

Replacement Levy 2012 – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q – What is the Replacement Levy?

A – This is a levy that is voted on by the citizens in a school district that allows the district to collect a property tax that provides funding for the public schools.

Q – Is this an additional levy beyond what we are currently paying?

A – No, this is a replacement levy that will take the place of the levy that was approved in 2009. The 2009 levy will expire after 2012.

Q – How will the passage of this levy affect property tax?

A – It is estimated that tax rates will be \$2.14-\$2.38 per \$1000 of assessed value. The 2012 rate is \$1.94 per \$1000. Please see slides 21-23 for the rates over the previous 20+ years, in the slide presentation at

http://www.psd401.net/staticfiles/psd/documents/2012_Replacement_Levy_Presentation.pdf

Q – How much more will this replacement levy cost the average homeowner?

A – The current levy approved by the taxpayers in 2009 will be assessed at \$1.94 per \$1,000 of assessed value in 2012. A homeowner with a home valued at \$300,000 would pay \$582 in property taxes to the Peninsula School District. The proposed replacement levy estimates tax rates to be \$2.14 in 2013 or about \$642 for a \$300,000 home. This would be \$60 difference annually, or \$5 per month.

Q – When will this replacement levy take effect?

A – Voters are being asked to approve a four-year levy which, if passed, will be in effect from 2013-2016.

Q – What do the levy dollars pay for?

A – Many years ago, when the levy system was initiated, the intent was that levy dollars would be used to pay for extras that a community wanted to provide within their school system.

However, over the years, as other funding sources have decreased, levy dollars have become more and more important as support for basic programs and services. In the Peninsula School District, levy dollars now provide over 20% of the operating budget. Current levy dollars pay for:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20% of the cost of classroom teachers• 40% of the cost for custodians, paraeducators and clerical staff• 80% of athletic and co-curricular costs• 100% of the cost of health technicians• 85% of technology staff and equipment• 100% of maintenance projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The 4-day, all-day free kindergarten program• 60% of textbooks and instructional materials• Supplemental funding for school security and emergency preparedness
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Q – How would the Peninsula School District be impacted should the levy not pass?

A – We know that our options are to review the current levy and consider resubmitting it in April or begin the painful task of reducing over \$18 million in revenues. As 90% of the levy is people, the latter would require that we review all areas essential to supporting the classroom and consider reductions in non-essential areas such as sports, evening/weekend facility use, middle and high school electives, technology, transportation, partnerships, all-day kindergarten, reduce or eliminate after-school clubs and defer capital maintenance projects.

Q – How is this levy different from the capital bond election that was held last year?

A – The capital bond election was for building maintenance and other capital projects. The levy funds the day to day operation of the schools which includes staffing and program costs.

Q – How much money will the levy provide the school district?

A – It varies by year, providing \$19-23 million each year. The total budget for the Peninsula School District for 2011-12 is approximately \$80 million (which includes our current levy dollars).

Q – How does the Peninsula School District tax rate compare with neighboring school districts?

A – Peninsula School District has the lowest tax rate in Pierce and Kitsap counties. Please see the graph, at http://www.psd401.net/staticfiles/psd/image_directory/PSD/district/budget/Levy-Rates-Compared.jpg

Q – What is the date of the levy election?

A – Election Day is February 14. Ballots have been mailed to homes. This is a **mail-in election only** and the ballots must be postmarked by February 14, 2012. If you would prefer to use a Drop Box instead of mailing, the following is a list of Drop Box sites:

Key Center Fire Station: 8911 Key Peninsula Hwy, KPN; Lakebay

Gig Harbor Fire Station: 6711 Kimball Drive; Gig Harbor

Purdy Fire Station: 5210 – 144th Street NW; Gig Harbor

Note: Drop Box sites close at 8:00 p.m. on February 14, 2012.

Q – How can I find more information and get my questions answered?

A – You can attend an informational meeting:

- Superintendent’s Forum, February 7, Harbor Ridge Middle School

You can visit the district’s website <http://www.psd401.net/> and view presentation slides at: http://www.psd401.net/staticfiles/psd/documents/2012_Replacement_Levy_Presentation.pdf

You can call Superintendent Terry Bouck or Deputy Superintendent Chuck Cuzzetto at the District office, 530-1000

Q – How does the State Supreme Court decision in *McCleary v. State of Washington* impact levies throughout the State?

A – The recent Washington Supreme Court decision in *McCleary v. State of Washington* confirmed that the State has not complied with its duty to make ample provision for the education of all children in Washington. The court also held that the State’s ample funding for basic education must be accomplished by dependable and regular tax sources and that local levies do not meet this standard. The court’s ruling did not invalidate the legal authority, nor the need for local levy dollars, especially in light of the State’s failure to amply fund basic education. The District does not anticipate a change in this need until there is a substantial change in the State-provided funding of basic education.

Q – What is the cost of this election?

A – According to the Pierce County Election’s Office, the cost for the February 2012 election will be between \$260,000 and \$280,000. This cost will be shared by the following ten (10) jurisdictions:

Auburn School District, Carbonado Historical School District, Clover Park School District, Dieringer School District, Eatonville School District, Franklin Pierce School District, Orting School District, Peninsula School District, Yelm Community Schools, and Riverside Fire & Rescue

Q – How does Peninsula School District’s per student revenue compare to the state and national average?

A – Our student revenue for 2010-2011 was as follows: **Peninsula School District \$9,226; Washington State \$9,754; and National \$10,591.** In fact, the Peninsula School District receives approximately \$500 less than the Washington State average and more than \$1,300 less than the national average; thus, delivering on a “quality” education in the Peninsula School District at a lower per student revenue rate.