

FAQ's Concerning Fruitland School District Supplemental Levy

Why is the Supplemental Levy necessary?

State funding for education has been cut dramatically.

Funding for the current year (2009-2010) was cut by \$553,000. This decrease was addressed by cutting teacher salaries 2.6% to 12%; cutting coaches' salaries 11.25%; not replacing four certified staff who retired; eliminating an administrative position; requiring high school athletics to be self-supporting, other than salaries and transportation; and reducing funding for supplies and textbooks.

State funding for next school year (2010-2011) is being decreased again, this time by \$1,200,000 for our district alone—a reduction of 12%. The district has announced more cuts for next year, to help meet this decrease: the Intermediate School will be closed, with fourth graders moving into the elementary school and fifth graders into the middle school; eight assistant coaching positions will no longer be funded, at least one teaching position will be cut and several others reduced to less than half-time, and administrative staff will again be reduced.

These cuts by the district, however, will not be enough to meet the deficit. In order to continue existing operations and avoid diminishing the quality of education for our students, the district is asking taxpayers to approve a supplemental levy of \$475,000.

How much will this supplemental levy cost me?

The cost to taxpayers is a total of **\$101.93 per \$100,000** worth of taxable property.

TAXABLE value is NOT the same as appraised value. Taxable value is the amount you pay taxes on AFTER the home owner's exemption is subtracted from the assessed value of your home. You can refer to the tax assessment notices that were sent out last May to find your taxable value, or you can call the Payette County Assessor's office at 642-6012 for information. Once you know the taxable value, you can figure out how much the supplemental levy will cost you.

Here are some actual examples of the cost to home owners in the Fruitland School District:

*****A four-bedroom home on five acres, outside the city limits:** Assessed value is \$193,390. Taxable value after the homeowner's exemption is \$98,605. Total cost of the supplemental levy is \$100.50--or \$8.37 per month.

*****A three-bedroom, 1800 square-foot home in the Hidden Meadows subdivision:** Assessed value is \$207,000. Taxable value after the homeowner's exemption is \$104,000. Total cost of the supplemental levy is \$106--or \$8.83 per month.

*****120 acres of farm ground** south of the city, with no buildings or improvements: Assessed value is \$47,590. Total cost of the supplemental levy is \$49—or \$4.08 per month.

*****Five-bedroom, 1800 square-foot home in the Red Williams subdivision:** Assessed value is \$150,930. Taxable value after the homeowner's exemption is \$82,170. Total cost of the supplemental levy is \$83.76—or \$6.98 per month.

*****80-acre farm,** including 1900 square-foot home, barn, outbuildings, and other improvements, two miles from city: Assessed value is \$219,630. After homeowner's exemption for the house, taxable value is \$161,530. Total cost of supplemental levy is \$165—or \$13.72 per month.

I rent my home. How will the supplemental levy affect me?

The owner of the home you rent will pay additional tax of \$101.93 for every \$100,000 of taxable assessed value. If the home you rent has an assessed value of \$100,000, the increase will be \$8.49 per month. If the value of the home is \$50,000, the increase will be \$4.25 per month. The homeowner may or may not choose to pass that cost on to you.

If the levy passes, how will the money be used? What will happen if it doesn't pass?

The money will be used for day-to-day operation of the schools. If the levy is not passed, further cuts will be necessary. These cuts could include increasing class sizes and reducing the number of days students are taught, as well as eliminating programs and activities.

If it is necessary to cut the number of school days, how many days would be cut?

The school district projects that up to 14 days of student instruction would have to be cut to deal with the state funding decrease, if the supplemental levy does not pass.

Why doesn't the district eliminate programs such as sports, band, and FFA to save money?

State funding for schools is based on the number of students in the system. The approximate amount per student is \$5,000. If programs were cut, many families would choose to take their children to other schools that offered those programs. The district would then lose the state funding generated by those students. Additionally, elimination of these programs would adversely affect the quality of education and would greatly diminish the overall development of students.

Couldn't the district save money by running fewer bus routes, or by running buses only four days per week?

The state reimburses the school district for 85% of all transportation costs related to education, so savings in transportation costs result in very little savings for the district.

Didn't we just pass a levy a few years ago? What happened to that money?

The money for the construction levy could be used *only* for construction of new facilities. That construction was necessary because at that time the district was experiencing rapid growth and existing facilities were not adequate. The changing economy has affected that growth, and at this time it is possible to find space for the intermediate school students in the elementary and middle schools.

If the intermediate students and teachers are moving into existing schools, how will closing the intermediate school result in significant savings?

Closing the intermediate school will result in savings through utilities, maintenance, support staff positions, and an administrative position.

I have noticed some improvements in the school facilities, such as paving of parking lots. Why was this done, when money was so tight?

Facilities improvement money is earmarked, meaning it cannot be spent for anything except improving facilities—so it cannot be spent on supplies, salaries, etc. The cost of maintaining the parking lots by seal coating is 10¢ per linear foot, but the cost of having to repave because of lack of maintenance would be \$2 to \$3 per linear foot.

When and where can I vote?

You may vote anytime between now and April 6th at the School District Office. Voter registration and supplemental levy voting may be done at the same time. Absentee ballots may be requested by calling the school district at 452-3595. The polls will be open on April 6, 12:00 noon until 8:00 pm, at the Fruitland High School Band Room.