

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 time. 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. These 3 levies represent 25% of our current operating budget. Eliminating one of the levies would result in additional cuts. Combining the levies would eliminate voter fatigue, save on attorney fees and actual election cost.

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

Eliminating a levy was considered. The district is operating on a \$10M budget after the cuts of 2013. If a levy was eliminated we would be operating "status quo" for a couple years and then we would be looking at additional cuts. The elimination of a levy would not allow the district to consider bringing back lost opportunities for our students.

3. 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.

4. 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 \$36.16 a month per \$100,000 of evaluation.

5. With passing this levy will programs be reinstated?

Reinstating and expanding programs is certainly the goal. The district will continue to act cautiously as fluctuations and uncertainty in state funding could certainly impact the district. However, the Board of Education has been working with the Strategic Planning Committee to discuss what programming and opportunities can be brought back to our students. Based on feedback from the Strategic Planning Committee, students and public, in 2015-2016, we hope to provide additional agricultural/STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) programming, hire a full-time technology coordinator, and update the district's technology to be Wi-Fi compatible. In 2016-2017, we hope to update science and social studies curriculum, reinstate Family and Consumer Science classes, and expand College Credit Plus, STEAM, art and music classes. We encourage everyone to attend the Strategic Planning Committee meetings and provide input regarding priorities. Our next meeting is May 11th, at 6:30pm, in the High School Library.

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

Cuts from programming have had an impact on the students and the community. When opportunities are limited and even eliminated, students and their parents look at other opportunities. This ultimately impacts the district financially. Each student who open enrolls to another district is a loss of \$5,800 in Funding per year. Traditionally, the district has brought in more open enrollment students than we have lost, but we have had an increase in students leaving the district. Even though we are still positive in students open enrolling into our district, we have seen a decrease in revenue of \$30,000 since the cuts of 2013.

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