

February 13, 2018 Special Election

King County Official Local Voters' Pamphlet

as requested by Tahoma School District No. 409



vote!

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Ballot drop boxes

Return your ballot without a stamp at a ballot drop box.

For a list of all **55 drop boxes open** for this election visit kingcounty.gov/elections. Here are the 5 closest locations to the districts on your ballot:

Covington	Covington Library, 27100 164th Avenue SE, 98042
Kent	Kentridge High School, 12430 SE 208th St, 98031
Maple Valley	Hobart Food Market, 20250 276th Ave SE, 98038 *Tahoma School District Building, 25720 Maple Valley-Black Diamond Rd SE, 98038
Renton	Fairwood Library, 17009 140th Ave SE, 98058

* Drive-up ballot drop boxes

Ballot drop boxes are open 24 hours a day beginning January 25.

Ballot drop boxes close at 8 p.m. on Election Day, February 13.

Mail your ballot

You can vote and return your ballot through the U.S. Postal Service as soon as you receive it.

Mailed ballots require first class postage and must be postmarked by February 13.



Register to vote

Requirements

To register to vote in Washington, you must be:

- A citizen of the United States
- A legal resident of Washington state
- At least 18 years old by election day
- Not disqualified from voting due to a court order
- Not under Department of Corrections supervision for a Washington felony conviction

How to register

- Register online with the Secretary of State, www.vote.wa.gov.
- Download a registration form from the King County Elections website.
- Register in person at the King County Elections office or at the King County Elections Annex.

Registration deadlines

While you may register to vote at any time, there are registration deadlines before each election. The deadlines for the February 13, 2018 Special Election are:

- **January 15** – Deadline for online and mail-in voter registration, address change and other updates.
- **February 5** – Deadline for people not currently registered in Washington State (in-person only).

Keep your voter registration current

Update your registration if you have moved or changed your name, or if your signature has changed. Simply submit a new registration form to update your information.

Who donates to campaigns?

View contributors for candidates and measures

Public Disclosure Commission

www.pdc.wa.gov

Toll Free 1-877-601-2828

Accessible voting options

Voting by mail is a convenient option for most people. There are other options available.

Online Ballot Marking Program

- Any registered voter can use the online ballot marking program.
- Voters with disabilities can mark their choices on the ballot online. The online ballot marking program has been designed specifically to enable blind and vision-impaired voters to cast a private ballot.
- If a voter's ballot is damaged or lost, voters may mark their ballot on a computer, print it out, and return it by fax, standard mail, or email before the 8 p.m. election day deadline.

Accessible Voting Centers

Accessible voting centers are available for voters who need assistance completing their ballot. Trained staff and specialized equipment are available to help voters with disabilities cast a private, independent ballot. Mail ballots can also be dropped off at any accessible voting center, when open.

King County Elections

919 SW Grady Way, Renton 98057

Elections Annex

King County Administration Building, 500 4th Ave., Room 440, Seattle 98104

- Weekdays, Jan. 24 - Feb. 12, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Election day, Feb. 13, 8:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Bellevue Regional Library

1111 110th Ave NE, 98004

- Monday Feb. 12, 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Election day, Feb. 13, 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Other accessible voting options

If one of the above options doesn't work for you, please contact our office for further assistance:

Phone: 206-296-VOTE (8683)

1-800-325-6165

TTY Relay: 711

Email: elections@kingcounty.gov

Proposition No. 3 School Bus Levy

The Board of Directors approved Resolution No. 2017-27 authorizing a levy for school buses. This levy funds new and replacement school buses and authorizes the following excess levy on all taxable property within the District:

Collection Year	Estimated Levy Rate/\$1,000 Assessed Value	Levy Amount
2019	\$0.14	\$1,000,000
2020	\$0.13	\$1,000,000

all as provided in Resolution No. 2017-27. Should this proposition be approved?

Yes

No

The complete text of this measure is available at the Elections Office or online at kingcounty.gov/elections.

Statement in favor

Submitted by: Angela Stewart, Katrina Montgomery, Sarah Gilbert
www.voteystahoma.com

It has been 15 years since Tahoma asked voters for a levy to buy new buses. Since then, the district has grown by more than 2,000 students and opened a new high school. It's time to buy more buses.

Recent changes in how the state funds schools have not provided any additional money to purchase buses. Tahoma's bus fleet is aging and there is a need to add about 15 new, full-size buses so that older ones, purchased in the early 1990s, can be retired. The bus fleet also needs to grow in order to meet the demand created by more students and an additional school, added in the 2017 transition. With this two-year levy, Tahoma can modernize its bus fleet and improve flexibility.

The cost to taxpayers is estimated to be 14 cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation in 2019 and 13 cents in 2020. The estimated annual cost to owners of a home valued at \$400,000 would be \$56 in 2019 and \$52 in 2020. This levy is endorsed by teachers and the Maple Valley-Black Diamond Chamber of Commerce.

Let's keep moving forward by continuing to provide safe, reliable student transportation. Please vote Yes to buy more buses!

Rebuttal of statement against

The district is prohibited by law from spending construction bond funds to buy buses. The reserve fund is already paying for planned transition costs to open the new high school and to keep an emergency fund. Taxpayers supported the last bus levy in 2002. The district has grown and needs additional buses; it also must replace old ones, purchased in the 1990s. Yes, more drivers are needed, but so are more buses. Please vote yes!

Explanatory statement

Passage of Proposition No. 3 would allow for the levy of \$1,000,000 in property taxes within Tahoma School District for collection in 2019 and the levy of \$1,000,000 in property taxes for collection in 2020. In accordance with Resolution No. 2017-27 approving this proposition, these taxes would be deposited in the Tahoma School District's Transportation Vehicle Fund to pay part of the costs of acquiring new school buses to meet projected population growth and allow for the retirement of older and more costly to operate buses of the District. If authorized by the voters, such property taxes would be collected at the rates estimated to be \$0.14 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation in 2019 and \$0.13 per \$1,000 of assessed value in 2020. The exact levy rate shall be adjusted based upon the actual assessed value of the property within the District at the time of the levy.

For questions about this measure, contact:
Kevin Patterson, Director of Public Relations
425-413-3400, kpatters@tahomasd.us

Statement in opposition

Submitted by: Fletcher Barkdull
fletcherbarkdull@gmail.com

In 2017 the Tahoma School District completed construction projects and opened the doors for two brand new schools – Lake Wilderness Elementary School and Tahoma High School. The community is generally proud of these schools, and the district still had \$19M in capital projects funds as of June 2017. In addition, the district began the school year with \$15M in reserves. It seems that the district should have sufficient funds to absorb the \$2M that would be generated from this levy for school buses, if they are really needed.

While there has been challenges with new busing routes and capacity concerns within the district, the administration has made clear that the issue is primarily driven by a shortage of bus drivers, not a shortage of buses. Thus, this levy would not solve the transportation issues in our district.

With a significant property tax increase coming from the state for education combined with maximum increases from other taxing districts, the combined levies proposed by the district create a significant overall tax increase. Now is not the time to increase our tax burden.

Rebuttal of statement in favor

Every year the school district gets a transportation allocation from the state. In 2016-2017, that allocation was over \$3M. With the right planning, the district could have set aside funds over time in anticipation of future bus purchases. Although buses may not have been the stated purpose behind the \$15M in reserves held by the district, such reserves are for the very purpose of buying depreciable assets. With such reserves, a bus levy is unnecessary.

Proposition No. 1 Replacement of Existing Educational Programs and Operations Levy

The Board of Directors adopted Resolution No. 2017-25 concerning educational funding. This proposition authorizes the District to levy the following excess taxes, to replace an expiring levy, on all taxable property within the District, to support the District's educational programs and operations not funded by the state:

Collection Year	Estimated Levy Rate/\$1,000 Assessed Value	Levy Amount
2019	\$1.50	\$10,710,073
2020	\$1.50	\$11,823,067
2021	\$1.50	\$13,051,814
2022	\$1.50	\$14,408,350

all as provided in the Resolution. Should this proposition be approved?

Yes

No

The complete text of this measure is available at the Elections Office or online at kingcounty.gov/elections.

Statement in favor

Submitted by: Angela Stewart, Katrina Montgomery, Sarah Gilbert
www.voteystahoma.com

Washington is making great strides toward funding basic education, but there is still a need to raise money locally to pay for staffing, programs and equipment not provided by the state. The Educational Programs and Operations Levy helps fill the gap between state funding and what Tahoma students need. We want all students to receive a Future Ready education that goes well beyond basic.

The levy is \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value, half the current rate, thanks to improved state funding. It replaces a 2014 levy and helps pay for special education, security, nurses, classroom support staff, transportation staff, maintenance, and supplies. The levy also pays teachers for work they do beyond the 180 school days paid by the state.

State money is important, but has many strings attached. Without the levy, Tahoma loses much of its flexibility in how dollars can be spent to educate and support students. Our teachers, administrators and School Board know our students best. Levy funds can be applied where the need is greatest.

The levy is endorsed by teachers, Maple Valley-Black Diamond Chamber of Commerce and Fifth District legislators. Parents and community members, our kids need you: Please vote *Yes* by Feb. 13!

Rebuttal of statement against

New state funding is a good start, but there are still gaps. The levy ensures Tahoma keeps the programs and staff students need. The proposed levy is half of what it is now and our 5th District legislators publicly endorse it. District reserves are being spent for planned transition costs connected to opening the new high school and serve as a fiscally responsible emergency fund. The budget process is public and transparent. Please vote yes!

Explanatory statement

Passage of Proposition No. 1 would replace an expiring levy and allow the levy of \$10,710,073 in property taxes within Tahoma School District for collection in 2019, the levy of \$11,823,067 for collection in 2020, the levy of \$13,051,814 for collection in 2021, and the levy of \$14,408,350 for collection in 2022. In accordance with Resolution No. 2017-25 approving this proposition, these taxes would be deposited in the Tahoma School District's General Fund to pay part of the general expenses of operating the District. General expenses of the District include employee costs (such as salaries), instructional materials, special programs, activities and sports, technology systems operation, transportation costs, maintenance of facilities and other non-capital expenses of operating the District schools. If authorized by the voters and based on projected assessed valuation information, the estimated levy rate per \$1,000 of assessed value would be \$1.50 for collection in the years 2019 through 2022, inclusive. The exact levy rate shall be adjusted based upon the actual assessed value of the property within the District and the legal limit of the levy amount at the time of the levy.

For questions about this measure, contact:
Kevin Patterson, Director of Public Relations
425-413-3400, kpatters@tahomasd.us

Statement in opposition

Submitted by: Fletcher Barkdull
fletcherbarkdull@gmail.com

In 2017 the legislature approved a massive overhaul on basic education, including a \$7.3B increase in funding for K-12 education over the next four years. Consequently, the state is now responsible for fully funding basic education. The impact of this overhaul on the district is not yet fully understood, but we know (i) teacher salaries will increase from state funding and (ii) the law prohibits the district from using local levy funds for basic education, including teacher salaries. Until the impact is fully understood, we should not approve the levy.

Moreover, rather than doing a bottoms-up assessment of its needs, the district merely set the levy at the full amount allowed under the new legislation with little transparency in the process. A greater degree of transparency and rigor in the budgeting process should be required of the district before we give more of our hard-earned money.

And, with a significant property tax increase from the state combined with maximum increases from other taxing districts, now is not the time for this levy or the other proposed levies. If necessary, the district has reserves that it could tap, which amounted to \$15M at the beginning of the school year.

Rebuttal of statement in favor

While the needs cited are noble, the district lacks specifics. With little effort, the district merely set the levy at the maximum amount in order to have flexibility. I do not doubt the good intentions of the district, but administrators and elected officials need to be held to a greater level of scrutiny.

The pro statement says that teachers, administrators, and the School Board know their students best. I vehemently disagree; parents know them best.

Proposition No. 2 Replacement of Existing Capital Projects Levies

The Board of Directors approved Resolution No. 2017-26 for educational facilities and technology levies. This proposition authorizes the improvement and upgrade of District facilities; including educational technology, software and training; building and site improvements; and authorizes the following excess levies for such purposes on all taxable property within the District:

Collection Year	Estimated Levy Rate/\$1,000 Assessed Value	Levy Amount
2019	\$0.39	\$2,750,000
2020	\$0.35	\$2,750,000
2021	\$0.32	\$2,750,000
2022	\$0.29	\$2,750,000

all as provided in the Resolution. Should this proposition be approved?

Yes

No

The complete text of this measure is available at the Elections Office or online at kingcounty.gov/elections.

Statement in favor

Submitted by: Angela Stewart, Katrina Montgomery, Sarah Gilbert
www.voteystahoma.com

It's hard to imagine a world without computers: no smartphones, tablets, laptops, desktops, or internet. Now, imagine living in the real world but not having access to those things. That's why we need to renew the Tahoma technology levy. The levy pays for computers, software, network equipment, and people to provide support and training to about 9,000 students and staff. The proposed levy is the same amount as the one that it would replace. Our community has supported technology levies consistently for more than a decade, and this levy is endorsed by teachers and the Maple Valley-Black Diamond Chamber of Commerce.

The recent change in how the state will fund schools provides about one-quarter of what is needed for classroom technology. Without local levy dollars, there is not enough money to maintain technology students now receive.

Tahoma publishes a technology plan each year. A citizen advisory committee reviews spending and programs connected to the technology levy. All classroom technology is tied to the district's curriculum so that computers and software complement student learning.

Tahoma is committed to helping students become Future Ready. The technology levy helps students succeed. Please support Tahoma students by voting Yes by Feb. 13.

Rebuttal of statement against

The Technology Levy buys classroom computers, network equipment and software, and provides support staff. It does not pay for buildings. As planned, current reserves are being spent for transition costs. Representatives of technology companies support us on our district oversight committee and make recommendations for our levy needs. A public, detailed technology plan guides how money is spent and resources are allocated. Local dollars provide more than 70% of classroom technology. Please vote yes!

Explanatory statement

For questions about this measure, contact:
Kevin Patterson, Director of Public Relations
425-413-3400, kpatters@tahomasd.us

Passage of Proposition No. 2 would replace an expiring levy and allow the levy of \$2,750,000 in property taxes within Tahoma School District No. 409 for collection each year in the years 2019 through 2022, inclusive, to fund construction, renovation, improvement and expansion of new and existing facilities, to make improvements to technology equipment and training, and modernize educational facilities, including but not limited to enhancing infrastructure, acquiring hardware, licensing software, and implementing online applications and training related to the installation of the foregoing as an integral part of the District's technology systems, facilities, or projects; and the application and modernization of technology systems for operations and instruction including, but not limited to, the ongoing fees for online applications, subscriptions, or software licenses, including upgrades and incidental services, and ongoing training related to the installation and integration of these products or services, and other capital project expenditures as approved by the Board of Directors. These taxes would be collected in the 2018-2019 through 2021-2022 school years, inclusive, and deposited in the District's Capital Projects Fund for such improvements to meet the current and future educational programs for its students. If authorized by the voters, and based on projected assessed valuation information, estimated levy rates per \$1,000 of assessed value would be \$0.39 (2019 collection), \$0.35 (2020 collection), \$0.32 (2021 collection) and \$0.29 (2022 collection). The exact levy rate shall be adjusted based upon the actual assessed value of the property within the District at the time of the levy.

Statement in opposition

Submitted by: Fletcher Barkdull
fletcherbarkdull@gmail.com

In 2017, the district completed two brand new state of the art schools and upgrades at other schools, paid for by a construction bond (which will take many years for taxpayers to pay off via property taxes). With \$19M in capital funds remaining as of June 2017 and reserves of \$15M as the school year began, I question whether the district really needs \$11M more from taxpayers for the "upgrade of District facilities" or "building and site improvements."

Additionally, with the numerous technology companies in the area, do we really need \$11M for "education technology, software, and training"? Even with these companies in our backyard, public records indicate the district has previously sent IT employees to places such as Sweden.

As a parent, I want teachers to have the resources needed to do their jobs most effectively. However, before voters agree to provide more funds for technology, voters should insist that the district (i) demonstrates it is fully leveraging the resources available in the surrounding area and (ii) details the specific needs and the intended uses for the funds.

Without further justification, now is not the time to increase our already significant tax burden.

Rebuttal of statement in favor

As a parent, I have seen the benefits of technology our community has supported. However, just doing what has always been done for the same amount is not the right approach. It lacks discipline and accountability. Prior to approving the levy, specific needs should be identified and costs should be justified. Are there cost saving opportunities? Again, we need to hold decision makers to a higher level of scrutiny and insist on greater accountability.



Contact information

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Online: kingcounty.gov/elections

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919 SW Grady Way
Renton, WA 98057

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Elections Annex
King County Administration Building
500 4th Ave., Room 440
Seattle, WA 98104

The Elections Annex is open Weekdays from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Contact us to receive this pamphlet in an alternate format.

Contact us to receive your voting materials in Chinese, Korean, Spanish or Vietnamese.

如需獲取您的中文投票資訊，請聯絡金郡選舉部。

Comuníquese con nosotros para recibir sus materiales de votación en Español.

한글로 선거 자료를 받으시려면 저희에게 연락하세요.

Vui lòng liên lạc Bộ Bầu cử Quận King để nhận tài liệu bầu cử bằng tiếng Việt.