

Mineral County Superintendent presents levy facts

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The school levy that Mineral County voters will consider on Nov. 7 should not be confused with school construction bond issues which are sought to build new schools.

The election rather focuses on the continuation of an on-going funding program for day-to-day operations and support of the schools and the students.

Voting for the levy does not increase taxes and is at the same tax rate voters have approved since 1952.

The levy provides financial support to various community organizations that provide services to the county school system. These include:

- Mineral County Health Department,
- All county libraries,
- West Virginia University Extension Service,
- Highland Arts, and
- Sheriff's Office.

The levy funding also goes to instructional supplies and equipment. Among these are:

- Textbooks and various instructional supplies,
- College classes contracted for students,
- Instructional equipment and repairs, including computers,
- Parent Teacher Organizations and school matching funds, and
- Student academic competitions.

And while the state provides funding in the State Aid to Education Formula for transportation the levy provides 20 percent of the costs not provided by the state for such things as:

- Curricular (student activities) and extra-curricular (band and athletic) field trips not provided for by the state, and
- Maintains and improves the county schools' transportation fleet.

The levy also provides salaries and benefits for all employees, including substitutes' salaries. The funds provide for extra-curricular salaries for coaches, band, career and technical education, agriculture, and Outdoor School.

In addition, the levy funds provide for maintenance and improvement of buildings and grounds at all schools. These include maintenance and custodial supplies and equipment, as well as insurance and increasing utility costs, and school security systems and programs.

This information is being made available to the public in a brochure provided by the Mineral County Board of Education. The board members and I both welcome questions concerning the school levy program. A sample ballot will soon be available as well.

The Levy Call is the legal document that explains the need for a county levy over and above what is provided by the state. It outlines the funding as described above in a little more detail. The call also notes that the amount to be collected from the levy equals approximately \$6,697,878.00 annually from July 1, 2016, to June 30, 2021.

The assessed valuation of the three classes of taxable property are:

- Class II (less Homestead) \$ 586,825,015.00
- Class III \$ 379,259,861.00
- Class IV \$ 95,021,561.00
- Aggregate Assessed Valuation \$1,061,106,437.00

The rate of levy proposed (stays the same as current levy rate):

- Class II (less Homestead) 45.90 cents
- Class III 91.80 cents
- Class IV 91.80 cents

This then becomes a part of the total Mineral County annual budget.