

Q: Are levy cap override elections common?

A: Yes. With the state funding decreasing on average from 66% to just over 50% of the revenue to fund school operations, communities frequently consider levy cap override referendums.

- This spring alone, 15 communities have an operating referendum on the ballot.
- In 2015, there were 44 operating referendum elections.
- Since 2000, there have been 30 operating referendum elections on average each year.

Q: Why is the election in February?

A: February 16 is the earliest scheduled election date for our state. It was important to select the earliest possible election date to assure funding for May employment contracts, retention of highly qualified staff, and efficient budgeting for the 2016-2017 school year.

POLLING INFORMATION

Prescott City Hall

800 Borner St., Prescott
7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Diamond Bluff Town Hall

W9870 290th Ave., Hager City
7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Oak Grove Town Hall

N4595 Cty. Rd. QQ, Prescott
7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Trimbelle Town Hall

N5310 - 800th St., Ellsworth
7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Clifton Town Hall

W11705 Cty. Rd. F, River Falls
7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

You can obtain an **absentee ballot** from your municipal clerk's office or by visiting <http://gab.wi.elections-voting/voters/absentee>.



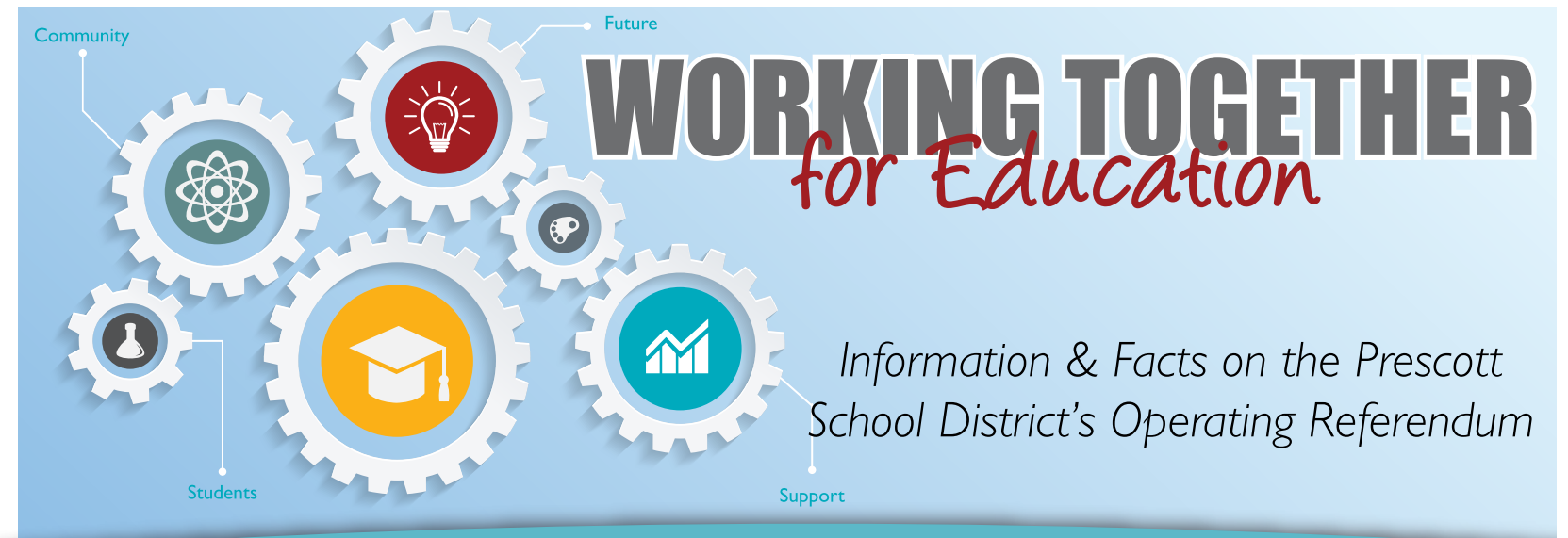
**WISCONSIN NOW REQUIRES
A PHOTO ID TO VOTE.**

<http://bringit.wi.gov>

NEED MORE DETAILS?

- Visit the website at www.prescott.k12.wi.us for referendum details, voter information, and more!
- Attend a community information session for more details. You can also talk to finance committee member, school board members and administrators while you are there.
The next session is Monday, January 25, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the High School Library
- Submit your questions to info@prescott.k12.wi.us.

Contact the District Office at 715-262-5782



LEVY CAP OVERRIDE - FEBRUARY 16, 2016

On February 16, 2016 Prescott School District residents will vote on a replacement levy cap override referendum to help address projected increased operating expenses for the next four school years.

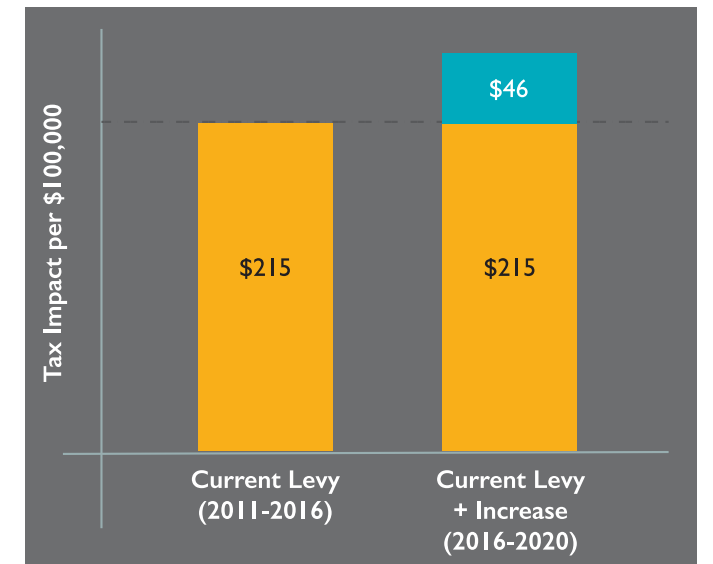
Renewal and Increase of Operating Levy

The current 4-year levy cap override will expire at the end of this school year (2016). A finance committee reviewed budget information to determine future district revenue needs. Their recommendation is to renew the current levy (approved by voters in 2011) with an increase of \$410,000 each year for the next four years. The increase is due to a gap in state funding that does not keep up with normal cost of living increases.

NOTE: This is an operating levy budget for the school district and is not related to the new high school or auditorium. A levy cap override for school district operations is common throughout Wisconsin and has been approved by Prescott voters in each operating referendum since 1999.

What is Being Asked of Tax Payers?

To RENEW the current levy cap override that is in place at \$215 per year per \$100,000 of home value, with an REQUESTED INCREASE of \$46 per year per \$100,000 of home value for the next four school years.



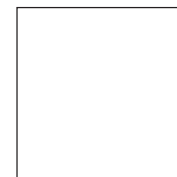
Budget Cuts Planned if Referendum Fails

If this referendum fails, the school board and school administration will need to establish cuts of \$1.46 million to compensate for the reduced revenue, plus additional cuts to compensate for the future funding gaps in state aid. *Student academics are the first priority, so adjustments will be made in other areas including:*

- Overall staffing levels
- Larger class sizes
- Reduced busing options for families within 2 miles
- Reduction/elimination of athletics/extra-curricular programming
- Fees



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EGRWSS



P.O. BOX 392
Prescott, WI, 54021

COMMON QUESTIONS

Q: How much will this cost?

A: The chart to the right is a breakdown of the cost for the renewal, the increase, and what the total cost of the levy would be.

	CURRENT LEVY (expiring 2016)	REQUESTED INCREASE	TOTAL LEVY REQUEST
ANNUAL LEVY AMOUNT	\$1,460,000	\$410,000	\$1,870,000
MILL RATE	2.15	.46	2.61
COST PER \$100,000 HOME	\$215/yr. (\$17.92/mo.)	\$46/yr. (\$3.83/mo.)	\$261/yr. (\$21.75/mo.)

Q: How are school revenues used?

A: Local operating dollars provide a basic, well-rounded educational program in Prescott:

- ✓ Programming. This includes an emphasis on academics, athletics, and arts
- ✓ Student success. This is evident in state and national accomplishments
- ✓ Accomplished teachers. This is demonstrated by educational awards, local expertise pursued at state and national levels, developing successful student-centered programs
- ✓ Accountability to the community. Implementing a Continuous Improvement Plan across the district will provide the community with measureable standards of success
- ✓ Continuous Improvement. The district will evaluate all programs to assure a high level of rigor for students pursuing continuing education and careers after graduation

Q: Why the need for an increase?...What about state aid?

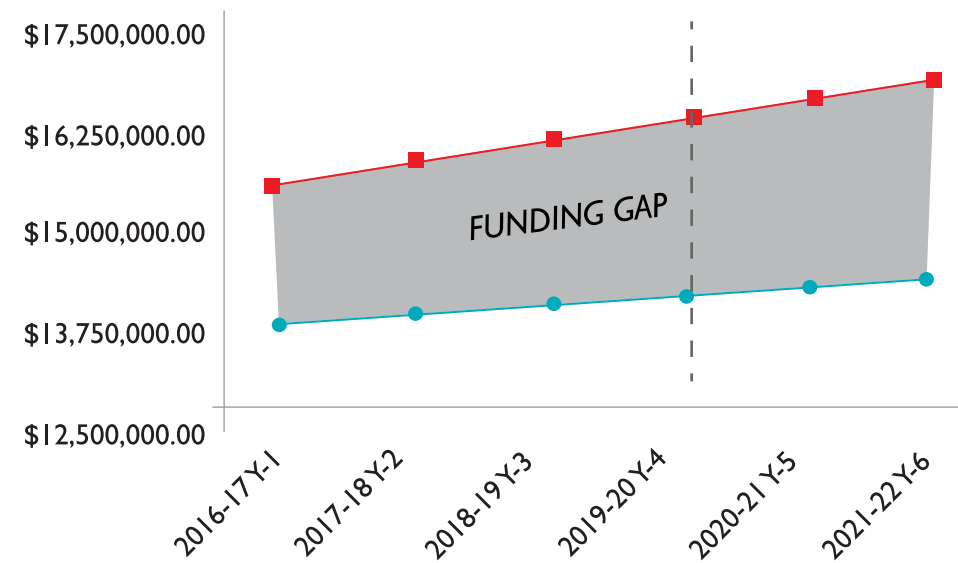
A: Schools are funded through a combination of state aid and local property tax.

In 1993, Wisconsin imposed a revenue limit, or a cap, on how much revenue a district can collect through property taxes. If the state increases aid, it may decrease the impact on local property taxes, but it does not increase the amount a district can receive. A district can only receive additional funding through property tax by approval of voters.

Budget vs. Revenue Chart

Assumptions: Budget increase 2% per year with State Aid Revenue at 1%.

The **red line** represents the average annual increase in the district's expenses. The **blue line** represents the average annual revenue the district receives from the state. The gap between the two is the amount being requested through the levy cap override.



(The vertical dotted line represents the end date of the proposed levy cap override)

Q: How was the amount of the levy cap override determined?

A: A finance committee - of citizens, school board members, parents, and school staff - critically reviewed financial information to determine if a replacement levy cap override was needed.

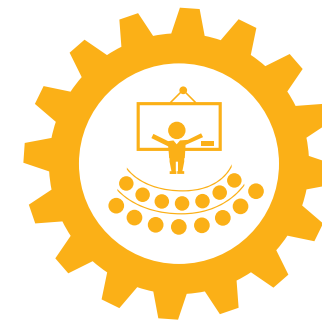
This is common when a levy cap override is set to expire. The school board and administration also review school finances regularly. With an already frugal budget and a projected continuing gap in state funding, the finance committee recommended the amount and timing of the levy cap override. The school board accepted the recommendation.



Q: What budget cuts have the district already implemented?

A: The district has realized substantial cost savings in the following areas:

- Dental and health care adjustments
- Bond refinancing at lower interest rates
- Reducing the number of teacher aide hours and contracts



The school board is committed to being proactive in undertaking cost containment steps whenever possible to reduce health care costs, utility costs, programming costs, etc. In addition, the school district has developed a continuous improvement plan at all buildings that can also apply to assessing the effectiveness of other district programs.

Q: Is this increase related to the new high school and auditorium?

A: No - this is an operating referendum that has been approved by voters multiple times since 1999. It is based on the three current buildings for the purpose of operating costs including employee wages, insurance, utilities, supplies, and maintenance.

Q: Why wasn't this request included in the recent referendum election?

A: The recent referendums were for building bonds and could only include the cost of construction.

- Finance law does not allow including operating funds in the cost of a building bond.
- A separate operating referendum was approved for the new high school.
- A 4-year levy cap was already in place- there was no need to replace it until it expired in 2016.

