

# Referendum Facts

On November 7, South St. Paul residents will decide whether the school district should be able to increase its funding to support South St. Paul Public Schools students, staff and schools.

## STRONG SCHOOLS = STRONG COMMUNITIES

- ▶ We are committed to making decisions that strengthen our schools, our students and our staff. Our vision is to prepare each and every student for their next step.
- ▶ Schools directly affect a community's vitality and home resale values.
- ▶ The more attractive a community is, the more likely people are to live, work and shop there.

## THE PROPOSAL

After years of cutting budgets, a history of inadequate state funding for our schools and months of analyzing district finances, the South St. Paul School Board voted unanimously to put two school funding requests before residents on a November 7, 2017 ballot:

**QUESTION 1** would increase the district's operating levy to help the district retain quality teaching staff, fund programs to help students who struggle academically, operate the schools and minimize future budget cuts.

- ▶ SSPPS would receive additional annual revenue of \$1.3 million.
- ▶ While that would not cover the entire 2018-19 projected budget deficit, it would help the district protect critical educational programs and staff while keeping the tax impact low for homeowners.

**QUESTION 2** would renew the district's technology levy to help fund technology for teaching and learning by keeping computers up-to-date, giving students exposure and access to technology tools and providing teachers with technology training.

- ▶ Because this would renew an existing levy, there would be no tax impact.

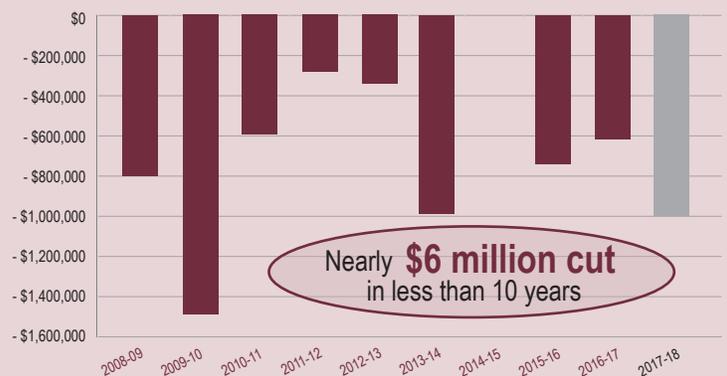
## QUICK FUNDING FACTS

- If state funding had kept up with inflation since 2003, South St. Paul Public Schools (SSPPS) would have received an additional \$5 million last year to spend on students' educational needs.
- In the past ten years, SSPPS has cut:
  - kindergarten assistants
  - teachers
  - custodians
  - support & administrative staff
  - school supplies
  - curriculum

The district has also increased activities fees to help balance costs.

- The last time SSPPS voters approved an operating levy increase was 2009.

SOUTH ST. PAUL BUDGET REDUCTION HISTORY



- SSPPS has cut nearly \$6 million in less than ten years, and recently approved cutting \$1 million more for 2017-18.

DAKOTA COUNTY SCHOOLS OPERATING LEVY COMPARISON



- SSPPS currently receives \$470 less in per-student voter-approved funding than the average of all Dakota County school districts; our local education funding is among the lowest in the county.

## A 2017 COMMUNITY SURVEY FOUND THAT:



**93% agree** that maintaining **strong schools** builds **strong communities**



**Two-thirds or more** are supportive of district efforts to **keep computers up-to-date**, give students exposure and access to technology tools and provide teachers with technology training



**Two-thirds or more** are supportive of **increased funding** to:

- help students who struggle academically
- minimize future budget cuts
- retain quality teaching staff
- focus on personalized learning

## VOTING INFORMATION

Polls will be open from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on November 7, 2017. Absentee ballots will be available in late September.

### Questions about where to vote?

Call (651) 457-9465 or visit [www.mnvotes.org](http://www.mnvotes.org) to find your polling location.

## LEARN MORE

- ▶ Visit [www.sspps.org/referendum](http://www.sspps.org/referendum)
- ▶ Call (651) 552-5575
- ▶ Email [referendum@sspps.org](mailto:referendum@sspps.org)
- ▶ Attend an information session:

Wednesday, October 11, 6:30 PM  
Secondary Building Media Center  
700 North Second Street

## WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

### IF VOTERS **APPROVE** QUESTION ONE, FUNDS WILL:

- Maintain support for struggling learners
- Help maintain class sizes
- Maintain student programs/services, activities, athletics and arts programs
- Minimize (but not eliminate) future cuts

### IF VOTERS **APPROVE** QUESTION TWO, FUNDS WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT:

- Technology support staff
- Personal computer devices for student learning
- Computer purchases for teachers and staff
- Infrastructure
- Wireless networks

### IF VOTERS **DO NOT APPROVE** QUESTION ONE, WE WOULD:

- Face a \$1.7M deficit in 2018-19 and more in future years
- Increase class sizes
- Eliminate teaching and teaching support positions
- Reduce building support positions such as clerical and custodial
- Decrease support for struggling learners
- Eliminate student programs/services, activities, athletics and arts programs

### IF VOTERS **DO NOT APPROVE** QUESTION TWO, WE WOULD FACE:

- A longer replacement cycle for all technology related equipment, leaving students and teachers with outdated or unworkable equipment
- A reduction in technology support staff
- No dedicated funding source for technology, equipment, and purchases

## TAX IMPACT

Ballot Question	Monthly Tax Impact*
Q1: Increase operating funds	\$11.67
Q2: Renew technology levy	\$0
<b>Total of Q1 and Q2</b>	<b>\$11.67</b>

*\*If voters approve both requests, taxes on the average district home (\$178,000 value home) would increase less than \$12 per month.*