

Millard Public Schools Levy Override

Actual Wording	Background and Explanation
<p>Shall the Millard Public Schools (School District No. 17, Douglas County, Nebraska) be allowed to levy a property tax not to exceed nine (9) cents per one hundred dollars of taxable valuation in excess of the limits prescribed by law for fiscal years 2018-2019 through 2022-2023 for purposes of general operations and building construction, remodeling, and site acquisition; and, shall the Millard Public Schools (School District No. 17, Douglas County, Nebraska) be allowed to increase its general fund budget of expenditures for the ensuing school year (2018-2019) by an amount not to exceed nine (9) million dollars above the authority prescribed in Neb. Rev. Stat. §79-1023?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> YES</p> <p><input type="radio"/> NO</p>	<p>In the 1990's, in an attempt to limit property taxes, the Legislature limited School Districts in two ways.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A revenue limit – the levy limit is currently at \$1.05 per \$100 taxable value.¹ 2) A spending limit – based on several factors, including the levy amount and household values. <p>For anything more than the \$1.05 levy, the people have to approve of it by a vote – to override the levy.</p> <p>The current request submitted by the Board of Education asks for a 9-cent increase which then requires no more than \$9 million additional dollars be spent from general fund for the next school year (2018-2019),</p> <p>That law also states how the request to the people must be worded, as noted to the left. So, even though the current Board of Education has no intention of using the requested increase for buildings, that language must still be included here.</p> <p>The \$1.05 levy means \$1050 taxes, for a house valued at \$100,000. However, the existing indebtedness for bond issues goes above the "levy" limit, since the bond issue passed in 2013 (and others before) will require payment for many years. Currently, including the bonds, the \$100,000 household pays \$1220 total. Adding the (9) cents to the levy could take the total to \$1310. NOTE: This authorizes but does not require the full (9) cents each year. That decision will be made each year in the annual budgeting process.</p> <p>Those who favor this increase point out the need to maintain the reputation of quality of education Millard, as the 3rd largest district in the state, has experienced. They don't want to cut class sizes or have to cut programs. They point out that Millard currently is the 3rd lowest spending district in the state for per pupil cost.</p> <p>For details from the superintendent's point of view, see https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B_5cVJbA4I4eXzFhTU1Td0ZEEdFE/view</p> <p>Some who oppose this increase suggest cuts related to academics or extracurricular activities don't necessarily need to be made if instead non-academic expenditures could be eliminated. Others would prefer hiring more teachers to keep the class size reasonable by decreasing the number and/or salaries of various administrative personnel.</p> <p>For details from State Senator Linehan, Legislative District 39, see http://news.legislature.ne.gov/dist39/2017/09/05/sen-linehan-on-millards-levy-override. Senator Linehan's information refers to TEEOSA which stands for Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act ²</p> <p>A YES vote will allow the Board of Education to increase the levy by (9) cents, with the limitation of spending \$9 million the next school year.</p> <p>A NO vote will force decisions on what needs to be changed to live with the \$1.05 levy.</p> <p>Further considerations:</p> <p>Essentially school districts have two kinds of funds - the "general fund" and a "building fund." General fund money can be used for anything – though typically in Millard, 80% goes to people – paying salaries and benefits. For the 24,000 student population, there are 87 administrative staff. The salaries for these personnel tend to range from \$80,000 to \$150,000 in annual income. To see a full list of the other personnel positions, see pages 16-25 of the 2017 report at http://hr.mpsomaha.org/documents/personnel-reports</p> <p>The numbers indicate full-time equivalents in the following categories of employees: teaching staff (1690), Pro-tech (social workers, therapists, etc.) positions (241), Para positions (315), Custodial/Maintenance (193), Food Service (142), staffing substitutes (687). Along with the administrators, all these personnel share in a self-funded health benefits program managed by Aetna.</p> <p>The other 20% of the general fund pays for utilities, textbooks, computers, desks, printers, office supplies, etc. Savings from projects such as using more efficient lighting, heating, and air has created some extra funds that have decreased the cost in the general fund. Other examples include changes in insurance programs and refinancing of bonds that have saved millions of dollars away from the classroom.</p>

¹ http://www.nebraskalegislature.gov/app_rev/source/proptax_trendsshift.htm,

² <http://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/statutes.php?statute=79-1003>