

Committed to Excellence

When and where do I vote on the Sinking Fund?

The proposal will be on the ballot for the August 8, 2017, election. Voters will vote at their regular polling places. Absentee ballots may be obtained from your city or township clerk.

Why will it appear on the ballot as a “new”, if it is just a renewal?

The only reason it will appear on the ballot as a new Sinking Fund is due to a language change in the law. In January 2017, the Sinking Fund language was changed in order to add the purchase of instructional technology and school security equipment as allowable expenses for Sinking Fund use. Due to this change, Districts have to either renew, which is what we are doing, or create an entirely new fund.

Why can't we just vote on a proposal for General Funds?

State school funding laws do not permit our School District to levy any mills beyond the 18 mills that it levies on non-homestead property to pay for day-to-day operational expenses such as salaries, benefits, classroom materials, and instructional resources. Prior to 1994, School Districts were allowed to ask voters for additional General fund millage. When Proposal A was passed in 1994, this option was no longer allowed.



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Sinking Fund Renewal Proposal Questions & Answers

August 8, 2017

Sinking Fund Questions & Answers

Mark Your Calendars

On Tuesday, August 8th, the Negaunee Public Schools will be asking the voters of the School District to cast their ballots with a request to renew a 2.5 mill Sinking Fund millage for a period of 10 years. Even though the request will appear on the ballot as a “new” Sinking Fund, it is truly a renewal. It is noted as “new” due to the language of the law requiring Districts to adopt a new millage in order to use Sinking Fund revenue to purchase technology and security equipment. These two items have just been added as allowable expenses when the new law passed in January. Negaunee Public Schools has been fortunate to have had a Sinking Fund for decades, so the request we are seeking to renew is very important to the future of the District. A Sinking Fund would also permit longer term planning and funding for major repairs and renovations, while continuing to relieve this burden on the General Fund, which allows more dollars to be directed specifically towards our educational program.

What is a Sinking Fund?

A sinking fund is a school revenue account designated for school building renovations and major repairs. This Sinking Fund renewal proposal requests authorization to levy up to 2.5 mill on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation for 10 years, 2017-2026, for the “construction or repair of school buildings, acquisition of sites and all other purposes authorized by law.” In 2017, this will generate approximately \$646,143. For over 60 years, Negaunee voters have supported schools with a millage dedicated to the renovation and repair of our schools.

How has the Sinking Fund benefitted the District up to this point?

In the past, the School District has used the revenue raised by the Sinking Fund millage to repair the roofs on all the school buildings, repair the heating and ventilation system in the Middle School, replace the lockers at the Middle School, upgrade the fixtures in the bathrooms at both the Middle and High Schools, replace flooring at all the school buildings, replace the windows in the Administration Building, replace the exterior doors at all the school buildings, remodeling of a building classroom into a science lab, upgraded the heating and lighting systems at Lakeview, install handrails at the Lakeview gym and football stadium, constructed new tennis courts and expanded the football practice field. This is only a partial list of the upgrades we have been able to accomplish.

These projects have helped to provide a safe and healthy environment for our students, staff and the many members of the community who use our buildings in the evenings and on the weekends. As a result of these many projects, we have experienced a savings in our utility bills, which in turn has allowed the District to invest more of our General Fund revenues into instruction and classroom supplies. Without the Sinking Fund, the District would not have been able to do many of these projects. With the financial support from the State declining in the past ten years, the majority of our revenue in the General Fund has been devoted to supporting teaching and learning. As with our own homes, we must continue to maintain our buildings to keep them in a safe and usable condition. The Sinking Fund has allowed the District to establish and follow a preventive maintenance plan for our school buildings.

What is planned if the Sinking Fund is renewed?

Our number one goal, as a District, is to keep our students safe. If the Sinking Fund is renewed, we will be looking into additional security cameras, along with keyless entries into all buildings. The upgrading of instructional technology will also be a high priority, as we continue to keep up with the ever-changing advances in technology. From a renovation perspective, we will work with our Booster Club in funding the construction of a new entrance, concession stand and handicapped accessible bathrooms at Lakeview Memorial Gym. We will continue with flooring replacements at all the school buildings, along with upgrading the playground at Lakeview Elementary.

What is the wording on the ballot?

NEGAUNEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS SINKING FUND MILLAGE PROPOSAL

Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all property in Negaunee Public Schools, Marquette County, Michigan, be increased by and the Board of Education be authorized to levy not to exceed 2.5 mills (\$2.50 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of 10 years, 2017 to 2026, inclusive, to create a Sinking Fund for the purchase of real estate for sites for, and the construction or repair of, school buildings, for school security improvements, for the acquisition or upgrading of technology and all other purposes authorized by law; the estimate of the revenue the School District will collect if the millage is approved and levied in 2017 is approximately \$646,143?

How do I get more information about the Sinking Fund?

You may speak with Dan Skewis, Superintendent of Schools, or any school administrator for additional information regarding the Sinking Fund proposal. Members of the Board of Education would also be pleased to discuss this with you. You may call the Administrative Office (475-4156) or email dan.skewis@negauneeschools.org.

You may also get information from the Negaunee Public Schools website:

www.negauneeschools.k12.mi.us
www.negauneeschools.org

