



Dear Community Members, Families, and Staff:

Exciting things are happening in the Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted School District. Our communities are great places to live, work, and raise a family. People want to put down roots here. **In fact, student enrollment grew more than 12 percent in the last 10 years.** Our last enrollment study predicted more increases, and we are committed to improving and growing our “big school” academic and extracurricular options in our “small school” setting.

As we make plans for the future of schools, we need to hear from you, our taxpayers! 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. Our schools and community are tightly linked. 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 confidentiality, all survey data is returned to School Perceptions, an independent research firm.

TO TAKE THE SURVEY:

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 320.543.4646.

Para pedir una copia de esta encuesta en español, favor de llamar 320.543.4646.

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 June 13, 2022. They will also be available on the District’s website at www.hlww.k12.mn.us. 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 Puncocar
Board Clerk

Jeremy Peterson
Board Treasurer

Katie Koch
Board Director

Brian Marketon
Board Director

John Scheuch
Board Director

Operations Funding

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

Type	Purpose
Levy	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 federal and state aid that has not kept up with operating expenses.
Bond	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.
<i>Bonds are for buildings, and levies are for learning.</i>	

Voters in the Howard Lake-Waverly-Winsted School District rejected operating levies in 2019 and 2020.

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 considering a \$1.1 million operating levy for 10 years.** If voters approve, we would use these dollars to:

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Reconfigure **bus routes** to create separate routes, allowing elementaries to start earlier and secondary later, shortening ride times for all students, eliminating travel between schools, and separating older and younger students.
- ✓ Expand our **extracurricular activities** (such as business club, robotics, dance, music/fine arts, athletics, etc.).
- ✓ **Help us sustain our financial health.**

ANNUAL PROPERTY TAX IMPACT OF A \$1.1 MILLION OPERATING LEVY		
Type of Property	Estimated Market Value	Annual Projected Tax Impact
All Taxable Property	\$100,000	\$106 (\$8.83 per month)
	\$150,000	\$159 (\$13.25 per month)
	\$186,000*	\$197 (\$16.42 per month)
	\$200,000	\$212 (\$17.67 per month)
	\$250,000	\$264 (\$22.00 per month)
	\$400,000	\$424 (\$35.33 per month)
Would you support a \$1.1 million operational levy for each of the next 10 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
<i>*The asterisk above marks the average home value in our district. Agricultural property will pay taxes for the proposed referendum based only on the value of the house, garage and one acre. Seasonal recreational residential property (i.e., cabins) will pay no taxes for the proposed referendum.</i>		

Comments/questions/suggestions:

Cost-Cutting Options

If voters do not support an operational referendum, the District will need to make substantial reductions from our budget beginning in the 2023-2024 school year. While the District does not endorse any of the following, the options we could consider include the following. **Survey results will help determine what reductions are made.**

<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 (including vocational courses), 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, increasing athletic/activity fees, and removing family fee caps?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion
<p>Technology: We provide access to learning technology (such as tech ed/shop equipment, science materials, and Chromebooks) for students. Also, the District's technology infrastructure needs regular maintenance to meet 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 safety/security updates, and prevent project backlogs.</p> <p>Should the District reduce the annual maintenance and safety/security budget?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion

Elementary School Planning

Some community members believe we should continue to maintain elementary schools in Waverly and Winsted. Others have asked whether it makes financial sense to consolidate to one elementary school on the current middle and high school campus property in Howard Lake, which could improve efficiencies over the long term.

<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
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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) 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 permanent classrooms. **Estimated cost: \$13.4 million**

What priority would you place on this project?

High Medium Low

B) Traffic Flow (All Schools): The car and bus traffic at each site needs to be reconfigured to improve safety. Bus lanes would be moved and widened. This would also ease congestion in the surrounding neighborhoods and on County Rd 6. **Estimated cost: \$8.3 million**

What priority would you place on this project?

High Medium Low

C) School Support Areas (Elementary Schools): 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. **Estimated cost: \$2.5 million**

What priority would you place on this project?

High Medium Low

D) Classroom Space: We do not have the room in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math), art, and CTE (career and technical education) areas to meet student demand for these courses. Expanding these departments across our district would help job demands common in our region and help us offer classes in welding, health sciences, robotics, business/coding, and on-the-job training for high school students. **Estimated cost: \$16.1 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: \$9.2 million**

What priority would you place on this project?

High Medium Low

F) Activity Facilities: We could update and expand our existing facilities (such as scoreboards, lighting, training equipment) and expand both indoor and outdoor facilities to improve overall participation, fan experience, and community use. This would also help us explore offering activities that we do not offer, such as tennis, dance, and soccer. **Estimated cost: \$11.9 million**

What priority would you place on this project?

High Medium Low

Comments/questions/suggestions:

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 \$60 million. **We realize paying for all these projects at one time is not realistic.** 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 ANNUAL PROPERTY TAX IMPACT OVER THE CURRENT LEVEL						
Type of Property	Estimated Market Value	Bond Referendum Amounts				
		\$25 million	\$30 million	\$35 million	\$45 million	\$55 million
Residential Homestead	\$100,000	\$53	\$69	\$89	\$128	\$168
	\$150,000	\$94	\$122	\$156	\$226	\$296
	\$186,000*	\$123	\$160	\$205	\$296	\$388
	\$200,000	\$134	\$174	\$224	\$323	\$423
	\$300,000	\$215	\$280	\$359	\$518	\$678
Commercial/Industrial	\$100,000	\$111	\$145	\$186	\$268	\$351
	\$250,000	\$316	\$410	\$526	\$760	\$995
	\$500,000	\$687	\$892	\$1,145	\$1,654	\$2,166
Ag Homestead** (average value per acre)	\$3,000	-\$0.04	\$0.06	\$0.18	\$0.43	\$0.68
	\$5,000	-\$0.07	\$0.10	\$0.30	\$0.71	\$1.13
	\$7,000	-\$0.10	\$0.13	\$0.42	\$1.00	\$1.58
Ag Non-Homestead** (average value per acre)	\$3,000	-\$0.08	\$0.12	\$0.36	\$0.86	\$1.35
	\$5,000	-\$0.14	\$0.19	\$0.60	\$1.43	\$2.26
	\$7,000	-\$0.20	\$0.27	\$0.84	\$2.00	\$3.16
<p>* The asterisk above marks the average home value in our district. 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 may change the net effect of the proposed bond issue for those property owners.</p> <p>** For all agricultural property, estimated tax impact for 2022 includes a 60% reduction and for 2023, a 70% reduction due to the School Building Bond Agricultural Credit. Under current law, the School Building Agricultural Credit will remain at that higher level. 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 \$55 million bond referendum.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would support a \$45 million bond referendum.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would support a \$35 million bond referendum.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would support a \$30 million bond referendum.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would support a \$25 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

Please indicate where you live:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> City of Howard Lake | <input type="checkbox"/> City of Waverly | <input type="checkbox"/> City of Winsted |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Township of Albion | <input type="checkbox"/> Township of Hollywood | <input type="checkbox"/> Township of Marysville |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Township of Middleville | <input type="checkbox"/> Township of Stockholm | <input type="checkbox"/> Township of Victor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Township of Winsted | <input type="checkbox"/> Township of Woodland | <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 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.)*

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humphrey Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> Winsted Elementary | <input type="checkbox"/> HLWW Middle School |
| <input type="checkbox"/> HLWW High School/ALP | <input type="checkbox"/> MAWSECO | <input type="checkbox"/> Private/parochial school |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Homeschool | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

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

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School/District websites | <input type="checkbox"/> School/District newsletters | <input type="checkbox"/> Phone notifications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Emails | <input type="checkbox"/> Twitter/Facebook |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Herald Journal</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio | <input type="checkbox"/> 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 website at [SITE](#) 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.*