1: RENEWAL TWO-YEAR EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND OPERATIONS LEVY
The two-year Educational Programs and Operations (EP&O) Levy (formerly M&O Levy) is the only locally approved ballot measure that directly pays for basic general classroom and operational needs such as special education, curriculum, extra-curricular activities, and staff salaries that are not fully funded by the state. Like a subscription, local school levies must be renewed with the approval of voters or the funding will be lost. Our current levy expires in 2018! If renewed, the EP&O Levy will allow the District to collect $81.2M over two years, which represents 15% of our total operating budget or 15¢ of every classroom dollar.

FOCUS ON ISSAQUAH SCHOOLS

WHAT IS FUNDED BY THE EP&O LEVY?

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS AND CLASSROOM SUPPORTS
• Certificated and Classified staff for Special Education, Highly Capable, and English Language Learner programs
• Paraprofessionals
• Professional development for teachers including professional learning days, training, and workshops
• Substitute teachers
• Career and Technical Education/STEM
• Early Childhood Learning
• Curriculum materials and training
• Reduced class sizes

STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY
• Nurses
• Security staff
• Mental Health Counselors
• Student Behavior and Emotional Support Counselors

ACTIVITIES AND ATHLETICS
• All extracurricular activities
• Athletic Directors
• Coaches
• Sports

OPPORTUNITIES
• High School schedules that create opportunities for acceleration, exploration, and remediation
• Elementary Dual Language
• New teacher mentoring program
• More academic guidance counselors
• Increased Mental Health Counselors and Support
• Expanded Early Learning programs
• Expanded equity initiatives

OPERATIONS
• Transportation
• Substitute classified staff
• Maintenance staff
• Custodians

AVERAGE ANNUAL LEVY AMOUNT PER YEAR: $40.6 MILLION ($81.2M TOTAL OVER TWO YEARS)

TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR SENIORS AND DISABLED PERSONS
Did you know? Washington State law provides two tax benefit programs for homeowners age 60 or over, or those permanently retired due to a disability. These individuals may qualify for a complete exemption from all local voter-approved property taxes, including school levy and bond taxes. In addition, the assessed value of your home is frozen at the time you qualify.

A simple call may reduce your taxes. Call the King County Assessor’s Office at 206-296-3920 for details and an application form, or visit their website at www.kingcounty.gov/depts/assessor/TaxAssessor/TaxRelief.aspx

LENS AND ENRICHMENT SUPPORT
EMPowering STUDENTS THROUGH ACADEMIC AND ENRICHMENT SUPPORT

FOOD DRIVE!

FOCUS ON ISSAQUAH SCHOOLS

SCHOOL LEVY ELECTION
VOTER INFORMATION INSIDE

Please open this mailer for important information from the Issaquah School District about what the levies pay for, tax rates, and more.

Three replacement levies on the ballot to replace levies that expire December 31, 2018.
• Educational Programs and Operations Levy (Two-Year)
• School Bus Levy (One-Year)
• Critical Repair and Technology Levy (Four-Year)

BalLOTS must be dropped off or postmarked and mailed by February 13, 2018.

Information is also available online at www.issaquah.wednet.edu.

For email updates about Levy information and Issaquah School District schools, sign up for E-news on the District website at: www.issaquah.wednet.edu/news/Enews

FAST FACTS - MORE AT WWW.ISSAQUAH.WEDNET.EDU

Local Tax Impact:
In the Issaquah School District, the local school tax rate is expected to decrease $0.61 per $1,000 over two years from 2019-2020.

State School Taxes/HB2242:
The state portion of school taxes will increase an estimated $0.96 per $1,000 and may be further increased by the State Department of Revenue.

Financial Management:
The Issaquah School District has the highest bond rating Moody’s Aaa & Standard & Poor’s AA+ of any public school district in Washington State. In fact, less than 0.40% of school districts in the entire nation hold a Aaa rating from Moody’s. The District has received fifteen consecutive “clean” Financial and Accountability Audits.

STAY CONNECTED

Facebook 
Twitter 
YouTube 
Email
A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Ron Thiele

Dear Residents of the Issaquah School District,

Thank you for taking time to read this mailing and become informed about the Issaquah School District’s upcoming renewal levies on the February 2018 ballot. Residents who have lived in the District for some time may notice that this election year, our Educational Programs and Operations Levy, referred to in the past as a “M&O Levy” is a two-year levy. Traditionally, the District has run its Educational Programs and Operations or EP&O Levies as four-year issues. I would like to take a moment to provide some background and our rationale for the change this year.

The most significant change to the way basic education is funded in the history of our state was signed into law by the Washington State Governor on June 30, 2017. You may hear this law referred to in the media or by others as House Bill 2242 or “The McCleary,”. While we believe our District will see definite benefits from this new funding model, as with any change of this magnitude, there is uncertainty about some parts of the law. Specifically, the law in its current form still does not fully fund Special Education and there are questions to be answered regarding inequities in districts across the state, salary allocations, and the amount of authority districts have with their local levies. These may be addressed in the upcoming legislative session, but without clarity on these

issues now, we are unable to accurately forecast how much we will need to ask local voters to pay for in order to maintain and grow our programs and operations over a four-year period.

That said, we are confident about the amount we need to collect locally in the next two years, or through 2020. For this reason, we are running our EP&O levy for only two years on this ballot issue. This means that, if the two-year EP&O levy on the February 2018 ballot is approved, taxpayers will be asked to vote to replace it again in February of 2020. Please note that we are also running a one-year School Bus Levy to replace and maintain buses and a four-year Critical Repairs and Technology Levy. You may not realize this, but even with the new state funding model, we receive only a portion of the funding we need from the State to adequately provide transportation and technology.

However, we do expect an increase in State funding of about $30 Million beginning in 2018. This is great news for our District! For nearly 30 years, the Issaquah School District has been one of the least state-funded districts in Washington. We are grateful that we have always had the support of our voters in approving local levies so that we could offer the high quality education our community expects and deserves. The increase in State funding gives us an opportunity now to plan for and implement new programs that our parent community has been demanding. These include a Dual Language Program, increased mental health and guidance counselors, an expanded Early Learning Program, and a high school schedule that provides more opportunities for our students. The increase in state funding is due to an expected increase in state school taxes of approximately $0.96 per $1,000 of assessed property value. Because we are receiving more money from the State, we are able to ask for less local money and decrease local school taxes by $0.69 per thousand of assessed property value in 2019 and $0.49 per thousand $1,000 in 2020.

Remember that about 15% of our total operating budget still needs to be paid for with local levy dollars! The State does not pay for athletics or extracurricular activities and provides only a portion of our operating budget for bus drivers, substitute teachers, professional development for teachers, paraprofessionals, school nurses, counselors, and many more funds vital to our mission. Ballots are arriving in mailboxes at the end of January and the last day to mail in or drop off your ballot is February 13. Please remember that each of the issues on the ballot are meant to replace levies expiring December 31, 2018 that allow us to continue serving the ISD community with our high-performing, safe, and efficient schools.

I encourage you to read the enclosed materials and for more details, visit the District website at www.issaquah.k12.wa.us.