



OUR FUTURE.
VOTE NOVEMBER 3, 2020

CommunicAT

SPECIAL EDITION: REFERENDUM 2020 - OPERATING LEVY

On November 3, 2020, residents of Waconia Public Schools (ISD 110) will vote whether to increase the district's operating levy, which would provide more local support for Waconia's educational programs and student support services.

WE ARE ONE10!



Waconia Public Schools has a long history of supporting all students as they explore their passions and create their success. This consistency of excellence in education has been built over time by everyone coming together to support students. ISD 110 has incredible teachers, students and parents all surrounded by communities that understand the value of great schools.

It's the "We Are ONE10" way -- and that commitment to kids was front and center as Waconia Public Schools designed and is delivering a new way of educating in a pandemic. As it has been stated, we know our plan may not be perfect but it will be the best it can be given the circumstances.

We will continue to make improvements/adjustments every day to enhance learning to ensure we deliver the best academic and safest environment possible.

The end goal is to have students graduate, prepared to follow their passions for a lifetime of success. The Class of 2020 may have graduated during a pandemic but that did not slow them down one bit.

CLASS OF 2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

84 honor students with 3.75 or higher cumulative GPA

38 students with cumulative GPA of 3.95 or higher

50 National Honor Society members

4 National Merit Scholars (most ever at WHS)

34% passed at least 1 Advanced Placement (AP) test

Waconia Public Schools is known for providing this type of top quality education year after year, and now, the district is at a crossroads. Due to a change in the way the state reimburses school districts for special education expenses, the district is in Statutory Operating Debt (SOD). This new special education funding formula did not adversely affect all districts in the state the same. At Waconia Public Schools, the change had a devastating impact.



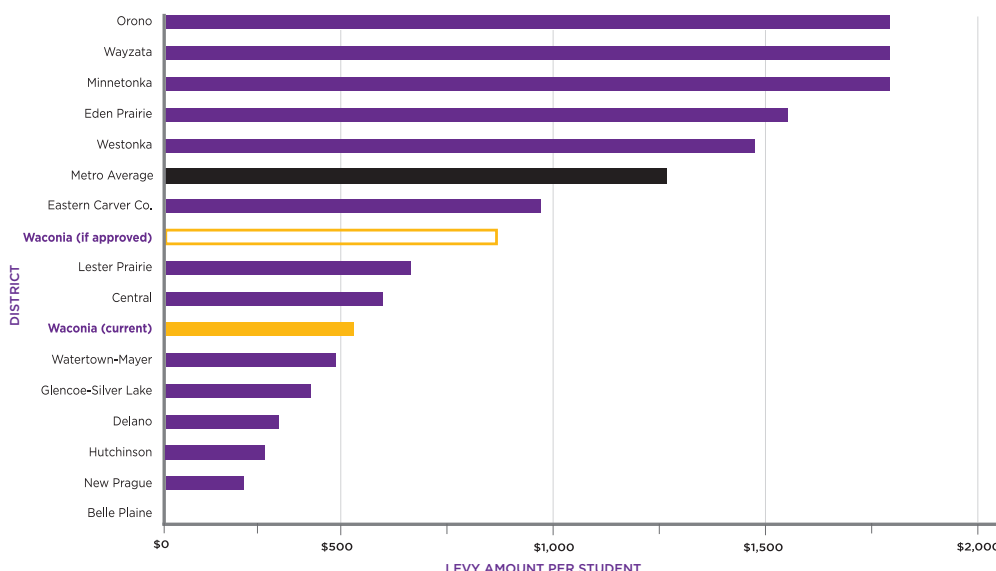
Before this new formula took effect, the state was reimbursing about 63% of the district's special education expenses. That has been reduced to less than 50%. The district has about \$10 million in yearly special education expenses.

COMMUNITY DECISION

On November 3, it will be up to the community to decide what the district looks like moving forward. The ballot question will ask voters to consider approving a \$410 per student levy increase. The resulting revenue of \$1.7 million per year would enable the district to maintain educational programs, and continue providing the quality education the community expects and students deserve. The tax impact on the average home value of \$350,000 would be about **\$19 per month**.

Even if the operating levy was passed, that would still put Waconia below the metro average in voter-approved levy amounts.

VOTER-APPROVED LEVY COMPARISONS (2020-21)



DIDN'T THE DISTRICT PASS AN OPERATING LEVY IN 2018?

It had been eleven years since the district asked for an operating levy ballot question when the voters approved an operating levy of \$525 per student in 2018. Those funds were supposed to help cover the state's funding gap for general education expenses for the next several years. When the state changed how it funds schools for special education expenses, this created another funding gap and the revenue

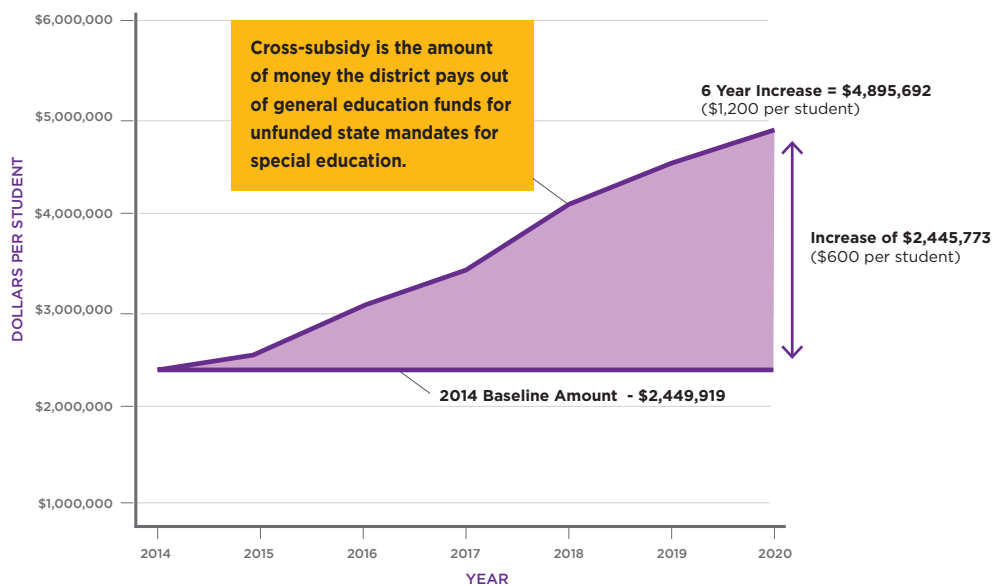
generated from the 2018 operating levy was needed to cover the new special education funding gap -- leaving the general education funding gap without a funding source.

IT'S A SPECIAL EDUCATION FUNDING ISSUE

This is not a special education issue. This is a special education funding issue. Waconia Public Schools is extremely proud of its special education program -- all of the students, staff and parents. Until

the state changes the way it reimburses for these expenses, the funding issue will continue to be an issue that will need to be addressed through a local decision. Over the past several years, the School Board made a strategic decision to draw down reserves to avoid going to taxpayers rather than eliminate programs in support of the district's commitment to academic excellence. This left the district with no financial cushion to protect against cost increases and funding gaps.

ISD 110 SPECIAL EDUCATION CROSS-SUBSIDY COSTS



IF VOTERS APPROVE THE OPERATING LEVY REQUEST

- › Additional social/emotional and mental health support
- › Increase advanced class offerings
- › More authentic learning experiences
- › Continue offering high quality programming
- › Maintain current class sizes
- › Continue offering electives
- › Add programming based on student interests and passion



IF VOTERS DO NOT APPROVE THE OPERATING LEVY REQUEST

The district would face budget cuts of at least \$1 million to the 2021-22 school year...this would be in addition to \$2 million in budget cutbacks the district has already made:

- › Less social/emotional and mental health services
- › Eliminate programs identified through community input
- › Larger class sizes
- › Fewer elective and activities offerings
- › Staff reductions

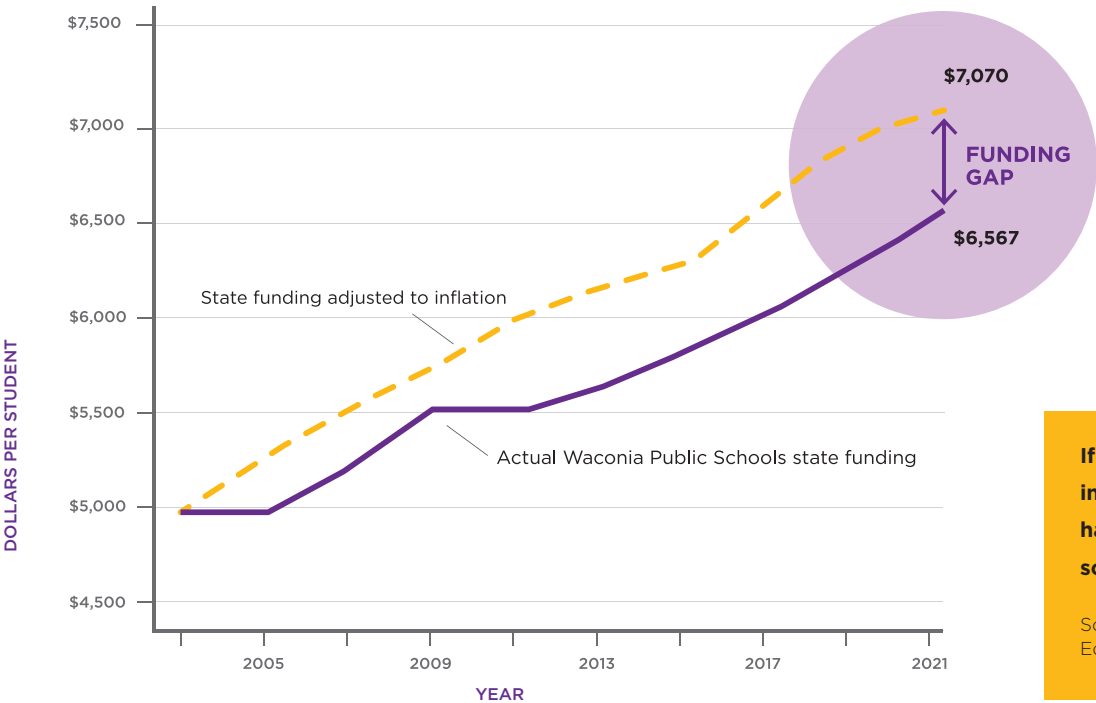


WACONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS RANKS IN THE BOTTOM 1% IN STATE FUNDING

Newly released rankings show that Waconia Public Schools ranks 328th out of 330 school districts in how much funding the state provides the district for general education students. ISD 110 continues to operate on a very lean budget yet delivers excellence.



STATE BASIC GENERAL EDUCATION FUNDING PER STUDENT, 2003-2021



If state funding had kept pace with inflation since 2003, ISD110 would have received \$2 million more last school year alone.

Source: Minnesota Department of Education June 2020 inflation estimates.

SAMPLE BALLOT

On November 3, residents of ISD 110 will decide whether the district will be able to increase funding to support Waconia Public Schools students, staff and schools.

School District Question

Approval of School District Operating Referendum Revenue Authorization

The board of Independent School District No. 110 (Waconia Public Schools), Minnesota has proposed to increase the School District’s general education revenue by \$410 per pupil, subject to an annual increase at the rate of inflation. The proposed new referendum revenue authorization would be first levied in 2020 for taxes payable in 2021 and applicable for ten (10) years unless otherwise revoked or reduced as provided by law.

YES ☐ Shall the increase in the general education revenue proposed by the board of
NO ☐ Independent School District No. 110 (Waconia Public Schools), Minnesota be approved?

PASSAGE OF THIS REFERENDUM WILL RESULT IN AN INCREASE
IN YOUR PROPERTY TAXES.

The state recently changed how it reimburses school districts for special education expenses. The amount of money ISD 110 must pull from its budget to cover those expenses more than doubled in the past 5 years.

If approved by voters, the estimated tax impact on the average homeowner (\$350,000 value) would be about \$19/month.

The majority of Minnesota school districts rely on levies to help fund their staff and operating costs.

The operating levy funds would provide critical funding for classrooms and instruction to support Waconia’s high quality educational programs.

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WHERE TO VOTE

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, November 3, 2020. Absentee ballots will be available in September.

Get all your voting questions answered online: www.mnvotes.org.

EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS

The first day to vote early in-person is September 18 and the last day is November 2.

HENNEPIN COUNTY

*City of St. Bonifacius,
City of Minnetrista*

HENNEPIN COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER

300 South 6th St PSL 012
Minneapolis, MN 55487-0012

Monday-Friday: 8:00am - 4:30pm
Oct. 24: 9:00am - 4:00pm
Oct. 26-30: 8:00am - 5:30pm
Saturday, Oct. 31: 9:00am - 4:00pm
Monday, Nov. 2: 8:00am - 5:00pm

ST. BONIFACIUS CITY HALL

8535 Kennedy Memorial Drive
St. Bonifacius, MN 55375

Monday-Friday: 8:00am - 4:30pm
Saturday, Oct. 31: 10:00am - 3:00pm
Monday, Nov. 2: 8:00am - 5:00pm

MINNETRISTA CITY HALL

7701 Co Rd No 110 W
Minnetrista, MN 55364 (952) 446-1660

Monday-Friday: 8:00am - 4:00pm
Saturday, Oct. 31: 10:00am - 3:00pm
Monday, Nov. 2: 8:00am - 5:00pm

CARVER COUNTY

*Benton Township, Camden
Township, Dahlgren Township,
Hancock Township, San Francisco
Township, Waconia Township,
Watertown Township, City of New
Germany, City of Victoria, City of
Waconia*

CARVER COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER

Administration Building
600 E Fourth St | Chaska, MN 55318
(952) 361-1981

Monday-Friday: 8:00am - 4:30pm
Saturday, Oct. 31: 10:00am - 3:00pm
Monday, Nov. 2: 8:00am - 5:00pm

WACONIA CITY HALL (City of Waconia residents only)

201 Vine St S | Waconia, MN 55387
(952) 442-2184

Monday-Friday: 8:00am - 4:30pm
Saturday, Oct. 31: 10:00am - 3:00pm
Monday, Nov. 2: 8:00am - 5:00pm

LEARN MORE

On the web:
www.isd110.org

Email:
Levy2020@isd110.org

Call: (952) 442-0611

VIRTUAL TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Wednesday, Sept. 30: 6:30pm
Thursday, October 8: 6:30pm

Participate by following the link
on www.isd110.org.

If you would like Superintendent
Devine to present to your group/
organization call (952) 856-4514.



#WEareONE10