

MEASURE 26-216 – Riverdale School District Levy

Ballot Title: Five-year local option tax for district operations.

Question: Shall the Riverdale School District levy \$1.37 per \$1,000 of assessed value each year for five years, beginning in 2021-2022, for operations? This measure renews current local option taxes.

Financial Impact: This measure continues the existing levy rate of \$1.37 per \$1000 of assessed value for an additional five years. While the assessed value of a home may change due to increases in property values or improvements, the rate itself would not change from that which property owners currently pay. The measure’s explanatory statement notes that for a home assessed at \$900,000, the cost would be \$1,233. The amount of tax collected is expected to increase from \$1,023,379 in 2021-22 to \$1,151,822 in 2025-26.

Note: assessed value (AV) is the value used to calculate property tax. It is shown on the property tax statement. It is NOT the same as real market value (RMV), which is the market price of the home.

Probable Results of a Yes Vote: A “Yes” vote would continue the existing levy and allow the District to maintain its programs and services.

Probable Results of a No Vote: The District would lose approximately 9.3% of its annual operating funds and face possible cuts in its programs.

Background: Riverdale School District serves over 600 students in two schools south of Portland. Its staff includes 37 teachers, two librarians, and three counselors.

Voters in the Riverdale School District have approved a local option levy every five years beginning in 2000. According to the measure’s explanatory statement, it uses this funding to

- Retain classroom teachers,
- Maintain low student-to-staff ratio,
- Support current programs
- Purchase instructional supplies
- Support operational needs such as security and maintenance.

The District notes that while the state plans to spend more on K-12 education, “actual dollars into the classroom have remained stagnant.” Furthermore, while the cost to educate a student in the District is more than \$14,000, the state provided only \$8,638 in 2019-20. Funding from the local option levy would allow the District to maintain its current level of programming, including art and music.

Summary of Measure:

If approved, this measure would continue adding the existing local option levy tax of \$1.37 per \$1000 of assessed value to the property taxes of District residents. The levy would:

- Continue to provide a stable source of funding for Riverdale schools,
- Allow the District to continue to offer its current level of staffing and programming,
- Enable the District to fully implement its new 2024 strategic plan, available on the District’s website.

Supporters Say:

- Levy funding allows the Riverdale School District to maintain its curriculum, retain its class sizes and continue its programming.

Opponents Say:

- There is no organized opposition to this measure.