



WAUNAKEE

COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

2026 Special Board Meeting - Approval of Budget & Tax Levy

Date:	Monday, October 26, 2026
Time:	7:00 PM
Location:	District Administration & Maintenance Center Board of Education Room 905 Bethel Circle Waunakee, WI 53597



RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF APPROXIMATELY \$5,425,000 GENERAL OBLIGATION REFUNDING BONDS, SERIES 2026

- This is a short-term financial strategy designed to reduce the increase in the local property tax levy
- The 2025-27 state budget increased state equalization aid by \$0
 - 2024-25 state equalization aid: \$24,634,807
 - 2025-26 state equalization aid: \$23,334,386 (-\$1,300,421)
 - 2026-27 state equalization aid: \$22,746,100 (-\$588,286)
 - Total loss: \$3,189,128 over 2025-27 state budget
- A \$1 loss in state equalization aid is an automatic \$1 increase in the local property tax levy **AND** the district has not spent \$1 more
- **AND** every additional dollar spent under the revenue limit formula increases the local property tax levy **AND** non-general fund levy increases like fund 39 or 80



RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF APPROXIMATELY \$5,425,000 GENERAL OBLIGATION REFUNDING BONDS, SERIES 2026

- The board approved a property tax levy in 2025-26 that was \$2.3 million less than legally allowed in order to keep the overall tax levy close to the rate of inflation for **existing** property tax payers
- The budget committee is proposing approving the resolution above to address the \$2.3 million from 2025-26 and to lower the 2026-27 tax levy by \$1.3 million in order to keep the overall tax levy close to the rate of inflation for **existing** property tax payers
- Please note: The property tax levy increases by 6.5% with approximately 3% absorbed by new construction and the remaining amount would be levied to existing taxpayers
- This action will preserve all cash for future board decision making (\$1.1 million clean energy rebate from Heritage, \$4-5 million from the middle school, and all remaining savings from \$175 million referendum)
- Administration recommends revisiting financial strategy after information becomes available on November 3, 2026 referendum questions and 2027-29 state budget



Third Draft of 2026-27 Budget - July

Proposed Property Tax Levy			
FUND	Audited 2024-25	Unaudited 2025-26	Proposed 2026-27
General Fund	33,383,590.00	37,939,991.00	41,325,725.00
Referendum Debt Service Fund	10,699,681.00	8,544,712.00	8,850,867.00
Non-Referendum Debt Service Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
Capital Expansion Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
Community Service Fund	740,000.00	1,006,300.00	1,296,871.00
TOTAL SCHOOL LEVY	44,823,271.00	47,491,003.00	51,473,463.00
PERCENTAGE INCREASE --			
TOTAL LEVY FROM PRIOR YR	8.0%	6.0%	8.4%

The 2026-2027 tax base is estimated at \$5,852,238,646 or \$331,258,791 higher than 2025-2026. This change equates to a 6.0% increase. The 2026-2027 tax rate (tax levy/tax base) increases to \$8.80. This equates to a 2.3% increase. Please also note the school levy credit has not increased for the 2026-27 tax year.

Total Expenditures and Other Financing Uses			
ALL FUNDS	Audited 2024-25	Unaudited 2025-26	Proposed 2026-27
GROSS TOTAL EXPENDITURES--ALL FUNDS	160,043,043.11	145,434,141.00	116,754,307.33
Interfund Transfers (Source 100) - ALL FUNDS	7,930,542.01	7,594,427.00	6,844,790.00
Refinancing Expenditures (FUND 30)	0.00	0.00	0.00
NET TOTAL EXPENDITURES -- ALL FUNDS	152,112,501.10	137,839,714.00	109,909,517.33
PERCENTAGE INCREASE -- NET TOTAL FUND			
EXPENDITURES FROM PRIOR YEAR	5.5%	-9.38%	-20.26%



Budget Adoption - New Information

- 3rd Friday in September Student Count
 - September enrollment count (4,309 compared to budget estimate of 4,395)
 - Summer school FTE count (199)
 - Open enrollment in and out students are verified during September student count
- October 15th State Equalization Aid Certification (\$22,746,100)
- October 1st Equalized Property Values (\$6,056,215,771)
- Tax Rate (\$8.35)
- Finalization of 26-27 Revenue Limit Worksheet
 - Transfer of Service (\$110,898)
 - Non-recurring Exemptions (\$586,610)
- Grant Allocations, Including Carryover Balances



Budget Adoption- Budget Changes

- Fund 10 - General Fund Revenues
 - Open Enrollment In
 - State Equalization Aid
 - Property Tax Levy
 - Grant Allocations, Including Carryover
 - Building/Department Fees
 - State Categorical Aid
 - Aidable Refund
 - Premium
 - Personal Property Aid/Computer Aid



Budget Adoption- Budget Changes

- Fund 10 - General Fund Expenses
 - Grant Allocations, Including Carryover
 - Building Student Count Allocation
 - Building/Department Fees
 - 4K Student Count Allocation
 - Districtwide (private school voucher payments, open enrollment out, and business insurance)
 - Transfer to Fund 27
 - Salary and Benefits Accounts Updated Based on October Actual Staffing



Budget Adoption- Budget Changes

- Fund 27 - Special Education Fund
 - Revenues
 - Transfer in from Fund 10
 - State Categorical Aid
 - Grant Allocations, Including Carryover
 - Expenses
 - Grant Allocations, Including Carryover
 - Salary and Benefits Accounts Updated Based on October Actual Staffing
- Fund 39 - Debt Service Fund
 - Reduced property tax levy based on refunding plan
 - Reduced principal and interest payments owed



Budget Adoption- Information Provided in Boardbook

- 4th Draft of the Budget
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Budget Adoption Format



Fourth Draft of 2026-27 Budget

July 2026

Total Expenditures and Other Financing Uses			
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PERCENTAGE INCREASE -- NET TOTAL FUND EXPENDITURES FROM PRIOR YEAR	5.5%	-9.38%	-20.26%

October 2026

Total Expenditures and Other Financing Uses			
ALL FUNDS	Audited	Unaudited	Proposed
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
GROSS TOTAL EXPENDITURES--ALL FUNDS	160,043,043.11	145,434,141.00	110,484,777.33
Interfund Transfers (Source 100) - ALL FUNDS	7,930,542.01	7,594,427.00	6,669,721.00
Refinancing Expenditures (FUND 30)	0.00	0.00	0.00
NET TOTAL EXPENDITURES -- ALL FUNDS	152,112,501.10	137,839,714.00	103,815,056.33
PERCENTAGE INCREASE -- NET TOTAL FUND EXPENDITURES FROM PRIOR YEAR	5.5%	-9.38%	-24.68%



Tax Levy Approval - New Information

- August Estimate of Net New Construction (2.9%)
- October 1st Equalized Property Values (\$6,056,215,771 or 8% increase)
- Finalization of 2026-27 Revenue Limit Worksheet (Determines Fund 10 Property Tax Levy)
- Final Tax Rate: \$8.35



Tax Levy Approval - Changes

July 2026

Proposed Property Tax Levy			
FUND	Audited	Unaudited	Proposed
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
General Fund	33,383,590.00	37,939,991.00	41,325,725.10
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Capital Expansion Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
Community Service Fund	740,000.00	1,006,300.00	1,296,871.00
TOTAL SCHOOL LEVY	44,823,271.00	47,491,003.00	51,473,463.00
PERCENTAGE INCREASE –	8.0%	6.0%	8.4%
TOTAL LEVY FROM PRIOR YR			

October 2026

Proposed Property Tax Levy			
FUND	Audited	Unaudited	Proposed
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
General Fund	33,383,590.00	37,939,991.00	41,437,922.00
Referendum Debt Service Fund	10,699,681.00	8,544,712.00	7,850,867.00
Non-Referendum Debt Service Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
Capital Expansion Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
Community Service Fund	740,000.00	1,006,300.00	1,296,871.00
TOTAL SCHOOL LEVY	44,823,271.00	47,491,003.00	50,585,660.00
PERCENTAGE INCREASE –	8.0%	6.0%	6.5%
TOTAL LEVY FROM PRIOR YR			



Tax Levy Approval - Changes

- Tax levy increase between 25-26 and 26-27 was \$3,094,657
 - Estimated \$1.38 million increase offset by net new construction
- Tax rate decreases to \$8.35 compared to \$8.60 in 25-26 based on the equalized property value increase



Tax Levy Approval - Distribution

<u>TAXING AREA</u>	<u>TID OUT VALUE</u>	<u>% TO TOTAL</u>	<u>2026-2027 TAX LEVY</u>	<u>2025-2026 TAX LEVY</u>	<u>\$ DIFFERENCE</u>	<u>% DIFFERENCE</u>
V WAUNAKEE	\$3,782,162,800	62.450926%	31,591,212.85	29,292,296.85	2,298,916.00	7.85%
T DANE	\$42,656,023	0.704335%	356,292.30	357,014.01	-721.71	-0.20%
T SPRINGFIELD	\$211,618,646	3.494239%	1,767,583.80	1,911,765.96	-144,182.16	-7.54%
T VIENNA	\$232,509,087	3.839181%	1,942,075.06	1,978,832.47	-36,757.41	-1.86%
T WESTPORT	\$1,402,921,748	23.164990%	11,718,162.83	10,799,619.14	918,543.69	8.51%
C MADISON	\$142,567,611	2.354071%	1,190,822.28	1,185,053.22	5,769.06	0.49%
C MIDDLETON	\$241,779,856	3.992260%	2,019,510.87	1,976,421.35	43,089.52	2.18%
TOTALS	\$6,056,215,771	100.000000%	\$50,585,660.00	\$47,501,003.00	\$3,084,657.00	6.49%
TAX RATE= AMOUNT OF LEVY/TOTAL EQUALIZED VALUATION			0.008352684566			
TAX RATE PER \$1,000 OF EQUALIZED VALUE =			8.35			



Tax Levy Approval - Communication

- The 6.5% property tax levy increase approved by the School Board is not a net change in your property tax levy. There are school levy property tax credits that offset a portion of the school district tax levy. For the 2026-2027 school year, the state of Wisconsin has not increased the tax credit in the district, however the amount of the school district levy tax credit changes each year based on state formula.
- New properties built in 2025 are taxed for the first time in 2027 and this shifts the school property tax between properties. The estimate for new construction is an increase of 2.9%.
- The school district is made up of 7 different municipalities. School property tax levies shift between municipalities depending on equalized property value changes.
- Individual properties can have a tax value increase or decrease based on property changes (like a basement remodel or a reassessment).



Tax Levy Approval - Information Provided in Boardbook

- Tax Levy by Municipality



Budget Adoption & Tax Levy Approval

- Administration is recommending approval of the following:

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Next Steps 2026-27 - Budget Committee Future Meetings

- Completion of financial borrowing plan for November 2022 referendum, including discussion of allocating project savings to tax levy/borrowing, and discussion of November 2026 referendum results
- Discussion on financial commitments not budgeted in 2026-27
 - Diesel fuel costs
 - Termination benefits (accumulated vacation days) - budgeted at \$100,000
 - Maintenance costs in fund 10
- Discussion of assumptions in 26-27 budget
 - Interest earnings
 - Special Ed categorical aid
 - Medicaid
 - High Cost Aid
- Discussion of 26-27 end of the year balance
 - Allocating fund 10/fund 50 maintenance costs to fund 49
 - Allocating fund 10 technology costs to fund 49
 - Post-employment benefits funded within fund 73
 - Allocation of IRS Clean Energy Rebates (MS Spring/Summer 2027)



Next Steps 2027-28

- Referendum results from November 3, 2026
- Discussion on district contingency amount (currently \$300,000)
- Enrollment - 4K planning & open enrollment