

Find more information at:
www.columbus.k12.wi.us/referendum

COLUMBUS SCHOOL DISTRICT

OPERATIONAL REFERENDUM APRIL 1, 2025



On Tuesday, **April 1, 2025**, our community will vote on a proposed \$1,750,000 non-recurring operational referendum to exceed the revenue limit for four years. An approved referendum would begin with the 2025-2026 school year and end with the 2028-2029 school year.

With an approved referendum, CSD can fund the following priorities:

- ### REFERENDUM PRIORITIES
- Support Educational Programming
 - Retain Quality Staff
 - Preserve Optimal Class Sizes
 - Maintain Infrastructure: Technology, Preventative Maintenance, and School Safety
 - Focus on Mental Health Needs



COMMUNITY INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Join us for an upcoming community informational presentation on the operational referendum.

- Monday, Feb. 24**
6:00 PM
CHS Cafeteria
- Monday, Mar. 24**
6:00 PM
CES Cafeteria



COST FACTORS

Since 2020, CSD operational expenses have outpaced revenues. One of the main factors has been inflation. In that time, total revenues increased by **4.8%** total expenses have increased by **12%**.

- Notable cost increases:
- UTILITIES: 51.5%
 - SPECIAL EDUCATION: 34.9%
 - TRANSPORTATION: 33.1%



STEPS WE'VE ALREADY IMPLEMENTED

- Cut total expenses by 12% over the past 5 years
- Reduced staffing by nearly 10 FTE over the past 2 years
- Used one-time ESSER funds to fill budget gaps
- Absorbed a ONE-TIME budget deficit for 2024-2025
- Delayed infrastructure projects: facilities, maintenance, and technology
- Delayed purchasing activities/athletic equipment



PROJECTED PROPERTY TAX IMPACT

An approved referendum would have a tax impact of \$0.71 for every \$1,000 of assessed property value in our community.



Home Value	Monthly Impact	Annual Impact
\$100,000	\$5.92	\$71
\$200,000	\$11.83	\$142
\$300,000	\$17.75	\$213

* This chart uses the actual annual tax rate for 2023-2024, which included a defeasance.

ARE WE ALONE?

- Only 2 Columbia County School Districts are not utilizing an operational referendum. The last 2, Columbus & Randolph are both pursuing an operational referendum on April 1st.
- These districts have passed an operational referendum in the past 12 months: Cambria-Friesland, DeForest, Fall River, Marshall, Rio, Sun Prairie, and Waunakee.
- Since revenue limits were introduced, a total of 356 school districts asked voters an operational referendum question
- In 2024, a total of 148 operational referendum questions were asked state wide.

AREA MILL RATES

CSD mill rate for 23-24 was \$6.87, the state average was \$7.22

Columbus	\$6.87
Beaver Dam	\$8.88
Waterloo	\$7.34
Portage Community	\$8.05
Marshall	\$8.08
Lodi	\$8.08
Fall River	\$8.18
Belleville	\$8.18
Poynette	\$8.45
Randolph	\$8.47
Rio Community	\$8.52
Deerfield	\$8.75
Sun Prairie Area	\$10.16
Cambria-Friesland	\$10.49



April 1st, 2025
VOTE

<https://www.columbus.k12.wi.us/referendum>

