



WORKING TOGETHER FOR A STRONG FUTURE

A Phased Approach: Built on Community Input

For more than a decade, the Waunakee Community School District has taken a **strategic, long-range approach** to facilities and financial planning. Guided by ongoing community input, this work has focused on offering robust academic programs and services, retaining high quality staff, and providing modern learning environments to students and staff across our district.

The proposed 2026 referendum questions represent the third phase of our comprehensive long-range planning. They address both the district's ongoing operational funding needs and facility improvements at Waunakee Community High School.



Ask questions. Learn more.

Community Information Sessions & High School Tours

Community members are invited to visit Waunakee Community High School on Tuesday, October 13 for a building tour and referendum information session. This is an opportunity to see the high school firsthand, learn more about the two referendum questions, and ask questions of district representatives, design, and construction partners.

Tuesday, October 13 | Waunakee Community High School Informational Sessions and Tours

Morning: 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.

Evening: 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Additional community drop-in sessions, virtual information sessions, and community presentations are scheduled throughout the fall. For a complete listing of dates, times, and locations, visit our referendum website.

CONTACT:

Email: wcsd_communications@waunakee.k12.wi.us

Phone: (608) 849-2000

www.waunakee.k12.wi.us Follow Us:    

Si tiene alguna pregunta o necesita este material en español, envíe un correo electrónico a wcsd_communications@waunakee.k12.wi.us



Voting Information

Remember to Vote:

Tuesday, November 3, 2026

Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

To find your polling location, check your voter registration status, view a sample ballot, or learn more about absentee voting, visit MyVote Wisconsin at myvote.wi.gov.

<https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/My-Ballot>

**Make Sure to
Flip the Ballot!**



2026 REFERENDUM

VOTE NOV 3

WHAT IS ON THE BALLOT TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3?

Question #1: Investing in People *(Operational Referendum)*

This operational referendum would provide recurring funding for the district's annual operating budget. These funds are used to provide competitive salaries and benefits to attract and retain high quality staff.

If approved, the district would maintain its current annual operational funding of \$2.1 million (approved in 2024) and increase this amount by up to \$2.1 million per year. The additional amount would be phased in over four years, beginning in the 2027-2028 school year. After the four-year phase-in, our new revenue limit would remain at this level.

Question #2: Investing in Places *(Capital Referendum)*

The capital referendum would provide funding for the next phase of the district's long-range facilities plan, focused primarily on Waunakee Community High School. The proposed improvements would modernize learning spaces, enhance safety and security, and update aging infrastructure.

If approved, the project cost would not exceed \$97.5 million, including approximately:

- **WCHS renovation and new construction** — \$88.7 million
- **South Campus (former Middle School) renovations** — \$4.4 million
- **Outdoor athletic fields and facilities** — \$4.4 million

Why Now? Maximizing the 4K-12 Student Experience

Students learn differently today than when many areas of Waunakee Community High School were originally built. The proposed plan addresses several identified needs:

- **Modern Learning Spaces:** Update classrooms, science labs, career and technical education spaces, and flexible learning areas to support current and future programming.
- **Safety and Security:** Improve secure access, campus traffic flow, and emergency response capabilities.
- **Aging Infrastructure:** Address portions of the high school that are more than 55 years old.
- **Expanded Learning Spaces:** Expand space and student access to high-demand programs, including Health Sciences, Agriculture, Culinary Arts, and more.



Understanding the Proposed Referendum Questions



Question #1 (Operational Referendum) Investing in People \$10.5 Million

Question 1: Operational Referendum

Waunakee School District to Exceed the Revenue Limit Referendum
Shall the Waunakee Community School District, Dane County, Wisconsin be authorized to exceed the revenue limit specified in Section 121.91, Wisconsin Statutes, by \$4,200,000 for the 2027-2028 school year; by an additional \$2,100,000 for the 2028-2029 school year; by an additional \$2,100,000 for the 2029-2030 school year; and by an additional \$2,100,000 for the 2030-2031 school year (for a total of \$10,500,000 and to remain at that amount thereafter), for recurring purposes consisting of ongoing operational expenses and employee compensation expenses?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Why Per-Student Spending Matters

The Waunakee Community School District remains focused on using its resources responsibly while maintaining strong educational programming and positive student outcomes. The School Board has established a goal to maintain employee salaries and benefits at the average of comparable Dane County school districts. At \$16,106 per student, the district's spending is below the regional average of \$16,839.

This comparison provides important financial context for the 2026 referendum:

- Financial responsibility:** The district works to balance available resources with the programs, services, and staff needed to support students.
- Purposeful spending:** District resources are directed toward classroom instruction, student services, operations, and other areas that support student learning.
- Transparency:** Sharing financial comparisons helps community members understand how WCSD spending compares with neighboring school districts and why additional funding is being requested.

The district's goal is to continue providing high-quality educational opportunities while carefully managing taxpayer resources and maintaining the programs and services our students currently receive.

Did You Know?

State funding that has not kept pace with inflation has created an estimated shortfall of \$3,379 per student. For the Waunakee Community School District, this equals an estimated total funding shortfall of \$14,853,650.

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

SOURCE: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Comparative Cost Per Member data.

Question #2 (Facilities Referendum) Investing in Places \$97.5 Million

Question 2: Facilities Referendum

Waunakee School District General Obligation Bonds not to Exceed \$97,500,000 Referendum
Shall the Waunakee Community School District, Dane County, Wisconsin be authorized to issue pursuant to Chapter 67 of the Wisconsin Statutes, general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$97,500,000 for the public purpose of paying the cost of a school facility improvement project consisting of: removal of an older portion of the High School and construction of additions and renovations at the High School; renovations at the old middle school (known as the High School South Campus); outdoor athletic field renovations and improvements at the High School Campus; district-wide renovations, capital maintenance and site improvements; and acquisition of furnishings, fixtures and equipment?

☐ Yes ☐ No

What is in the Proposed Plan for Waunakee Community High School?

- Modern Learning Spaces
- Enhanced Safety & Security
- Expanded Program Opportunities

3D VIEW

AERIAL VIEW

KEY

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

WHAT IS THE TAX IMPACT OF BOTH QUESTIONS?

Property Value	Q1: Operational (Increase of \$0.17 per \$1,000)	Q2: Capital (Increase of \$0.25 per \$1,000)	Annual Combined 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 terms and timing, and may change.

Example: For a home with an estimated fair market value of \$500,000, the combined estimated property tax impact would be approximately \$210 per year (or about \$17.50 per month).

Did You Know?

WCSD combines an experienced workforce with strong student outcomes. Our 670+ staff average 16 years of experience, and 95.5% of teachers returned from the previous school year. At the same time, WCSD maintains a 99.1%+ graduation rate, with more than 74.7% of high school students earning a 3.0 GPA or higher.

LEARN MORE:



www.waunakee.k12.wi.us/community/2026referendum
or **SCAN QR CODE** to access our website.



2026 REFERENDUM

Make Sure to
Flip the Ballot!

VOTE NOV 3