

February 9, 2010 Election

# School Levy Facts

## General Fund, Capital Projects and Transportation Vehicle Replacement Levies

On February 9th, our school district will have three levy renewal propositions on the ballot.

### 1. General Fund Levy

General Fund levies pay for 23.6% of all educational and support programs in the district, supplementing state revenues to fund a basic education for our students. The proposed General Fund levy would authorize: \$12,438,000 in 2011; \$13,370,000 in 2012; \$14,373,000 in 2013 and \$15,451,000 in 2014.

#### Why is the General Fund Levy needed?

In Washington State, funding for day-to-day operations of public schools comes from three main sources: state, federal, and local taxpayers. State and federal revenues do not fully fund educational programs and services. Consequently, districts must ask their local communities to support the basic needs of schools by approving local levies every four years. In Mercer Island schools, the current General Fund Levy supports 23.6% of the costs for education programs and daily operations. The General Fund levy amount is determined by a “levy lid” percentage that the state sets for each district. MISD’s per pupil revenue from all sources **ranks 166th out of 295 districts. The MISD local levy is an important part of school funding.**

### 3. Transportation Vehicle Levy

The Transportation Vehicle levy is a one-year, renewal levy in the amount of \$500,000. If approved, this levy allows the district to replace school buses at the end of their serviceable life and buy additional buses to transport students to and from school.

### 2. Capital Projects Levy

Local levy support is needed to maintain our buildings, attend to emergent needs in the next six years, and to improve the learning environment through technology. If approved, this six-year enhanced Capital Projects levy would authorize: \$2,353,000 in 2011; \$2,471,000 in 2012; \$4,595,000 in 2013; \$4,844,000 in 2014; \$5,025,000 in 2015 and \$5,216,000 in 2016.

#### Why is the Capital Projects Levy needed?

The district’s general fund supports the cost of routine and preventive maintenance, but capital funds are needed for major projects such as classroom expansion, technology-based teaching and learning solutions, communication system upgrades, student safety and security, and boiler replacements. As part of our commitment to enhancing and maintaining assets provided by the community, we have identified emergent needs that require attention over the next six years. These are divided equally between the need to enhance our technology program to support educational programs in the classroom; and the need to renovate and maintain our buildings, playfields and other facilities.

#### Why are we including technology in a renewed Capital Projects Levy?

Our state defined “basic education” in 1977, and still does not include technology in its definition. However, state law allows technology to be considered a capital expense. Consequently, we are including the costs of technology equipment, service support, and training in our renewed Capital Projects levy. ALL of this funding must come from local funding approved by district voters.

# 1 What would the General Fund Levy pay for?

**Highlights include:**

- 88 teachers and support staff across the district
- Lower student-to-teacher ratios K-12 beyond what the state funds
- The seven-period day at Mercer Island High School
- School counselors at the secondary level
- Enhanced special education programs
- Programs for English-language Learners
- Most of our athletic and sports programs
- Custodial services and building maintenance
- Nursing services
- Physical Education specialists
- Art, drama, debate, music programs
- Support for struggling students
- Materials/supplies
- Library resources
- Utilities

## What is the cost of the proposed General Fund Levy?

In school levy elections, voters authorize a fixed collection amount. The estimated tax rate in 2011 would be approximately \$1.41 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Below is an example of a current and future estimated levy tax bill:

Home Value	You already pay:		Renewal amount:	
	2010 Estimated Tax Bill current General Fund		2011 Estimated Tax Bill proposed General Fund	
	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly
\$1,000,000	\$1,190	\$99.17	\$1,410	\$117.50

# 2 What would the enhanced Capital Projects renewal levy pay for?

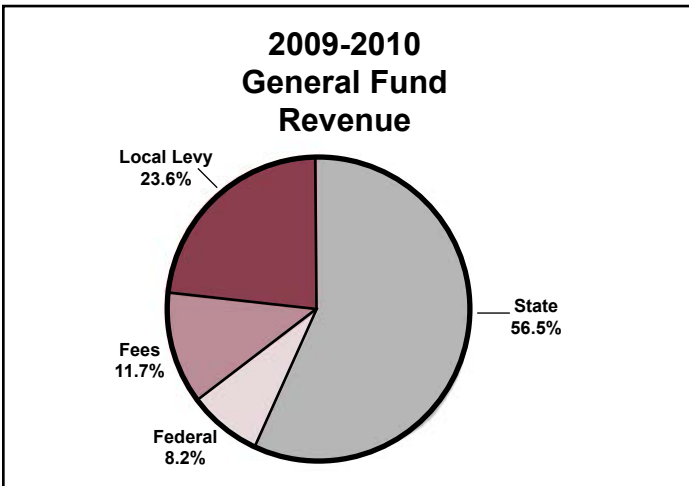
**Highlights include:**

- Replacement of boilers that are beyond serviceable life with energy-efficient boilers
- Music room addition at Mercer Island High School for improved instruction for a growing population of music students
- Video surveillance systems at all schools for student safety and security
- Play area and field improvements for student health and safety
- Track resurfacing and gym upgrades
- Elementary classroom spaces to house a growing student population
- A broadcast media studio/editing room at Islander Middle School to enhance student learning
- Technology equipment upgrades
- Telephone system (present system is 17 years old)
- Special education classroom expansion to accommodate a growing population of special education students
- Additional Teachers on Special Assignment to help teachers use technology as a tool for learning
- District network upgrade to allow more capacity for technology-based teaching and learning such as global video conferencing and sharing innovative strategies for reaching 21st century goals
- Energy-efficient lighting
- Emergency power distribution

## What is the cost of the proposed Capital Projects Levy?

The estimated tax rate in 2011 would be approximately \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Below is an example of a current and future estimated levy tax bill:

Home Value	You already pay:		Renewal amount:	
	2010 Estimated Tax Bill current Capital Levy		2011 Estimated Tax Bill proposed Capital Levy	
	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly
\$1,000,000	\$320	\$26.67	\$500	\$41.67



# 3 What is the cost of the proposed Transportation Vehicle Levy?

The estimated tax rate in 2011 would be approximately \$.06 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. The estimated tax levy bill in 2011 is a one-time collection of \$60 for the owner of a million dollar home.

Home Value	You already pay:		Renewal amount:	
	2007 Tax Bill prior Transportation Vehicle Levy		2011 Estimated Tax Bill proposed one-year Transportation Vehicle Levy	
	Annual	Monthly	Annual	Monthly
\$1,000,000	\$50	\$4.17	\$60	\$5

## Voter Registration Information

The deadline to register for this election is January 11.

- Register online at [www.vote.wa.gov](http://www.vote.wa.gov)
- Call the King County Elections office at 206-296-8683
- Or, register in person at the King County Elections Office