



Mail Back Ballots
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County Ballot Drop Box
by the Easton
Fire Station by
Feb. 8, 2022

2022 Easton School District Educational Operations Levy

Simply Renewing the Expiring
Approved Funding

You have
Questions?



We have
ANSWERS!



**DID YOU
KNOW?**
Easton
has one of
THE LOWEST
levy rates in
the state.



FAQ's: Easton School District



Q. What is an Educational Programs and Operations levy?

A. It is a local property tax that helps support educational programs and operational expenses.

Q. Is this a new tax?

A. *No, this is not a new tax.* It replaces the current levy that will expire in 2022.

Q. Will there be an increase in the amount of the levy?

A. *No, the amount has not changed since 2014* and there is no increase in this renewal of the Educational Programs and Operations levy.

Q. How can the levy amount stay the same when costs have gone up over time?

A. Because one of the goals set by the Board of Directors is for the district to pursue every possible grant opportunity and to manage the finances well in order to avoid any tax increases. This past year the district has received over \$200,000 in grants from Washington State and the U.S. Department of Education.

Q. Why does the district need a levy?

A. To bridge the gap between what the state pays and the actual cost of operating Easton School and to pay for special programs such as preschool and athletics.

Q. I thought that the state pays for public education. Aren't local levy funds just for enhancement programs and sports?

A. *No*, Easton School, like many schools throughout the state, depends on local levy funds to support a portion of the core educational and operational expenses, as well as enhancement programs and extracurricular activities such as sports.

Q. What is the impact to the taxpayer of approving this levy renewal?

A. Based on updated assessed valuations of Easton School District, the estimated cost for this levy is 99 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation.

Q. How does this compare with other school districts?

A. The rate for local school funding at Easton School District is the lowest in Kittitas County and much lower than most school districts in the state (see table on back).

Q. What has Easton School District done to demonstrate good stewardship of school levy funds?

A. The Board of Directors and school staff work diligently to be cost-conscious and conserve resources while providing the students at Easton School with a quality education. School staff teach more than one grade level and often wear multiple hats to "get the job done." In addition, the district saves money by contracting for services in areas where it is more cost-effective to do so.

Q. Does Easton School District enter into cooperative purchasing agreements, grant funding, or utilize other financial strategies to save money?

A. *Yes!* Every attempt is made by the district to enter into cooperative arrangements that decrease expenses or enhance funding opportunities. Financial strategies to save money are continually explored. For example, we were able to reduce the interest rate on our last bond refinance

Educational Programs and Operations Levy

from 4.17% to an interest rate of 1.49%, resulting in a net savings to our local taxpayers of \$79,754. Easton School has applied for and been awarded numerous grants over the past year, including a recent grant that provided over \$5,000 to renovate our kitchen.



Q. Are there any special considerations on local school levy taxes for seniors or disabled community members who live on a fixed income?

A. Yes! You may be exempt from local school levy taxes if your annual income is less than \$40,000 and you are 61 years of age or older, or unable to work because of a disability, or a veteran entitled to and receiving compensation from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs at a total disability rating for a service-connected disability.

Q. What happens if the levy renewal is not approved?

A. Easton School District is dependent on the local funding that comes from the Education Programs and Operations levy. If the levy renewal is not approved, Easton School District would use its financial reserves to bridge the gap between the amount the state provides and its expenses. However, these reserves would only cover the shortfall for one-half a year and then the district would be unable to provide a quality education to its students.

Q. Do I stop paying school levy taxes if Easton School closes?

A. No. In fact, they may actually go up. All students in the state (kindergarten through the 12th grade) are entitled to a public education. If Easton School were to close, the students that reside in the district would be annexed into another school district. Homeowners in the Easton School District would assume the higher tax rate in the school district where the students are annexed.

Q. If I have more questions about the levy, whom should I contact?

A. Please contact Superintendent Tim Berndt at Easton School. You can drop by anytime and ask your questions in person. He can also be reached by phone at (509) 656-2317 or by e-mail at berndtt@easton.wednet.edu.

Q. Are there any final thoughts that the community should keep in mind regarding this levy renewal?

A. Yes, please remember to vote! Your voice is important and your vote counts. Please take the time to fill out your ballot, drop it off or mail it in by February 8th.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Please call (509) 656-2317 or e-mail berndtt@easton.wednet.edu



LOCAL
Postal Customer

School District	Educational Programs & Operations Levy	Bonds	Capital Projects	TOTAL
EASTON	99¢ (no change since 2014)	68¢	--	\$1.67

Easton School District citizens benefit from one of the lowest local levy rates in the state.

How do Easton's tax rates compare to the Kittitas County average?

AVERAGES for comparison	TOTAL (local school levies)
Kittitas County Avg.	\$2.51

All rates shown are per thousand of assessed valuation. Easton rates listed above based on approval of this levy request in the amount of \$495,000 annually over the next four years.