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Klamath Falls City Schools

District Newsletter

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The Operating Levy's Local Impact

The Oregon state educational funding formula is confusing to many people. It is called an equity-based system. This means every student in the state gets the same base funding. This funding comes to districts from the same general pot of money. State educational revenue is accumulated from several different funding sources. One is income tax, a second is local property taxes, a third is lottery funds, and a fourth is Secure Rural School federal funds.

What makes this confusing for the average taxpayer is that their taxes do not go directly to their school district. They first go to the statewide educational fund and from there they are sent to districts according to how many students they have.

There is one exception to this rule. All educational funds that a community approves locally stay in their local school district. These include bond issues for buildings and local option levies to increase dollars available for the day-to-day operations of a district.

This second funding stream is what the district is proposing on the May 15th ballot. All the dollars from this local option levy stay right in Klamath Falls. None are mixed in with the general educational funds at the state level. In fact, this levy is the opposite as it actually attracts more funds from the state. So instead of being a levy that is sent to Salem and then divided up among the other 197 districts, it all stays in Klamath Falls and the state will even send down additional dollars from Salem for our school district.

The \$.50 on \$1000 of property local option levy equates to \$50 per year on a \$100,000 home. This three-year levy would generate \$890,000 per year. The state would then kick in an additional \$151,300 per year. Therefore, the annual revenue the operating levy would bring to our local classrooms is \$1,041,300.

This addition to district funds would be used for three purposes:

- Lowering elementary class sizes (by hiring approximately 10 teachers)
- Adding elective classes in grades 7-12 (culinary arts, art, human development, child development, beginning and advanced engineering, and multimedia)
- Updating high school textbooks

These funds would impact more than just our schools as they would largely be spent locally and help stimulate the Basin economy.

What is your Levy I.Q.?

Here are some questions to help you measure your levy knowledge. Check your understanding by comparing to the answers at the bottom of the page.

1. When will the ballots be mailed for the local option levy?
 - a. June 1; b. May 20; c. April 27; d. None of the above
2. When is the last day I can register to vote?
 - a. April 5; b. May 1; c. April 10; d. April 24

3. How would KFCS use the additional revenue?
 - a. Lower class sizes; b. Add electives at Ponderosa and KU; c. Purchase high school textbooks; d. All of the above
4. Where does the educational tax in the KFCS taxing district rank with other districts that have 2,000 or more students?
 - a. The lowest tax rate; b. The highest tax rate; c. At the state average; d. None of the above.
5. How much is the district asking residents to approve?
 - a. \$1.50 per \$1,000; b. \$1.00 per \$1,000; c. \$.75 per \$1,000; d. \$.50 per \$1,000
6. When will the levy expire?
 - a. 3 years; b. 10 years; c. 5 years; d. none of the above
7. What percentage of the approved funds will the state match for the district if it is approved?
 - a. 10%; b. 5%; c. 20%; d. 17%
8. If I had a \$100,000 home how much would my taxes increase?
 - a. \$50 per year; b. \$75 per year; c. \$125 per year; d. none of the above
9. How can I get more information on the levy?
 - a. Check the KFCS website: <http://www.edline.net/pages/klamathfalls>; b. Call Paul Hillyer: 541-883-4700; c. Both of the above

Answers: 1. c; 2. d; 3. d; 4. a; 5. d; 6. a; 7. d; 8. a; 9. c

For more about what's happening at Mills Auditorium, visit the website (www.kfalls.k12.or.us). Please call Shaw Nee at 541-883-4700 Ext 1 if you would like more information about donating a seat.