

# Hillsdale RENEWAL Levy Questions and Answers

1. Why combine all three levies as one issue on the ballot?

The Hillsdale School system currently has three operating levies that expire at the same times. The terms of these levies are 2 years, 4 years and 5 years. With these different term lengths there is an alignment of all 3 levies once every 20 years. The goals of combining the levies are to eliminate voter fatigue, save on attorney fees and actual election cost.

2. What is the term length of the Renewal levy?

This levy is for a period of 5 years.

3. With the passage of the income tax, could one of these levies been eliminated?

This district is currently operating on an approximate \$10,000,000 budget after all the cuts of 2013. By eliminating the levy collecting the least amount our projected carryover would be \$98,261 in the school year 2018/19. This figure represents staying at status quo. It would not allow us to consider educational opportunities that our students have lost.

4. Could this levy have been combined, but for less mills?

Any change to the current millage would constitute a new levy and the district would lose an additional 12.5% of the collected amount, as the Homestead Exemption and Rollback reimbursement through the state would be eliminated. As long as you are running renewals the district keeps this state reimbursement. Currently through the Homestead Exemption and Rollback reimbursement we received \$324,000 in 2014 from these three levies.

5. I know this is a renewal levy, but what is the Property Owner paying per \$100,000 of property evaluation?

This renewal will not increase home owners' taxes. The property owner would continue to pay approximately \$41 a month per \$100,000 of evaluation.

6. With passing this levy will programs be reinstated?

This district lost a good number of opportunities for our students before the passage of the income tax levy. We stated with the passage of the income tax levy that we would still have to operate cautiously as we had all 3 of the operating levies expiring at the same time. With the passage of the renewal levy we will be scheduling a work session with the Board of Education to discuss what programming can be brought back and on what timeline this can happen. The Board of Education will have input from the Strategic Planning Committee, student surveys and from the community.

7. When do you foresee going to the tax payers for additional dollars?

My goal as Superintendent is not to go back to the voters for additional operating dollars as long as I am here! We need to continue to look at cost saving measures to ensure this. I am in strong support of reinstating some lost opportunities for our students, but not at the expense of asking voters for additional support.

8. How has our district been affected from the recent cuts?

The recent cuts and the higher extracurricular fees of two years ago have had a major impact on this district. Whenever you lose opportunities for students, you have students and families looking for additional means to provide this through Open Enrollment or online opportunities. Each student we lose cost this district approximately \$5,800. We are trying to be proactive guarding against this potential financial hit. We do have a total online curriculum. This has allowed us to keep some students from departing and keep our local tax dollars in the district. This also can be a huge benefit to our home schooling community as we can provide an educational opportunity through Hillsdale, the student would still be in the home setting and we would receive state funding for those students. Hillsdale has traditionally brought in more dollars through open enrollment than we have lost. The last two years we have seen a slight trend of this leveling out. I believe that this is a direct effect of lost opportunities and higher participation fees.

9. What effect does the property reappraisal process have on this levy?

Property reappraisal happens throughout the county every six years. There is also a triennial update every three years. During these times you can have an adjustment in the actual amount of taxes you are paying. Individually your taxes could adjust to a less or higher amount. The one constant is that the school district does not receive any additional funds from the renewal during the reappraisal. The district does receive additional funds through new construction.

Please contact Superintendent, Steve Dickerson for questions you may have.  
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