

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Pateros Maintenance and Operations Levy

### February 19, 2008

The Pateros School District is conducting an election on February 19, 2008 for a two-year M&O Levy to replace the current two-year levy, which is expiring. The election will be entirely by mail ballot. The ballots will be in the mail approximately January 31. Please vote and return your ballot **by Tuesday, February 19<sup>th</sup> before 4:00 p.m.**

Below are questions that are frequently asked regarding the levy:

#### **How is the Pateros Public School District funded?**

Approximately:

- |                     |                                 |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| * State funding 77% | * Federal funding and grants 7% |
| * M&O Levy 12%      | * Levy Equalization 4%          |

#### **What is a Maintenance and Operations Levy?**

An M&O Levy provides funds to cover the gap between state and federal funding and the cost of maintaining existing programs. This two-year levy will replace the current two-year levy which is expiring. Although the levy amount will increase, this levy does not, in general, represent new taxes. In fact the cost per thousand has decreased.

#### **Why are local M&O funds so important? What are funds from the levy used for?**

The levy money represents increased capacity to enhance state and federal funding, and is spread throughout the budget. It has been said that separating out the levy money is like removing the cream from ice cream. In general, this levy is seen as replacement and will allow us to offer a level of program very similar to what we have now. However, some of the areas highly supported by the levy are:

- Textbooks and curriculum .....\$36,000
- Instructional technology.....\$55,000
- Student transportation .....\$35,000
- Fine arts program .....\$110,000
- Co-curricular activities.....\$87,000
- Facility improvements .....\$50,000
- Vocational programs.....\$12,000
- Summer program .....\$10,000

#### **What is the actual dollar amount being requested?**

Collected from the previous levy: 2008 \$315,000 \$2.69 per \$1000 assessed value

<b>New Levy Request:</b>	{	<b>2009 \$395,000 \$2.33 per \$1000 assessed value</b>
		<b>2010 \$405,000 \$2.39 per \$1000 assessed value</b>

#### **You said that my taxes will decrease from \$2.69 per \$1000 to approximately \$2.33 per \$1000. How will this decrease affect a typical taxpayer?**

On property assessed at \$150,000, school taxes will decrease \$4.50 per month.

On property assessed at \$200,000 the decrease will be approximately \$6.00 per month.

**What is Levy Equalization Money?**

Levy equalization money, officially called Local Effort Assistance, is funding from the State that helps equalize the burden on taxpayers in districts where the overall assessed valuation is relatively low. In a “property rich” district, it costs each taxpayer less to raise a given amount of money for the schools than in a “property poor” district. Levy equalization money comes to the district only if the local levy passes. If our current levy request passes, our levy equalization money is estimated to be \$137,300 per year. This helps us to offer a lower levy than we might otherwise need.

**Why are we asking for a two-year levy?**

The levy that was passed in 2006 was for two years, and another two-year levy is being requested to replace it. When compared to a one-year levy, a multiple-year levy reduces election costs and effort, provides stability for the school district, and allows better long-range planning.

**What is the local levy limit in Washington State?**

The levy limit for most districts, including Pateros, is 24% of the local budget. A few districts are grandfathered at higher rates. The levy limit for Pateros at this time would authorize a maximum of \$651,783. Our levy request for \$395,000 is over \$250,000 less than maximum allowed.

**How does the proposed tax rate compare with surrounding districts?**

Circumstances such as levy percentage, overall assessed valuation and levels of federal funding vary between districts. Listed below are some of the projected rates for 2009-10 in nearby districts:

Waterville	\$4.31	} per \$1000 of assessed value
Brewster	\$3.58	
Mansfield	\$2.58	
Entiat	\$2.45	
<b>Pateros</b>	<b>\$2.33</b>	
Bridgeport	\$1.18	
Methow Valley	\$1.13	

**How do I get more information about this levy request?**

Contact the superintendent, Larry Keller, at the district office: 923-2751, ext. 4  
or

Contact a school board member:  
Steve Nieuwenhuis, Board Chair  
Jerry Evans, Board Member  
Patti Luchte, Board Member  
Marty Robinson, Board Member  
Michael Bruno, Board Vice Chair

or  
Contact Citizens for Pateros Schools:  
Corinn Steggall, President

**Levy Informational Meetings:**

Thursday, Jan. 17 @ 6:30 p.m., Jim and Grace Larsen’s home (97 Bill Shaw Rd.)  
Tuesday, Jan. 22 @ 6:30 p.m., School Library

Enjoy refreshments and learn more about the M&O Levy