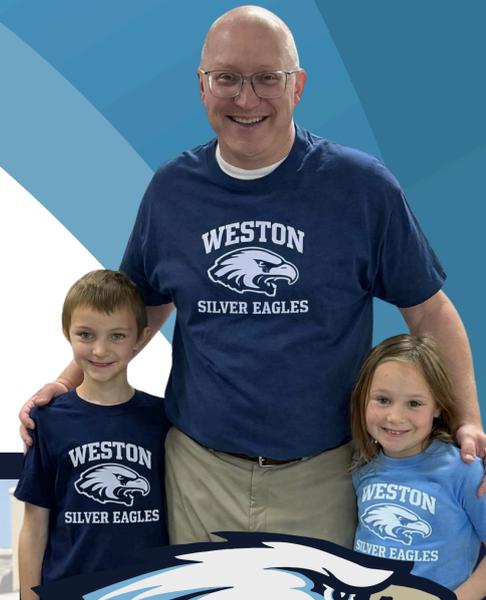




OPERATIONAL REFERENDUM

April 7, 2026



How Referendum Funds Would Be Used



BALLOT QUESTION

Shall the School District of Weston, Sauk and Richland Counties, Wisconsin be authorized to exceed the revenue limit specified in Section 121.91, Wisconsin Statutes, by \$1,500,000 per year for three years, beginning with the 2026-2027 school year and ending with the 2028-2029 school year, for non-recurring purposes consisting of operational and maintenance expenses?

Why Have Wisconsin Schools Become Referendum Reliant?

- State revenue limit (created in 1993) caps how much funding schools can receive.
- State aid has not kept pace with inflation.
- Operating costs continue to rise (transportation, utilities, insurance, supplies).
- Staffing and benefit costs are increasing as districts work to recruit and retain educators.
- Special education costs exceed state reimbursement levels.



SUSTAINING OUR SCHOOLS DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS



ATTRACT & RETAIN STUDENTS & STAFF



COLLEGE & CAREER READY STUDENTS



CONTINUE TO GROW ATHLETICS, FINE ARTS, CLUBS, & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

WHAT IS THE TAX RATE IMPACT?

\$300,000
Taxable Value:

Tax Increase:
\$35.75 /mo.

\$100,000
Taxable Value:

Tax Increase:
\$11.92 /mo.

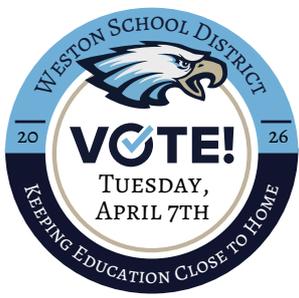
\$200,000
Taxable Value:

Tax Increase:
\$23.83 /mo.



\$9.45 PER \$1,000 OF TAXABLE VALUE INCREASE

*Financial estimates provided by Robert W. Baird & Co. are planning estimates only. Mill rate based on 2025 equalized valuation with annual growth of 5% thereafter.



OPERATIONAL REFERENDUM



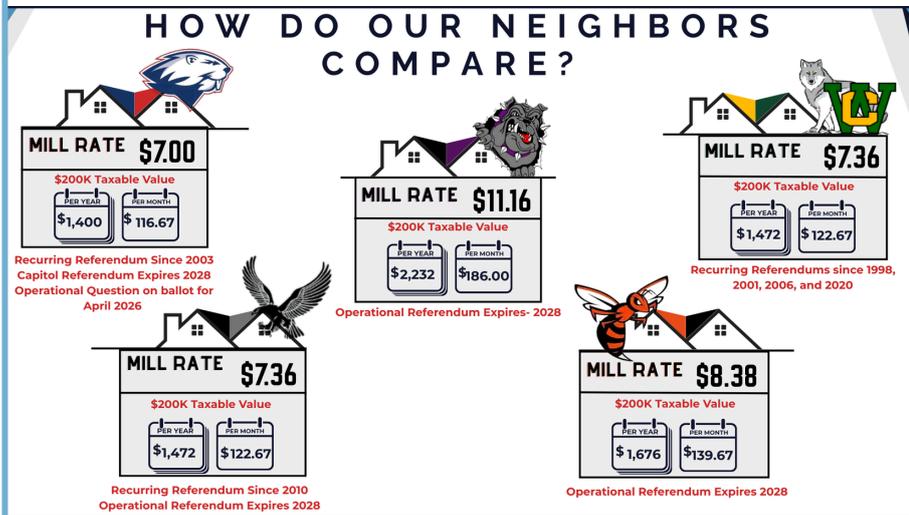
FAQ- Why Don't Small Schools Just Dissolve?

FAQ: Why Don't Schools Consolidate With Neighboring Districts?

- ▶ School district dissolution is extremely rare in Wisconsin and has not successfully occurred in the past 30 years.
- ▶ If a district dissolves, taxes do not go away – property is reassigned to neighboring districts and taxpayers pay their mill rates, which are often higher.
- ▶ Any remaining district debt would still be paid by taxpayers.
- ▶ Dissolution requires a school board vote, financial feasibility study, approval from neighboring districts, and approval from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI).
- ▶ Neighboring districts must agree to accept students, take on facilities and debt, hire staff, and provide transportation.
- ▶ Many dissolution requests are not approved by DPI due to transportation challenges, financial considerations, or lack of justification.
- ▶ In most cases, communities are encouraged to work locally to address financial challenges instead of dissolving the district.

- Consolidation does not change Wisconsin's revenue limits. Schools are still capped by state law on how much funding they can raise.
- State aid formulas remain the same. Merging districts does not significantly increase total funding.
- Transportation costs often increase due to longer bus routes in larger districts.
- Many expenses remain the same including utilities, building maintenance, special education services, and instructional programs.
- Many large or consolidated districts **still** go to referendum. District size alone does not solve funding gaps.

Consolidation may change how districts are organized, but it does not address the underlying school funding structure in Wisconsin.

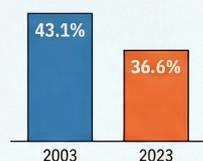


Why Are Wisconsin Property Taxes Rising? A Look Beyond Your Local School Board

THE STATE FUNDING SHIFT

State Froze General School Aid
The 2025-27 state budget included no general aid increase for schools.

Schools' Share of State Budget is Shrinking



SHIFTED ENTIRE COST OF \$325/STUDENT REVENUE INCREASE to property owners.

Taxpayers Forced to Cover the Gap

COMPOUNDING FINANCIAL PRESSURES

Record-High School Referenda

With state funding lagging inflation, districts must ask local voters to raise their own taxes.



Private School Vouchers Added \$47 Million to Property Taxes

State aid is cut from public schools to fund vouchers, which districts then must levy.

Property Assessments Matter

Your individual tax bill also depends heavily on shifts in local property values.

WANT TO LEARN MORE OR HAVE QUESTIONS?

- ▶ Attend our Community Q&A Session
Friday, March 20, 2026
Time: 9:00-10:00 A.M.
Location: Weston Cafeteria
- ▶ Visit our Website:
www.weston.k12.wi.us/page/referendum
- ▶ Contact District Administrator- Molly Kasten
Email: kastene@weston.k12.wi.us
Phone: 608-983-2380 Ext. 204