

Proposition No. 3 Construction Levy (Critical Construction Needs)

The Board of Directors of Lake Washington School District adopted Resolution No. 2321 for educational facilities and critical construction needs. This proposition authorizes construction of elementary, middle school and high school classroom capacity; and acquisition of required property; and authorizes the following excess levies for such purposes on all taxable property within the District:

Collection Year	Estimated Levy Rate/\$1,000 Assessed Value	Levy Amount
2023	\$0.42	\$35,000,000
2024	\$0.51	\$45,000,000
2025	\$0.49	\$45,000,000
2026	\$0.60	\$58,000,000
2027	\$0.55	\$56,000,000
2028	\$0.53	\$56,000,000

as provided in the Resolution. Should this proposition be approved?

Yes

No

The complete text of this measure is available at the Elections Office or online at kingcounty.gov/elections.

Statement in favor

Submitted by: Penny Sweet, Angela Birney, Karen Moran, Vote4lwsdkids.org

Our schools are facing critical capacity issues. As one of the fastest-growing districts in the state, we must act now to address overcrowding. Many schools are already over-capacity, and by 2030, 83% of all schools in the district will be at or over capacity.

Our district relies on more than 160 portables to accommodate current enrollment – that’s equivalent to 5 elementary schools! Students learning in portables are separated from core facilities like bathrooms, offices, specialists, the library and cafeteria, which presents logistical challenges. Furthermore, failing to act now will only increase the cost down the road of operating and purchasing more temporary space.

Students can’t learn effectively in makeshift classrooms, and have needed to use hallways and converted spaces for learning. Overcrowding further threatens our ability to deliver smaller class sizes that are so important to giving *all* students the individual attention they need to succeed.

Voting yes builds additional permanent classrooms for 2,300 students at all levels across the district to address current needs and prepares for future growth. *All students* deserve access to a safe, productive learning environment. *Please join community leaders, elected officials, and your neighbors in voting yes* for our schools!

Rebuttal of statement in opposition

Voting yes adds new classrooms at Redmond Elementary campus, additions at Finn Hill, Kirkland, and Redmond middle schools, plus capacity for 1,200 high school students. For a full list of projects visit www.lwsd.org/education-levies.

This is not a new tax. Because bond debt is being paid off, the levy increases capacity while keeping the tax rate low. Passing all 3 measures only increases property taxes by \$270 per year for a \$1,000,000 home. Vote yes.

Explanatory statement

Lake Washington School District requests voter approval of a Construction Levy to fund the *Building Excellence* plan and enables the district to pay for critical classroom needs not funded by the state and needed to meet current and future educational programs for its students. The district has grown by over 7,300 students since 2008 and expects to enroll 3,500 more students by 2030.

For questions about this measure, contact: Shannon Parthemer, Communications Director, (425) 936-1342, sparthemer@lwsd.org

These funds would be deposited in the Capital Projects Fund to pay for construction of classrooms to provide space for over 2,300 students. Projects include elementary capacity in the Redmond area; additional capacity at Finn Hill, Kirkland and Redmond middle schools; additional high school capacity; and acquisition of property for future needs.

Passage of this proposition would provide an average of \$49.2 million per year over the next six years. If authorized by the voters and based on current assessed valuation information, estimated levy rates would average \$0.52 per thousand per year of assessed valuation beginning in 2023. The tax rate for construction levies will decrease over time as past bonds are paid off and prior construction levies expire. The exact levy rate shall be adjusted based upon the actual assessed value of the property within the District at the time of the levy.

Further information is available on the district’s website at www.lwsd.org.

Exemptions from taxes may be available to homeowners who are 61 or older, or disabled, and who meet certain income requirements. For more information, call the King County Department of Assessments 206-296-3920.

Statement in opposition

Submitted by: Susan Wilkins, info@UnfairSchoolTaxes.com

Proposition 3 asks voters to raise property taxes by \$295,000,000 for construction and property acquisition over 6 years; however, it provides no information about the construction projects being funded. The district’s Explanatory Statement says that elementary, high school and three middle school construction projects may occur. Voters deserve to know how their tax dollars will be spent.

In 2016, voters approved a bond measure that built 7 schools. In 2019, a \$120,000,000 six-year levy built major additions at 5 schools. Both ballot measures specifically told voters what projects their taxes would be spent on. This levy provides no such information for voters to evaluate what they are approving.

Last year, LWSd used your tax dollars to purchase 25 acres in Redmond that was part of the Cadman Gravel Pit. The site contains immense piles of construction rubble and mixed fill. Soil samples indicate arsenic contamination (TetraTech ESA). Will your tax dollars be spent on site clean-up and remediation?

Again, with so many families and local businesses struggling to recover under Covid, this is no time to commit to undefined tax increases. This levy fails to tell taxpayers how this property tax increase will be spent. Vote No.

Rebuttal of statement in favor

This proposed 6-year \$295 million levy *overlaps* the three remaining years of the current six-year construction levy, increasing your total property taxes. It fails to consider the recent enrollment decline due to Covid impacts. Most importantly, unlike previous construction levies and bonds, it fails to provide a specific list of projects making it virtually impossible for voters to evaluate project priorities or to hold the district accountable for the eventual spending. Vote No.