



REFERENDUM QUESTION & ANSWER

Q. Why do we need two questions on the ballot?

A. The two questions on the April ballot have distinct differences in the source of funding and the duration of taxpayer commitment. According to state law, operating and debt questions cannot be combined, and voters must vote YES or NO on each question independently.

[Question 1](#) is an operating question; it asks voters to exceed the revenue limit by \$275,000 a year for five years to update technology. This operating question is a continuation of technology referenda that were passed by the community in 2007 & 2012.

[Question 2](#) is a debt question; it asks voters to authorize the borrowing of \$17,770,000 for Intermediate/Middle/High School building improvement projects. The duration of this debt question will be 20 years.

Intermediate/Middle/High School Renovation

Q. Is there community support to pursue a referendum at this time?

A. As part of their ongoing planning process, the Board of Education solicited community volunteers to participate in a facilities task force beginning in the fall of 2016. A diverse group of seventeen community members formed the Little Chute Facilities Task Force (LCFTF), whose charge included developing a community survey for District residents to capture their voice in the development of a potential referendum. Results of the community survey clearly indicated support for facility improvements and technology enhancements for the students of the Little Chute Area School District. The Community Task Force used the survey to consider and prioritize needs, with a focus of being good stewards with taxpayers' dollars.

The Task Force was charged with reviewing operational efficiencies and structural deficiencies at the current Intermediate/Middle/High School complex. The first option the Task Force considered came in at an estimated cost of over \$21 million. Further investigation and conversation led the Task Force to a final cost of \$19.4 million. The District-wide survey measured support for a \$19.4 million commitment.

The District-wide [survey results](#) suggested overall support for school renovations, but at a reduced cost. The Task Force used the survey feedback to reduce the scope of the building project. After several months and careful consideration, the Task Force unanimously recommended a \$17.77 million investment and the Board adopted a resolution on January 23, 2017 that supported the Task Force recommendation.

Q. Why now?

A. As a part of the planning process over the past year, the Board identified some areas of potential improvement at the Intermediate/Middle/High School campus. A [Comprehensive Facility Review](#) was completed by Bray Architects. The review identified a list of infrastructure needs and maintenance projects. While the Intermediate/Middle/High School building has been well maintained, some of the major systems have exceeded their useful life, resulting in inefficiencies and ongoing costly maintenance and repairs, many of which cannot be covered in the District's annual budget. For example, Little Chute High School currently houses a 50 year old main electrical service/transformer that can no longer be maintained or serviced with new parts. Furthermore, aging, inefficient heating, ventilation and cooling systems have exceeded their service life and need to be replaced. Roof sections on the original high school building have reached their life expectancy.



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Q. What is the impact on my taxes for Question 2?

A. The estimated tax on a \$100,000 property is \$129.00 annually, which falls to \$93.00 annually beginning with the 2019-20 school year. For a property value of \$150,000, the impact is \$193.50 annually, and approximately \$139.50 after two years. [Click here](#) for more information.

Q. Why does the payment drop after two years?

A. In short, this is due to the way public school state-aid is calculated. Essentially, the state begins to pick up a larger portion of the debt payment beginning with the third year of the referendum.

Q. Why did the Facilities Task Force select that particular location for the addition of a combined library and office?

A The main reason this site was selected was to address identified structural deficiencies located in the footings of the glass wall. Water infiltration and corroding metal framework is currently challenging the structural integrity of the entrance way in the commons and the glass wall. Significant dollars will need to be invested to rectify the structural and footing problems. Therefore, to make best use of available dollars, locating the combined library/office addition at the current commons/fitness center entrance is fiscally sound and creates the best safe and secure option for a complex or a school-wide entrance.

Q. How does Open Enrollment affect the Little Chute Area School District?

A. The option for parents to open enroll their child outside of their resident district has had a financial impact on school districts across the state, especially here in the Fox Valley where local school districts are in close proximity. Annually, parents are allowed to decide to open enroll their children for any reason to multiple school districts.

Approximately 25% of our student body is comprised of students enrolling “into” the District. Conversely, approximately 8% of District residents opt to enroll their child “out” to another district. Since state funding is directly impacted by student enrollment, families that opt “into” our District, versus choosing a different option, support our general fund for educating all children.

Q I've been hearing about the Flex Academy. What is the Flex Academy and why do need it?

A. The [Little Chute Flex Academy](#), now in its third year, is a District-run thriving [charter school](#) that uses an innovative, site-based approach with a focus on personalized learning, health and wellness education and service learning. Currently, the Flex Academy is located in a rented space inside the Village of Little Chute's Library/Civic Center. The Academy educates 75 kindergarten through 8th grade students. Demand for this program, along with increasing enrollment would allow for expansion up to approximately 125 students.

In the first two years of the school's existence, the Academy has outgrown its current instructional space. A two-year search for an in-district alternative location yielded no feasible cost-effective options. By relocating the Flex Academy to the Intermediate/Middle/High School campus, we can realize operational efficiencies and respond positively to families who want to enroll their child in the Flex Academy.



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Q. What is a charter school?

A. *From the WI Dept. of Public Instruction Website:*

Wisconsin established charter schools to foster an environment for innovation and parental choice. They can exist as living laboratories that influence the larger public school system and introduce an element of competition within that system. Charter schools are created with the best elements of regular public schools in mind. Their leaders may experiment with different instructional theories, site-based management techniques, and other innovations. They learn, sometimes by trial and error, what works best for their student population. Regular schools can observe and learn from what happens in the charter school and make similar improvements. Through this process, the entire public school system is continually challenged to improve itself.

Q. Why do we need a multipurpose room?

A. A multipurpose room is needed due to the number of activities that our students/athletes are involved in, and the limited space available for them now. For example, our Poms team currently practices in the commons area, creating logistical challenges during other after-school activities.

Q. Why does the kitchen need to be renovated?

A. In 1994, the kitchen was originally designed to only warm and serve food. Twenty-three years later, this area is now operating as a full-service kitchen and does not have adequate room for meal preparation, serving meals, and dry goods or cooler storage. An additional issue is that the current serving area is not a permanent space, which results in daily setup and takedown of equipment because the space is also used for clubs and activities during other hours of the day and weekend.

Q. How come the district can't pay for maintenance repairs out of the regular budget?

A. The building referendum does include dollars for maintenance repair. During the past five years LCASD has allocated over \$1 million for preventative maintenance and building improvements. For example, this past fiscal year, the District allocated over \$250,000 to roof and wall repairs at the Elementary School. This summer, the regular budget will be used to replace the gym floor in the 1966 portion of the high school and address additional building maintenance projects.

Major maintenance repairs, such as the ones included in this referendum, have been repairs the District has not been able to complete because of the high cost associated with these projects, and state-imposed revenue limits.

Technology

Q. Why do we need Question 1?

A We are very grateful for the support our community provided by approving five-year non-recurring referenda in 2007 and 2012. These two referenda allowed the District to update technology hardware, software and infrastructure. In June 2017, the 2012 referendum for technology enhancements will end. To continue to build on the great things the first two referenda accomplished, Question 1 is asking residents to approve another



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five-year non-recurring referendum to exceed state revenue limits to support the next layer of the District's technology plan, which includes 1:1 computing opportunities (a computer for every student) in grades 5-12.

Q. What is the Tax Impact for Question 1 (the technology operational question)?

A. The estimated tax impact on a property with fair market value is \$5.00 per year, with an annual impact of \$7.50 for a \$150,000 property. (2017-18 through 2021-22). Click [here](#) for more information.

Q. Can the \$275,000 allocated for Question 1 regarding technology be used for other things like salaries or maintenance?

A. If the community approves exceeding the District's revenue cap by \$275,000 per year for five years for technology, by law the money can only be used to purchase technology. It cannot be used for salary or maintenance.

Q. Why did the tax rate go down 50 cents this year if the need for improvements was known? Couldn't we have addressed some of the needs with that money?

A. The short answer is no, the district did not have the authority to levy the extra 50 cents to be used for improvements. The district's authority to levy taxes is highly regulated and there are very specific calculations to determine the district's levy. There is a formula that every school district must follow that calculates the total amount of money we are allowed to raise via state aid and taxes, our "total revenue limit". The district is not allowed to exceed that amount without voter approval (for example, the question asking to exceed the revenue limit for technology). In 16-17, the calculation of our "total revenue limit" resulted in a decrease from the prior year which means the district was allowed to raise less money via state aid and taxes. This led to the decrease in the tax rate.

It should be noted that the money we are allowed to collect is used for operations which includes maintenance and improvements. Each year, within the scope of our budget, we accomplish many projects. Some recent examples include the tuckpointing and sealing of each building and the roof/wall repair at the elementary. This summer, the district is replacing the wood floor in the middle school gymnasium. All of the projects mentioned were paid for using our general operations budget. However, there are some projects that the size and scope is so large that it is not possible to accomplish within the constraints of our operating budget.

Q. I have some questions. How can I contact you?

A. We would like to hear from you. Click [here](#) for the opportunity to submit your questions and/or comments. If desired, you may remain anonymous using this option.

Or, please email us at referendum@littlechute.k12.wi.us

Please visit the [Referendum Fact Sheet](#) on our website for more information.