

Seattle Public Schools Education Levies

Staff Recommendations to the Seattle School Board



BUILDING
— FOR —
LEARNING

EDUCATION LEVIES 2025

Community Information Sessions

Nov. 7, 2024

Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that we are on ancestral lands and traditional territories of the Puget Sound Coast Salish People.

Agenda

- Welcome and introductions
- Our current budget climate
- Overview of our two levies
 - Educational Programs & Operations Levy (EP&O)
 - Building Excellence VI Capital Levy (BEX VI)
- Questions and answers: submit your levy questions in the Q&A button in the Teams menu

About SPS School Levies

Local property taxes used to fund public schools

- Must be approved by voters
- All funding stays in Seattle to support our students and schools
- Not new taxes
 - If approved, these levies continue current funding sources
- Fixed amount collected over life of levy



Two SPS Education Levies Up for Renewal

Educational Programs & Operations Levy (EP&O) renewal

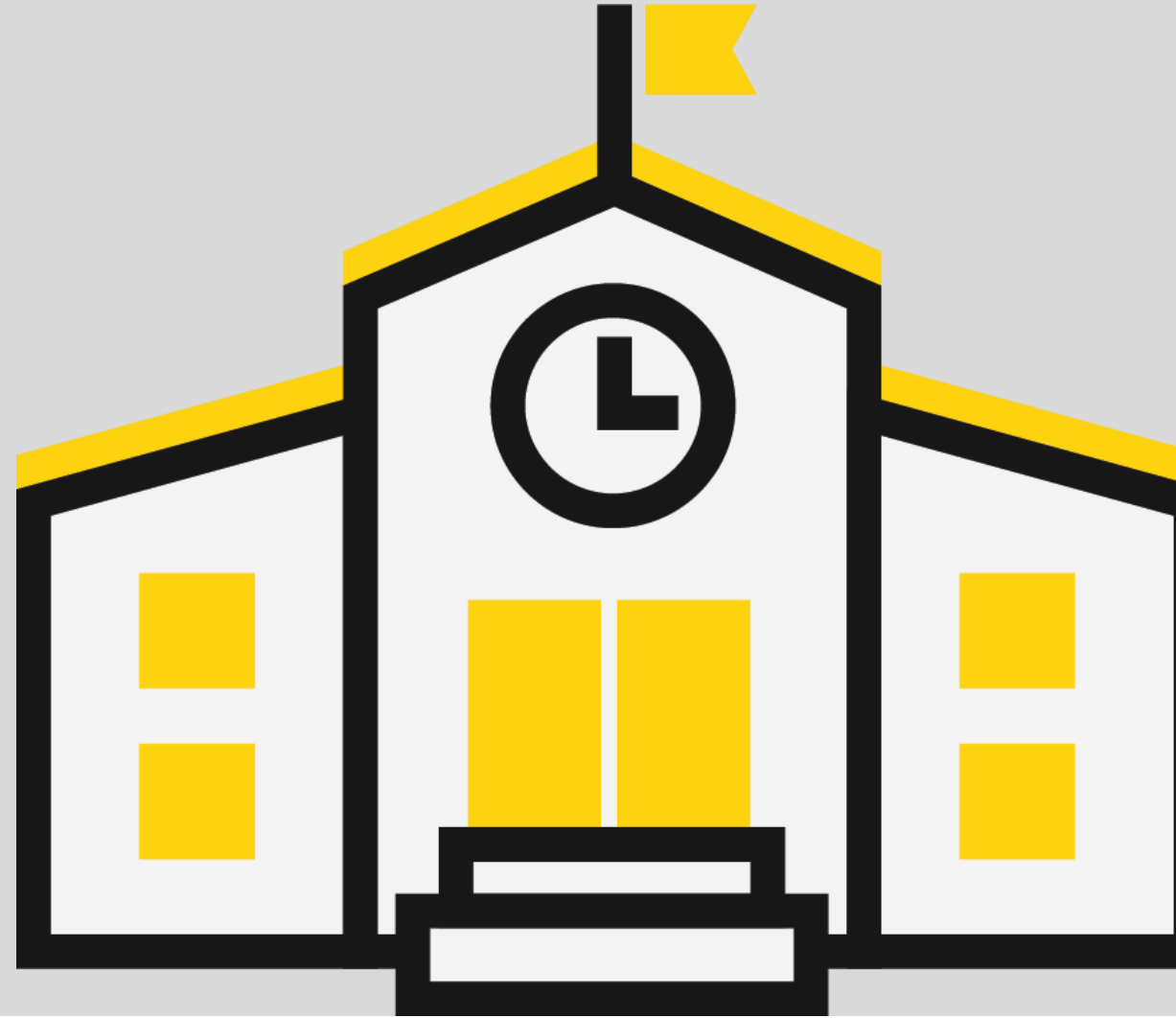
- Provides day-to-day operations not fully funded by by state
- Funds staff positions, special education, and programs and opportunities for students such as athletics, drama, and art

Capital Levy renewal

- Main source of funding for safety and security improvements, technology, and school building replacement, renovation, and repair

**If Seattle School Board approves on Nov. 19,
these levy renewals will be on the Feb. 11, 2025, ballot**

Our Current Budget Climate

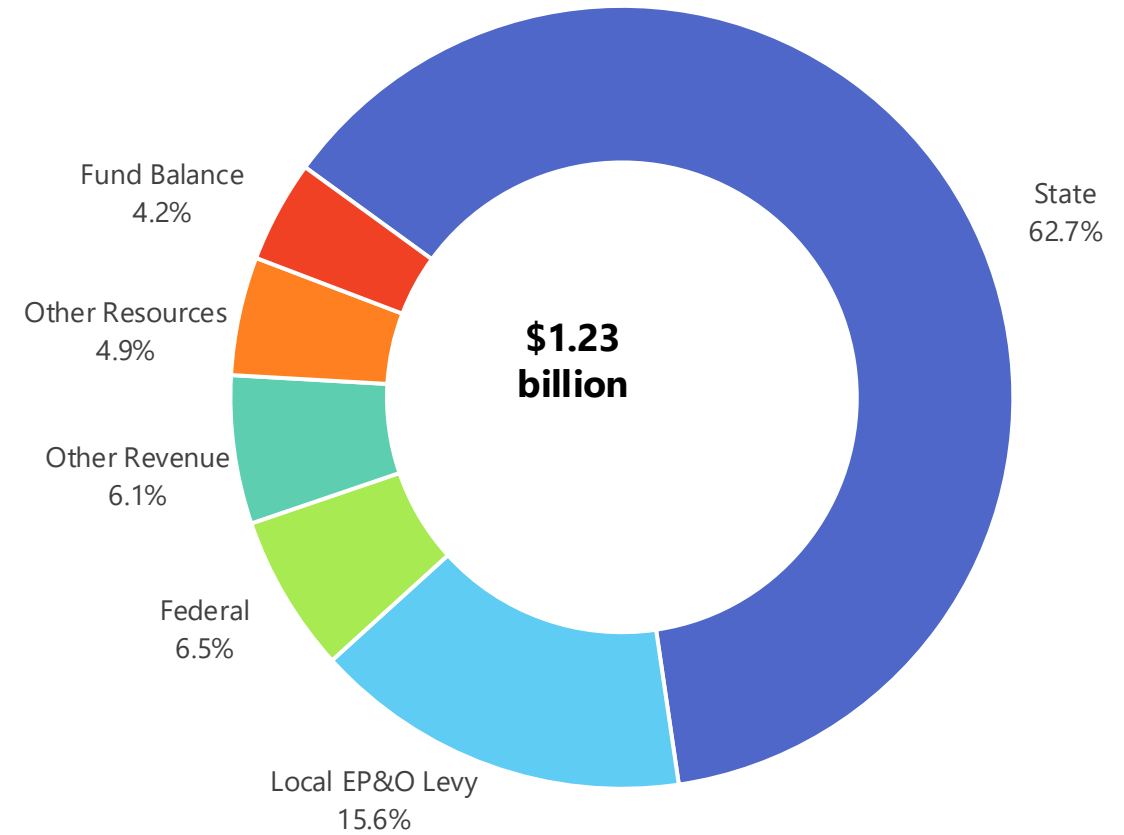


K-12 Funding in Seattle

- School districts are funded through state, local, and federal dollars.
- \$191.1 million or 15.6 percent of the District's 2024-25 General Fund comes from voter-approved local levy funding.

2024-25 Budgeted Resources by Type

percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding



Current SPS Funding Deficit

\$1.2 billion yearly budget and a \$94 million deficit

- Why?
 - Continued underfunding from the state
 - Costs to operate have increased
 - Increased needs
 - Security
 - Special Education services
 - Multi-language learners
 - Substitutes
 - More



Current SPS Funding Deficit

- Making significant cuts to help close shortfall.
- Continuing to work with state legislators to find statewide funding solutions
- In addition to considering school consolidations:
 - Reduced reserves to cover current costs
 - Salary cuts for non-represented staff; reductions in central office staff and expenses
 - Reduced school staffing and discretionary allocations
 - Implemented fees, including voluntary athletic fees for families



Renewal of the Educational Programs & Operations Levy (EP&O)

Educational Programs and Operations Levy

Helps continue funding for day-to-day educational programs and services not fully funded by the state

- **Student safety and support:** Funds salaries, including school security, special education, and multilingual support staff
- **Student services and programs:** Ensures continued funding for special education, healthy student meals, and student transportation
- **Student opportunities:** Supports student activities such as athletics, arts, music, and drama

Restrictions on EP&O Levies

State Law

- Limits amount school districts may collect
- Amount has changed
 - Washington Supreme Court decision in McCleary v. State and subsequent changes in state law further restricted the amount school districts can ask for in local taxes

Our Financial Ask

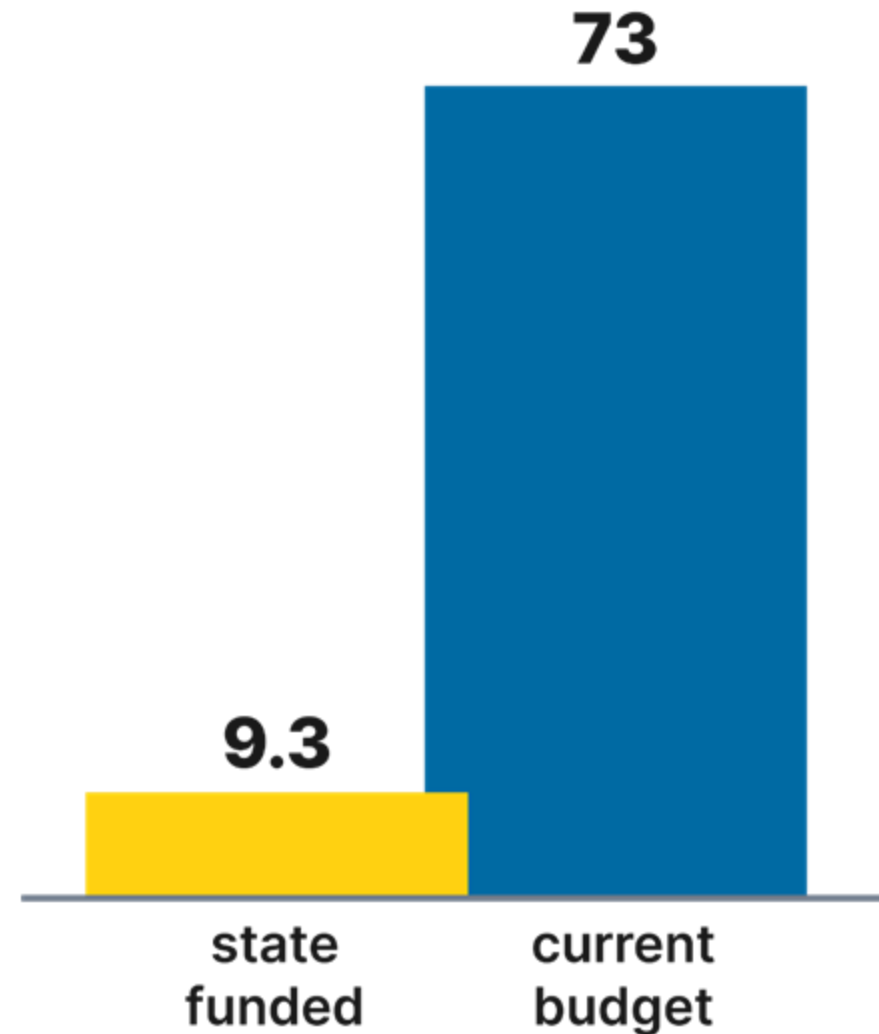
- Request maximum allowed plus additional amount in case state increases limit during 3-year levy
- Extra amount not collected unless authorized by state Legislature

Example of the Funding Gap

Security Staff

The state funds 9.3 security specialists for Seattle Public Schools.

Levy funds are used to provide an additional 63.7 security specialists for a total of 73.



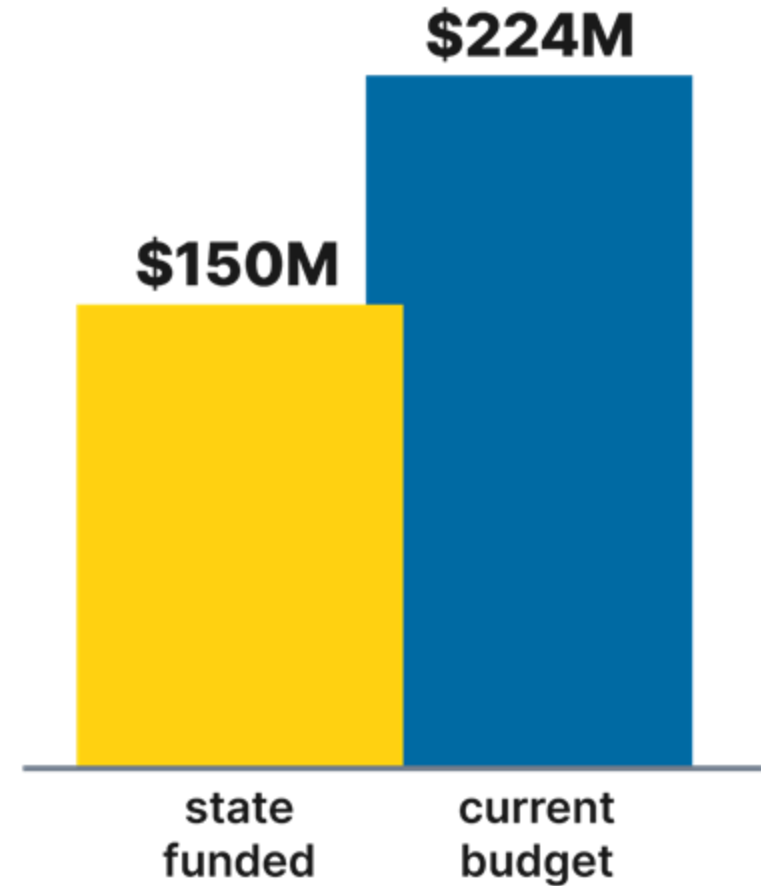
Example of the Funding Gap

Special Education

To ensure our 7,809 students who need special education services have the supports they need, we spend \$224 million per year for special education.

The state provides \$150 million.

That's a \$74 million gap.

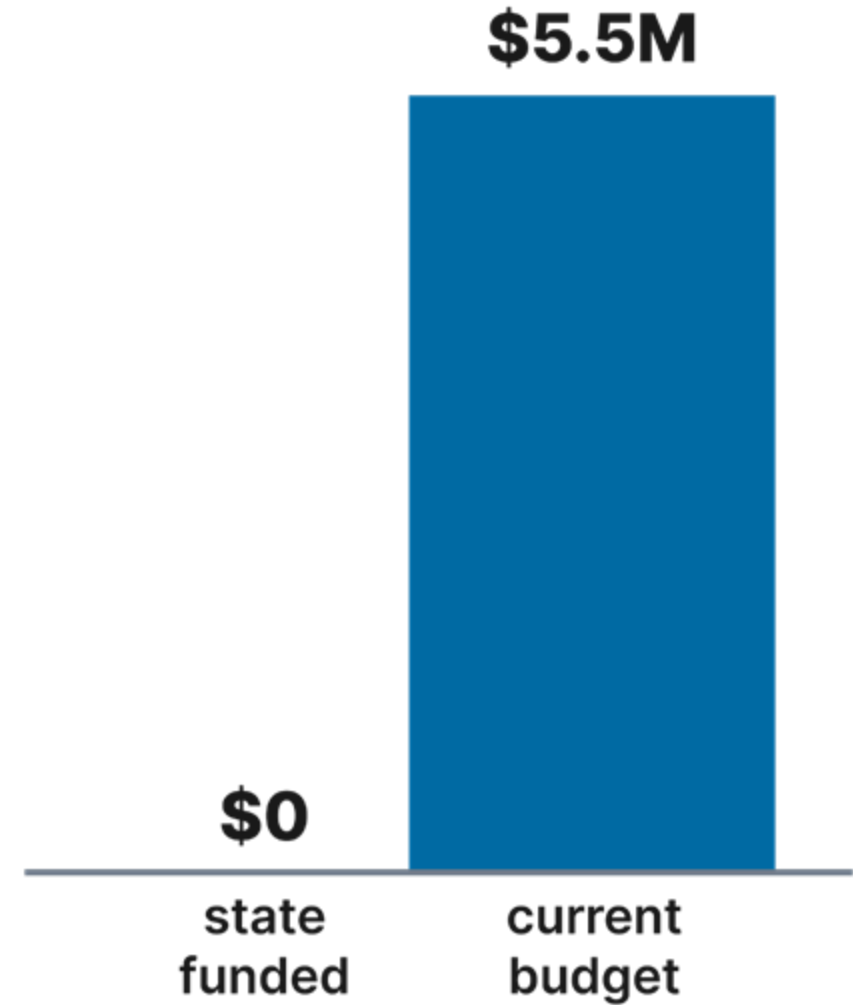


Example of the Funding Gap

Athletics

The state provides zero funding for middle and high school athletics.

The levy funds coaches, field rentals, equipment, and transportation to ensure our students have access to after-school sports.



What is the cost of the Educational Programs and Operations Levy Renewal?

- \$747 million over three years (if the state lifts our current levy restrictions)
- We are proposing a levy rate between 78 and 72 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value over the 3 years
- This amount is slightly higher than what was previously presented in our two earlier community meetings.

Building Excellence Capital Levy (BEX VI) Renewal

Capital Levy Renewal

- 6-year levy
- Replaces expiring BEX V levy
- Building Projects
 - Safety and security improvements
 - Heating and ventilation improvements
 - Replacements, renovations, and repairs
 - Energy conservation
- Technology funding



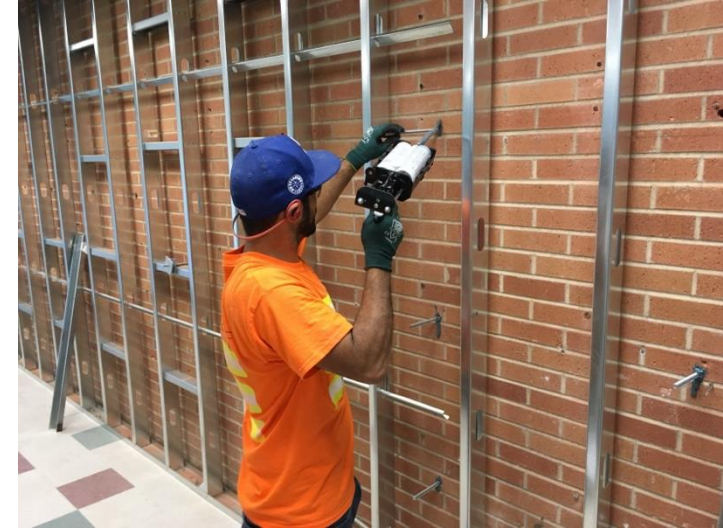
BEX VI Capital Levy Building Recommendations

Major Renovations and Replacements

- Lowell ES addition and renovation of historic building
- NE region elementary school replacement to be determined based on School Board decisions
 - Sacajawea ES planning funded in BEX V; less than \$400,000 spent to date; still in conceptual design
- Aki Kurose MS addition and renovation
 - Planning funded in BEX V
- Chief Sealth International HS Career and Technical Education (CTE) and classroom addition
- John Marshall School interim site renovation

BEX VI Capital Levy Building Recommendations

- Safety, Security, and Accessibility Improvements
 - Security entry lobbies
 - Building and site security equipment (fencing)
 - Intercom systems (districtwide emergency notifications)
 - Security systems
 - Fire alarm systems
 - Seismic improvements for earthquake safety
 - Defibrillator replacements
 - Accessibility (ADA) improvements including elevator repairs



BEX VI Capital Levy Building Recommendations

- Building Condition Improvements
 - Exterior improvements: Roofs, windows, walls
 - Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC)
 - Single occupancy student restrooms
 - Lighting upgrades and other changes to comply with new regulations such as Clean Buildings Performance Standards
 - Playground safety and site improvements; athletic field replacement and field lighting
 - Central kitchen improvements to support school breakfast and lunches

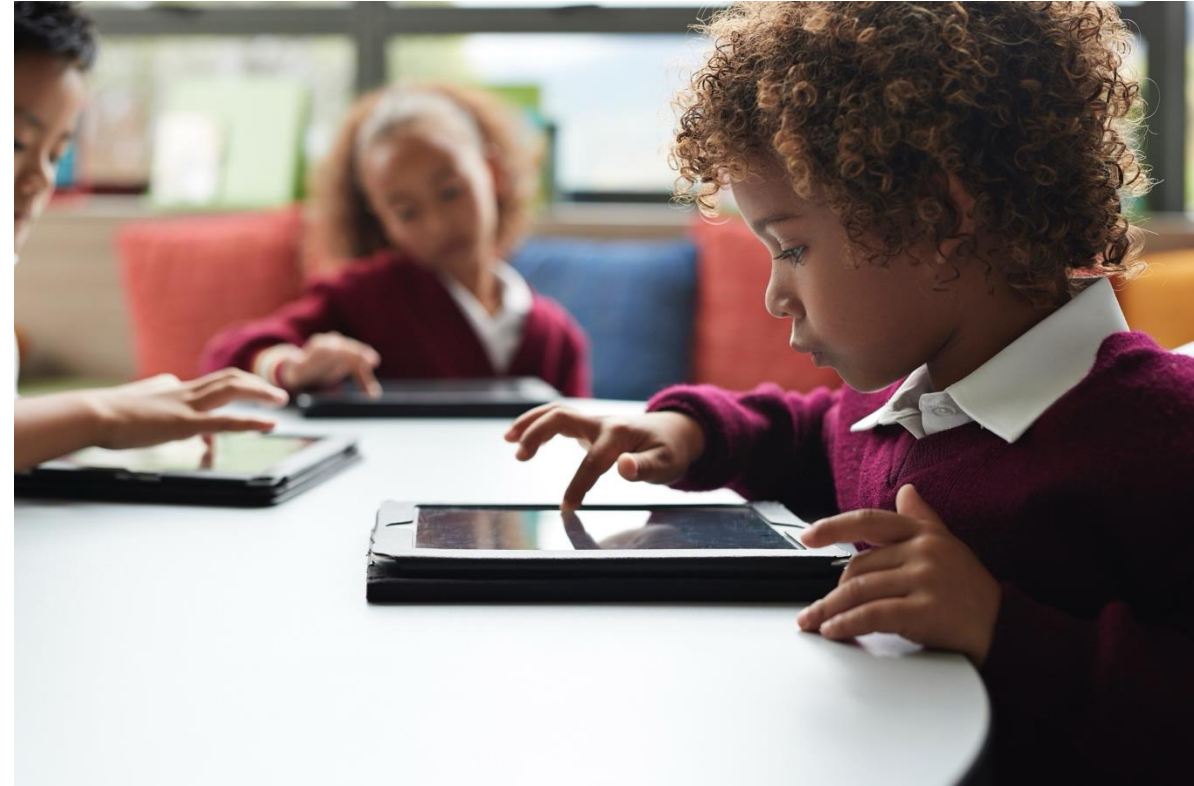
BEX VI Capital Levy Building Recommendations

- Other projects
 - Thornton Creek flood mitigation in Nathan Hale parking lot
 - Interior build out of new Rainier Beach Performing Arts Center
- Each capital levy also includes funds for other things such as:
 - Equipment, building modifications for academic needs, management and staffing, and more.
 - You can see a full list of what the levy will cover on the website.

How Were Projects Selected?

- Reviewed consultant report and facilities department data on condition of school buildings
- Developed cost estimates
- Assigned priority number to each project
- Refined list using School Board policy and Guiding Principles (which includes using an equity lens)
- Reviewed with BEX/BTA Capital Levies Oversight Committee and Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC)
- Made recommendations to School Board on Oct. 9

BEX VI Technology Funding



Technology Funding

Capital levies fund 90% of SPS's technology budget

- Student and staff computers/devices
- Classroom technology
- Software and hardware
- Development and implementation of a digital curriculum
- Upgrades to digital systems
- Upgrades to cyber security systems
- Equitable access to digital resources and language support systems

Technology Areas of Funding

\$415 million over 3 years to fund:

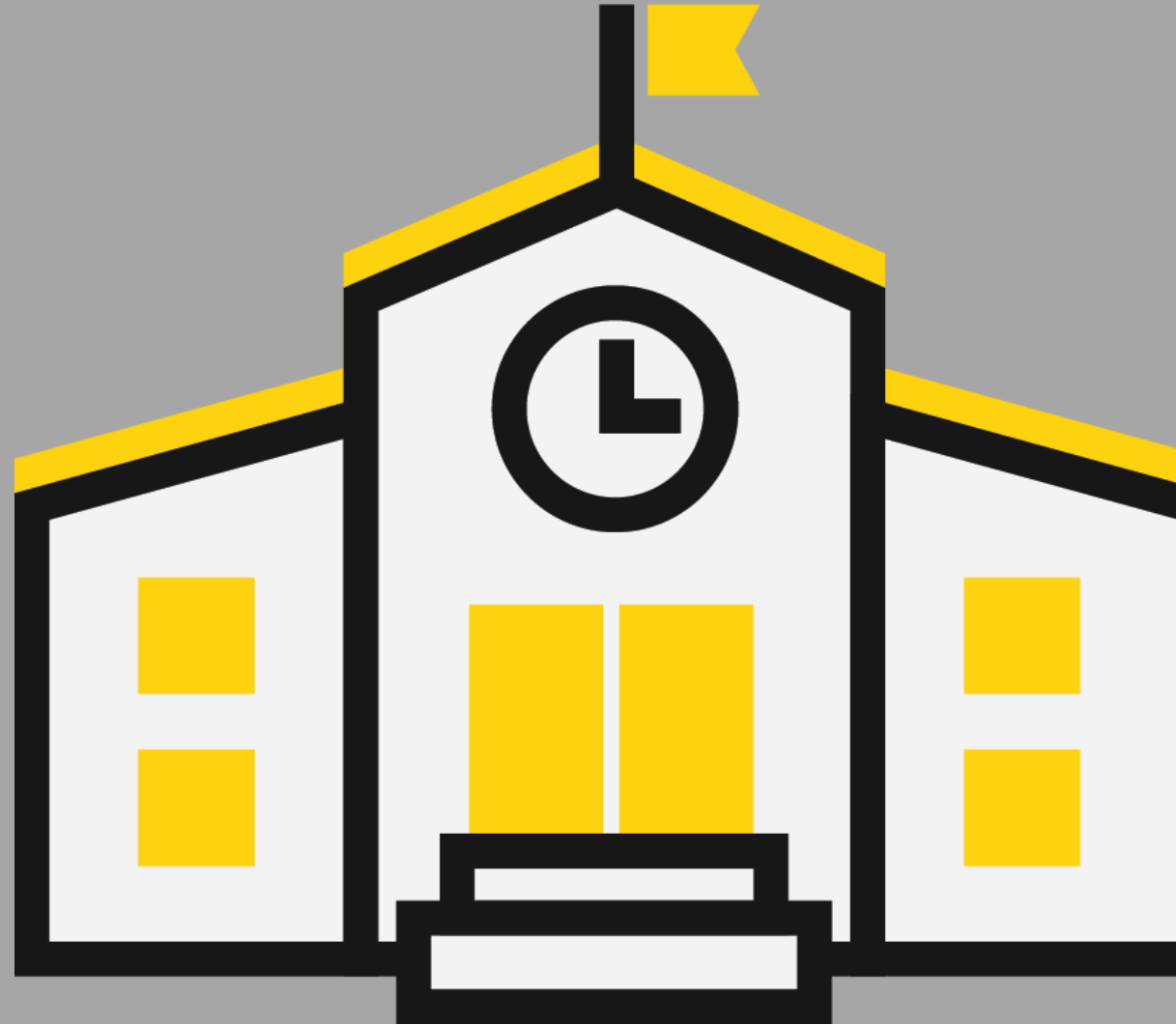
- Student Learning and Support
 - Technical support staff for repairs and logistics at schools
 - Digital learning support, instructional software, student laptops
- Infrastructure and Security
 - Cybersecurity monitoring
 - Server software licenses, operations, equipment/hardware maintenance
 - District infrastructures such as internet, telephone service, and associated staff
- District Systems and Data
 - Business/financial systems, learning management systems, student information systems



BEX V Capital Levy Rate

- \$1.8 billion over 6 years for all projects including Technology funding
 - Rate ranges between 93 cents and 79 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value over the 6 years of the levy

Levy Rate Comparison



How Seattle School Taxes Compare — 2024

per \$1,000 of assessed property value



Source: King County Assessor Reports, Levy Rate Reports; Includes all current school levies and bonds for 2024



Next Steps

November 19: School Board vote on placing levies on the Feb. 11, 2025, ballot.

We will host informational meetings about the levies with PTAs and community groups, plus regional meetings between December 2024 and February 2025.

More Information: www.seattleschools.org/levies

Questions or comments? Use the Let's Talk link on the webpage