

It Takes A Millage

Ann Arbor
Citizens Millage Committee

a2cmc.org

*What Voters
Need to Know*



To Educate A Child

Paid for with regulated funds by the Citizens Millage Committee PO Box 8131 Ann Arbor, MI 48107

What is the Washtenaw Schools Millage?

▶ We're asking voters who live in the 10 school districts in Washtenaw County—including Ann Arbor Public Schools—to vote “yes” on a two-mill tax increase for public schools.

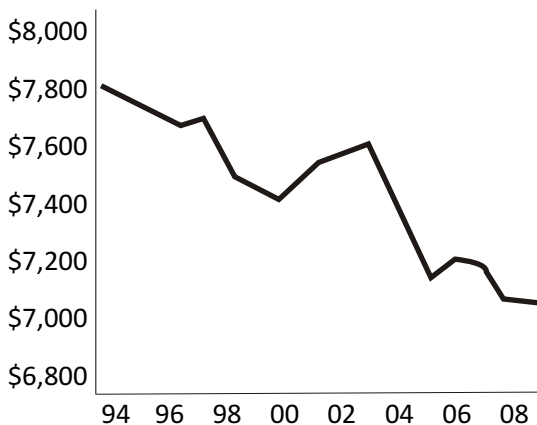
▶ This millage will help fund current operations for the Ann Arbor Public Schools. **It will only allow Ann Arbor to keep most existing programs**, not add new ones. Without it, the schools face serious cuts in teachers and possible closing of schools.

▶ The proposed millage would raise about \$11 million for each of the next five years for AAPS. Even with the millage, the district still faces some difficult economic challenges.

▶ **All of the money from the millage—100% of it—will stay in Ann Arbor and the other school districts in Washtenaw County.**

▶ We're not alone. Voters in Kalamazoo, Monroe and Midland counties have passed similar proposals.

Why this millage is urgent now!



AAPS per-pupil funding, adjusted for inflation

We know it's not a great time to ask for a tax increase. But the poor economy puts our schools at even greater risk. **The state system of school funding is not working.** Every year we receive fewer dollars from the state, while the cost to educate has continually gone up.

With the state's funding problems, Ann Arbor faces a \$15 million shortfall for 2010-11. The district has tried to avoid impacting the classroom but this will no longer be possible with the magnitude of the deficits on the horizon.

Every student, classroom and school will be impacted by the passage of this millage. And it stretches beyond our schools. **Strong public schools are the foundation of a strong community.** By keeping our schools strong, businesses can recruit employees, people want to move here and property values are higher.

Instead of asking yourself, can I afford this tax increase...the real question should be...for the sake of my children and community, can I afford *not* to?

Vote Yes on November 3.

Learn more! Sign up! Donate! ➔ [Http://a2cmc.org](http://a2cmc.org)



NOV. 3

It Takes A Millage



What Voters Need to Know

Ann Arbor has made effective cost cuts but our funding crisis can only be solved with added revenue and cuts.

Schools aren't in trouble because they are overspending. **Ann Arbor has cut \$16 million from its budget over the past 4 years.** The per-pupil funding from the state has decreased 9 percent since

1994, after inflation. We've lost many of the things that made our schools special. **This proposal is the only chance we have to take our children's future back into our own hands.**

Ann Arbor Schools has tried hard to cut costs, not teachers. Here are some cost savings:

- » Class sizes were increased for all grades.
- » The middle school program was restructured, taking away coordinated teaching and teaming (for 7th and 8th grades) and an elective period, in order to save \$2.3 million a year.
- » Many curriculum coordinators, who helped teachers develop programs and meet state standards, were eliminated.
- » All but essential custodial work is being done every other day.
- » Many enrichment programs and nearly all field trips are now paid for with parent donations.
- » Services are being consolidated at the county level to cut costs.
- » Capital investments have helped to cut energy and maintenance costs.

Here are some salary and benefit cuts school staff members have already taken:

- » Employee salaries have been frozen or risen slower than inflation over the past several years.
- » Food service workers were privatized, with diminished benefits.
- » Administrative and support positions have been left empty, leaving others to pick up the slack.
- » Employees have contributed more toward their healthcare costs, and the district has capped the amount it contributes to healthcare.

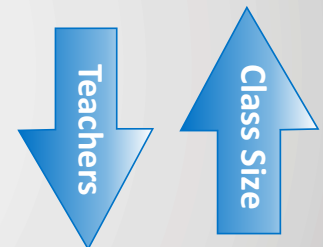


Vote Yes on November 3rd.

What we stand to lose.

Each month brings worse news from Lansing about school funding. The Federal stimulus is being used up much faster than expected. School funding is likely to be cut in 2010-11 by \$15 million. That represents about 220 staff, which would require cuts in several of these areas:

- ▶ More class size increases, with less personalized learning and more time spent On classroom management.
- ▶ Eliminate the 7th hour at high schools.
- ▶ Reduction or elimination of some services, such as transportation, Maintenance and custodial.
- ▶ Art, music, physical education, sports, elementary libraries and other important programs are at risk.



It Takes A Millage



What Voters Need to Know

Pay for teachers and other staff has not kept up with inflation.

We want our kids to have the best teachers possible, and that means offering a competitive pay package. Everyone at AAPS knows we need to be reasonable, especially in these times. Just recently, teachers passed a contract that freezes wages for at least the next year.

Pay for teachers and other staff has not kept up with inflation, and all employees, including teachers, must share the mushrooming cost of healthcare. AAPS has capped what it will contribute toward teachers' health insurance, even though actual costs are rising much faster.

All employees are paying a substantial share of their healthcare costs.

Retirement costs are also increasing. These costs are determined by the Legislature, which runs the pension fund.

Strong schools are the heart and engine of a strong community.

We realize this is an especially difficult time to ask our neighbors to make an extra sacrifice. But the damage that will be done if we dismantle our schools will be so great, and take so long to fix, that the cost of doing nothing is even greater.

How much you pay depends on the taxable value of your property. **In fact, half of AAPS taxpayers** will see

their tax bill increase by **less than \$200** under this proposal; one fifth of all households will pay less than \$140 a year. Once you take into account the state property tax credit, and deductions on your federal tax return, **40% of AAPS homeowners will end up paying under \$100 a year**, depending on their circumstances. **Renters do not pay this tax directly at all.**

This millage is our only option.

The problem is that the amount from the state has been inadequate, falling behind inflation. And now the poor economy means even more cuts in state funding over the next two years. The Michigan Association of School Boards is projecting cuts of \$500-\$800 per pupil, which when added to other shortfalls, means cuts of at least \$15 million for 2010-11.

In 2008, we renewed basic operating millages required to keep our schools open. By law, we cannot increase these operating millages, which makes up about half of the district budget. The state determines our per pupil funding each year.

By law, our only option to raise revenue is to pass a millage with all the districts of the WISD. Without this millage, we will start dismantling what has been a great school system.

What will this cost me?

Probably less than you think.

Home value (or more)	Taxable value	Annual cost
\$150,000	\$75,000	\$150
\$200,000	\$100,000	\$200
\$250,000	\$125,000	\$250
\$300,000	\$150,000	\$300

The proposal asks homeowners to pay an additional \$2 per \$1,000 of taxable value (2 "mills"). See the chart above for examples.

Vote Yes on November 3rd.



Learn more! Sign up! Donate!

➡🗳️➡ <http://a2cmc.org>

We need to act NOW!

- ➡ **Strong schools prepare our children for 21st century realities.**
- ➡ **Strong schools attract companies and families to the area.**
- ➡ **We must act locally to help our schools stay strong. Voting yes raises money that stays right here in Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County.**

The Ann Arbor Citizens Millage Committee

PO Box 8131

Ann Arbor MI 48107

a2cmc.org

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It Takes A Millage To Educate A Child

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