



Spooner Area School District Operational Referendum Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What steps have already been taken to control costs?

- Reduced teachers, support staff & administrator positions
- Reduced bus routes
- Maximized use of Emergency Federal funds to sustain programs for students
- Frozen operational budgets
- Implemented lower cost health insurance
- Early retirement of existing debt

What would referendum funds be used for?

- Retain high quality academic and extracurricular offerings for students
- Continue to provide additional learning and social/emotional supports for students
- Keep class sizes stable
- Stay current on facilities maintenance and repairs
- Keep District curriculum and student learning resources up to date
- Keep technology resources current
- Retain highly qualified staff members

What is the difference between an Operating Referendum and a Capital Referendum?

Wisconsin law permits districts to hold two types of referendums; a capital referendum, which is used to raise a set sum of money to fund building projects or improvements; and an operational referendum, which allows the district to exceed its revenue limit in order to pay for general educational expenses that affect all students.

What goes into the District's Curriculum Budget? How much money is allocated to curriculum?

A variety of things make up the District's Curriculum Budget. These include replacing or adding additional text books, online resources for student support and assessment, consumable supplies and professional development/training for teachers, support staff and administrators. The amount budgeted for curriculum in 2022-23 is \$83,800.

What is on the ballot?

Ballot Question: Shall the Spooner Area School District, Washburn and Burnett Counties, Wisconsin be authorized to exceed the revenue limit specified in Section 121.91, Wisconsin Statutes, by \$1,950,000 per year beginning with the 2023-2024 school year and ending with the 2025-2026 school year, for non-recurring purposes consisting of operational expenses to maintain current programs and services for students?

Why doesn't the District use remaining funds from the recent Capital Referendum that have not been spent on construction?

State law does not allow school districts to use Capital Referendum funds for operation costs nor does it allow Operational Referendum funds for capital expenditures.

What happens if the referendum does not pass?

- Reduced academic offerings
- Reduced extra-curricular opportunities
- Reduced learning and social/emotional supports
- Increased class sizes
- Postponed facility & maintenance repairs
- Postponed curriculum updates & learning materials
- Reduced technological resources & postponed upgrades

Why is the District proposing a three-year period for the referendum?

The proposed three year referendum would provide limited access to raising additional funds for school operations. The District's commitment to transparency lets taxpayers know that open-ended spending is not taking place. The next State Biennial budget will need to provide additional spendable funds for public schools. With this support, the SASD looks to get back to the position of producing balanced budgets with the resources that come through normal channels at the end of the three year period.

What has the District's Mill Rate been over the past five years?

- 2022-23 \$7.77
- 2021-22 \$8.66
- 2020-21 \$9.55
- 2019-20 \$9.56
- 2018-19 \$9.57

How does the SASD's Mill Rate compare with other school districts in our region?

In 2021-22 (the latest information available) Spooner's Mill Rate ranked 8th of the 11 member districts of the Heart O' North Conference. Our Mill Rate was lower than Ladysmith, Barron, Cameron, Bloomer, Northwestern, Ashland and St. Croix Falls.

What will an approved referendum cost?

The total cost of an approved referendum is \$1,950,000 per year for three years. The annual tax increase is \$34.71 for every \$100,000, or \$2.89 per month.

PROPERTY VALUE		The Cost of an Approved Referendum
\$100,000	\$34.71/year	\$2.89/month

Cast an Informed Vote on April 4, 2023!
For more information, please visit www.spooner.k12.wi.us