

Facts about 2007 Seattle Public Schools Levy and Bond

Seattle residents will have an opportunity to vote on two school measures Tuesday, February 6, 2007 – an operations levy and a capital projects bond.

The Capital Bond

\$490 million - Proposition 1

- Is a short-term, six-year bond that would allow the District to borrow money upfront and repay it at a lower interest rate than it would cost to pay construction-related cost increases due to inflation over time.
- Continues the District's long-range plan for funding new construction and building renovation or additions.
- Pays for 26 projects and contains three major components: buildings, infrastructure improvements and technology.
- Building projects include renovation and replacement of secondary school facilities throughout the city.
- Infrastructure improvements focus on replacement of water piping, improvements in indoor air quality and replacement of athletic fields.

The Educational Programs and Operations (EP&O) Levy

\$397 million - Proposition 2

- Makes up 23 percent of the District's annual general fund budget.
- Supports basic education programs not fully funded by the state.
- Replaces an expiring, three-year levy that voters approved in 2004 and have supported every three years since 1976.

The EP&O Levy would help pay for many educational needs, including:

Full-day kindergarten. Continuation of one, full-day kindergarten class at each school. (The State of Washington pays only for half-day kindergarten.)

Bilingual services. Continuation of English Language Learners classes at a number of elementary schools and the Secondary Bilingual Orientation Center for older students. Also maintain funding of a Bilingual Family Center that provides translation services and support for families.

Special Education services. Ongoing funding for a wide range of special education services to students with disabilities ranging from communication disorders and vision, hearing and health impairments to autism, traumatic brain injury and multiple disabilities.

Student transportation. Funding for transportation twice daily for more than 25,000 Seattle students riding either traditional yellow school buses or Metro buses.

What the Capital Bond would help pay for:

The following major capital construction and renovation projects

- Renovations at Hamilton International Middle School and Nathan Hale High School
- Replacement of the South Shore building
- Implementation of the Denny-Sealth Campus Plan, including a new Denny building, new common facilities and a renovated Chief Sealth building
- Construction of the Rainier Beach Career and Technology Center
- An addition to Ingraham High School

Waterline projects. Replacement of waterlines at Graham Hill, Lowell, McClure, Mercer, Montlake, Sanislo and Summit K-12 schools.

Indoor air quality. Improvement to indoor air quality at Ingraham, Loyal Heights, Montlake, Rainier Beach, Sacajawea and Whitworth schools.

Athletic fields projects. Replacement of turf at Denny/Chief Sealth field and Summit/Nathan Hale fields; installation of new synthetic turf at Eckstein field; and the renovation of Hiawatha field.

The following technology improvements:

- Replacement of outdated classroom technology equipment; training for teachers; continuation of student access to online database resources at school and home; and development of academic online resources and distance learning programs.
- Technology to support community engagement, including continued development of The Source, a Web site for parents that provides online information about their student's grades, assessments, homework, and attendance; and establishing a program to make computers available to students who don't have one at home.
- Upgrades to academic and business data processes and communications.
- Continued improvements in the technology infrastructure district-wide.

General levy and bond facts:

- Of 10 local school districts in Puget Sound, Seattle has the third lowest levy rate. The tax rate for Seattle school levies will remain at or below current levels.
- The money to operate Seattle Public schools comes from multiple sources, with the largest share (55 percent) provided by the state and the second largest share provided by the local levy (23 percent).
- A levy will be approved if the measures receive a supermajority "yes" vote of 60 percent. In addition, at least 40 percent of the total number of voters who cast a ballot in the November 2006 election must vote on Tuesday, February 6, 2007 to validate the school levy vote.
- While Seattle Public Schools has made tough decisions to achieve a balanced budget and replenish reserves, the district also faces what is known as a structural deficit. That's because state funding is not keeping pace with the inflation-driven costs associated with running schools, including transportation, utilities, health care and salaries. As a result, Seattle – like other school districts statewide – has to rely on local levies to make up the difference for basic education needs.