



**FOREST LAKE AREA SCHOOLS
FOREST LAKE, MN 55025**

April 19, 2018

AGENDA ITEM: 4.1

TOPIC: November 2018 Levy Referendum Discussion

BACKGROUND:

The school district continues to face financial challenges due to lagging state funding and a voter approved operating referendum that has not increased in eleven years. A referendum was presented to the voters of the district last November seeking a \$750/student increase to the current levy. The referendum failed, thus resulting in a targeted budget reduction of \$2 million for the 2018-2019 School Year. This reduction follows \$5.5 million in budget reductions and adjustments made in the last three years.

PROCESS:

Following the November 2017 failed levy/bond referendum a number of steps were taken to engage the community on the financial challenges facing the School District. A post-election survey was conducted, six community conversations were held throughout the school district, and a school funding task force was formed to study the district's financial situation and to provide guidance for the school board on a future operating levy referendum.

RECOMMENDATION:

Set amount and term for an operating levy to be presented as a referendum question to district voters on the November, 2018 election.