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Operating Referendum Discussion – Board Renewal of Expiring Authority

St. Louis Park Public Schools, ISD 283

School Board Study Session

November 10, 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

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

Can be renewed by school board one-time

Taxes spread on Referendum Market Value

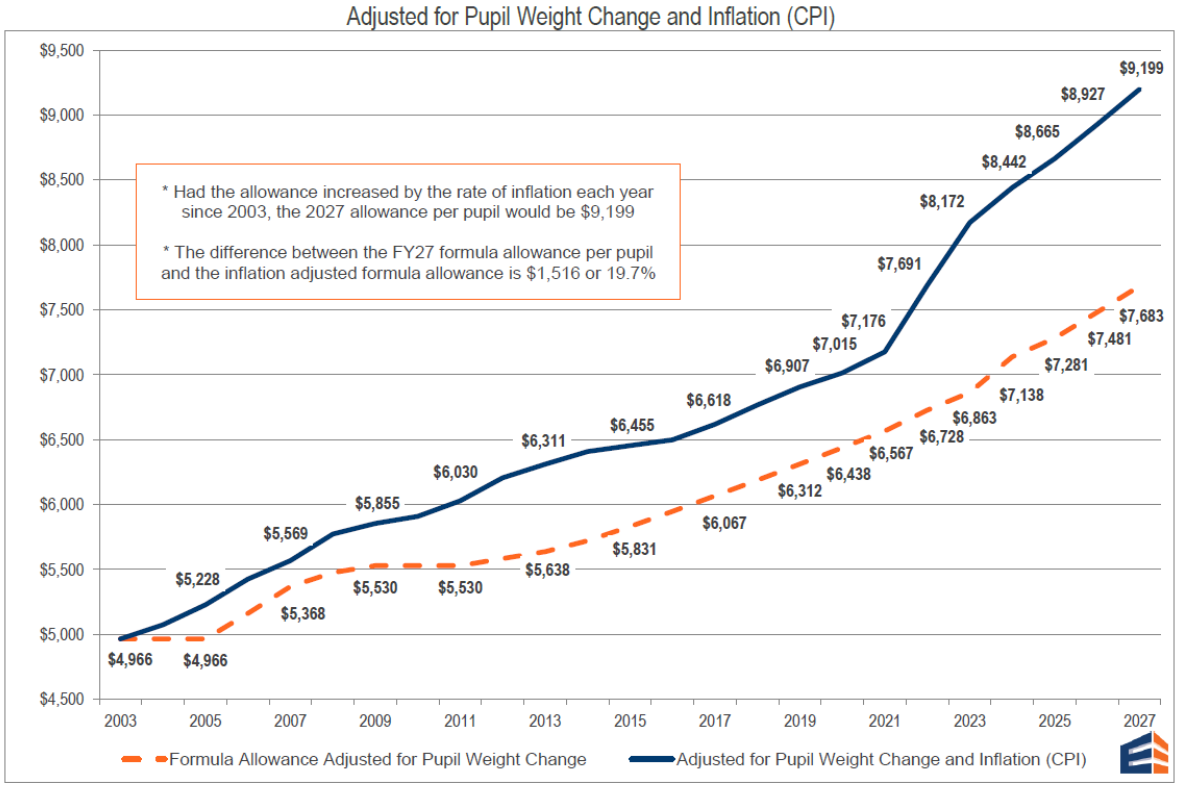
(most property types pay same taxes per dollar of property value)

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*	
			Operating Referendum	Renewal Years for Expiring Authorities	First Date	Deadline
2024	2025	2026	2,307.45			
2025	2026	2027	2,386.98			
2026	2027	2028	2,444.48			
2027	2028	2029	2,515.84	**	July 1, 2026	June 15, 2028
2028	2029	2030	0.00	***		
2029	2030	2031	0.00			

Estimated Revenue for Fiscal Year 2027

Operating Referendum $ 11,389,087

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

Source: Minnesota Department of Education

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School Board Renewal of Operating Referendum

- Renew authority up to same authority and length
  - ✓ Timeframe for Board renewal is July 1, 2026, through June 15, 2028
  - ✓ Original authority of $2,079.99 was approved for a 10 year term
  - ✓ Annual increase for inflation
- Must allow for public comment (can be at same meeting)
- Board approves a resolution and submits to MDE and Hennepin County

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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