


SDFA Referendum: Looking Ahead



Board of Education
Special Meeting: June 2, 2016





Purpose:

To establish a common understanding
of referendum among Board Members
and in the larger community.



Referendum: The Basics

What is a Referendum?

A referendum is a direct democracy where electors decide whether a measure should be enacted.

The State of Wisconsin requires school districts to provide for binding referenda for borrowing funds, exceeding revenue limits, and other reasons.

Let the People Decide





Referendum: The Basics

What are the possible types of school district referendums in Wisconsin?

Referendums to issue debt (i.e., new buildings, maintenance projects, other debt issues) - **Capital Referendum**

Referendums to exceed the revenue cap (typically used for operating expenses) through an increase tax levy - **Operational Referendum**

Recurring Referendums (No Sunset)

Nonrecurring Referendums (Sunset)

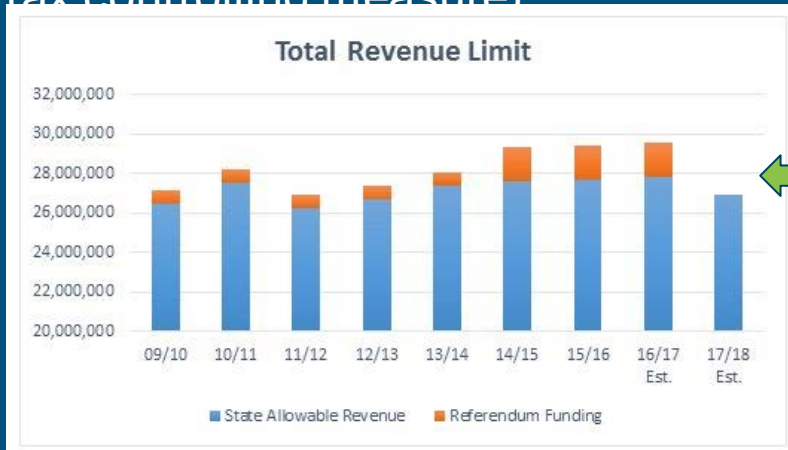
What are the time requirements for the Board to present a Referendum Question?



Referendum: The Basics - WHY?

WHY? - Why is it necessary for the District to hold a referendum?

Revenue Limits - state-imposed controls on the amount of money a Wisconsin school district can receive through state aid and local property taxes (1993 - tax controlling measure)



Structural Deficit



SDFA: History of Referendums

Date	Type	Reason	Result
May 30, 1996	Mixed: Capital/Operational, No Sunset	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New High School• Pool• Auditorium• Middle School Remodel Old HS• Operational Cost to Operate new HS	Pass
October 8, 2005	Mixed: Capital/Operational, No Sunset	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HVAC Upgrades• Structural Deficit• Technology	Fail
April 4, 2006	Mixed: Capital/Operational 5-Year Sunset	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HVAC Upgrades• Structural Deficit• Technology	Pass
April 5, 2011	Operational, 3-Year Sunset	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operational/Structural Deficit	Pass
April 1, 2014	Operational 3-Year Sunset	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operational/Structural Deficit	Pass

SDFA: History of Referendums - Oct. 8, 2005

Date	Type	Need	Amount	Result
October 18, 2005	Mixed: Capital/ Operational, No Sunset	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HVAC Upgrades• Structural Deficit• Technology	\$2.1 Million	Yes - 1,305 No - 2,097

- No Citizen Task Force - Authored by BOE and Administration
- Listening Sessions and Presentations by Administration
- Vote Yes for Kids Campaign (Citizens' Committee)

Post 2005 Referendum- Community Survey

We're concerned about property taxes

We want to support the current level of educational programming, but...

We want a sunset

We won't write a blank check

Give us choices

Work harder to cut spending

We want to be asked to spend a smaller amount of money more frequently if needed

Schedule a referendum to coincide with a regularly scheduled election

SDFA: History of Referendums - April 4, 2006

Date	Type	Need	Amount	Results
April 4, 2006	Mixed: Capital/ Operational, 5-Year Sunset 3 Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• HVAC Upgrades• Structural Deficit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$9,650,000 - HVAC• \$1,040,000 - Geothermal• \$ 694,000 - Operational	<u>Yes to All</u> (199 votes) (83 votes) (20 votes)

- Task Force Established by BOE (18 Community Members)
- Task Force Charge:
 - Understand the fiscal condition of the District and forecast five years out
 - Develop long-term recommendations to address fiscal challenges
 - If a referendum is recommended, prepare a plan and timeline
- Task Force guidelines from BOE: • Be supported by the Taskforce as a whole; • Indicate how each fiscal challenge would be addressed; and, • Include a list of advantages and disadvantages of the options
- “Friends Of Fort Schools” Citizen Group Formed

SDFA: History of Referendums - April 5, 2011

Date	Type	Need	Amount	Results
April 5, 2011	Operational 3-Year Sunset	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Structural Deficit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$694,000	Yes - (10 Votes) Recount - (4 Votes) (Costs: \$32,854)

- Task Force Established by BOE (19 Community Members)
- Task Force Charge:
 - Develop a collective understanding of the District's current fiscal condition and its forecast for at least the next five years.
 - Develop the long-term fiscal recommendation(s) to address fiscal challenges for consideration by the Board and presentation to the community.
 - If the final recommendation(s) includes referendum, prepare a plan, including a timetable for when and how to implement that recommendation.
 - Indicate how the financial challenges would be addressed
 - Include a list of the option's advantages and disadvantages
- No Citizens' Group - Newspaper Ad Run by Parents & Friends

SDFA: History of Referendums - April 1, 2014

Date	Type	Need	Amount	Results
April 1, 2014	Operational 3-Year Sunset	• Structural Deficit	\$1.75 Million	Yes - 2,370 No - 1,539

- Two Task Force Groups assigned by BOE:
 - Finance Advisory Committee (FAC) - 9 members
 - Community Advisory Committee (CAC)
 - Become familiar with the financial status of the District
 - **FAC** - Consider referendum options presented by Administration
 - **FAC** - Consider any additional referendum options developed by the Finance Advisory Committee
 - Finalize referendum recommendation(s) to be forwarded to the Community Advisory Committee
 - **FAC** - Select member representation to become part of the Community Advisory Committee
 - **CAC** - Consider referendum options recommended by the Finance Advisory Committee
 - **CAC** - Finalize referendum recommendation(s) to be forwarded to the Board of Education
 - **CAC** - Make recommendations to the Board of Education regarding communication to the community
 - **CAC** - Select member representation to present the referendum recommendation(s) to the Board of Education
- Survey Conducted regarding options provided
- Community Group - "Vote Yes for Kids"

SDFA Referendum Options: Structure ?

Operational Referendum

Capital Referendum

Mixed: Operational & Capital

Single Question

Multiple Questions

Recurring - No Sunset

Non-Recurring - Sunset

SDF A Referendum Options: When ?

November 8, 2016 Referendum	February 21, 2017 Referendum	April 4, 2017 Referendum

Referendum: Questions for the Board

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- What types of community engagement does the Board want to have?
- What amount of involvement does the Board want to have?
- Is the Board receptive to additional reductions/cuts?
- “Maintain existing programming & services” or include all needs?



Thank You!