Eastmont Focus: Local Levies

Meet our teachers:
Mark Wavra, Eastmont High School

Meet our specialists:
Mary Thompson and Natalie Hoback, Kenroy Elementary

Meet our staff:
Kim Osborn, Lee Elementary ParaEducator

Eastmont Voices: Learn from our faculty and staff the vital role Local Levies play in funding our schools.

www.eastmont206.org/levy
An open letter from the Eastmont School Board

October 2016

Dear Eastmont Voters:

Eastmont School District has three priority goals related to the Educational Programs and Operations Levy and the Capital Levy before voters on the November 8th General Election Ballot:

1) **Goal** - Students will perform academically at or above the state average for districts of similar size and demographics.

2) **Goal** - Ensure current Eastmont educational programs are consistent with leading public, charter, and private school systems.

3) **Goal** - Facilities, equipment, and grounds will be repaired and maintained to ensure longevity, maximum use of public resources, and demonstrate responsible use of public funds.

The Educational Programs and Operations Levy, previously called a maintenance and operation (M&O) levy supports Goal #1 and Goal #2. The Capital Levy supports Goal #3.

If renewed, these two levies will continue our work to provide quality and efficient K-12 schools and programs. Any increase in the current combined rates is minimal and will likely decrease as our community continues to grow.

We thank you for your support of our past proposals. Please read the enclosed information, visit our website, or call for an appointment if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

Annette Eggles
Board President

Chris Gibbs
Board Vice President

Jan Cote
Board Director

Steve Picchi
Board Director

Cindy Wright
Board Director

Carol Christiansen
Superintendent

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**FISCAL FAST FACTS**

**FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

- $65,000 ANNUAL UTILITY BILL
- $60,000 PAYROLL AND OPEX
- $20,000 MONTHLY PAYROLL (MAJORITY PART-TIME)

**HEALTH CONCERNS**

121 REQUIRED EMERGENCY CARE PLANS

291 STUDENTS WITH MEDICATIONS AT SCHOOL

**Programs Supported by the Educational Programs & Operations Levy**

- After School Programs
- Club Activities
- Music and Art Programs
- Sports
- Technology Initiatives
- Transportation
- Transportation
Facts about the Local Levies

by Cindy Ulrich
Executive Director of Financial Services

On Tuesday, November 8, 2016, Eastmont School District residents will vote on two issues that affect the children in our community. The first issue is a four-year renewal of our Existing Educational Programs and Operation Levy. The second is a six-year Capital Projects Levy.

Facts about the Educational Programs and Operation (M&O) Levy

Fact #1: On November 8, 2016, Eastmont School District residents will be asked to renew the existing Educational Programs and Operations Levy, which expires December 2017.

This is not a new tax. Approximately 14% of our District budget is funded by our local community. The District is seeking approval to renew this levy now. We are able to achieve savings of more than $50,000 asking for voter approval on the November General Election ballot versus holding a special election at a later date.

Fact #2: The District receives additional Local Effort Assistance funding from the State because we have an approved levy.

Local Effort Assistance (LEA) is funding assistance provided by the state in the form of property tax relief. These funds attempt to bridge the gap between a school district in a community with lower property value and one in a community with above average property value. Only if our levy renewal is approved will the District continue to qualify for approximately $2.5 million in LEA funding from the state.

Fact #3: Every school receives levy dollars to support student learning.

Levy dollars make up the difference between what it costs to operate our schools and what funding we are allocated from the State. These dollars support operations at all schools within our District.

Fact #4: The estimated tax rate per thousand dollars of assessed value will not increase.

The actual tax rate is based on the total assessed value of all taxable property within our school district. When the total assessed value for the school district goes up, the tax rate is reduced.

The actual tax rate is based on the total assessed value of all taxable property within our school district. When the total assessed value will not increase.

Fact #5: The Eastmont School District will collect only the amount approved by the voters.

The District is asking voters to authorize the renewal of collection of levy dollars for 2018 through 2021. Total excess levy collected will not exceed the amount approved by voters.

Fact #6: Approximately 5,800 students and 700 staff members are directly affected by this levy.

Class size, competitive wages and benefits, curriculum and instruction materials, special education services, fine arts and music programs, highly capable education, employee training, substitute teachers, and safety and security for students and staff are all supported by this local levy.

Athletics, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities are 100% dependent on levy dollars. The levy funds expenses for all sports, coaches and advisors, athletic equipment, band and music, field trips, and clubs.

Fact #7: Levy = Learning and Programs

The levy also provides additional time paid to teachers beyond the number of days paid by the state. This time is used for training, review and development of curriculum, and for extended work responsibilities beyond the school day.

Fact #8: The Educational Program and Operation (M&O) Levy needs a simple majority vote to pass.

M&O Levies and Capital Project Levies require a simple majority to pass (50% + 1 vote).

Facts about the Capital Levy

Fact #1: On November 8, 2016, Eastmont School District residents will be asked to approve a six-year Capital Levy, which expires December 2023.

This is a levy that will provide funding for repair and upgrade of building maintenance. These funds would also be used to secure land for water, sewer, irrigation, electrical supply, and security and safety improvements. This levy would also be used to secure land for future school sites as we plan for enrollment growth.

Fact #2: This is not a new tax.

Many years ago, voters approved a Debt Service Levy for the purpose of paying principal and interest on debt issued for construction and renovation of our school buildings. This Capital Levy will replace the expiring Debt Service levy and allow for an interest free, “pay as you go” financing for much needed school building maintenance.

Fact #3: Local capital levy dollars make up the difference between what it costs to maintain school buildings and what the state funds.

State funding for basic education does not allocate designated resources for building renovation, improvements, or land acquisition. Our district does apply for facility funding when eligible. However, we are not eligible for additional modernization funding until 2024.

Fact #4: This levy will generate $22.6 million throughout six years for upgrade and repair to District facilities.

The levy will gradually increase as the existing debt service levy decreases. Total excess levy collected will not exceed the following amounts in the table to the right.

The actual tax rate is based on the total assessed value of all taxable property within our school district. When the total assessed value for the school district goes up, the tax rate is reduced.

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Fact #7: The entire community benefits from our school facilities.

School buildings are community-owned assets. Our buildings were used more than 9,000 hours by 160 groups during the past year for recreation, meetings, and events. This levy will assist in funding to preserve and enhance these community assets for future generations.

Fact #8: A Capital Levy needs a simple majority vote to pass.

Capital Project Levies, like Educational Program and Operation (M&O) levies, require a simple majority to pass (50% + 1 vote).

The Capital Levy replaces an existing debt service levy and will not increase taxes.

Cindy Ulrich explains the basics of the Local Levies. Scan the QR code or visit shor-tn.us/esd-levy101

There are TWO SEPARATE Local Levies on the ballot for the Eastmont School District.

The M&O Levy is a renewal of the existing levy and is not a new tax.

The Capital Levy replaces an existing debt service levy and will not increase taxes.
Focus on Local Levies

The Capital Levy provides vital funding for projects like these...

East Wenatchee Schools: A Pictoral History

The land east of the Columbia River in the Wenatchee Valley was little more than sparsely populated steppe lands, but one-room schools already dotted the landscape in the early 1900’s. Originally, the area consisted of at least 12 separate school districts that combined and reorganized over the decades to form what is now the Eastmont School District. Here are just a few examples of schools from our past, as featured in “A History of the East Wenatchee Schools,” a booklet originally published by Edward A. Barnhart in 1979.

Liberty School, built in approximately 1905, was likely the first school built on the east side of the Columbia River. Established as part of School District #88, it survived until 1933.

Columbia Heights School was built in 1909 as part of the newly formed School District #48. This one-room school burned down in 1939.

Majestic Flat School Building, located at the corner of Nile and Rock Island Road, as it appeared in 1979. The original building, built in 1909, burned down in 1917 due to a stove fire.

The new brick East Wenatchee School opened in 1920 at a cost of $30,000 with an enrollment of 235 students. An addition was built in 1931 to house the junior high school.

Read the full text of “A History of the East Wenatchee Schools” online at shor-ln.us/esd-history
Focus on Local Levies

October 2016

How do Local Levies support grades K-4?

by Spencer Taylor
Executive Director of Elementary Education

Educational Programs

1. Class Sizes: Local Levy funds allow us to keep class sizes lower. Students who are assigned to smaller classes in grades K-3 do better in every way that can be measured: they score higher on tests, receive better grades, and exhibit improved attendance and behavior.

2. Curriculum: Local Levy funds allow us to provide an up-to-date, quality curriculum for our students and teachers. Quality curriculum is essential in providing research-based, engaging lessons that best promote high levels of learning. It allows our teachers to focus more on the students and what the students need rather than finding instructional resources on their own.

3. Technology: Local Levy funds enable us to keep our technology tools up to date and give more access to students. Each year, the curriculum is becoming more and more digital, and teachers and students continue to rely on technology for instruction and learning. Providing adequate access for students and teachers and a reliable network is essential for learning in the 21st century.

4. Highly Capable Program: Local Levy funds provide a large portion of our highly capable budget, which provides a teacher and materials for our students. These students have the opportunity to stretch their minds and become involved in fun and relevant activities.

5. PE Instruction: Local Levy funds help provide 100 minutes of active physical education and health instruction each week. In PE and health courses, our students learn how our bodies work and how to keep our bodies functioning well in an active and fun environment. Being active not only makes a person healthier, but it increases engagement and learning in their other classes.

6. Music Instruction: Local Levy funds help provide approximately 60 minutes of music instruction a week. Our students learn music fundamentals, how to read music, how to play instruments, and how to work together as a group.

7. Elementary School Libraries: Local Levy funds help staff our libraries and provide engaging books that meet the reading levels of our diverse students. Having access to quality literature and nonfiction resources is key to helping students become proficient readers.

8. Art Instruction: Local Levy funds provide regular art instruction throughout the year at each of our elementary schools. Students learn the fundamentals of art and can express their individuality through their own masterpieces.

Stacy West, Cascade Elementary, speaks about the levies. Scan the QR code or enter shor-ln.us/ed-for-wsweet

9. Counselor Support: Local Levy funds help provide counselors who assist students to learn how to get along with others, process grief, understand their emotions and handle them appropriately. They also connect students and families to community resources.

10. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math): Local Levy funds provide after-school, hands-on activities where students work in teams to create devices to accomplish tasks. Some examples are Tower Building, Egg Drop, Windmills and Recycled Vehicles.

(continued, next page)
Focus on Local Levies October 2016

How do Local Levies support secondary schools?

by Mark Marney
Executive Director of Secondary Education

Educational Programs

Quality communities have quality schools. Quality schools reside in quality communities. The relationship is both symbiotic and symbiotic. You won't have one without the other. What sets great communities apart is what they provide for their children. Communities that pass their levies know those dollars matter to students and to all the experiences that make for a well-rounded education.

What does the levy mean to a secondary student? The experiences that can become life-changing educational experiences are electives. Those classes like drama, art, welding, journalism, yearbook publishing, woodwork, Now, or photography are not basic education. They are electives to inspire as well as ignite creativity and hope. A student who attempts an elective class like sports medicine can be motivated to seek a future career in medicine. That may not happen if electives aren’t readily available in our high school and junior high schools where levy dollars make a significant difference. To have an elective opportunity is a chance to explore new possibilities. Often it is the spark that ignites future career decisions.

Many of the courses that can become life-changing educational experiences are electives. Those classes like drama, art, welding, journalism, yearbook publishing, woodwork, Now, or photography are not basic education. They are electives to inspire as well as ignite creativity and hope. A student who attempts an elective class like sports medicine can be motivated to seek a future career in medicine. That may not happen if electives aren’t readily available in our high school and junior high schools where levy dollars make a significant difference. To have an elective opportunity is a chance to explore new possibilities. Often it is the spark that ignites future career decisions.

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Fiscal Fast Facts

- 45 Buses
- 31 Part time drivers with 8 Substitutes
- 30 Tires Inflated
- 56,000 Gallons of Diesel
- 24 New since 2006
- 925 Sinks, 466 Toilets
- 1,919 Doors
- 15 Buildings

At some point, they may have conquered stage fright while acting in a play? Sang a solo? Marched and danced at the halftime show? Competed in a cabinet making contest or metal machining contest? Showed an animal at the fair? When they asked that special someone to a dance? When their classmates elected them to be part of ASB or a class officer? You simply cannot put a price tag on the impact those experiences add to education.

We continue to try and eliminate barriers for students of poverty so they can participate in extracurricular activities. We no longer have pay-to-play fees for students, and for those who cannot afford equipment, the school district can provide it.

Facilities & Capital Projects

A significant portion of our maintenance plan includes updates and modernization of our systems. This is something that is behind the walls and usually not visible like a clean parking lot or a freshly cut lawn. Imagine if our schools still used old boilers for heating and air conditioning. That certainly would not be the best use of tax dollars. Having the most efficient and up-to-date systems comes with the cost of installation and maintenance. Those initial costs lead to long-term savings and efficiency. It is not glamorous or easily identifiable, but at the end of the day, we do not want leaky, wasteful faucets, fixtures or equipment.

One of the advantages for some neighborhoods has been the recent activity of the school district in updating the safety features of our playgrounds. Previously, many people chose not to use the playgrounds when school was not in session. Now, at many of our elementary schools, you will find children and adults accessing the playgrounds in their neighborhoods.

We will continue to be thoughtful about what the facilities of the Eastmont School District should be, now and into the future. Our community deserves the very best we can provide.

Initial costs lead to long-term savings and efficiency.

Even out of season, you see patrons using our fields, courts, tracks, and athletic facilities for all kinds of activities that help our community stay healthy and active. Community basketball, baseball, softball, soccer, volleyball, and tennis teams are constant users of Eastmont School District facilities.

On several occasions, our schools have been community resources during wildfires. We have been emergency shelter buildings, and we have been command central for personnel and equipment-staging.

The path is clear. With your help, we will continue to be thoughtful about what the facilities of the Eastmont School District should be, now and into the future. Our students and our community deserve the very best we can provide.

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Election Day is Tuesday, November 8
Ballot Drop-Off Locations & Voter Registration Information:

Douglas County Public Service Building
148 19th St NW
East Wenatchee

Douglas County Law and Justice Center
110 2nd St NE
East Wenatchee

Rock Island City Hall
5 N Garden Ave
Rock Island

Or mail in your ballot, postmarked no later than the day of the election.

- The deadline for in-person voter registration is October 31.
- Citizens of Douglas County can register online, by mail or in person.
- For more information on voter registration, visit the Douglas County Auditor’s website at shor-tn.us/dc-registertovote.
- Levy tax exemptions are available for senior citizens (61+), veterans and disabled persons.
- For more information on tax exemptions, visit the Douglas County Assessor’s website at shor-tn.us/dc-assessor or call (509) 741-8521.