

Levy Questions and Answers

How can I get my levy questions answered?

There will be three informational meetings that you could attend:

Monday, January 13th 7:00 p.m. Carson PUD Meeting Room 1492 Wind River Hwy, Carson	Wednesday, January 15th 10:00 a.m. District Office 350 NW Bulldog Drive, Stevenson	Wednesday, January 15th 7:00 p.m. Stevenson Elementary School 100 NW School Street, Stevenson
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You could also e-mail or call the superintendent, Karen Douglass.

douglassk@scsd303.org 427-5674

Is this a new tax?

No. The proposed levy replaces the levy that will expire at the end of 2020. The taxes will appear and be collected on your 2021, 2022, and 2023 tax bills.

Is this levy tax rate increased from the current estimated tax rate?

No. The current tax rate for 2020 is estimated to be \$2.18 per \$1,000 assessed property value. The replacement levy for 2021, 2022, and 2023 is estimated to be \$2.17 per \$1,000 assessed property value.

Why are the levy tax rates “estimated”?

School districts ask their voters for a specific total amount in their levies. However, in order to help our voters understand the impact of the levy, we estimate the tax rate based on property values and growth. Unlike other public entities, like fire districts, we do not collect more money if property value rises. We will collect approximately the same amount. In fact, our taxpayers will see a decrease in the school tax rate if property value rises.

How much would the district collect if this replacement levy is approved by voters?

Year	Amount of Collection	Estimated Tax Rate
2020	\$2.0 Million	\$2.18 (already approved)
2021	\$2.1 Million	\$2.17
2022	\$2.21 Million	\$2.17
2023	\$2.3 Million	\$2.17

Doesn't the state pay for basic education?

The state does not fully fund the cost of basic education. It is anticipated that 14% of the SCSD budget for the 20-21 school year would come from local funds should the levy be renewed.

Local levy dollars provide our students with important learning programs, classroom support, and day-to-day district operations.

Do other communities pay a levy tax for their school districts?

Yes. There are **295** school districts in Washington State. In 2018 there were **288** that had voter-approved levies to support their students.

Why do some neighboring school districts not ask for a local levy?

Districts with under 100 students get special funding from the state at a much higher rate per student than districts like Stevenson-Carson School district.

What does the district do with SRS funds?

The district desires to build a district budget that does not rely on SRS for daily operations. Any SRS funds received by the school district, after an approved levy, would be used for one time projects (capital outlay—roofs, student desks, new construction) and would not be used for the day-to-day operations.

How does a levy get approved?

All active registered voters in the Stevenson-Carson School District receive a ballot. Over 50% of voters must vote “yes” in order to approve the levy.

What happens if the levy does not pass?

District staff would recommend the Board run the levy again. If the levy fails twice, District funding would be reduced by up to \$2.1 million resulting in significant budget cuts to staff, programs, and operations.

What are levy equalization funds?

If the levy is approved, the District will receive approximately \$65,000 more in State levy equalization funds in 2021 and similar amounts in 2022-2023. The state provides this money to school districts, which have relatively low property values so students in less affluent or smaller districts receive a comparable education to students in wealthier districts.

How did the district use previous approved levy dollars?

Improved Technology: Students have access to more than 450 additional computers and many staff have learned new ways to integrate technology into curriculum.

Updated Curriculum: Reading and science curriculums have been updated and a new social studies curriculum adoption is underway.

Improved Health and Safety: Staff funded to provide for health and safety needs including a social-emotional teacher, nurse, counselor, several recess supervisors, and cooks. New security cameras, door locks and monitoring systems have been added to our infrastructure.

Improved Facilities: New roofing on our vocational education buildings at Stevenson High School was funded with levy dollars. Windows and HVAC systems were also updated to become

more energy efficient. In addition, levy dollars also contributed to pavement repairs, and staff time to seek additional grants for facilities updates and repairs.

Supported Academic Success: Current 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students have consistently demonstrated growth in English Language Arts (ELA), as a cohort, over time. Current 10th grade students exceeded the state average on ELA for the first time, 8th grade math scores more than doubled from last year, and 8th grade science scores are above the state average. The District has not yet reached all of its academic goals, but we are making progress!

Funded Extracurricular Activities: Opportunities outside of the school day, clubs and athletics, are important and possible because of levy dollars.

Why are sports always included in the list of items funded by the levy?

The state does not fully fund the cost of basic education. Furthermore, the state does not provide ANY funding for sports, clubs, or other activities outside of the school day. In order for these activities to be offered to our students, local funding must bridge the gap.

How do I better understand the whole school district budget and process?

The school district budget is posted here: <http://scsd303.ss14.sharpschool.com/info/budget>

An introductory video of Washington State School budgeting can be found here:
<https://www.esd112.org/schoolfunding/>

If you have questions about the district budget and our process for preparing the budget each year, please contact our Business Manager, Kathy McKee mckeek@scsd303.org 427-5674

If you have a question that is not on this list, please e-mail it to Karen Douglass.
douglassk@scsd303.org