

Minneapolis Public Schools

2008 Strong Schools Strong City Referendum

What is the 2008 Strong Schools Strong City referendum?

The referendum is a request to voters to provide additional education funding from local property taxes for Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) students. If approved, the referendum would provide MPS with **\$60 million per year for eight years** to fund education essentials including improved early literacy, enhanced math and science, updated technology and textbooks and class size management.

How would the referendum funds be used?

Referendum funds would help drive achievement results for all students, including support for these education essentials:

- **Early Reading Skills:** Individualized teaching for our students and improved support for our teachers will put us on track to have every child reading by third grade.
- **Math and Science:** Supplying professional training and tools to support student achievement in math and science will help students prepare for algebra in eighth grade and for living, working, competing and contributing in the 21st century.
- **Technology and Textbooks:** Providing up-to-date textbooks and technology is critical to any formula for giving students the knowledge needed to succeed.
- **Class Size:** Teaching and learning can be difficult with excessively large class sizes, so half of the referendum funds would be dedicated to managing class size.

This support would help raise student achievement, close the racial and income achievement gap and help us reach our goal of making every student who graduates from MPS college ready.

How much would the referendum cost?

The referendum, if approved, would increase taxes approximately \$17 per month on an average Minneapolis home (average home value is \$256,000).

How would the money be managed?

As part of the new referendum, MPS has created an independent Referendum Oversight Committee, led by two former Minnesota Finance Commissioners, that would monitor and report on the use of referendum dollars.

What if the referendum does not pass?

MPS has cut more than \$150 million over the past seven years. If the referendum does not pass, the district would need to make an additional \$30 million in cuts to its annual budget. These cuts could result in layoffs of up to 350 teachers, further class size increases and program reductions.

When and where do I vote?

The referendum vote will be held on election day, November 4, 2008. Most polling places are located in the neighborhood in which you live. For more information, see the Minnesota Secretary of State's election web site at www.pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us.



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