

Watchmen Ministry North Idaho Voter Guide for Kootenai County Schools

On March 9th Kootenai County Residents will have the option of voting on whether to maintain levies for their local school districts. Coeur d’Alene School District, Lakeland School District, Post Falls School District, and Kootenai School District all have levy requests for the voters.

- ❖ Coeur d’Alene School District, \$20 Million per year for a total of \$40 Million
- ❖ Lakeland School District, \$9.52 Million per year for a total of \$19.04 Million
- ❖ Post Falls School District, \$4.995 Million per year for a total of \$9.91 Million
- ❖ Kootenai Joint School District, \$750 Thousand per year for a total of \$1.5 Million

Statements For Approval	Statements Against Approval
<p style="text-align: center;">Statement from the Coeur d’Alene School District</p> <p>Our 2-Year local levy supports a wide variety of instructional programs and other services in our school district. The levy provides \$20 million a year, which is 25% of the district’s annual operating budget.</p> <p>NO INCREASE IN THE LEVY: We are not asking voters to increase the levy. The district is seeking voter approval to replace the current levy with a new 2-year levy of the same amount.</p> <p>Levy dollars allow us to bridge the gap between funding provided by the state and the cost of meeting the educational expectations of our community. Our local levy ensures our students continue to receive quality education in a safe and supportive environment.</p> <p>Voters have approved our local levy continuously since 1986. The current levy will expire at the end of June 2021.</p> <p><i>Our local levy supports educational opportunities not fully funded by the state.</i></p> <p>State and federal funding provide about 75% of what it takes to fund our schools. The rest comes from our 2-year local levy, which pays for programs and services our district has provided for years.</p> <p>WHAT OUR LEVY SUPPORTS</p> <p>Safety: School resource officers, high school campus safety</p> <p>Health: School nurses, mental health resources, family support</p> <p>Staffing: Recruiting and keeping quality teachers and staff</p> <p>Classroom Support: Instructional assistants, classroom supplies</p> <p>Skilled Trades: Pathways to careers in an evolving economy</p> <p>Enrichment: Sports, music, arts, extracurricular activities</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Statement from Jim Hollingsworth</p> <p>On March 9th there will be a levy election. Everyone needs to vote.</p> <p>Some years back our schools were funded completely by property taxes. Later the state government took over the funding so there was no charge to property taxes. But in time some schools felt they needed more money so they devised levy elections.</p> <p>Since most of the levy funds go to fund teacher salaries voting more money in a levy election enables a school district to pay teachers more than they could make in other professions, with similar training.</p> <p>The job our school districts are doing is not as good as it was many years ago. Someone has asked the question “Is this a time to reward failing education?” Why do mothers with little or no college and who teach their own children at home often do a better job than the public schools? Many of the spelling contests are won by home school children.</p> <p>We cannot control most of what our government spends money on. But, we can control what we spend on schools. Now is the time to vote no on these levy elections. Remember that this money is not for better buses, or pencils and paper, but for higher teacher salaries.</p> <p>When I was interviewed by the teacher’s union when I ran for office, everything they wanted me to approve cost more money. But it is time to spend less and expect more. It is the least we can do.</p> <p>Here schools have pretty much had a blank check. It is time for them to learn to live like the rest of us. Schools will beg for passage of the levies. Please vote no for the levies.</p>

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<p>Transportation: Buying new, safer school buses</p> <p>Technology: Additional student devices, tech support</p> <p>The Coeur d'Alene School District's overall tax rate was \$1.79 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value in 2020.</p> <p>IT'S GOING DOWN: The tax rate this year is projected to decrease to \$1.71 per \$1,000 of taxable assessed value.</p> <p>Statement from Lakeland School District</p> <p>Instructional Levy Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports Teaching & Learning for ALL students by providing programs & services to meet student needs • Addresses staff, student, parent and patron priorities • Instructional Levy closes the gap between State funding and the cost of operating our educational program, including small neighborhood schools <p>State funding mechanism shifted in 2006 to rely on local taxpayer support to fund essential programs, services, and activities.</p> <p>The Levy Helps Fund:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly 30% of our yearly budget • Small neighborhood schools and reasonable class sizes • Current staffing levels • School safety and security (Armed Guards, Athletic Trainers) • Technology education & integration (1:1 devices for all students and staff) • All athletic & academic extracurricular activities (athletic teams, band, choir, drama, speech, FFA) • Full day Kindergarten • Advanced Learning Program • All curricular materials, textbooks & resources • Additional School Nurse time <p>Board Approved Replacement Instructional Levy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains current programs/services/staffing • Tax rate is not increased. Annual cost to the taxpayer per \$100,000 of taxable assessed value will not change. • Amount increase addresses inflation over 6 year span <p>Statement from Post Falls School District</p> <p>On January 11, the Post Falls School District Board of Trustees unanimously approved a resolution for a supplemental levy election to be held on March 9, 2021. The proposed levy amount will remain at \$4.955 million per year for two years for a total of \$9.91 million.</p>	<p>Statement from Bob Shillingstad</p> <p>To quote Peter Brimelow, "There is no particular relationship between spending and educational results. Most education spending is actually on salaries and that's allocated according to political muscle". Idaho is flush with cash this legislative session and power players are ready to grab the money- mainly the teachers' unions, school boards and administrators.</p> <p>Here is a statistic that is thrown around a lot and used to shame the voters. Idaho ranks 48th in per pupil spending barely above Utah. Now that may be correct, I haven't all of the facts to check the results, but let's take this the next step and compare results. NYC, Washington D.C., Chicago and other urban areas spend insane amounts of money with abysmal results. Not a fair comparison, but let's look at Wyoming who spends double Idaho on per pupil education. How do we compare? Both Idaho and Utah are in the middle of the pack beating Wyoming more often than not. What will we get for doubling our spending?</p> <p>We will be hammered with adding early childhood education and fully funding not only kindergartens but also down to four-year-olds! Studies have shown that at the end of elementary education you cannot tell who were in school prior to first grade or not. A very large Dept. of Education study confirmed and concluded that Head Start was largely a waste of money. The next "solution" is smaller class size and again studies have shown that there is no measurable advantage to this spending. What both of these do accomplish are more dues paying members for the unions and higher taxes.</p> <p>We have most Idaho districts asking for voter approval of a levy in March and we need to do our homework and decide how to vote. How have districts handled the emergency declarations during the COVID scare. We have been lied to all during this last year. If you are under the age of 24 is nearly impossible to find anyone in the country with complications. A UK study and another from Brown University clearly showed that students do not transmit the virus to teachers and even to parents or grandparents. Sweden never closed schools and we have a lot of data to support schools being open and yet across the country the majority of schools have insane policies. How did your district do?</p> <p>The Coeur d'Alene district is asking for \$40 million over the next two years to fund the district. This is a district that has reacted as if their hair is on fire during the "pandemic" and can't decide how to proceed. Understandably when they opened the doors last fall they realized enrollment down by 8%. Parents had already voted with their feet. They now are saying that they will go to four days a week instruction.....no guarantees if they continue.</p>

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<p>The current levy expires on June 30, 2021. This proposal, if approved March 9, will not increase school district taxes of the average Post Falls taxpayer.</p> <p><i>What is a supplemental levy?</i> Idaho school districts have the ability to “supplement” the basic budget revenue they receive from the state by asking local school district patrons to vote for additional funds. A simple majority of local patrons can approve a supplemental levy request.</p> <p><i>Why do we need a renewal of the current supplemental levy?</i> Even with limited state funding, the district continues to make student programming its number one priority. For example, we need to update curricular materials and technology. The supplemental levy will be used to address these issues as well as maintain current educational opportunities and programs such as school safety and student health services.</p> <p><i>How do we compare with other school districts’ supplemental levy amounts?</i> Post Falls School District has the lowest per student tax rate in the area and one of the lowest in the state. Post Falls School District’s tax rate is \$1.70. The average for a school district of similar size to Post Falls is \$3.81.</p> <p>Statement from Kootenai School District</p> <p>The Kootenai School District will be running an operational levy this year on March 9. The levy provides funds enabling the district to provide many services they would not otherwise be able to such as having a school resource officer on site everyday, offer an all day, every day kindergarten, and regular building supports for day-to-day operations. This year we want to include new playground equipment and a new welding program into the levy. We will be mailing you a brochure this month with more details. I will also provide some levy informational meetings to the public to help answer questions you may have about the levy or how it affects the school budget. Please be sure to vote on March 9.</p> <p>The estimated average annual cost to the taxpayer on the proposed levy is a tax of \$96.21 per \$100,000 of taxable assessed value, per year, based on current conditions. The proposed levy shall replace the District’s existing supplemental levy, which expires July 1, 2021, and has an annual cost of \$99.53 per \$100,000 of assessed values per year. The net effect, based on current conditions, is a \$3.32 per \$100,000 decrease per year.</p>	<p>The Lakeland School District with Rathdrum and Spirit Lake schools have continued schools as normal all year. Masks are voluntary. Most charter schools and nearly all private and Christian schools have had traditional instruction all year also. Surprisingly, there have been no reports of students dying or transported to the hospital from these schools.</p> <p>When Joe Biden promised to “follow the science” regarding school reopening in the “pandemic era”, we should have realized he was talking about political science rather than good old fashioned science-science. He is basing his “keep em closed” policy, according to Stilton, on the Teachers Unions’ compelling argument that “actual work is for losers who don’t make massive contributions to Democrats.” Jen Psaki has now clarified that defines successful “opening” as 50% of schools offering “one day of in-class teaching a week. Considering that the numbers were already slightly better than that, it’s a low bar that satisfies the donors.</p> <p>There has been an effort to combine school levy and trustee elections to coincide with either primary or general elections to generate turnout. In the past the teachers and spouses can decide most of these elections with their vote alone. It is imperative to have everyone vote! The real solution is to cut off the funding and convince the legislature to allow the free market to dictate education. Vouchers, educational savings accounts or a variety of means to allow the dollars to go to the student much like we do for college costs. Choice is the only answer to so many of the issues of education.</p> <p>The legislative roundtable for Kootenai County was held this past Saturday at The Altar Church and a question was presented to the group about sex education issues in the CDA district and whether a law should be passed requiring parents to “opt-in” if their child should be included in the indoctrination. Rep. Vito Barbieri had an amazing answer that brought down the house when he said, “Take them out of the institutions. You are not going to control this bureaucracy, it is taking a billion and a half dollars now and those that are homeschooling we are double paying.....get them out of the system. They are propagandizing....come on....we recognize this!.....The world has gone crazy, nothing makes sense. Take the kids out.”</p> <p>You can watch the entire session on You Tube. Vote March 9th, make your voice heard and let your legislators know that our vote is more important than the unions.</p>