



Whitehall District Schools 2024 Operating Millage Information & FAQs

VOTE Tuesday, November 5, 2024
On or Before

On **November 5, 2024**, voters in Whitehall District Schools will be asked to consider an Operating Millage Proposal. The District is asking voters to consider authorizing 20 mills of non-homestead millage for a period of 10 years.

However, Michigan law limits the maximum amount of operating millage that can be levied and collected to 18 mills. If approved, this millage would allow for the school district to receive its full state aid foundation allowance.

All voters in Whitehall District Schools boundaries are encouraged to learn more and vote on November 5.

FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

How does this tax impact primary residents or family farms?

The operating millage is not levied on primary residences (the home in which a homeowner lives) or most agricultural land. It is levied on businesses, second homes, vacant land, and rental property. **All school districts in Michigan must levy 18 mills on non-homestead property to receive their full pupil foundation allowance.**

Is the maximum amount the District can levy 18 mills?

Yes, by law, the District can only levy 18 mills. The State funding system known as Proposal A expects the District to levy all 18 mills to get the full per pupil foundation allowance.

Why is the District asking for 20 mills?

Some districts ask for "Headlee Override" millage elections to ensure that their per pupil foundation allowance is fully funded. By asking for 20 mills the district will not need to request additional voter authorization. When properties sell at values greater than statutory growth rate caps, the District would have to reduce the millage. If the millage is lowered below 18 mills, the District would not receive the full amount of the foundation grant.

Does the 18 mills apply to the taxes on my primary residence?

No. The mills applies to second homes, vacation property, rental properties, or certain businesses.

How is this money used?

The operating millage generates revenue to support the District's operating budget. The operating budget funds essential day-to-day expenses including salaries and benefits, utilities, and all costs associated with the District's educational and co-curricular programs.

How is this different from a Bond Proposal?

Voters should be aware that Bond Proposals authorize a district to borrow funds for capital improvement needs across the district such as furniture in schools, renovations or additions, safety and security updates, technology upgrades, etc. Bond funds cannot be used for staff salaries and benefits, or other essential day-to-day costs, including classroom supplies, textbooks, utilities, or building maintenance.

What happens if the proposal fails?

Because a substantial portion of the district's operating budget comes from this millage, there would be significant cuts in programming for students.



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Does every Michigan school district need to ask for this 18 mills?

Without it, a district would not receive the full per-pupil foundation allowance face severe financial losses from the state funding systems.

What is the exact ballot language?

WHITEHALL DISTRICT SCHOOLS OPERATING MILLAGE PROPOSAL

This proposal will allow the school district to levy the statutory rate of not to exceed 18 mills on all property, except principal residence and other property exempted by law, required for the school district to receive its revenue per pupil foundation allowance. The remaining 2 mills are only available to be levied to restore millage lost as a reduction required by the "Headlee" amendment to the Michigan Constitution of 1963 and will only be levied to the extent necessary to restore that reduction.

Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all property, except principal residence and other property exempted by law, in Whitehall District Schools, Muskegon County, Michigan, be increased by 20 mills (\$20.00 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of 10 years, 2026 to 2035, inclusive, to provide funds for operating purposes; the estimate of the revenue the school district will collect if the millage is approved and 18 mills are levied in 2026 is approximately \$4,178,297?

How/when can I vote?

Absentee ballots are available starting Thursday, September 26, 2024 at your City or Township Clerk's Office. Contact your local precinct for hours of operation.

Starting Saturday, October 26, 2024, voters may cast a ballot at their assigned early voting site(s) as a part of the nine day early voting period. They can look up their assigned early voting site(s) up to 60 days prior to Election day at Michigan.gov/vote.

Election day, polls are open Tuesday, November 5, 2024 from 7am - 8pm

Polling locations and absentee ballot information are available at Michigan.gov/vote.

My question wasn't answered here, who can I contact?

Please reach to Superintendent, Dr. Jerry McDowell
Office Phone: 231.893.1005

Email: jerrymcdowell@whitehallschools.net

