |
| <b>Waunakee</b>         | <b>\$16,106</b>      |
| DeForest                | \$15,515             |

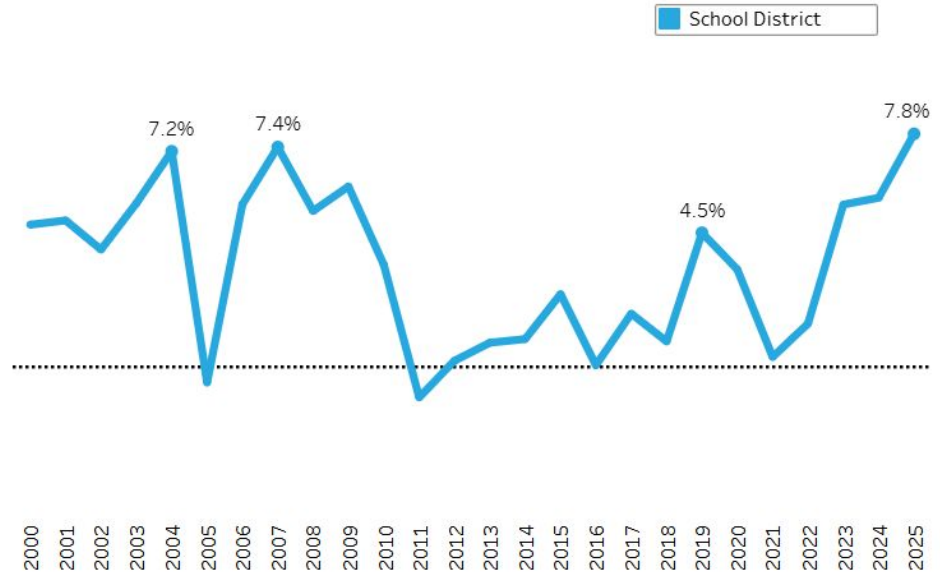


# Operational Referendum Overview - Investing in People

**Figure 1: K-12 Property Taxes Jump by Highest Amount Since 1992**

% change in K-12 school, county and tech college property tax levies by year, 2000 to 2025

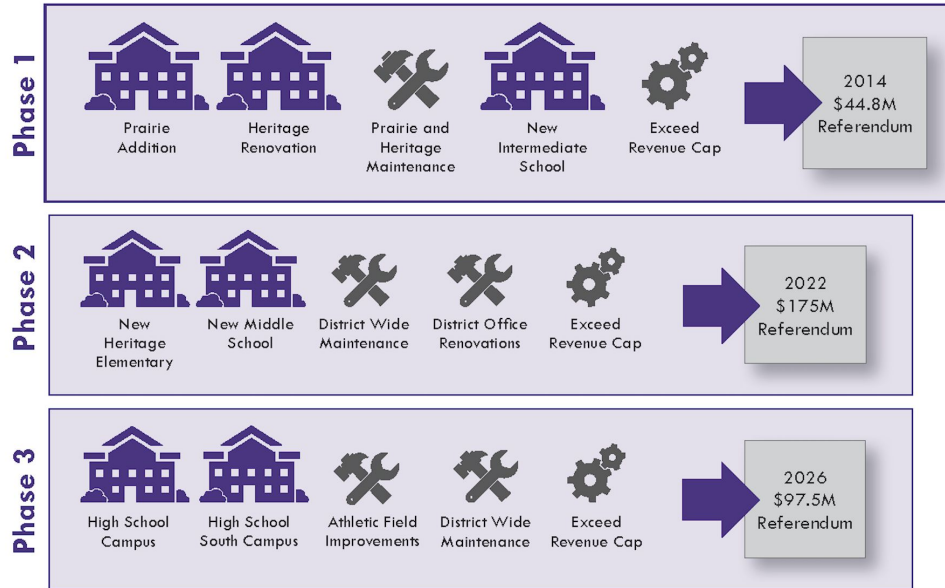
2025-26 tax levy included a \$2.3 million reduction under what was allowed to be levied for WCSD by the State of Wisconsin.



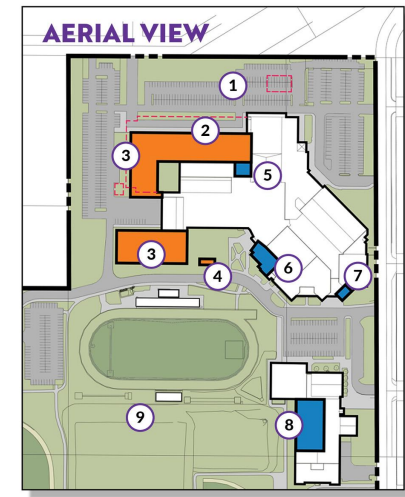
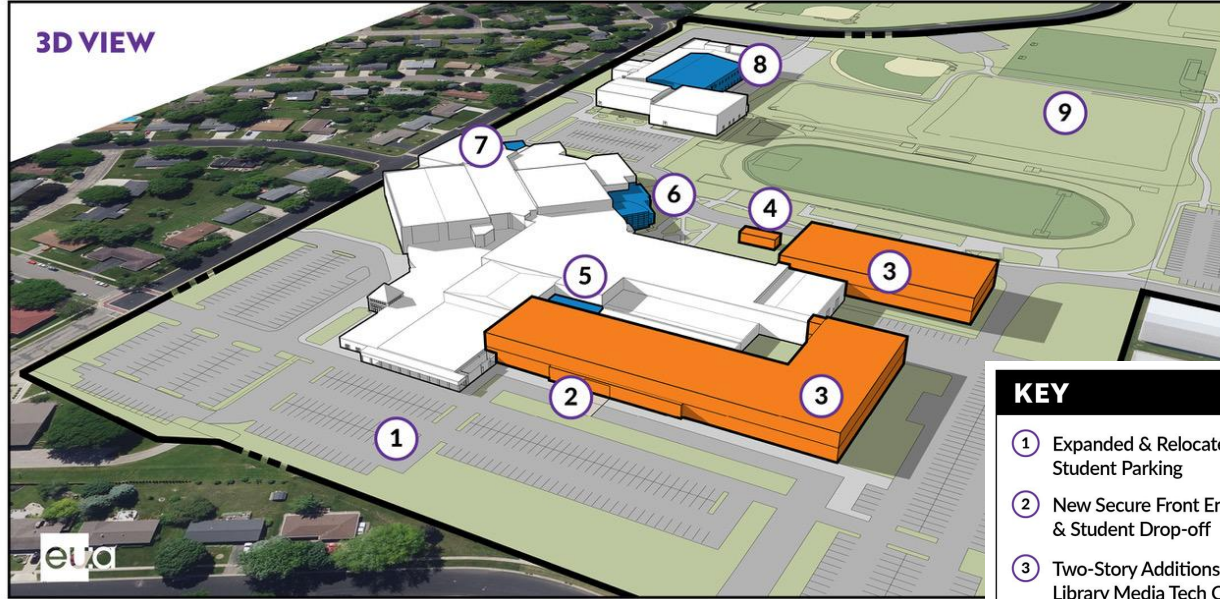
# Facilities Referendum Overview - Investing in Places

## A Long-Range, Phased Approach

Phase 1 (Complete) ➡ Phase 2 (Complete) ➡ Phase 3 (Future)



# Proposed Facilities Project Overview



## KEY

eua

- |                                                                                                                   |                                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| ① Expanded & Relocated Student Parking                                                                            | ⑤ Commercial Culinary Classroom & Lab      |
| ② New Secure Front Entrance & Student Drop-off                                                                    | ⑥ Expanded Performing Arts Learning Spaces |
| ③ Two-Story Additions for Library Media Tech Center (LMTC), Core Classrooms, Labs including Science & Agriculture | ⑦ Family Locker Room Facilities            |
| ④ Greenhouse                                                                                                      | ⑧ Team Locker Rooms & Weight Room          |
|                                                                                                                   | ⑨ Outdoor Athletic Improvements            |

■ New Construction   ■ Heavy Renovation   - - - - Removal of Oldest Portion of School

**NOTE:** Site plans are preliminary and conceptual at this time.  
Final design will evolve pending a successful referendum.



# Tax Impact: Operational & Facility Referenda

| Property Value | Q1: Operational<br><i>(Increase of \$0.17<br/>per \$1,000)</i> | Q2: Capital<br><i>(Increase of \$0.25<br/>per \$1,000)</i> | Annual Combined<br>Tax Impact |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Per \$100,000  | \$17.00                                                        | \$25.00                                                    | \$42.00                       |
| \$300,000      | \$51.00                                                        | \$75.00                                                    | \$126.00                      |
| \$500,000      | \$85.00                                                        | \$125.00                                                   | \$210.00                      |
| \$750,000      | \$127.50                                                       | \$187.50                                                   | \$315.00                      |

*\*Tax impacts shown are estimates based on interest rates, borrowing length and timing, and may change.*



# Voting Information

Election Day is Tuesday, November 3, 2026

MyVote Wisconsin: <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/Register-To-Vote>

- Register to vote
- Find your polling place
- Absentee Voting by Mail or In-Person information available



# Upcoming Community Informational Sessions

## Community Drop-In Sessions

September 23 | 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. | Bethel Circle District Office

September 29 | 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. | M-N-M Coffeehouse

October 1 | 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. | Waunakee Public Library

October 5 | 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. | Starbucks Waunakee

October 15 | 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. | Grace's Coffee

October 21 | 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. | Waunakee Village Center

October 22 | 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. | Bethel Circle District Office

## Virtual Information Sessions

October 6 | 1:00 p.m.

October 6 | 6:00 p.m.



# Upcoming Community Sessions and Tours

## Community Drop-In Sessions and Building Tours Tuesday, September 29

9:00 - 10:00 a.m. | High School Tour at Waunakee Community High School

10:00 - 10:30 a.m. | Information Session at WCHS

5:30 - 6:30 p.m. | High School Tour at Waunakee Community High School

6:30 - 7:00 p.m. | Information Session at WCHS

\*Waunakee Community High School (WCHS), 301 Community Drive,  
Waunakee, WI 53597

## Community Drop-In Sessions and Building Tours Tuesday, October 13

9:00 - 10:00 a.m. | High School Tour at Waunakee Community High School

10:00 - 10:30 a.m. | Information Session at WCHS

5:30 - 6:30 p.m. | High School Tour at Waunakee Community High School

6:30 - 7:00 p.m. | Information Session at WCHS

\*Waunakee Community High School (WCHS), 301 Community Drive,  
Waunakee, WI 53597



# Where Can I Learn More?

Email:

[wcsd\\_communications@waunakee.k12.wi.us](mailto:wcsd_communications@waunakee.k12.wi.us)

Website:

<https://www.waunakee.k12.wi.us/community/2026referendum>





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