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# POTTSVILLE

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## SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Pottsville School District Families,

Let me begin by thanking each of you for choosing Pottsville School District to educate your children. We appreciate all the support you have given us over the years. Asking our school district families to raise taxes is a very difficult decision, but we are at the point that we have to begin looking at the very near future. Fortunately, PSD has been able to accommodate and add to our campuses the past 18 years without asking for a millage increase. We have had capital improvement projects totaling almost 15 million dollars around the district since the last millage increase in 2004. If you have been to an elementary play or production, or a high school band concert, you have seen firsthand the issue of space we are facing. Limiting the number of individuals that can come to the children's events is heartbreaking.

Below you will see some information that I hope will help you make the best decision for your family regarding the proposed millage increase. We believe all students will benefit from the proposed new school.

There will be a community meeting Thursday, July 21, 2022 at 6 PM in the junior high cafeteria.

Early voting will take place at election headquarters in Russellville and indistrict voting will be Tuesday, August 9<sup>th</sup> at Pottsville First Baptist Church.

### **Why do we need a new school?**

Student growth in the district has precipitated the need for a new building. Every classroom we have at our campuses is being utilized. It will allow for growth in the district for the next 20-30 years. The new school will decrease traffic flow at the elementary and middle grades. The district needs a venue to celebrate our students' successes and to enjoy plays and concerts and other programs. The addition of a baseball and softball complex will alleviate pressure on the city fields. The new building will also allow pee wee basketball program to utilize the current high school gym for games and practices. The new building will have a positive impact on all other campuses creating more space for all our students.

### **When was the last millage increase?**

Pottsville School District asked our patrons for a 6 mill increase in 2004 to help build the junior high school. That brought the total debt service mills to 20.2 where it stands today.

### **Why 6.8 Mills?**

Our debt payment is 903,100 dollars. With the addition of the proposed new building, our debt service payment will go up to 2.3 million dollars. The proposed millage will raise approximately 800,000, and the district will supplement the remainder with 600,000 dollars of revenue. In order to make this payment, the district is also asking patrons to restructure the current debt.

### **What will my tax increase be?**

If your real property (house) is assessed at:

100,000 – 136 dollars per year/11 dollars a month  
150,000 – 204 dollars per year/17 dollars a month  
200,000 – 272 dollars per year/22 dollars a month  
250,000 – 340 dollars a per year/28 dollars a month  
300,000 – 408 dollars per year/34 dollars a month  
350,000 – 476 dollars per year/40 dollars a month

The tax on personal property will vary depending on the assessed value of your vehicle, campers, trailers or any other item considered personal property. Based on the information I was given the average that should be around 50 dollars a year.

### **Why do students from other districts get to come here and how are they funded?**

School choice is mandated by the Arkansas General Assembly. Our board of education passes a resolution every year that limits school choice to 90% capacity. If a program or grade level is at 90% capacity, we can deny those students wishing to come to Pottsville. We also deny school choice students if they cause us to hire new staff.

School choice students generate revenue but not through any local taxes. Their parents still pay taxes to the district in which they reside. In the 21/22 school year, the state guaranteed that PSD would receive 7182 dollars per student in attendance. Our local mills for maintenance and operation raised 1410 dollars per student this past year. Thus, the state, from its tax revenue sent PSD 5770 dollars per student. With around 600 school choice students we received almost 3,500,000 million dollars for those school choice students. Their parents aren't paying directly to the district but in a round about way, they are paying.

### **What are we getting?**

We will have an educational space that will consist of 158,000 square feet. Included in the plans are enough classrooms to house grades 9-12, science labs, a media center, computer classrooms, a band/vocal music hall, an Agri facility with two classrooms and a large shop, baseball and softball fields, and a 2000 seat arena to host graduations, plays, band and choir concerts as well as basketball, volleyball and wrestling events; and a larger, more modern dining area for our students.

### **Understanding Millage types**

Currently, PSD is at 45.20 mills. Twenty-five of those mills are mandated by Arkansas law. Anything above the 25 mills (20.2) is voted on by school district patrons to pay for any debt incurred for capital projects.

## **What happens if the millage fails to pass?**

PSD will continue to provide the best education in the state in the safest way possible. To accommodate student growth, we will more than likely have to add more portable buildings on the campuses that need them. Unfortunately, we will have to continue to limit the number of people that can attend events where space is limited.

## **One last item of interest**

The project itself has an estimated cost of 38 million dollars based off numbers given to me from Van Horn Construction. They based their numbers off their most recent school building project and inflation. The one thing that could be an issue is interest rates. As you know interest rates have risen considerably in the past few months. If that trend continues and prices haven't stabilized by the time we start this project the 6.8 mills will not cover the increased debt payment. At that point we will have to scale back the project to meet the financial responsibility of the district. We will not come back and ask for another tax increase.

I appreciate you taking the time to read the information above. This is an important issue for everyone, and I wanted to make sure you have enough information to make a good decision for the community, current and future generations and your family.

If you have any more questions or concerns, please feel free to call me, come by and visit or email me.

Thank you.

Larry Dugger, Superintendent  
Pottsville School District

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