River Trails
SCHOOL DISTRICT 26

To: Finance Committee
From: Ryan Berry
Date: November 2, 2026
Subject: 2026 Tentative Tax Levy

Introduction

Every year, the board must approve the tax levy, instructing the county to secure the local revenue necessary to maintain and enhance the district's educational programs, support staffing and student services, and ensure the continued operation and improvement of school facilities.

Recommendation

It is recommended by the Administration that the Board of Education adopt an estimated tax levy for the tax year 2026 in the amounts as follows:

the sum of	$ 21,300,000	for educational purposes, and
the sum of	$ 3,325,000	for operations and maintenance purposes, and
the sum of	$1,000,000	for transportation purposes, and
the sum of	$ 400,000	for Illinois Municipal Retirement purposes, and
the sum of	$ 400,000	for social security and Medicare purposes, and
the sum of	$ 2,250,000	for special education purposes

on the equalized assessed valuation of all the taxable property in River Trails School District 26, Cook County, Illinois, for the year 2026.

Background

Based on projections of needed revenue for the 2027-28 programs, the 2026 levy is proposed at a level to sustain access to the maximum tax revenues under the tax cap.

The 2026 total tax rate for the District (excluding the Bond and Interest Fund) is restricted to the rate limit imposed by the tax cap. The rate limit is derived by increasing the 2025 extension by the 2025 consumer price index (cpi) or 5.0%, whichever is less, and then dividing it by the 2026 EAV of the district minus any new property. Since the 2025 cpi was 2.7%, the extension is limited to a 2.7% increase plus any revenue for new property.

Since information on the 2026 new property amount will not be available until after May, 2027, the estimated levy is based on new growth of $12,000,000 to ensure that the District's maximizes operating revenue from any new growth; however, actual new growth is estimated at $1,500,000 for the 2026 tax year based on the impact of economic conditions on new construction in the district. Additional new growth and extension protection is included by the county's loss amount which adds an additional 3% to each levied fund.

The following chart displays the tentative 2026 tax levy distribution

Recommended and Estimated 2026 Levy

2025 Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV)	**$827,391,546**
2025 Estimated Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV)	**$828,891,546**
2025 Extension	**$29,394,617**
2026 Recommended Extension	**$30,172,400**

Fund	2025 Levy Extension	2025 Tax Rate Est	Best Guess 2026 Levy*	Best Guess 2026 Tax Rate	Recommended 2026 Levy Based on 2.7% Increase	Recomended 2026 Tax Rate Based on 2.7% Increase	Legal Maximum Rate
Education	$20,370,952	2.4621	$21,075,109	2.5426	$21,300,000	2.5330	as needed
Operations	3,666,362	0.4431	3,424,750	0.4132	3,325,000	0.3954	0.5500
Special Education	2,317,500	0.2801	2,317,500	0.2796	2,250,000	0.2676	0.4000
Transportation	875,500	0.1058	1,030,000	0.1243	1,000,000	0.1189	as needed
Municipal Retirement	319,300	0.0386	412,000	0.0497	400,000	0.0476	as needed
Social Security	319,300	0.0386	412,000	0.0497	400,000	0.0476	as needed
Sub-Total	$27,868,914	3.3683	$28,671,359	3.4590	$28,675,000	3.4101	
Percentage Increase			2.9%		2.9%		
Debt Service	1,525,703	0.1844	1,572,270	0.1897	1,497,400	0.1781	
Total Levy	$29,394,617	3.5527	$30,243,629	3.6487	$30,172,400	3.5881	
Adjustment for Rebates(O&M)	$818,561	0.0989					
Total Levy with Rebates	$30,213,178	3.6516					

* Includes Loss and Cost of 5% on Debt Service and 3% on all other funds

Under the Cook County *Truth in Taxation* law, the District is not required to publish notice of the proposed levy or hold a hearing in the first regular meeting of December because the proposed levy is less than 105% of the 2025 extension.

When a school district issue bonds, a certified copy of the resolution providing for their issuance and levying a tax to pay them is filed with the County Clerk. Each year during the life of a bond issue, the Clerk's office extends the tax for bonds and interest set forth in the resolution. Therefore, to avoid a possible duplication of tax levies, the Board of Education does not include a levy for bond and interest payments in its annual tax levy.

Timeline and Next Steps (if needed)

It also recommends the Board use the following timeline:

November 10, 2026	Board Certifies tentative levy
November 27, 2025	Publish legal notice in local newspaper
December 08, 2025	Board/Public Hearing & Levy Adoption
December 30, 2025	Final day to file levy with County Clerk

Attachments

- 2026 Tentative Levy Packet