

Wayne County Regional Enhancement Education Millage

What is a Regional Enhancement Millage?

- Since 1994, the State Controls School Funding
- One Exception: Regional Enhancement Millage
- Constituent School Districts can request an Enhancement Millage Proposal be put before voters.

What is a Regional Enhancement Millage?

- It must be proposed on a county-wide basis.
- Each school district board must decide if they wish to put it on the ballot. If enough school districts vote yes to put it on the ballot (representing at least 50% of the students in the county) – it goes on the ballot.
- It passes or fails on a county-wide basis, not by local communities.
- If approved, the money is collected by the ISD and distributed equally to all constituent districts on a per student basis.
- Each district has local control over how the money is spent.

What was the Specific Proposal that was passed in 2016?

- November 2016 Ballot
- 2 mills to be levied over 6 years – expires 2021-22
- Generated approximately \$360 per student for each district.
- Proposal cost a homeowner with a home value of \$100,000 about \$8 per month.

Why did School Districts request to put this Proposal before Wayne County Voters in 2016?

- Wayne County Districts each have the goal of providing the kind of education which will enable their students to be successful and believes this investment will help them do so.
- From 2011-2015 school operating funds for districts in Wayne County dropped by \$485 million.
- Despite various budget stabilizing measures, including reducing or freezing salaries, benefits, administrative costs and implementing other cost saving measures, most districts continue to feel challenged in their ability to provide core educational programs.
- A recent statewide school funding adequacy study concludes that added investment into local schools is necessary to prepare students for success after school.
- Wayne County school systems want to solve this funding gap and increase educational opportunities for their students.

A Few Other Facts Behind the Decision to Place the Proposal on the Ballot in 2016

Studies Conducted

- Adequacy Study concluded that resources to educate at-risk and English Language Learners are low in Michigan.
- Federal Study-Michigan down 7.5% since 2008 in inflation adjusted per student funding.
- Other studies conclude that Michigan's school finance system creates difficulties for districts experiencing declining enrollment.

Facts in Wayne County

- The Percentage of students living in poverty in Wayne County is 43% vs. 17% statewide.
- From 1999-2011, poverty in Wayne County is up from 21% to 38%; trend has grown since 2006.
- English Language Learner Students:
2010 – 20,766
2015 – 30,087

How has the money been used?

- All money was passed down to local districts on an equal per student basis.
- Each local district will choose how to best utilize the money.

Examples of areas districts used the money:

- *Teachers to maintain and reduce class size*
- *Repair schools*
- *Improve technology*
- *Improve school programs*
- *Support students with added needs*
- *Hire and retain teachers*

The Regional Enhancement Millage has been a great success. School Districts have stabilized their finances and improved programs for students. The promises made to voters have been kept.

The Next Question:

Do we renew the millage when it expires in 2021-22?

- Districts will lose \$360 per student if the millage is not renewed.
- The School Funding System at the State level has been ranked the worst in the Country in the past 20+ years, and has not been substantially changed.
- Based on State Law, a renewal would have to be voted on in 2020 or 2022 (after expiration).
- Charter Schools are now eligible for the millage.

DECISION

- Wayne County School Districts have agreed to ask that this millage be renewed for six more years.
- This is because the State has still not fixed its funding system for local schools, thus these resources are still needed.
- It was decided to put the ballot proposal on the November 2020 ballot, so districts will know before it expires, whether these resources will still be available.

FAQ

1. What is the regional enhancement millage renewal proposal?

The regional enhancement millage proposal is a renewal request to voters to continue a current 2 mill property tax, first passed in 2016, that will generate revenue for all 33 Wayne County public school districts as well as public school academies in Wayne County.

2. When will the proposal appear?

The renewal will appear on the Nov. 3, 2020, ballot. It is a 6-year proposal which will continue the current millage that expires in the fall of 2022.

3. How much will the proposal cost homeowners?

It is not a tax increase. The millage would be renewed at its current rate and will continue to cost the average Wayne County homeowner less than \$8 per month, with 100% of funds going to Wayne County public schools and public school academies so they can keep schools safe, and improve programs and services for students.

FAQ

4. How will school districts be held accountable for this proposal?

Wayne County's public school districts have been fiscally responsible stewards of the enhancement millage for the past four years, and the funding provided by this renewal will continue to be spent wisely and transparently.

If passed, this renewal will continue to undergo independent audits and all spending will be tracked on a public website to ensure tax dollars are being spent transparently and with accountability.

5. Why is this proposal necessary?

The Wayne RESA enhancement millage has provided critical financial support for local districts faced with state budget cuts – allowing them to promote safety, prepare students for jobs and provide world-class programming for both special education and general education students.

6. How much funding will my school district receive?

Every penny generated from this proposal will be distributed on a per-student basis to local school districts and public school academies to help keep schools safe and improve programs for Wayne County students. We estimate this will be approximately \$300 per student.

FAQ

7. What impact will this proposal have on kids in my school district or community?

This millage renewal will allow Wayne County public schools and public school academies to lower class sizes, expand technology and STEM programs, and a variety of other very necessary services that would not be available except for the added funding this renewal provides.

8. Why is this renewal important?

Strong schools help make Wayne County a great place to live, raise a family, work or launch a business. Strengthening our schools supports our future workforce, which will help attract new families, businesses and talent to Wayne County.

9. Where can I learn more about this proposal?

Visit www.resa.net to learn more about the regional enhancement millage renewal proposal.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

www.resa.net