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**Strong Schools, Strong Communities**  
**Kent ISD Regional Enhancement Millage 2017**  
**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**1. What is an enhancement millage?**

When the legislature in 1993 drafted a new funding formula for public schools, passed by voters as Proposal A in 1994, concerns existed that over time the new funding plan could fall short of revenue needs and expectations in certain communities. To compensate for the potential need for additional revenues, Proposal A included a provision allowing Intermediate School Districts to levy up to 3 mills for 20 years or less to be distributed 100% on a per pupil basis to every constituent K-12 school district within that ISD.

**2. How is an enhancement millage different than a bond issue?**

School districts have two primary sources of funding, operational and capital. Capital revenues such as the 2014 construction bond approved by TK voters for building construction and repair is generally funded through bond issues, which are levied locally for capital expenditures. Operating revenues come primarily from the state, through the “foundation grant” allocated to each district on a per pupil basis. These state dollars include your local contribution through the 6-mill state education tax and the 18-mill non-homestead tax levy on businesses and second homes. An enhancement millage would be an additional local contribution to school operations which would support programs and services.

**3. How is the enhancement millage proposal placed on the ballot?**

The only way districts can receive additional operating revenues to meet student needs is through an ISD enhancement millage levied, collected, and distributed equally to each district on a per pupil basis. As a result, Thornapple Kellogg Schools Board of Education, along with the other 19 school districts within Kent ISD, passed a resolution asking the Kent ISD board to place the proposal on the May 2, 2017 ballot. Per legislation, TK Schools is prohibited from independently asking its voters for additional operating revenues.

**4. How much are districts asking for?**

Districts asked Kent ISD’s School Board to call for an election asking voter approval of 0.9 mills for 10 years. This 0.9 mills will provide an estimated \$19,931,466 in additional revenue for Kent ISD school districts in the first year of the levy, which amounts to approximately \$211 per pupil.

**5. How will the revenue be distributed?**

The revenue will be collected by Kent ISD and distributed by law on an equal, per pupil basis, to each of the local school districts within Kent ISD. Kent ISD will not receive any money or administrative expense from this millage; per law 100% must be given to school districts. For TK, it will generate approximately an additional \$650,000 annually.

**6. How will these funds be used?**

TK Schools will dedicate dollars raised from the enhancement millage to:

- maintain our current educational offerings
- attract and retain quality staff
- increase community enrichment programs
- maintain cutting edge technology resources and support
- maintain district facilities

**7. How much will this cost the average homeowner?**

The proposal calls for a levy of 0.9 mills for 10 years. The state equalized taxable value for a \$150,000 home is one-half the market price, or \$75,000. If approved, the owner of a \$150,000 home would pay an additional \$67.50 per year in taxes, or \$5.63 per month.

**8. Why do schools need more money?**

All public school districts have seen the purchasing power of state revenue received decline over the past decade. A report (page 17) from the House Fiscal Agency in January 2016 found school revenues, adjusted for inflation, are 6% less today than in 2000.

[http://house.michigan.gov/hfa/PDF/Briefings/State\\_Budget\\_Overview\\_fy15-16.pdf](http://house.michigan.gov/hfa/PDF/Briefings/State_Budget_Overview_fy15-16.pdf)

Because the purchasing power of district revenues has declined, districts have cut millions in operating expenses but are still struggling to maintain the core educational services necessary for all students to succeed. A recent study commissioned by the Michigan Legislature found every district should receive \$8,667 per pupil, which is well above what most districts currently receive in state funding.

[https://www.michigan.gov/documents/budget/Michigan\\_Education\\_Finance\\_Study\\_527806\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/budget/Michigan_Education_Finance_Study_527806_7.pdf)

In addition, a three-year study by the Michigan State University Policy Institute released in June 2016 found Michigan school districts face financial hardship based on factors almost entirely outside their control. Top among those factors was inadequate state per-pupil funding, declining enrollment, and the increasing number of students with special needs statewide.

<http://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2016/michigan-school-funding-choice-policies-hurting-local-districts/>

**9. How is Thornapple Kellogg funded?**

Thornapple Kellogg Schools is a base foundation district, which means no district in the State of Michigan receives less funding than TK in their foundation allowance. Furthermore, in total revenue, TK ranks 19 of 20 in the Kent ISD.

**10. What if I have additional questions?**

Please contact Tom Enslin, Superintendent or Rob Blitchok, Assistant Superintendent at 269-795-5521.

## **Proposed Ballot Language**

### **REGIONAL ENHANCEMENT MILLAGE PROPOSAL**

Pursuant to state law, the revenue raised by the proposed millage will be collected by the intermediate school district and distributed wholly and completely to local public school districts based on pupil membership count.

Shall the limitation on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all property in Kent Intermediate School District, Michigan, be increased by .9 mill (\$0.90 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of 10 years, 2017 to 2026, inclusive, to provide operating funds to enhance other state and local funding for local school district operating purposes; the estimate of the revenue the intermediate school district will collect if the millage is approved and levied in 2017 is approximately \$19,931,466, which funds will be disbursed wholly and completely as required by statute to the following school districts: Byron Center Public Schools, Caledonia Community Schools, Cedar Springs Public Schools, Comstock Park Public Schools, East Grand Rapids Public Schools, Forest Hills Public Schools, Godfrey-Lee Public Schools, Godwin Heights Public Schools, Grand Rapids Public Schools, Grandville Public Schools, Kelloggsville Public School District, Kenowa Hills Public Schools, Kent City Community Schools, Kentwood Public Schools, Lowell Area Schools, Northview Public Schools, Rockford Public Schools, Sparta Area Schools, Thornapple Kellogg School, and Wyoming Public Schools?

# Enhancement Millage

Information regarding the May 2, 2017 Regional Ballot Proposal

## Quick Facts:

- Voters in each of the 20 KISD public school districts will be asked to consider an enhancement millage proposal of 0.9 mill for 10 years on May 2, 2017.
- A majority of voters in the KISD would need to approve the proposal for it to be successful.
- An enhancement millage is the only option for school districts to request operational funding from the public beyond funding provided by the State.
- Since 2008-09 funding has not kept up with inflation, causing districts to reduce or eliminate programs, classroom materials and staff.
- If approved each of the 20 school districts in the KISD would receive an additional \$211 per student for operations starting with the 2017-18 school year.
- If approved, TK Schools would receive approximately \$650,000 annually for the next 10 years. Funds would be spent on:
  - Maintaining our current educational offerings
  - Attracting and retaining quality staff
  - Increasing community enrichment programs
  - Maintaining cutting edge technology resources and support
  - Maintaining district facilities

For the purpose of calculating a property tax increase, one mill is equal to one dollar per \$1,000 of the taxable value of a home. Because the enhancement millage proposal is for 0.9 mill, this means the proposal would be calculated on 90 cents per \$1,000 taxable value.

Home Value	Taxable Value	0.9 Enhancement Millage Calculation
\$100,000	\$50,000 or less	$50 \times 0.9 = \$45$
\$150,000	\$75,000 or less	$75 \times 0.9 = \$67.50$
\$200,000	\$100,000 or less	$100 \times 0.9 = \$90$

## VOTING INFORMATION

Last day to register: Monday, April 3, 2017

Absentee ballots will be available: Saturday, March 18, 2017

Election Date: Tuesday, May 2, 2017



For additional information, please contact  
Tom Enslin, Superintendent or  
Rob Blitchok, Assistant Superintendent at  
269-795-5521.

