



VOTE

November 5, 2019

Our **Schools**. Our **Community**. Our **Future**.

On **November 5, 2019**, Alexandria School District residents will vote on a request to increase school funding to bridge the district's budget gap and help maintain its academic programs, student support services and class sizes.

5 FINANCE FACTS

Here are FIVE FACTS every parent should know about the financial reasons for this request.

- 1 State funding is not keeping up with inflation and rising educational costs.**
 - If it had kept pace since 2003, our district would have received nearly \$3 million more from the state in 2018-19, and that gap is projected to increase.
 - This funding challenge is compounded by the fact that we pay nearly \$3.5 million annually for critical special education services that aren't reimbursed by the State or Federal governments, even though they mandate the services.
- 2 Alexandria is one of the only districts in our area without a voter-approved operating levy.**
 - The last operating levy request was 15 years ago.
 - Most Minnesota school districts rely on locally approved levies to help operate their schools.
 - Because Alexandria doesn't have a voter-approved operating levy, we don't have the additional financial support that many communities provide to help operate our schools.
- 3 The district has worked hard to balance its budget and keep any cuts away from the classroom.**
 - Every year the district lives within its means and works with a balanced budget - even though that has required cuts and belt-tightening.
 - This year's budget had a \$1.1 million shortfall and more were projected for the future. To maintain a balanced budget, the school board cut more than half a million dollars, in addition to drawing down our fund balance, which is a critical safety valve for all districts.
 - Recognizing that continued cuts are not a sustainable way to operate the district, the Alexandria School Board unanimously approved putting this school funding request on the November 5 ballot after several months of community input, deliberation, budget review and discussion.
- 4 Operating levy dollars are needed to support all our schools and all our students.**
 - If voters do not approve the referendum, the district will need to increase class sizes; cut and/or reduce specialist teachers, such as music, art and science; and reduce real world work programs and electives at middle and high school.
 - Levy dollars would help:
 - Maintain or reduce class sizes
 - Continue with specialist teachers
 - Expand mental health support
 - Maintain or expand real world work experiences at middle and/or high school
 - Provide more financial stability
- 5 The levy amount would be phased in over three years, as would the tax impact.**
 - The School Board intentionally chose a conservative phased-in approach as a financially responsible and respectful way to increase funding slowly over time.
 - The phased-in levy enables us to ask for what we need, when we need it - rather than all at once.
 - The tax impact would also be phased in over time: the average homeowner (\$220,000 value home) would see a less than \$10 per month increase in 2020, followed by less than \$3 per month increases in 2021 and 2022. Beginning in 2023 there would be no more increases from the levy.

LEARN MORE > Web: alexschools.org/referendum > Email: referendum@alexschools.org > Phone: (320) 762-2141 ext. 4223

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