#### Key Message:

We are increasing our school district's supplemental levy to better support students and programs — all while slightly *lowering* the tax rate for our community.

# Talking Points by Theme

## 1. Tax Rate Is Going Down Slightly

- Even with a higher supplemental levy, the overall school district tax rate will decrease.
- Current tax rate: \$64.89 per \$100,000 of taxable property value
- New tax rate: \$63.67 per \$100,000 a reduction of \$1.22
- That means we are investing more in education while reducing the burden on taxpayers.

## 💸 2. Strategic Financial Planning

- We're able to do this because we are paying off a \$1.636 million bond levy.
- By **retiring this debt**, we can increase the supplemental levy from **\$2.25 million to \$3.85 million**, while the overall tax rate still drops.
- This is a smart, balanced use of district funding tools that maximizes student support without asking for more from taxpayers.

## 3. Why the Increase in the Supplemental Levy?

The additional \$1.6 million in supplemental funding will be **strategically invested** in key areas that directly support student success and safe, effective learning environments:

## Student Learning Resources

 Updated classroom textbooks, workbooks, and digital resources, learning materials, and supplies to support strong academics and student achievement.

#### ✓ Safety, Security, & Technology

 Improvements to school safety systems, cybersecurity, and modern classroom technology to ensure secure, connected learning.

#### ✓ Equipment & Furniture

 Replacement and modernization of worn-out desks, chairs, and classroom equipment to create functional, comfortable learning spaces.

#### ✓ Campus Repairs & Maintenance

 Ongoing building repairs, maintenance, and facility upgrades to keep our schools safe, clean, and welcoming.

These targeted investments are essential to **maintaining quality education** and giving students the tools and spaces they need to thrive.

#### 4. Simple Math Explanation

• Supplemental Levy Increase:

From \$2.25 million  $\rightarrow$  \$3.85 million (+ \$1.6 million)

Bond Levy Being Retired:

\$1.636 million — no longer on the tax rolls

- Net effect on tax rate:
  - → Decrease from \$64.89 to \$63.67 per \$100k of taxable value

## **⊗ ⊗ o** 5. Responsible, Community-Minded Approach

- We are doing more for students while reducing the tax rate.
- This plan reflects our commitment to:
  - Fiscal responsibility
  - Student success
  - Respect for local taxpayers
- It's an investment in the future that aligns with the values of our community.

# **✓** Summary Statement:

"By paying off a \$1.636 million bond levy, we're able to increase our supplemental levy to \$3.85 million to better serve students—while reducing the school tax rate from \$64.89 to \$63.67 per \$100,000 of taxable value. That means more support for our schools, at a lower tax rate for our community."

## **the Difference:**

#### **Supplemental Levy vs. Modernization Funds (HB 521)**

Our schools receive funding from different sources, and each one has specific rules about how it can be used. Here's an easy breakdown:

# Supplemental Levy Funds

These are **local dollars approved by voters** to help schools with their **everyday operating costs**.

## What they can be used for:

- Paying teacher and staff salaries
- Buying classroom supplies like books, paper, and learning tools
- Supporting **student programs** (music, art, athletics, after-school)
- Funding technology and basic building maintenance

## What they can't be used for:

Major building construction or big renovation projects

## **Mow it works:**

- Approved by voters in your local district
- Usually lasts 1–2 years
- Needs to be renewed by vote when it expires

# Modernization Funds (House Bill 521)

This is **state funding** created in 2024 to help schools **fix and upgrade aging buildings**.

# What they can be used for:

- Replacing old roofs
- Upgrading heating & cooling systems (HVAC)
- Improving school safety (doors, windows, security systems)

Making buildings more energy efficient and long-lasting

#### What they can't be used for:

- Paying teachers or buying school supplies
- Regular maintenance (like patching a wall or mowing the lawn)
- Athletic fields or sports facility upgrades

## What's required:

- Districts must submit a 10-year facilities plan
- Funds are audited to make sure they're used correctly

## In Simple Terms:

- Supplemental Levies = People & Programs
  They keep our schools running day-to-day.
- Modernization Funds = Bricks & Buildings
   They help us repair and improve school facilities for the long term.

#### What Are HB 521 Modernization Funds?

Passed in 2024, **House Bill 521** created a **statewide fund** to help public schools **upgrade and modernize aging school buildings**. These dollars are **not local levies or bonds**—they come from the **State of Idaho**, and they have strict rules.

# Earmarked for Student Learning Spaces Only

Modernization funds are **limited to school areas that directly support student learning**. That means:

## ✓ Allowed:

- Classrooms (elementary, middle, high school)
- Libraries
- Science labs
- Hallways and entryways used by students
- Bathrooms attached to student-use areas
- Technology infrastructure in instructional spaces

## Not Allowed:

- Non-Classroom Athletic facilities (gyms, stadiums, locker rooms, weight rooms)
- Concession stands, press boxes, or field lighting
- District offices or admin-only buildings
- Bus garages, maintenance shops, or storage buildings

This ensures that every dollar goes toward improving the spaces where students learn — not extracurricular or administrative areas.

# 30-Year Lifespan Requirement

To qualify, **projects must be built to last**. HB 521 requires that all improvements made with modernization funds must have a **minimum expected lifespan of 7 years**.

#### What that means:

- Funds can be used for **permanent building improvements**, not quick fixes.
- Examples include:
  - New roofs
  - Upgraded HVAC systems
  - Energy-efficient windows and doors
  - Electrical or plumbing overhauls
  - Fire alarm and security systems

#### What's not eligible:

- Routine maintenance or patchwork repairs
- Short-term fixes (e.g., replacing a single unit instead of upgrading the entire system)
- Projects that don't extend the life of the school facility

This rule ensures the money is used for **long-lasting**, **impactful upgrades** that protect taxpayer investment and extend the life of our school buildings.

#### Why This Matters

- Many Idaho schools are decades old some over 50 years and have outdated systems that are expensive to repair and hard to maintain.
- HB 521 gives districts a rare opportunity to invest in safe, efficient, and modern learning environments — without putting all the cost on local taxpayers.
- But to access the funds, districts must follow strict rules and show the upgrades directly benefit students and are built to last.