

# Replacement Levy Q&A



**Please  
vote by  
Feb. 13**

## Local levies make the difference to our success.

Camas School District is asking voters to consider two four-year replacement levies: Prop 6 an Educational Programs and Operations (EP&O) levy, and Prop 7 a Technology, Health, and Safety capital levy. These four-year levies replace the current levies which will expire at the end of 2024.

Read more about these funding measures inside. →



{ MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT }

# Local levies make the difference to our success

Dear Camas Community,

As we embark on the journey of 2024, I extend my warmest wishes and hope the holiday season was joyful for each of you. It's my pleasure to share that this academic year, we have been privileged to welcome 7,300 bright and aspiring students into the nurturing environment of our schools. These young minds are not only our pride but a reflection of our community's core values.

Rooted in our mill town heritage, Camas has always valued hard work, dedication, and excellence. These are not just ideals; they are the living essence of our community, especially evident in our collective commitment to each of our students. Their achievements are a testament to the unwavering support they receive from our dedicated staff and the broader community.

In Camas, we are proud of our tradition of community-school collaboration, a synergy that has been instrumental in providing top-tier education. This partnership is vital, especially considering that local funding, through levies, contributes significantly to our educational expenses. In fact, roughly 15% of our education budget, equivalent to nearly a full day of schooling per week, are covered through this local support.

With our current educational programs and capital levies set to expire in 2024, we seek your continued support as we approach a crucial juncture. In February, we will propose replacement levies for a

span of four years. This is not just about maintaining the status quo but ensuring that our students receive an exceptional educational experience enriched with diverse academic and extracurricular opportunities.



These levies provide a financial lifeline that contributes significantly to our educational ecosystem. They fund smaller class sizes, special education, accelerated programs, and essential extracurricular activities like sports, music, and arts. They also maintain the technological infrastructure critical in today's learning environment. These funds bridge the gap between state-provided resources and the actual costs of delivering a comprehensive, high-quality education.

The renewal of these levies is an investment in our children's future and, by extension, our community. Should you have any questions or need further information, please visit our district website or contact us directly. Remember to vote by February 13, 2024.

There is a rich tradition of valuing education in Camas, and it will only continue with your assistance. Camas is a great place to live and raise a family, and our schools are a great place to build the future.

With gratitude and Mill Town pride,

John Anzalone

# Levies & School Funding

## WHAT ARE LEVIES FOR?

Levies provide local funding that bridges the gap between what the state and federal governments pay and the actual costs of operating our schools. Camas School District's EP&O levy makes up about 15% of the district's total operating revenue.



## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A LEVY AND A BOND?

**Bonds are for Building.** A bond is a long-term loan that is paid off over a span of years, similar to a mortgage. Voters approve school bonds to fund large capital projects, such as the bond Camas voters approved in 2016 to construct and improve district facilities.

**Levies are for Learning.** An Educational Programs & Operations (EP&O) levy is a tax that is collected each year for operating expenses. It can only be used for programs that directly affect student success and achievement in the classroom. Since 2018, the state has set limits on how much districts can ask voters for with an EP&O levy (formerly M&O levy).

A capital levy collects funds in the same way as an EP&O levy, but its funds are directed toward capital expenses, such as technology updates, building maintenance, and small facilities improvements.



Helen Baller kindergarten teacher Elizabeth Baker delivers a phonics lesson to her students.

## DOESN'T WASHINGTON STATE FULLY FUND PUBLIC EDUCATION?

**No.** The state and federal governments do not fully fund public education. Although the state has invested more money in schools in recent years, it only funds part of the actual cost of education. For example, the state's definition of "basic education" does not include any funding for athletics or extracurricular activities for students.

In addition, the state's funding model for staff relies on an experience factor average, not actual experience. Because most of our teachers have many years of experience and are near the top of the pay scale, our teacher salaries exceed the state allocation.

## ARE THE LEVIES NEW TAXES?

**No.** These levies replace the current levies, which expire at the end of 2024. Camas School District has had at least one locally approved levy in place for more than 50 years.

## WHY FOUR-YEAR LEVIES?

Voters must reauthorize the levy for each year of funding. Voters approved the current levies in 2021 for three years. The replacement levies on the February 13, 2024, ballot will continue programs, services and maintenance for four years: 2025 through 2028.

Multiple-year levies help with budget planning and ensure stable funding for the near future. Additionally, four-year levies reduce election expenses.

# Proposition 6: EP&O Levy

## HOW DO EP&O LEVY FUNDS BENEFIT STUDENTS?

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**SMALLER CLASS SIZES**—additional staffing to help maintain low class size

**TEXTBOOKS AND CURRICULUM MATERIALS**—math, science, English, and history textbooks, including novels, materials for reading and writing instruction, and supplemental teaching materials for all subjects

**STUDENT SAFETY**—including our school resource officers, security personnel/supervision, and anti-bullying programs

**EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**—including athletics, band, choir, dramatic productions, and academic teams such as Knowledge Bowl, Science Olympiad, and FIRST Robotics

**SPECIAL EDUCATION**—adaptive equipment for children with special needs, staff including teachers and paraprofessionals, textbooks, supplies, and materials needed for special services programs

**STUDENT HEALTH**—counselors, most nurses, health room paraprofessionals, health screenings, and student health plans for medically fragile children

**ACCELERATED PROGRAMS**—training for advanced placement courses, world language classes, Science Olympiad programs for grades 3-12, FIRST Robotics program, Math, Science and Technology Magnet program, highly capable programs, and AP programs

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING**—workshops, seminars, and any related special training for our staff

**SCHOOL LIBRARIES**—library staff, library books, curriculum and reference materials



A high school Student Advisory Committee member discusses social emotional learning with a 5th grader at a recent presentation.

## WHAT IS THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF THE EP&O LEVY PROPOSAL?

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The district is requesting authorization of \$19.13 million for 2025, \$19.71 million for 2026, \$20.3 million for 2027, and \$20.91 million for 2028.

## HOW MUCH WILL THE EP&O LEVY COST?

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If approved, the levy would cost taxpayers a projected \$1.82 per \$1,000 of assessed home value per year, which is less than the maximum of \$2.18 per \$1,000 allowed by the state.

## HOW DID THE DISTRICT DETERMINE THE LEVY AMOUNT?

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The school board and district leadership sought to strike a balance between funding necessary educational programs and services while being mindful of the financial strain on taxpayers, especially during times of economic uncertainty and inflation. This is why the district isn't asking voters for the maximum EP&O levy rate, which is \$2.18 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation, despite recent budget challenges. Instead, the proposed replacement levy is estimated to maintain the current levy rate of \$1.82 per \$1,000.

# Proposition 7: Capital Levy

## WHAT TECHNOLOGY IS FUNDED BY THE CAPITAL LEVY?

**MOBILE COMPUTING SOLUTIONS FOR STUDENTS**—laptop computers, tablets, and handheld devices

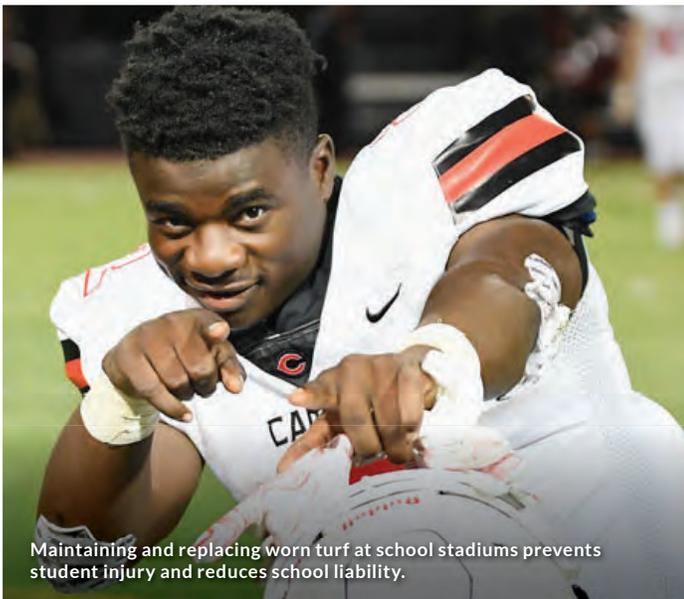
**INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT**—network systems, hardware and software, and technical assistance

**ONLINE LEARNING SPACE**—student access to calendars, assignments, and digital resources for learning

**STANDARD CLASSROOM EQUIPMENT**—expansion and upgrade computers, projectors, document cameras, and amplification systems

**STUDENT DEVICE UPGRADE**—mobile and standard computer labs for state and district assessments, and for student projects

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**—training for teachers to blend and integrate technology into teaching and learning



Maintaining and replacing worn turf at school stadiums prevents student injury and reduces school liability.



Starting in elementary school, students use technology daily.

## WHAT FACILITIES MAINTENANCE IS FUNDED BY THE CAPITAL LEVY?

**BOILER REPLACEMENT**—Camas High School

**ROOF REPLACEMENTS**—phase two of the Camas High School roof replacement and phase one of the Liberty Middle School roof replacement

**TURF REPLACEMENT**—turf replacement at Cardon Field and Doc Harris stadium to prevent student injury

## WHAT IS THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF THE CAPITAL LEVY PROPOSAL?

The district is requesting authorization of \$4.15 million for 2025, \$4.27 million for 2026, \$4.4 million for 2027, and \$4.53 million for 2028.

## HOW MUCH WILL THE CAPITAL LEVY COST?

If approved, the levy would cost taxpayers a projected \$0.39 per \$1,000 of assessed home value per year.

# Levy Rates & Taxpayer Cost

## Did You Know?

The district cannot collect more than the total collection amount authorized by voters, even if population or home values increase.

## HOW WILL TOTAL LOCAL SCHOOL TAX RATES COMPARE TO EXISTING RATES?



## HOW DOES COMMUNITY GROWTH AND HOME VALUE AFFECT LEVIES?

School districts request a total collection amount to be approved by voters. **The district can collect no more than this total amount, even if the community grows or property valuations change.**

For example, if new homes are built or a business moves into the area, taxes go down, as the total fixed collection amount is divided by more taxable property. The district does not collect more.

Similarly, if home valuations increase, the tax rate decreases, so that the total collection amount stays the same. The amount of taxes paid by homeowners stays the same if the collection amount and population stays the same, regardless of home valuation.

**The bottom line? School districts can only collect the total levy amount approved by voters.**



**TOTAL LEVY COLLECTION AMOUNT APPROVED BY VOTERS**

*divided among property tax base by assessed value*



\* Future tax rates are estimates. Rates are per \$1,000 in assessed property value.



Extracurricular activities, such as marching band, are supported by the EP&O levy.

## Answers to three common levy funding questions:

**1** If home values increase over the next four years, can the district collect more?

**No.** The total amount collected is fixed by the school board resolution.

**2** If home values increase over the next four years, will my taxes increase?

**No.** The rates will go down to compensate for the increase in home value so that the total collected is the same.

**3** Can the total levy collection amount be increased without a vote?

**No.** All levies must be passed by at least 50 percent plus one vote of the election turnout.

# Election Information

## WHAT PERCENTAGE OF “YES” VOTES IS REQUIRED FOR LEVY APPROVAL?

A 50 percent majority of “yes” votes is required to approve both the replacement Educational Programs & Operations levy and the Capital levy.

## WHEN WILL I RECEIVE MY BALLOT?

This is an all mail-in election. Ballots will be mailed to registered voters by January 26. Persons who reside in Clark County but who will be out of town between January 26 and February 11 may call the elections office to have a ballot mailed to an alternate address.

## HOW CAN I CAST MY BALLOT?

Ballots must be postmarked by February 13 or dropped off at the Elections Office (1408 Franklin Street, Vancouver). On Election Day, ballots may be dropped off at the downtown Camas Post Office drive-up drop box.

## WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

Visit [bit.ly/CamasLevies](https://bit.ly/CamasLevies). Community members also are welcome to contact the Superintendent’s office at 360-833-5412, a school board member, or their local school principal.



### Postal Customer

# Inside: Facts about the Feb. 13 replacement levies

## { PROPOSITION 6 }

### REPLACEMENT EP&O LEVY

The replacement Educational Programs & Operations (EP&O) levy ensures that Camas can continue high-quality academic programs. If approved, this four-year replacement levy would collect \$80.05 million, which fills gap in state funding in the following areas:



**BASIC EDUCATION  
NEEDS**



**SPECIAL  
EDUCATION**



**ENRICHMENT &  
EXTRACURRICULAR  
ACTIVITIES**



**ACADEMIC SUPPORT  
for both advanced &  
struggling learners**



**EXTRACURRICULAR  
TRANSPORTATION**



**FOOD & NUTRITION  
SERVICES**

## { PROPOSITION 7 }

### REPLACEMENT CAPITAL LEVY

The Technology, Health, and Safety capital levy replaces a previously approved capital levy that expires at the end of 2024. If approved, this four-year replacement levy would collect \$17.35 million, which would be used to repair, replace or modernize:



**AGING  
COMPUTERS  
AND OTHER  
TECHNOLOGY**



**SCHOOL  
SYSTEMS, LIKE  
HVAC, ROOFS  
& FLOORS**



**WORN  
STADIUM  
TURF**



Student Chromebooks are maintained by the Capital levy.