

Q&A

February 13, 2018 Election

Anacortes School District

What is a levy?

A levy is a tax measure. If approved by voters by a simple majority, the levy allows for the collection of local taxes within the boundaries of the school district. School districts in the State of Washington use local property tax levies to support public education beyond what the state funds for basic education. Twenty-eight percent of the Anacortes School District revenue is from local levies.

What are the two renewal levies?

The two renewal levies are measures that support the overall operations of the district, as well specific funds for technology and safety. They are four-year levies that passed in 2014 with 75 and 73 percent support, respectively. They include:

Educational Programs & Operations Levy

If renewed, the Educational Programs & Operations Levy will allow the district to collect up to a total of \$32 million over four years. This expiring levy currently funds 23% of our programs and operations budget. It is the only locally approved ballot measure that directly pays for day-to-day classroom and operational needs that are not funded by the state, including:

- Additional nurses, counselors, and security
- Early childhood
- Curriculum materials
- 7th period classes at high schools
- Special education
- Substitute teachers
- Gifted programs
- Music in elementary schools
- Athletics and after school activities
- Teacher trainings and collaboration time

Safety & Technology Levy

If renewed, the Technology & Capital Projects Levy will allow the district to collect a total of \$8 million over four years. This expiring levy currently funds:

- Classroom technology and training for teachers
- Laptop devices for elementary, middle school and high school students (four-year replacement cycle)
- Safety and security training and upgrades
- Integrated digital curriculum
- Collaborative STEM learning
- Access to new technologies that support student learning

Isn't education fully funded?

The district's budget includes state funding, local property tax levy dollars, and other local and federal monies. Local levies fund 28 percent of the total budget. The recent increases in state funding shift the responsibility of fully funding salaries and benefits from local funding to state funding. "Fully funded" from the state's perspective does not include educational and extracurricular programs such as the seven-period day; music at elementary schools, world languages and career and technical programs at middle schools, mental health support, and other opportunities that Anacortes students, families and community members consider essential. Local dollars also fund special education and highly capable programs.

How successful has ASD been in managing its finances?

The Anacortes School District has one of the highest bond ratings (Aa3) on Moody's Investor Service scale. The district has also received no audit findings since 2011.

Why are there two measures on the ballot? Can't it be done in one?

State legislation on school funding determines how districts collect local tax dollars and how those funds are spent. Each levy type requires voter approval and can fund only specific types of expenses:

- The Educational & Operations Levy can be used to fund ongoing operating expenditures not covered by the state in support of students. These levies have a one to four-year life, determined by the school board, before having to be renewed.
- The Safety & Technology Levy can fund large-scale maintenance, repairs and upgrades to school facilities, equipment, technology and safety.

What is Anacortes' school tax rate?

The current tax rate for local school measures in Anacortes is \$2.92 per \$1,000 of assessed value. The local school tax bill for the median priced home in Anacortes School District of \$400,000 in 2017 is \$1,168 per year.

What are the results of the community's investment?

Anacortes remains one of the top-rated districts in the state. ASD ranked first out of 32 districts in northwest Washington on state assessment results in 2017 across grade levels and subject areas. AHS recently earned recognition from US News magazine for ranking in the top 3 percent of Washington high schools. And the district boasts a well-rounded education program that emphasizes the arts, career and technical education and social and emotional growth.