

Blaine School District
Maintenance and Operations Levy Facts
February 14, 2012 Election Date

- The February 14, 2012 Maintenance and Operations Levy is a replacement levy, not a new tax. It replaces the current four-year Levy which expires at the end of 2012, and will maintain Levy funding for the Blaine School District for four years, through 2016.
- Public school districts in Washington State receive the majority of their annual operating funds from the state. However, the legislature only provides approximately 62% of what it costs to provide a child's public education. This number is down from 69% in 2008. The balance of the money needed to operate schools is expected to come from the federal government, grants and local levies. Over the past four years, the level of revenue received from Washington State has been declining rapidly, driving the need for an even higher level of reliance upon local Levy funding to support existing level of program for students.
- Taxes collected by the school district do not increase after they are set in place, regardless of changes in assessed property value. In fact, as the tax base increases, the tax rate to collect the dollars authorized by voters is reduced. After the school board sets a Levy amount, and voters approve a Levy request, it becomes the maximum amount that can be collected.
- In Blaine, the Levy currently provides about 25% of the total district budget. A School District Maintenance and Operations Levy is the local community's share of the cost of providing a quality education for its children. Since the State provides only 62% of the total cost, the legislature authorizes Maintenance and Operations Levy requests for a set % of a district's budget. With continued decline in State funding to schools over the past four years, local Levy authorization has increased. In essence, if we are to continue with existing programs short term, additional funding support is going to have to come from local tax payers.
- The Levy helps support a wide variety of staffing, instructional materials, staff training, student transportation, athletics, music programs and student activities, equipment, information systems, vocational education, special education and maintenance needs. As State revenue to schools has continued to decline on an annual basis, Levy revenue has continued to become a much more essential part of the basic education program that we deliver to our students at all levels of the system.

- Once a Levy amount has been approved by voters, the District may not collect more than the approved total during any given calendar year, regardless fluctuations that may occur in the Levy rate. The Levy amounts (total collection) being requested for 2013-2016 are:

\$6,100,000 for 2013

\$6,240,000 for 2014

\$6,360,000 for 2015

\$6,500,000 for 2016

- The Levy rate is calculated from the total assessed valuation of all the real property within the district boundaries. The projected 2012 rate is \$1.45 per \$1,000 of property valuation. Actual tax rates are set by the county and may be higher or lower than projected, depending upon the overall assessed valuation of property within the school district during a given school year. The estimated tax rates for the proposed Levy levels (cost per \$1000 of assessed valuation) for 2013-2016 are:

\$1.62 for 2013

\$1.64 for 2014

\$1.66 for 2015

\$1.68 for 2016

- The BP Cherry Point Refinery historically has represented up to 24% of the tax base in the Blaine School District, and therefore pays a significant share of the Maintenance and Operations Levy total. The resulting impact to home owners is significantly less than what many of our neighboring districts would have to levy to raise a similar level of tax revenue
- An exemption is available for qualifying seniors and low-income homeowners. Those interested should contact the County Auditor's office by phone at 676-6742.
- School levies positively impact everyone in the community, whether you have children in school or not. Levy dollars remain in our community helping with economic stability and prosperity. Businesses and health professionals who consider relocation to our area consistently say that the quality of our schools is a critical part of the quality of life that attracts them to Blaine, Pt. Roberts and Birch Bay.

Levy questions, comments and suggestions may be sent via email to: levy@blainesd.org, or by U.S. Mail to: Superintendent, Blaine School District, 765 H Street, Blaine, WA 98230.

10/27/2011