

Updated 9-26-11

## Melrose Area Public Schools

### Operating Referendum Election Information

Operating referendums are used to provide revenue to help fund the programs that we have for our students. In our district this revenue is not used to find extra items but is needed to run our basic programs.

Some of the facts regarding our district and referendum are:

- 90% of school districts in our state have referendums.
- The state average for referendum revenue is \$863.00.
- Our district currently has a \$700 per pupil referendum which is in place until the end of the 2011-12 school year.
- Sauk Centre's referendum amount is \$1,030.83 per pupil.

The following are some of the reasons why referendums are in place:

- Declining enrollment
- Increased annual costs for fuel, transportation, special education, materials, etc.
- For the past several years the state has funded less than the cost of living index increase. The per pupil allowance would have needed to increase by approximately \$425 for the 2011-12 school year to have kept pace with inflation. (Actual increase was \$50 per pupil)

The district has worked to resolve the financial situation by reviewing staffing, programs, supplies, equipment, etc. and has made reductions of about \$2.1 million dollars from the 2005-06 school year through the 2011-12 school year.

The Board has approved a one ballot question for the November 8, 2011 special election. The ballot question proposes to:

- Renew the expiring referendum revenue authorization at the same level of \$700 per pupil.
- Would extend the existing property tax referendum scheduled to expire but amounts would change slightly due to a reduction in state aid (\$1 per year on a \$150,000 property).
- The average market value per residential homestead in our school district is \$124,827
- If passed will be used to help maintain existing programs.
- If passed will result in state aid of \$370,291 (35%) and a local levy of \$702,408 (65%)

- **If passed would be in place for six years.**
- **If passed reductions in programs and staff may still be necessary (depending on student numbers and state funding).**
- **If not passed would result in lost revenues of approximately \$1.1 million dollars per year.**
- **If not passed would result in a reductions of many basic programs.**

### **General Information**

- **Taxes for agricultural property (both homestead and non-homestead) will be based only on the value of the house, garage, and surrounding one acre of land only.**
- **For residential homesteads, apartments, and commercial industrial properties, the referendum would not increase taxes above current levels, but would extend taxes at the same level for six additional years.**
- **No referendum property tax on the value of other agricultural land and buildings.**
- **No referendum property tax on the value of seasonal residential recreational property.**
- **The total school tax ranges from 22.8% to 40.3% (average of 34.7%) of the total property tax on each property depending on where the property is located in the district.**

**If you have any questions or need additional information, please call the school at 320-256-5160 X1003.**