

Why is the Crosby-Ironton School Board going out for an operating referendum this fall?

1. Without an operating referendum in place, the Crosby-Ironton School District's budget faces a financial cliff, including statutory operating debt.
2. State funding hasn't kept pace with inflation and the rising costs of operations.
3. New requirements mandated by the state are unfunded or only partly funded.
4. State funding is tied to student enrollment, making it essential to offer a strong school experience that keeps families here and attract new ones.
5. C-I has already made significant cuts, and further cuts will directly impact student learning and the experience of a well-rounded education.
6. For a school district, managing our budget includes prioritizing spending and making cuts when necessary. But making major cuts year after year threatens the education and opportunities students receive in our district.
7. Over 70% of Minnesota school districts rely on local operating levies to maintain their program Crosby-Ironton does not have a voter-approved operating levy, putting us at a disadvantage.



Referendum Facts

- \$1.5 million/year (\$1,512/student) - 10 year levy
- Tax impact: \$26/month on a \$400,000 valued home
- What does an operating revenue cover?
 - An operating levy is a local, voter-approved property tax that provides additional funding to help cover the day-to-day costs of running a school district, including:
 - Staff wages
 - Classroom supplies and activities
 - Student support services
 - Academic programs and electives
 - Building operations
 - Implementation of state mandates
- September 19th - mail in/absentee voting starts
- November 4th - Voting in person
- RangerNationStrongFoundation.org
 - Challenges, The Plan, How to connect, FAQ's, Tax Calculator



Why is the Crosby-Ironton School Board
approving budget adjustments for the
2026-2027 this early?



July 14th - Monday Work Session

- Discuss operating referendum
 - o The why, which explains the need.
 - o The amount that is being requested in the November 4th referendum.
 - o The tax impact of the operating referendum.
 - o When the school district will begin to receive the revenue from a successful referendum.
 - o Revisit 2025-2026 reductions
 - o Discuss provisional budget concepts for 2026-2027 with a **failed referendum**.

July 28th – Monday – School Board Meeting

- Discuss operating referendum
 - o The why, which explains the need.
 - o The amount that is being requested in the November 4th referendum.
 - o The tax impact of the operating referendum.
 - o When the school district will begin to receive the revenue from a successful referendum.
 - o Discuss provisional budget concepts for 2026-2027 with a **failed referendum**.

August 11th - Monday Work Session

- Discuss operating referendum
 - o The why, which explains the need.
 - o The amount that is being requested in the November 4th referendum.
 - o The tax impact of the operating referendum.
 - o When the school district will begin to receive the revenue from a successful referendum.
 - o Discuss provisional programming and sustainability concepts for 2026-2027 with a **successful referendum**.
 - o Revisit provisional budget concepts for 2026-2027 with a **failed referendum**.
 - o Superintendent asked to put together a plan for \$1,000,000 in reductions for the 26/27 school year in the event of a **failed referendum**.

August 25th – Monday – School Board Meeting

- Discuss operating referendum
 - o The why, which explains the need.
 - o The amount that is being requested in the November 4th referendum.
 - o The tax impact of the operating referendum.
 - o When the school district will begin to receive the revenue from a successful referendum.
 - o **Approve** 2026-2027 reduction concepts with a **failed referendum**.
 - o **Approve** 2026-2027 programming and sustainability concepts with a **successful referendum**.



Why is the Crosby-Ironton School Board choosing \$1,000,000 as the target reduction number for the 2026-2027 school year?



Fund Balance

*Crosby-Ironton School Board Fund Balance Policy (714) is **7%-12%**

*Having a fund balance of 7-12% is the minimum recommendation

*This policy allowed the school board to spend down money and minimize reductions the last two years.

Reduction Amount	Fund Balance	July 1, 2027 Reality
\$0	-3.43%	Statutory Operating Debt
\$800,000	2.35%	Fund balance below board policy
\$1,400,000	7.15%	Fund balance within board policy

***School board chose \$1,000,000 as 26/27 budget target (3.88% fund balance**

Budget Concepts (failed referendum)

- Provisional conversations with administration and at the school board level (work sessions, board meetings)
- Tiered System of reductions - Tier I, II, III
- Fund balance projections presented
- C-I School Board has decided on a target of \$1,000,000 for 2026-2027
- Superintendent was asked to produce a plan for communication and approval.



Considerations in reduction plan

- Graduation Credits
 - State of Minnesota: 21 Credits to Graduate
 - Crosby-Ironton: 26 Credits to Graduate
- Potential Enrollment Loss
- Class Sizes
- Staff Licensures
- Seniority Roster
- Employee Contracts



Provisional Budget Concepts

- Tier I
 - College in the Schools
 - High School Electives
 - Classroom Teaching Positions
 - Student Support Services
 - Curriculum Freeze
 - Instructional Supplies Freeze
 - Custodial Positions
 - Extra-Curricular Activities
- Tier II
 - Student Support Services
 - Classroom Positions
 - High School Electives
 - Administrative Assistant Position
 - Family Services Collaborative
- Tier III
 - 4 Day School Week
 - Building and District Level Administration
 - No Access to school building after school hours



2026-2027 Reductions for approval

TOTAL: \$998,000 for 2026-2027 School Year (flexibility for more if needed)

1. Online & CIS Contracts (Infinity & Bemidji State University) - \$45,000
2. 5.0 - Certified Staff - \$350,000
 - a. 1.0 Music
 - b. 1.0 FACS
 - c. 1.0 High School Science
 - d. 1.0 Foreign Language / Work Based Learning
 - e. 1.0 Elementary Teacher
3. .5 FTE - Student Support Position - \$50,000
4. 1.0 - Custodial Position - \$45,000
5. 1 year freeze on all curriculum purchases - \$100,000
6. Suspend all instructional supply purchases - \$73,000
7. Defunding all Extra-Curricular Activities - \$335,000

3.88% fund balance to start the 2026-2027 School Year



2026-2027 Reduction Relief

“Successful referendum”

1. C-I fund balance restored back to board policy (7% or higher)
2. Manageable class sizes
3. Sustain current elective offerings
4. Sustain current student support services
5. Sustain well maintained buildings and grounds
6. Provide adequate classroom supplies and materials for teachers
7. Offer a wide variety of extra-curricular activities that are not 100% fundraised



August 25th School Board Meeting

1. C-I School Board considering the approval of a reduction plan for the 2026-2027 School Year in the event the referendum is **not successful**.
2. C-I School Board will be considering the approval of a plan outlining what the District is able to sustain if the referendum is **successful**.

