



APRIL 4, 2023 OPERATING REFERENDUM

MANITOWOC PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

manitowocpublicschools.org/referendum



RAISE ALL SHIPS: Referendum would help ALL schools and ALL students

The greater Manitowoc area is truly a wonderful place to raise a family and MPSD adds so many great opportunities for our youth to learn, grow and thrive. MPSD has a rich tradition of providing expansive academic, arts and athletic opportunities. MPSD supports not only students' academic achievement and college, career and life readiness, but also their social-emotional learning and mental health and wellness.

But like many districts, MPSD is being tightly squeezed by:

- a two-year freeze in state per-pupil funding
- the cost of inflation on goods and services
- pandemic learning loss and the expiration of federal emergency relief funds (ESSER)
- consumer price index (CPI) impact on staff compensation
- growing competition with other districts and the private sector to retain and attract the best teachers and support staff

And unlike many districts, MPSD is also squeezed by its designation as a low-revenue district. In 1993 when the state imposed revenue limits on all public school districts, MPSD was locked in at a lower level than many other districts. Without changes to state school funding formulas, the only way MPSD can maintain our existing K-12 programming is to seek community support of operational referendums.

Our community generously approved referendums in 2015, 2018 and 2021 and we are once again seeking support. Without that support, MPSD will face steep deficits which will force us to cut staff and programs. A projected \$5.2 million deficit in the first year would translate to about 40 full-time staff members across all buildings, along with great reductions in other expenses.



THE NEED

How Will We Spend the Money?

If successful, the referendum funds will be used to:



Maintain a wide range of academic courses, programs and services for all students



Provide competitive wages/benefits to attract and retain highly qualified staff



Address annual, ongoing maintenance on our aging buildings



Update technology infrastructure and implement a computer and related devices replacement system



Cover rising inflationary costs on goods and services, including transportation, utilities, insurance, supplies and equipment

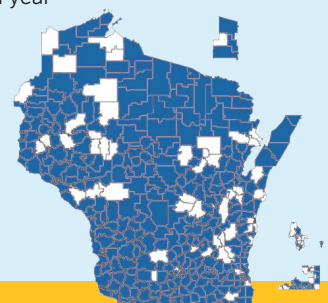
THE SOLUTION

How Much Are We Seeking?

We are seeking funds to maintain our programs and services. Guided by our strategic plan, we will use funds for ongoing academic, technology and school maintenance needs to be a destination district with high student achievement. The referendum seeks to exceed state revenue limits in these amounts to balance the budget and meet community expectations:

- \$5,200,000 for the 2023-2024 school year
 - » This would be an addition to the \$4,300,000 voters approved in 2021, bringing the 2023-2024 total to \$9,500,000
- \$11,000,000 for the 2024-2025 school year
- \$13,000,000 for the 2025-2026 school year
- \$15,000,000 for the 2026-2027 school year
- \$17,500,000 for the 2027-2028 school year

MPSD is not alone in this struggle: more than 80% of Wisconsin's 421 school districts have sought referendum approval over the past five years. In 2022 alone, there were 92 operating referendums to maintain programming.



Strong Schools = Strong Community

As it has since 2015, MPSD's operating referendum remains a critical funding source for students to achieve and succeed. These supports (highly effective and certified teachers, counselors, updated curriculum, technology and extracurriculars) are also a significant reason why families and businesses choose this area over other areas to locate.

We have a revenue problem, not an expenditure problem. Over the next five years, we are projecting the district's cumulative general operating expenses will increase by less than 10% total or 2% annually (\$73 to \$80 million). The state funding formula does not cover these modest increases.

Referendum funds would help maintain academic and extracurricular programs and student services including social/emotional and mental health and retain and attract staffing needed to provide them (estimated \$5M in salaries, \$5.6 M health insurance, \$475,000 benefits); improve student achievement with updates to curriculum (\$200,000), technology (\$700,000) and facilities (\$500,000); and pay rising transportation (\$265,000) and utility costs (\$300,000).

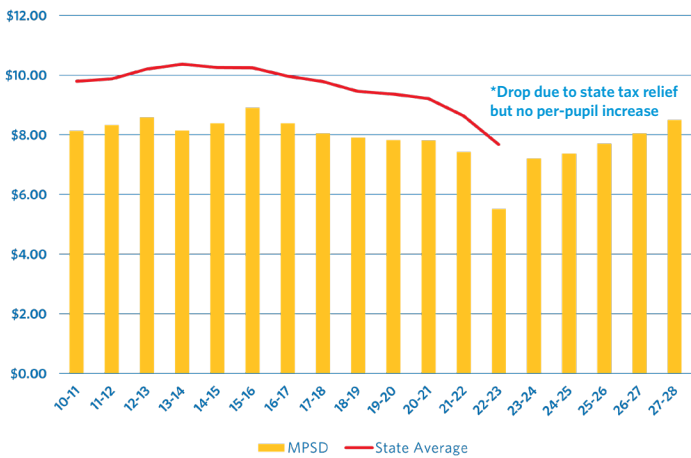
What is the Tax Impact?

THE COST

MPSD's tax rate has gone down in each of the last seven years, even after voters approved referendums in 2015, 2018, and 2021. If approved, the five-year operating referendum would increase the school property tax levy rate from its 38-year record low but keep the rate through 2027-2028 lower than it was in 2015-2016.

Over the past six years, the declining MPSD tax rate has resulted in a **\$340 savings** on a \$100,000 home. If the April 4 referendum is approved, a \$100,000 home would see a \$299 increase over five years: \$169 + \$17 + \$33 + \$34 + \$46 = \$299. However, these projections are fiscally conservative and **actual MPSD tax rates have been lower than projected in each of the past eight years.**

Tax Rate History: MPSD and State Schools Average



Projected MPSD Tax Rates

| | 2021-2022 | 2022-2023 | 2023-2024 | 2024-2025 | 2025-2026 | 2026-2027 | 2027-2028 |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Tax rate* | \$7.42 | \$5.51 | \$7.20 | \$7.37 | \$7.70 | \$8.04 | \$8.50 |
| Change in rate | -\$0.39 | -\$1.91 | \$1.69 | \$0.17 | \$0.33 | \$0.34 | \$0.46 |
| Impact on \$100,000 home | -\$39 | -\$191 | \$169 | \$17 | \$33 | \$34 | \$46 |
| Impact on \$200,000 home | -\$78 | -\$382 | \$338 | \$34 | \$66 | \$68 | \$92 |

*Actual MPSD school property tax rates 2021-2022 and 2022-2023. Projected MPSD school property tax rates 2023-2024 to 2027-2028

One of the Lowest Tax Rates in the State


The MPSD takes pride in being fiscally responsible and has been a low-spending school district for more than two decades. MPSD's school property tax rate remains the **second-lowest in Manitowoc County and among the lowest in the state.** MPSD's rate for 2022-2023 is \$5.51 per \$1,000 of equalized property value, compared to the county average rate of \$6.51 and the state average rate for K-12 districts of \$7.68. MPSD's \$13,995 per-pupil funding ranks in the lowest 4% out of 420 WI districts.





Mark Your Calendars to Vote!

- In-person at the polls on Election Day April 4, 2023
- In-person before Election Day at your municipal clerk's office
- By absentee ballot via myvote.wi.gov/Vote-Absentee-By-Mail

Learn More

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