

For Immediate Release

January 11, 2022

Trevor-Wilmot Consolidated School District Approves April Referendum To Exceed State Revenue Limit

The Trevor-Wilmot Consolidated Grade School District will ask voters to allow the District to exceed its state-set revenue limit by \$800,000 annually over five years in a plan that will be on the April 5 spring election ballot. The District's Board of Education approved the proposal at its meeting on January 11.

"We have long maintained a quality school system by using all available tools and resources to sustain programming. The referendum is also a tool that the State's legislators have given schools to ask taxpayers to exceed the revenue limit to save programs. That's exactly what we are doing," said Michelle Garven, district administrator.

In Wisconsin, the revenue limit is the amount of revenue the district receives in local property taxes and state aid. The District has been struggling with budget deficits for the last several years due to declining revenue and increasing expenses. Despite attempts to control costs, Garven said the District is unable to sustain the current level of programming and services without additional revenue. If approved, she said, the referendum funds would help sustain current educational programs for students.

An April 2021 proposal failed by just 12 votes. It would have allowed the District to exceed its revenue limit by varying amounts over a five year period.

"The problems have certainly not gone away and we cannot remain status quo. We are committed to asking the voters again because we heard from citizens that they either didn't know about the last referendum or didn't understand the urgency of our request," said Garven.

Under the current referendum proposal, the District would be allowed to exceed its revenue limit by \$800,000 annually beginning in the 2022-23 school year. It is a non-recurring referendum, which means the authorization would expire after five years.

The initial tax increase is estimated to be \$.15 cents per \$1000 of property value.

"This increase represents an estimated \$15 per year increase on property taxes for \$100,000 home value," said Kadlec.

Trevor-Wilmot has taken steps to address budget shortfalls including reducing the number of support staff, reducing the number of teaching and administrative positions, and increasing class sizes. The District has sought to control costs by keeping expenses at or below the consumer price index for each of the last 10 years.

“Historically, we have been very conservative with taxpayer dollars and mindful of the community. I believe this referendum proposal is in the best interest of the schools and the taxpayers,” Kadlec said.

Even if the referendum passes, the District is committed to continuing to control costs and remaining fiscally responsible to taxpayers, according to Kadlec.

“An approved referendum doesn’t mean clear sailing: an approved referendum will help us avoid budget deficits and sustain programs while we continue to control expenses to maintain the educational programs for students,” he said.

If the current proposal does not pass, Garven said the District will have no choice but to make further reductions to balance the budget including increasing class sizes; reducing class offerings; deferring maintenance and repairs, and reducing technology replacement cycles.

The district will host two public information meetings (in-person, if possible) on February 24, 2022, 6 p.m in the school library, and March 29 at 6 p.m., also in the school library.

For more information, call District administrator Michelle Garven at (262) 862-2356 or visit [the district website](#).