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Operating Referendum Discussion – Board Renewal of Expiring Authority

Mahtomedi Public School District, ISD 832

School Board Study Session

October 12, 2026

Voter-Approved Funding

"Bonds are for Building"

- Building Bonds

"Levies are for Learning"

- Operating Referendum
- Capital Project Levy

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Operating Referendum

November election ballot question, stated per pupil, estimated cap for Fiscal Year 2026-27 is $2,366

Allows districts to generate additional general education revenue

Revenue can be a combination of local property tax levies & state aid

Annual levy, maximum length of 10 years

Taxes spread on Referendum Market Value

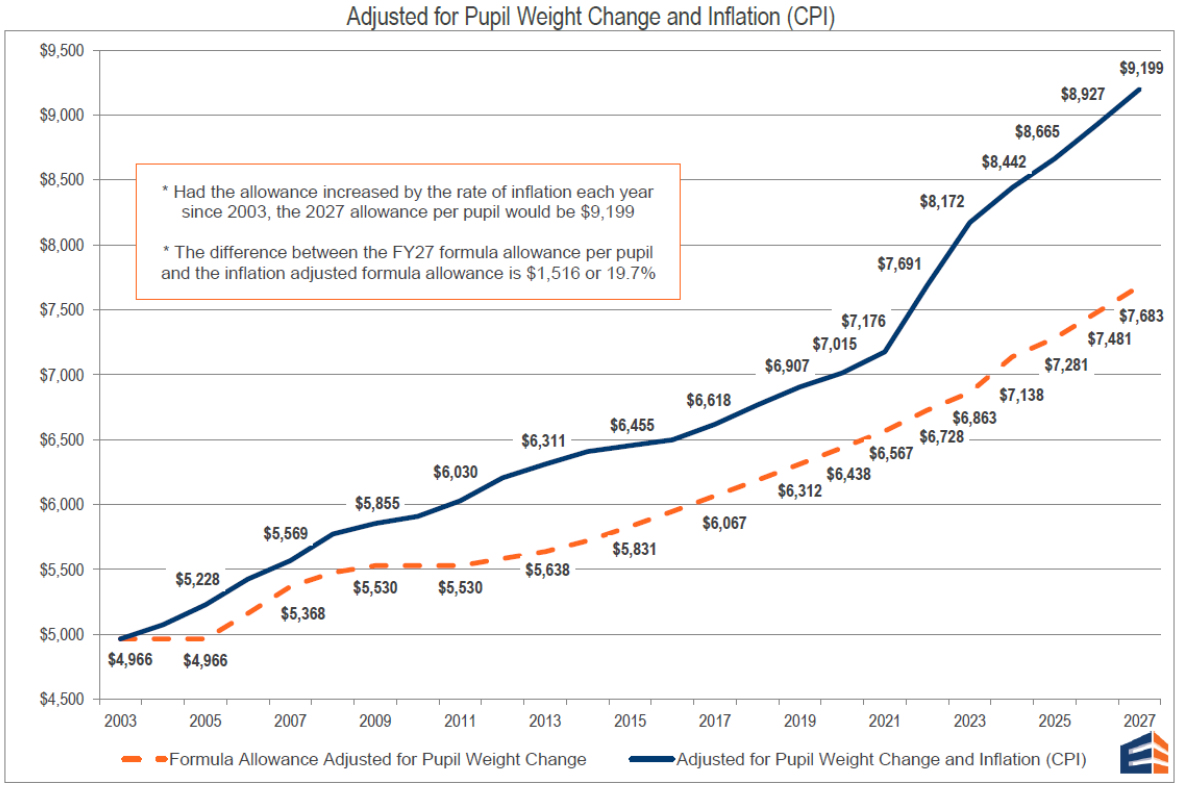
(most property types pay same taxes per dollar of property value

Revenue may be used for any operating or capital expenses

(e.g. staff salaries & benefits, utilities, supplies, technology)

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General Education Formula Allowance



Source: MDE June 2026 CPI Inflation Estimates and Minnesota Laws 2023

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Reliance on Referendums



Other funding sources (e.g., special education) have not kept pace with inflation or costs of providing services.



Additional recent underfunded and/or unfunded mandates



Districts can only bridge funding gaps by reducing budgets or seeking voter-approved operating referendum and/or capital project levy authority; most have done both.

Referendum Allowances

Election Year	Taxes Payable	Fiscal Year	Voter Approved		Board Renewal*		Tax Rate
			Operating Referendum	Renewal Years for Expiring Authorities	First Date	Deadline	Capital Project Levy
2024	2025	2026	1,570.00				2.730%
2025	2026	2027	2,145.00				2.730%
2026	2027	2028	2,145.00				2.730%
2027	2028	2029	2,145.00	**	July 1, 2026	June 15, 2028	2.730%
2028	2029	2030	575.00	***			2.730%
2029	2030	2031	575.00				2.730%
2030	2031	2032	575.00				2.730%
2031	2032	2033	575.00	^			0.000%
2032	2033	2034	575.00				0.000%
2033	2034	2035	575.00				0.000%
2034	2035	2036	575.00	**	July 1, 2033	June 15, 2035	0.000%
2035	2036	2037	0.00	***			0.000%
2036	2037	2038	0.00				0.000%

Estimated Revenue for Fiscal Year 2027

Operating Referendum $ 7,522,086
Capital Project Levy $ 1,045,304

Estimated FY 2027 CPL Revenue Per Pupil: $ 298.08

Notes:

* Minnesota Statutes, Section 126C.17 allows school boards to renew an existing operating referendum one-time for the same term and same amount

** First year voters can renew expiring voter approved operating referendum authority

*** Last year voters can renew expiring voter approved operating referendum authority

^ Last year to renew expiring capital project levy

Source: Minnesota Department of Education

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School Board Renewal of Operating Referendum

- Renew authority up to the same authority and length
  - ✓ Original authority was approved by voters November 6, 2018, with a 10-year term, effective beginning with taxes payable 2019/Fiscal Year 2019-20
  - ✓ Current per pupil authority (including step ups) is $1,570
  - ✓ Timeframe for Board renewal is July 1, 2026, through June 15, 2028
- Must allow for public comment (can be at same meeting)
- Board approves a resolution and submits to MDE and counties

School Board Renewal Information

Fiscal Year Expiring	Authorities	Board Renewed	Ask Voters			In Progress
			Revoke & Replace	Additional Authority	Straight Renewal	
2023-24	13	13	0	0	0	0
2024-25	16	15	0	1	0	0
2025-26	51	48	2	1	0	0
2026-27	21	19	2	0	0	0
2027-28	38	17	0	0	0	21
2028-29	22	2	0	0	0	20

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