



STRONG SCHOOLS STRONGER COMMUNITY

Top 10 Renewal Levy FAQs

In November 2023, Kelso School District asked our community through a ThoughtExchange what questions they had about the **RENEWAL educational program and operations levy** that will be on the **February 13, 2024**, ballot. Here are the frequently asked questions.

1 What will the levy pay for?

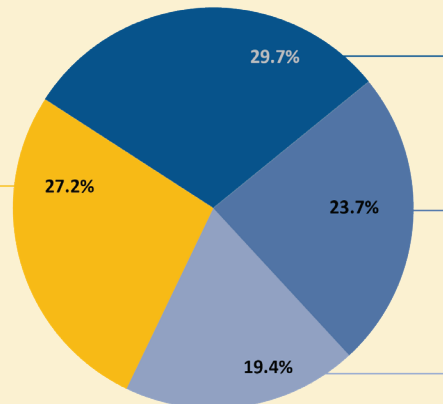
This levy helps pay for staffing and operations that are unfunded, or underfunded, by the state, such as:

- School safety and security
- Sports & extracurricular activities
- Electives (visual & performing arts, music, world languages)
- Dual credit, advanced courses
- Early learning
- Smaller class sizes
- Special education
- Nurses, counselors, and behavioral health specialists
- Family & Community Resource Center
- Maintenance of facilities
- Instructional materials, technology

2023 LEVY EXPENDITURES

27.2% NON-STAFFING

MATERIALS
SUPPLIES
EQUIPMENT
SERVICES
UTILITIES
MAINTENANCE



72.8% STAFFING

CERTIFICATED
(TEACHERS)

CLASSIFIED
(SECRETARIES, INSTRUCTIONAL
SUPPORT STAFF, NURSES,
COUNSELORS, CUSTODIANS,
ETC.)

REQUIRED BENEFITS
(MEDICAL INSURANCE,
EMPLOYMENT TAXES, RETIRE-
MENT, SOCIAL SECURITY, ETC.)

2 What won't the levy pay for?

Levies are for learning, bonds are for building. The levy won't pay for construction or renovations of buildings or school structures.

3 What is the monthly increase in the levy for me and my family in terms of benefits for kids and staff?

The estimated average rate is \$2.08 per \$1,000 of assessed property value, or \$6.87 per month increase over the expiring levy for the owner of a median-valued home. Passage of this levy ensures a high-quality educational experience and a better future for 4,975 Kelso students. It's important to note, with 12.3% of teaching and instructional support staff paid for by levy funding, passing the levy helps keep class sizes smaller.



RENEWAL EDUCATION & OPERATIONS LEVY FAQs

cont.

4 If this is a renewal/replacement levy, why does the amount increase?

The renewal levy on the February 13 ballot replaces the existing levy by securing funding for the same purpose at today's higher cost. The purpose of the levy is to provide staffing and programs essential for a high-quality education (see #1) that are unfunded or underfunded by the state. Like many things, the cost of providing the well-rounded, robust education that allows our children to grow and thrive has increased.

5 What is the levy amount, estimated levy rate, and collection years for the 2024 levy?

The below information will be placed on the February 13, 2024, ballot. This explains the collection years, estimated levy rate per \$1,000, and levy amount.

PROPOSITION NO. 1

KELSO SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 458

RENEWAL OF EXPIRING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND OPERATIONS LEVY

The Board of Directors of Kelso School District No. 458 adopted Resolution No. 2023/24-02, concerning a proposition to finance educational programs and operations. This proposition would authorize the District to levy the following excess taxes, renewing an expiring levy, on all taxable property within the District, for educational programs and operations expenses not funded by the State, including teaching and support staff, smaller class sizes, instructional materials, maintenance, athletics and student activities:

<u>Collection Year</u>	<u>Estimated Levy Rate/\$1,000 Assessed Value</u>	<u>Levy Amount</u>
2025	\$1.91	\$8,500,000
2026	\$2.03	\$9,500,000
2027	\$2.14	\$10,500,000
2028	\$2.23	\$11,500,000

6 What are the highest priorities for the district and schools if the levy passes?

Kelso School District has a [strategic plan](#) that is reviewed and updated each year. This plan is crucial for identifying priorities and provides a roadmap for student success keeping our mission of preparing every student for living, learning, and achieving success as a citizen of our changing world at the heart of everything we do. Our strategic plan includes the following areas: fiscal stewardship, early learning, quality instruction, college/career/ community readiness, climate/culture, and communication.



RENEWAL EDUCATION & OPERATIONS

LEVY FAQs

cont.

7 If the levy doesn't pass, what will happen to the following staffing funded by levy dollars: school safety and security, sports and activities, Family & Community Resource Center, counseling and nursing supports, teachers and instructional staff?

8 How does levy funding affect class sizes?

9 What steps are taken to ensure fiscal responsibility?

10 When will the next bond be proposed?

A levy failure would impact all 4,975 students in every school. These programs and services would be significantly impacted, if not eliminated.

Our levy funds underfunded and/or unfunded people and programs. These dollars directly support student services and learning in the form of teaching, counseling, coaching, feeding, transporting, maintaining facilities, providing high-quality materials and training, and much, much more.

If the levy fails, anticipated effects include but aren't limited to:

- Fewer teachers and support staff to provide instruction for students
- Reduced funding for security staff and behavioral supports
- Fewer counselors and nurses/health specialists
- Larger class sizes
- Significant cuts in sports programs, clubs, performing arts, and other student activities
- Reduced classroom materials, supplies, and curriculum updates for students and staff
- Less funding for maintenance and facilities support

With 12.3% of teaching and instructional support staff paid for by levy funding, passing the levy helps to keep class sizes smaller. If the levy fails, there will be fewer teachers and support staff to provide instruction for our 4,975 students.

Good [fiscal stewardship](#) is a top priority for Kelso School District and part of our [strategic plan](#). We continue to allocate district resources effectively to support academic and operational needs. District financials are shared monthly at school board meetings, published in our [annual report](#) (which is mailed to every home in the district each year), and are audited annually by the State Auditor.

Bonds are infrequent and happen when buildings are in need of major renovation or replacement. There are no plans in the near future to run another bond. Construction from the 2018 bond, which made improvements to every school and built two new schools, is almost complete and will be fully paid off in 2038. The bond before that was in 2001.

