



LEVY 2026 FACT SHEET

<https://www.hayfield.k12.mn.us/2026-2027-operating-referendum>

**Voting
Nov. 3**

What is an Operating Levy?

An Operating Levy Referendum is an election ballot question that asks voters to support a local property tax that allows school districts to generate additional general education revenue. This funding can be used for any operating or capital expense as decided by the School Board.

How Does This Proposal Replace the 2021 Levy?

The proposed levy would replace the current 10-year operating levy approved by voters in 2021, which is now in year five. The two levies would not be added together; if approved, the new 10-year levy would replace the existing levy and provide additional operating revenue based on the district's current financial needs. This approach allows us to reset our 10-year plan while asking taxpayers for only what we believe we absolutely need.



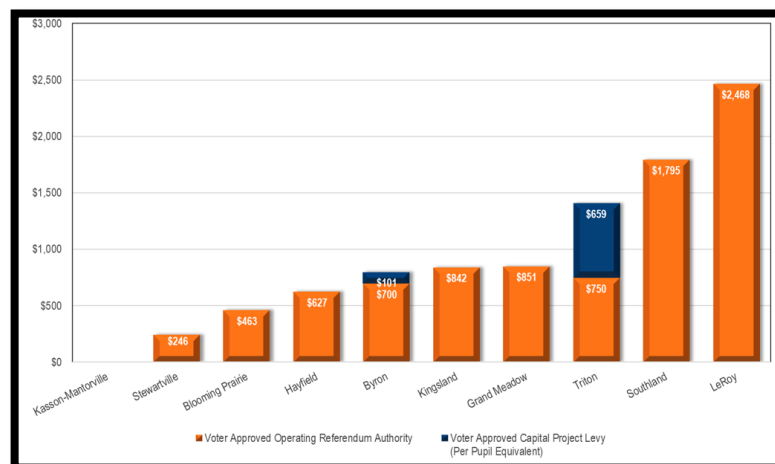
How Does the District Use the Operating Levy Funding?

The proposed levy would generate approximately \$395,000 in additional funding each year. These dollars would be used to support the district's day-to-day operations, including staffing, educational programs, transportation, special education, utilities, insurance, technology, and other rising operating costs. Most importantly, this funding will help the district maintain current programs and services while working toward a balanced and financially sustainable budget.

What is the Operating Levy Based on?

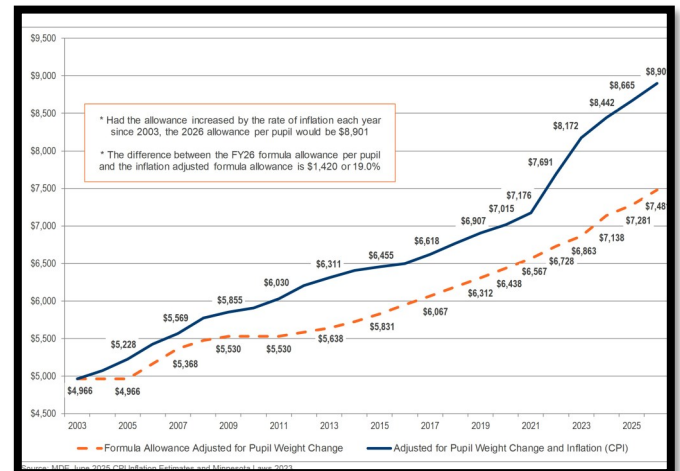
Homes and businesses pay taxes for the proposed operating referendum. This includes the house, garage and one acre (HGA). Please note that agricultural property outside of the HGA does not pay taxes toward the operating referendum.

How Does the Hayfield Voter Approved Operating Referendum Compare to Other Local School Districts?



Why do schools need Operating Levies?

Nearly three out of every four Minnesota school districts rely on an operating referendum to help fund their schools. One major reason is that the state's General Education funding formula has not kept pace with inflation since 2002-03; if it had, state funding would be approximately \$1,420 more per student in 2025-26. Other funding sources, including special education, have also not kept pace with actual costs, leaving districts with two primary choices: reduce programs and services or ask local voters for additional operating revenue.





What did I vote for in 2017?

The 2017 referendum was a building bond used for school building and facility improvements. The 2026 Operating Levy is different. It supports the day-to-day costs of educating our students.

2017 was for the building. 2026 is for operating our schools

What If this proposed Operating Levy is Not passed?

If the levy does not pass, the School Board will be required to consider significant budget reductions to address the district's financial shortfall. Possible impacts could include:

- Larger class sizes
- Fewer course offerings
- Reductions in student programs and services
- Reductions in staffing
- Reduced extracurricular opportunities

Continued deficit spending is not sustainable, and without additional revenue, difficult decisions will need to be made to balance the district's budget.



Hayfield School Board Members

Patrick Towey Jr., Chair
 ptowey@hayfield.k12.mn.us
 Kathy Hegna Zelinske, Vice Chair
 kzelinske@hayfield.k12.mn.us
 Chad O'Connor, Clerk
 co'conner@hayfield.k12.mn.us
 Justin Holtan, Treasurer
 jholtan@hayfield.k12.mn.us
 Curt Heydt, Director
 cheydt@hayfield.k12.mn.us
 Heather Swygman, Director
 hswygman@hayfield.k12.mn.us
 Tyler Anderson, Director
 tanderson@hayfield.k12.mn.us

Public Informational Meetings

Oct. 21, 2026	Hayfield HS Cafeteria	7:00 pm
Oct. 28, 2026	Brownsdale Community Center	7:00 pm

Prepared and paid for by Independent School District No. 203
 (Hayfield Community Schools)
<http://hayfield.k12.mn.us>

This publication is not circulated on behalf of any candidate or ballot questions.

*Proudly Serving the Communities of
 Brownsdale, Hayfield, Oslo, Sargeant, and Waltham*

