



Dear Community Members, Parents, and Staff:

The Howard Lake, Waverly, and Winsted communities are great places to live, work, and raise a family. The secret is out, and, as a result, our school district continues to grow. In fact, student enrollment grew more than 12 percent in the last 10 years. Our last enrollment study predicted more increases, but we are committed to improving and growing our “big school” academic and extracurricular options in our “small school” setting.

While we are pleased that people are choosing Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted, this does present challenges. Our growing enrollment and programs for students mean we are nearing capacity at the elementary level. Investments are also needed to expand our classrooms and courses to better prepare students for their path after high school, whether it’s college, technical school, the military, or the workforce.

We need your input on plans that will address these challenges. These decisions will impact our community for decades. Therefore, the Board of Education is committed to reflecting the priorities of our community members and taxpayers. **Please take a few minutes to respond to this survey.**

To ensure your confidentiality, all survey data is returned to School Perceptions, an independent research firm.

TAKE THE SURVEY IN ONE OF TWO WAYS

Option 1: To reduce mailing expenses, please go online –

Go to the survey website: **www.Feedback2000.com**

Enter your survey code:

Option 2: By paper – If you do not have internet access, please return the survey to any school office, or mail it to School Perceptions, PO Box 607, Slinger, WI 53086.

*Additional Surveys: The survey code can be used only once. To obtain additional surveys for other adults in your household, please call the District Office at **NUMBER**.*

*Para pedir una copia de esta encuesta en español, favor de llamar **NUMBER**.*

Please complete the survey before May 11, 2022.

If you would like the survey in a different language or have a disability that makes it difficult to read and/or take the survey, please contact the District office.

Final survey results will be reported at the Board of Education meeting on **DATE**. They will also be available on the District’s website at **SITE**. The Board is committed to continued conversations with you as we look ahead to the future needs of our students and community.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Sincerely,

Brad Sellner
Superintendent

Michelle Heuer
Board Chair

Paul Bravinder
Board Vice Chair

Kelsey Puncochar
Board Clerk

Jeremy Peterson
Board Treasurer

Katie Koch
Board Director

Brian Marketon
Board Director

John Scheuch
Board Director

Excellence in education!

Operations Funding

There are two types of local funding sources that school districts can pursue.

| Type | Purpose |
|---|---|
| Levies | Levies fund educational programming, student services, staffing, and maintenance. Funds are used the same year they are received, help address ongoing budget challenges, and make up for state aid that has not kept up with operating expenses. |
| Bonds | Bonds are used to pay for major building projects, such as renovations or building a school. Much like a home mortgage, a bond is typically financed over an extended period, often 20 years. |
| We like to think of it this way: bonds are for buildings, and levies are for learning. | |

Voters in the Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted School District rejected operating levies in 2018 and 2019. We respect the community’s decision and have attempted to balance our budget in the meantime. We have been able to avoid substantial reductions. However, our savings have been cut in half in recent years, which is not sustainable.

We are concerned that further cuts will impact our programming and services for students. Therefore, we are proposing a \$1.1 million operating levy for 10 years. If approved, we would use these dollars to fund the following:

- ✓ Offer additional **STEM** (science, technology, engineering, and math) courses, **art** programs, and **CIS** (College in the Schools) curriculum.
- ✓ Implement different **schedule options** (block, trimester, etc.) for grades 7-12 to best meet their learning needs. We would hire additional staff to allow students to take more courses, earn college credit while in high school, and improve students’ individualized instruction.
- ✓ “Double” our **bus routes** to allow elementary kids to start earlier and secondary students later, which also shortens ride times for all students and eliminates travel between school facilities.
- ✓ Expand our **extracurricular activity options** (such as business club, robotics, dance, music/fine arts, athletics, etc.).

| ANNUAL PROPERTY TAX IMPACT OF A \$1.1 MILLION OPERATING LEVY | | |
|---|------------------------|--|
| Type of Property | Estimated Market Value | Projected Tax Impact |
| All Taxable Property <i>Except seasonal recreational property and agricultural land beyond the dwelling value (i.e., house, garage, and one acre)</i> | \$50,000 | \$X |
| | \$100,000 | \$X |
| | \$150,000 | \$X |
| | \$200,000 | \$X |
| | \$250,000 | \$X |
| | \$400,000 | \$X |
| | \$500,000 | \$X |
| Would you support a \$X operational levy for each of the next X years to maintain current programs, services, and course offerings? | | <input type="checkbox"/> Definitely yes <input type="checkbox"/> Probably yes <input type="checkbox"/> Undecided <input type="checkbox"/> Probably no <input type="checkbox"/> Definitely no |

Comments/questions/suggestions:

Operations Funding

If voters do not support an operational referendum, the District will need to cut approximately \$X from the operational budget beginning in the 2023-2024 school year. Survey results will help determine what cuts are made. While the District does not endorse any of the following, we must consider all options to reduce expenses.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Class Sizes: Average class sizes are approximately 18 students at the elementary level and 27 students at the middle/high school level.</p> <p>Should the District consider cutting teachers and increasing class sizes?</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion |
| <p>Course Offerings: Electives (such as music, agriculture, business, art, and foreign languages), Advanced Placement (AP), career prep, and courses for college credits are offered for students.</p> <p>Should the District consider reducing college credit and elective courses?</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion |
| <p>Transportation: The District could reduce or eliminate another bus route, requiring students to be picked up earlier, further increasing ride time for some riders and eliminating busing services for others.</p> <p>Should the District reduce busing services?</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion |
| <p>Athletic/Co-Curricular Offerings: The District offers a number of athletic and co-curricular offerings for middle and high school students.</p> <p>Should the District consider reducing athletic/co-curricular offerings?</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion |
| <p>Technology: We provide access to devices (Chromebooks, tablets, etc.) for every student. Additionally, the District’s technology infrastructure (including wireless internet access, servers, and classroom computers) needs regular maintenance to meet students’ learning needs.</p> <p>Should the District consider delaying technology updates?</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion |
| <p>Facilities: We set aside some of the annual budget to stay current with building maintenance, make routine security updates, and prevent project backlogs.</p> <p>Should the District reduce the annual maintenance budget?</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion |

Elementary School Planning

We have identified several potential projects at the elementary school level, especially at Humphrey in Waverly. Some community members believe we should continue to maintain elementary schools in Waverly and Winsted. Others have asked whether it makes sense to consolidate to one elementary school on the current middle and high school campus property in Howard Lake).

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>What advice would you give the District?</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> Consolidate to <u>one elementary school</u> on the MS/HS site <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to maintain <u>two elementary schools</u> <input type="checkbox"/> I would support <u>either</u> option <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure |
|--|---|

Facility Projects

We need your feedback to prioritize the following projects.

Please use this scale when responding.

High: Address immediately

Medium: Important, but address in a future project

Low: Not a priority, do not address in the near future

A) Removing Portable Classrooms: We use portable classrooms at Humphrey and Winsted Elementary schools to help address our enrollment growth and capacity challenges. The utility costs to run these portables (heating/cooling, electricity, etc.) is very expensive. We would replace these portables with classroom additions. **Estimated cost: \$X million**

What priority would you place on this project?

High Medium Low

B) Reconfigure Traffic Flow: The car and bus traffic at all schools needs to be reconfigured to better separate vehicles and pedestrians. Bus lanes would be separated and widened. This would also ease congestion in the surrounding neighborhoods and on County Rd 6. **Estimated cost: \$X million**

What priority would you place on this project?

High Medium Low

C) Renovating School Support Areas: Humphrey's cafeteria and commons area is congested for breakfast and lunch. Expanding this area would reduce the number of lunch periods, minimize scheduling conflicts, and allow the space to be used for student collaboration, group work, and community events. Winsted's kitchen is too small, and the maintenance/custodial work areas are very limited at both Winsted and the high school. **Estimated cost: \$X million**

What priority would you place on this project?

High Medium Low

D) Adding Classroom Space: We do not have the room in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), art, and CTE (career and technical education or "shops") areas to meet student demand for these courses. Expanding these departments at Humphrey, Winsted, and the high school would help meet the jobs that are common in our region and help us offer additional classes in **welding, Y, and Z**. **Estimated cost: \$X million**

What priority would you place on this project?

High Medium Low

E) Major Building Systems/Infrastructure (All Schools): Many of our heating systems and roofing were installed over a two-year period in 2007 and 2008. Soon, these building systems will need to be updated and replaced, especially at our elementaries and the high school. These projects will help us maintain energy efficiency and keep our utility costs low. **Estimated cost: \$X million**

What priority would you place on this project?

High Medium Low

F) Athletic Facilities: Our conference offers competition in activities that we do not offer, such as **X, Y, and Z**. As our enrollments grow, this will limit opportunities for participation. We could update and expand our existing facilities, such as score boards, training equipment, and outdoor fields to improve overall participation, fan experience, and community use. **Estimated cost: \$X million**

What priority would you place on this project?

High Medium Low

Comments/questions/suggestions about the potential facility projects:

Funding Support

In addition to the levy, the District could also pursue a bond referendum to fund the potential facility projects explained on the previous pages. The total cost of the building projects would exceed \$X million. We realize doing all the projects at one time may not be realistic. However, because of careful financial planning, we are able to do \$X million of facility work with minimal impact on our taxes. **The Board of Education and District leaders will establish a plan based on the community’s priorities and willingness to support the projects financially.**

| PROJECTED <u>ANNUAL</u> PROPERTY TAX INCREASE* | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Type of Property | Estimated Market Value | Bond Referendum Amounts | | | |
| | | \$X million | \$X million | \$X million | \$X million |
| Residential Homestead | \$50,000 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| | \$100,000 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| | \$150,000 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| | \$200,000 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| | \$300,000 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| Commercial/ Industrial | \$100,000 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| | \$250,000 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| | \$500,000 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| Ag Homestead** (average value per acre) | \$1,000 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| | \$1,500 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| | \$2,000 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| Ag Non-Homestead** (average value per acre) | \$1,000 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| | \$1,500 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| | \$2,000 | \$X | \$X | \$X | \$X |
| <p>* Estimated tax impact includes principal and interest payments on the new bonds. The amounts in the table are based on school district taxes for bonded debt levies only, and do not include tax levies for other purposes. Tax increases shown above are gross increases, not including the impact of the homeowner's Homestead Credit Refund ("Circuit Breaker") program. Owners of homestead property may qualify for a refund, based on their income and total property taxes. This will change the net effect of the proposed bond issue for those property owners.</p> <p>** For all agricultural property, estimated tax impact for 2023 includes a 70% reduction due to the School Building Bond Agricultural Credit, based on current law. Average value per acre is the total estimated market value of all land & buildings divided by total acres. If the property includes a home, then the tax impact on the house, garage, and one acre of land will be calculated in addition to the taxes per acre, on the same basis as a residential homestead or non-homestead property. If the same property owner owns more than approximately \$1.9 million of agricultural homestead land and buildings, a portion of the property will be taxed at the higher non-homestead rate.</p> | | | | | |
| <p>How much of a tax increase would you support through a bond referendum, assuming the projects included were acceptable to you?</p> | | <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would support a \$X million bond referendum.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would support a \$X million bond referendum.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would support a \$X million bond referendum.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would support a \$X million bond referendum.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would only support a smaller bond referendum.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would not support any bond referendum.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I'm not sure/need more information.</p> | | | |

Comments/questions/suggestions:

Respondent Information

What is your age? 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+

Is your primary residence in the District? Yes No Not sure

In which municipality do you live?

City of Howard Lake

City of Waverly

City of Winsted

Not sure

Do not live in the District

Are you an employee of the District? Yes No

Do you have children attending a school in the District? Yes No

If you have school-aged children, what school(s) do they attend? (Mark all that apply.)

Humphrey Elementary

Winsted Elementary

HLWW Middle School

HLWW High School/ALP

MAWSECO

Private/parochial school

Homeschool

Other: _____

How do you like to receive school/District information? (Mark all that apply.)

School/District websites

School/District newsletters

Phone notifications

Board meetings

Emails

Twitter/Facebook

Herald Journal

Radio

Other:

Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Public Schools
8700 County Rd 6 SW
PO Box 708
Howard Lake, MN 55349

If you have questions about this survey, please visit our facility page ([WEBSITE](#)) or scan the [QR code](#) to the right.



***Please complete the survey before
May 11, 2022.***

*This publication was produced for the residents of the **Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted Public Schools**. Due to the overlap of postal routes, residents from neighboring school districts may receive this publication. Given the limitations of bulk mailing, this overlap was difficult to eliminate without significant cost. Thank you for your understanding.*