



# DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES

2023 Finance Referendum Campaign  
2024 Golden Achievement Award

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Richfield Public Schools ISD #280  
401 70th Street West  
Richfield, MN 55423

District Type: Urban  
District Enrollment: 4,200  
Communications Staff: 2



**RICHFIELD**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In November 2023, amidst uncertainties of post-pandemic public opinion, Richfield Public Schools achieved the decisive approval of a two-question referendum: renewing its existing technology levy and doubling its operating levy. Three factors made this campaign remarkable:

1. The election followed a historic 2023 MN Legislative Session, during which state legislators touted “fully funding” K-12 schools. Against these headlines, the district was asking voters to increase local property taxes.
2. A short timeline. The Legislative Session ended on May 22. The school board decided on the referendum question in August, and early voting for the November 7 Election started on September 22.
3. Overwhelming success: 81.3% voter approval for question 1 and 72.5% for question 2.

Academic gains, school funding and public trust were at stake in this campaign. Richfield Public Schools has been a leader in [closing opportunity and graduation gaps](#), and without additional operating revenue, successful educational strategies were at risk. The Technology Levy (Q1) provided \$4.7 million annually and would expire in 2024 unless renewed. The Board also needed to make a critical decision about asking voters to increase their operating levy (Q2). With inflation and the economic climate, board members worried about risking public trust if they asked for too much.

## DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES

IT'S TIME TO RENEW



Applying the four-step process, Richfield’s team conducted qualitative and quantitative research to inform decision-making and communications. They engaged community opinion leaders and locally elected officials. This effort grew from a long tradition of community engagement; it was more than a 12-week informational campaign.

*Delivering on our Promises*, the campaign theme aligned the referendum with the district’s [Strategic Plan](#). The campaign celebrated achievement, focused on students, and reinforced public trust. Implementation strategies amplified opinion leaders, saturated all channels, and inspired voter turnout for the off-year election.

## CUMPLIENDO NUESTRAS PROMESAS

ES HORA DE RENOVAR



The campaign evaluation included precinct-by-precinct analysis, metrics for each communication strategy, and a demonstration of public trust. With overwhelming voter support for both questions, the district secured \$90 million over the next ten years (11% of its annual operating budget), stabilized district finances for the future, and realized a high level of public trust.

A metropolitan district, Richfield Public Schools (MN) serves just over 4,000 students across six schools, an early learning center, an alternative high school program, and a Transition Plus program. District boundaries cross two municipalities (Richfield and a small portion of Edina). **Demographically**, the district is diverse with no ethnic majority: 43% Hispanic or Latino; 29% White; 13% Black; and **24% Multi-Language Learners (MLL)**. By policy, all communication is provided in English and Spanish. The median household income is below the state average; the average home value is \$300,000. The district benefits from a large commercial/industrial tax base, which reduces the tax impact on district residents.

With a reputation for community engagement, fiscal transparency and robust communications, Richfield voters have long prioritized education spending. **The District has several advisory committees actively engaged in planning** (Finance, Teaching & Learning, Technology, Facilities, Athletics, etc.). During the 2000s through 2017, the district held referendums about every two years, leading to volunteer fatigue. The District's last referendum was in 2017; citizen committee leaders were no longer engaged. New leaders would need adequate time to organize and plan.

The Minnesota Legislature touted "historic education spending" during their 2023 session. While revenue increased, many new mandates accompanied the funding. Ultimately, the increase in state revenue did not fill the gaps in need, especially since federal pandemic funding was expiring simultaneously. The District could need to **rely on third-party groups** (p.3) to explain the complexities of state funding, the cost of new mandates, and the continued need for local referendums. Working in cooperation with other districts would provide a unified message.

A **comparison of local referendum funding to neighboring districts** presented a compelling picture; Richfield's local tax effort was half that of neighboring districts. In addition, current property taxes (2023) were lower than those five years ago. (Two important key messages.)

To understand the audiences and information needs, the comprehensive research plan included:

- **Secondary research** on district referendums, including historical data, voting trends, and impact on the community.
- **Analyzed past referendum outcomes** and voter engagement strategies.
- **Reviewed state and national voter behavior statistics** to inform strategies (e.g., parents of school-age children mostly support but are least likely to make time to vote).
- **Engaged key stakeholders**, including district officials, community leaders, active community groups, other metro superintendents, and staff in planning to inform decision-making and messaging.
- **Developed a comprehensive glossary guide** for staff and volunteers to ensure all messaging was factually accurate and clear.
- **Analyzed primary staff and parent survey data**
- **Content analysis** of local media and social media groups to anticipate issues.
- **Conducted two primary, formal, random-sample phone surveys. February | August**

The planning phase of Richfield Public Schools’ referendum campaign started almost a year before the campaign and built on existing community engagement and communications strategies. Grounded in the [District’s Strategic Plan](#) and informed by research, our approach prioritized clear messaging, robust outreach, and effective engagement to create a proposal that the community could support.

To deliver on their promises in the Strategic Plan, Richfield identified how the renewed technology levy and increased operating levy would be used to continue meeting defined goals.

## View the Referendum Plan

### 1. Strategy Development:

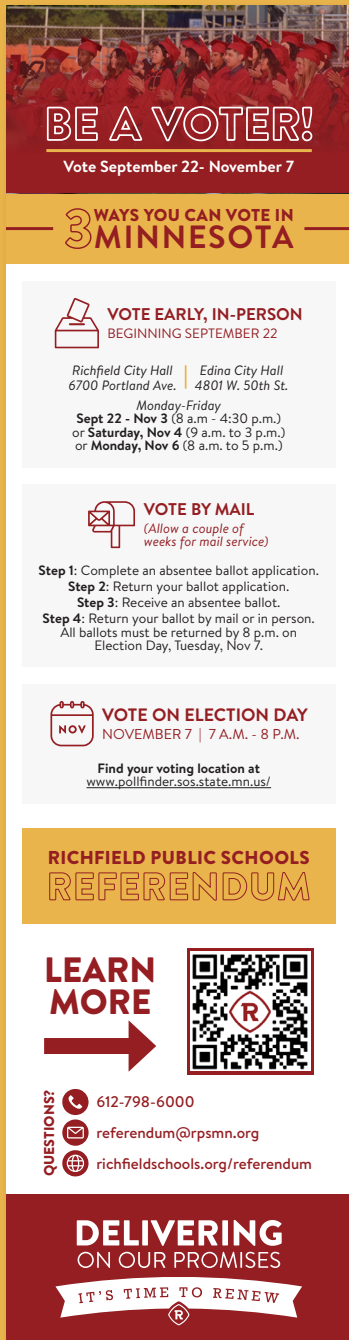
- **Campaign timeline:** Kick-off research (January), begin issue priming (March), anticipate the close of the Legislative session (May), statutory deadlines (August), back-to-school (August), the start of early voting (September), Election Day (November), post-election communication.
- **Campaign Theme:** Align the campaign theme with the district’s Strategic Plan, *Richfield Realized*, and referendum past promises to emphasize continuity and reinforce the district’s commitment to achieving its goals.
- **Stakeholder Involvement:** Personal outreach to involve key stakeholders, including opinion leaders, elected officials, staff and community groups in the planning process.
- **Research Integration:** Integrate insights from qualitative and quantitative research into the campaign strategy to effectively tailor messaging and outreach efforts.

### 2. Messaging Strategy:

- **Clear Communication:** Use one master messaging document to ensure clear and concise messaging across all materials and efficiently use translators’ time. Highlights the referendum’s benefits for student support, academic gains, school funding facts, how to vote, and public trust.
- **Evidence-based Messaging:** Support all claims with independent third-party data (academic data, financial data, legislative statements).
- **A Compelling Need:** Demonstrate the impact of funding and inequities compared to more affluent neighboring districts.
- **Language Accessibility:** To accommodate the district’s diverse audiences, ensure all communication materials are provided in English and Spanish.
- **Fiscal Responsibility:** Emphasize the district’s prudent financial management, transparent budgeting, and lower property taxes.



See supporting materials beginning on page 9.



**BE A VOTER!**  
Vote September 22- November 7

**3 WAYS YOU CAN VOTE IN MINNESOTA**

**VOTE EARLY, IN-PERSON**  
BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 22

Richfield City Hall | Edina City Hall  
6700 Portland Ave. | 4801 W. 50th St.

Monday-Friday  
Sept 22 - Nov 3 (8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)  
or Saturday, Nov 4 (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.)  
or Monday, Nov 6 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

**VOTE BY MAIL**  
(Allow a couple of weeks for mail service)


Step 1: Complete an absentee ballot application.  
Step 2: Return your ballot application.  
Step 3: Receive an absentee ballot.  
Step 4: Return your ballot by mail or in person.  
All ballots must be returned by 8 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov 7.

**VOTE ON ELECTION DAY**  
NOVEMBER 7 | 7 A.M. - 8 P.M.

Find your voting location at  
[www.pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/](http://www.pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/)

**RICHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS REFERENDUM**

**LEARN MORE**



QUESTIONS? 612-798-6000  
referendum@rpsmn.org  
richfieldschools.org/referendum

**DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES**  
IT'S TIME TO RENEW

Consistent messaging throughout campaign.

### 3. Outreach Plan:

- Multi-Channel Approach: Implement a multi-channel communication approach that leverages face-to-face opportunities, traditional media, social media, community events, and direct mail to reach audiences.
- Community Engagement Events: Leverage existing community engagement events to interact directly with stakeholders and answer questions.
- Volunteers: Mobilize volunteers to help with outreach efforts and ensure advocates have the information and answers they need.

### 4. Voter Turnout Strategy:

- Inspire Action: “Be a Voter” National research indicates appealing to identity is more effective for young and reluctant voters than “Vote.”
- Early Voting: Promote early voting opportunities to encourage voter participation for busy families and make it more convenient for residents to cast their ballots.
- Election Day Reminders: Visual reminders and message saturation across all communication channels since the school district was the only issue on the ballot.

### 5. Evaluation and Monitoring:

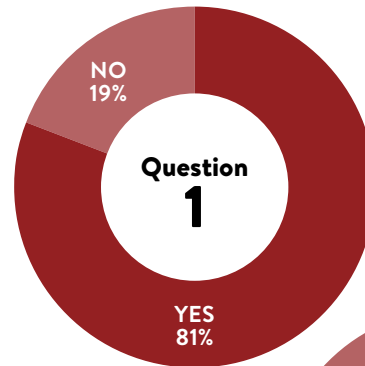
- Metrics Tracking: Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the effectiveness of communication strategies and outreach efforts, such as early voter turnout, questions submitted, social media reaction, and media coverage.
- Feedback Mechanisms: Implement feedback mechanisms for rapid response to questions and rumors; proactively meet with residents known to watch budget and tax issues closely. Gather input from residents and stakeholders throughout the campaign and make necessary adjustments to the strategy.
- Continuous Improvement: Use insights gained from evaluation and monitoring to continuously refine and improve the campaign strategy in real time, ensuring maximum impact and effectiveness.
- Election Evaluation: Survey volunteers and key leaders regarding strategy and tactics effectiveness. Summarize campaign to inform future strategy.



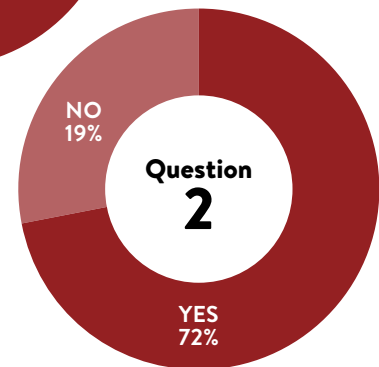
Key performance indicators for this campaign included voter turnout, [election results](#), early voting participation, digital metrics, and tool and tactic evaluations to inform future campaigns. The successful campaign was featured as a model for other [districts in an association newsletter](#).

## Election Results

- The District won supermajorities in each precinct for both questions.
- From pre-campaign survey (58% support) to election results, Q2 support increased 14%.
- Voter turnout was on par with other off-year elections when only school district issues were on the ballot: 17% Voter Turnout, 5,389 Total Voters
- Early voting attracted 802 early voters (15%), which was unlikely a factor in the results but aided in building momentum up to Election Day.



Total Funding  
for Ten Years:  
**\$90 MILLION**



## Campaign Evaluation

The District has an outstanding relationship with its community. Engaging advisory groups and opinion leaders early in the campaign was critical to its success. The district has also achieved an exceptionally high level of public trust (83%). In this small, urban community, word-of-mouth and relationships matter. Working in partnership with the City of Richfield, city leaders, the city elections clerk, and city staff had the information they needed to answer citizens' questions. Being respectful and responsive with residents via personal meetings and phone calls made all the difference. No visible opposition formed and support was strong.



“Earning the trust and support of our voters is something we work on every day.”

- SUPERINTENDENT STEVE ULOWSKY

Proactive planning started with research and engagement almost a year in advance. Working with communications partners from CEL Marketing PR Design and Captivate Media allowed the District’s communication team to manage the busy back-to-school season and launch the referendum campaign, meeting critical timelines and responding to requests. No single tool reached all voters, so the multichannel campaign, with consistent messaging across channels, ensured contact with all active voters.

A survey of key volunteers and leaders provided the following open-ended feedback:

- The campaign was well planned and executed.
- **Delivering on our Promises** was a great tagline and easy for folks to remember.
- Messaging on cost was clear, making the choice easier for residents.
- Comparing operating levy funding for RPS to neighboring districts was critical.
- Explaining tax impact and the simplicity of voting yes vs. no was helpful.
- Featuring students and teachers was great. Coming to PTSO meetings was great.
- Activating the yes vote was critical. Not sure phone banks were very effective, but support from the Yes committee and Education Richfield was important.

RANKED VALUE OF TOOLS & TACTICS	
1	<u>Video</u> (approximately 10,000 reach)
2	Direct Mail pieces <u>August</u>   <u>October</u> (15,000 households)
3	<u>Website</u> (Traffic spiked on Election Daybut only reached a portion of voters (<1,500 users)
4	<u>Social Media posts</u> <u>Calendar</u> (important but only reached a portion of voters (<2,000)
5	<u>Fliers</u>
6	<u>Emails</u>
7	<u>Posters</u>
8	Robocalls
9	A-Frame Signs at schools pick-up/drop-off
10	<u>Bookmark</u>



## VIDEO



[Learn about our 2023 referendum questions](#)



## DIRECT MAIL PIECES



**DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES**  
IT'S TIME TO RENEW

BE INFORMED. **VOTE** **NOVEMBER 7**

INFORMÉSE. **VOTE** **EL 7 DE NOVIEMBRE**

RICHFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG/VOTE



**Richfield Public Schools**  
401 W 70th Street  
Richfield, MN 55423

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit #90196  
Twin Cities, MN

**Two ballot questions. One commitment to maintain existing class sizes and support for student learning.**

The Richfield School Board has unanimously agreed to hold a referendum this fall to ask voters to renew and increase local funding to support student learning. There are two questions on the ballot.

**Question 1: Renew the existing technology levy.**

100% of our educational technology is funded through a local technology levy, which expires in 2024. It must be renewed by voters or the District will face more than \$4 million in budget cuts. This local levy started in 2023 and was renewed by voters in 2015. We are asking to renew the levy at the same rate as it has been since 2003. Question 1 would not increase taxes; it renews taxes already being collected.

The technology levy for capital projects levels:

- Personalizes instruction
- Provides real-world simulations for science
- Enhances student achievement
- Prepares students for a rapidly changing world
- Provides equitable access to schoolwork from anywhere, at any time
- Makes school operations more efficient
- Enhances security for people, property and data

**Question 2: Revoke and replace the existing operating referendum to be more equitable with neighboring districts.**

Richfield voters have long supported our students and schools with a local operating referendum. The operating referendum was last approved in 2007. However, it generates about half the amount per student that most districts receive. We are asking local voters for an increase.

- To ensure more equitable funding
- To maintain small class sizes
- To personalize learning
- To support students who struggle (academically and social-emotionally)
- To stabilize school funding for the future

**CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES**  
**¡FELICIDADES GRADUADOS!**

**2023**

**78**

graduates earned World Language Seals and Certificates, qualifying for college credits and gaining an advantage toward future bilingual employment.

Graduados obtuvieron Sellos y Certificados de Idioma Múltiple, calificando para créditos universitarios y obteniendo una ventaja para futuros empleos bilingües.

**67** percent of our graduates are college-bound.

El porcentaje de nuestros graduados que entra directamente a la universidad.

**22** percent are stepping directly into the workforce.

El porcentaje que entra a formar parte de la fuerza laboral.

**10,420** HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE  
HORAS DE SERVICIO COMUNITARIO

**8** percent of our graduates have chosen to embark on trades apprenticeships, career certificate programs, our Transition program, or have committed to serving in the military.

El porcentaje de graduados que elige embarcarse en el aprendizaje de oficios, programas de certificación profesional, nuestro programa Transition o que se han comprometido a servir en las fuerzas armadas.

**3** percent of our graduates are exploring various other opportunities, including a gap year to travel or discover their passions.

El porcentaje de nuestros graduados está explorando otras oportunidades, incluso un año sabático para viajar o descubrir sus pasiones.

**CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2023**  
**CELEBRAMOS LA CLASE DE 2023**

**How much is needed?**

Question 2 will ask to revoke our existing referendum of \$174.60 per student, and to replace it with a new authorization of \$2,202.89 per student. The increase would generate \$4.3 million annually for day-to-day operations, including hiring and retaining great teachers, supporting learning, purchasing instructional materials, paying salaries and transportation, etc. Approval of this increase would cost an additional \$16 per month on a property valued at \$300,000. More detailed information is available on our website.

**\$16** per month

Learn more at [richfieldschools.org/referendum](http://richfieldschools.org/referendum)

**QUESTIONS?**  
412-798-6000  
[referendum@rpsmn.org](mailto:referendum@rpsmn.org)  
[richfieldschools.org/referendum](http://richfieldschools.org/referendum)

**¿Cuánto se necesita?**

La pregunta 2 pedirá revocar el referéndum actual de \$174.60 por estudiante y reemplazarlo con una nueva autorización de \$2,202.89 por estudiante. La generación de \$4.3 millones anuales para las operaciones diarias, incluida la contratación y retención de maestros excelentes, el pago de salarios, el pago de materiales educativos, el pago de servicios de transporte, etc. La aprobación de este aumento costaría \$16 mensuales para una propiedad valorada en \$300,000. Más información en nuestra página Web.

**\$16** mensuales

Más información en [richfieldschools.org/referendum](http://richfieldschools.org/referendum)

**¿PREGUNTAS?**  
412-798-6000  
[referendum@rpsmn.org](mailto:referendum@rpsmn.org)  
[richfieldschools.org/referendum](http://richfieldschools.org/referendum)

Operating Referendum "Dollars per Student" vs. District



District

**VOTE BY MAIL**

**VOTE EARLY, IN-PERSON**  
BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 22

**VOTE ON ELECTION DAY**  
NOVEMBER 7 | 7 A.M. - 8 P.M.

**POR CORREO**

**TEMPRANO EN PERSONA**  
A PARTIR DEL 22 DE SEPTIEMBRE

**EL DÍA DE LAS ELECCIONES**  
2 DE NOVIEMBRE | 7 A.M. - 8 P.M.

## A-FRAME SIGNS AT SCHOOLS PICK-UP/DROP-OFF

**DELIVERING**  
ON OUR PROMISES

IT'S TIME TO RENEW

**Remember to**  
**VOTE**  
on November 7

Recuerda  
**VOTAR**  
el 7 de noviembre

English

**DELIVERING**  
OUR PROMISES

IT'S TIME TO RENEW

**VOTE**  
**DAY**

**VOTE**  
**HOY**

**Polls are open until 8 p.m.**  
Las casillas están abiertas hasta las 8 p.m.

Spanish



## POSTERS

Prepared and paid for by Independent School District No. 261 (Richfield Public Schools), 401 70th Street W., Richfield, MN 55423.  
This advertisement is provided for informational purposes only.

### DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES

IT'S TIME TO RENEW

The Richfield School Board has unanimously agreed to hold a referendum this fall to ask voters to renew and increase local funding to support student learning. There are two questions on the ballot.

**BE INFORMED. VOTE** **VOTE ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 7** **BE INFORMED. VOTE** **VOTE ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 7**

[RICHFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG/VOTE](http://RICHFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG/VOTE) [RICHFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG/REFERENDUM](http://RICHFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG/REFERENDUM)

**1**

**Question #1:**  
Renew the existing technology levy.

- Personalizes instruction.
- Provides real-world simulations for science.
- Enhances student achievement.
- Prepares students for a rapidly changing world.
- Provides equitable access to schoolwork from anywhere, at any time.
- Makes school operations more efficient.
- Enhances security for people, property and data.

**2**

**Question #2:**  
Revoke and replace the existing operating referendum to be more equitable with neighboring districts.

**\$16 per month**  
Additional \$16 per month on a property valued at \$300,000

- to ensure more equitable funding.
- to maintain small class sizes.
- to personalize learning.
- to support students who struggle.
- to stabilize future school funding.

**VOTE BY MAIL**  
(Allow a couple of weeks for mail service)

Step 1: Complete an absentee ballot application.  
Step 2: Return your ballot application.

Step 3: Receive an absentee ballot.  
Step 4: Return your ballot either by mail or in person. All ballots must be returned by 8 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, November 7.

**VOTE EARLY, IN-PERSON**  
BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 22

Richfield City Hall | Edina City Hall  
6700 Portland Ave. | 4801 W. 50th St.

Monday-Friday  
September 22 - November 3 (8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)  
Saturday, November 4 (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.)  
Monday, November 6 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

**VOTE ON ELECTION DAY**  
NOVEMBER 7 | 7 A.M. - 6 P.M.

Find your voting location at [www.sosmn.gov/elections](http://www.sosmn.gov/elections)

Are you registered to vote?  
In Minnesota, you can register or update your registration when you vote, whether that is at your polling place on Election Day or at an early voting location.  
[www.sosmn.gov/elections/online/register-to-vote/](http://www.sosmn.gov/elections/online/register-to-vote/)

**LEARN MORE** **BE A VOTER** **VOTE** September 22 through November 7

**QUESTIONS?**  
612-798-6000  
referendum@rpsmn.org  
richfieldschools.org/referendum

Prepared and paid for by Distrito Escolar Independiente 261 (Escuelas Públicas de Richfield), 401 70th Street W., Richfield, MN 55423.  
Este anuncio de los medios fue creado en apoyo de los votantes de voto.

### CUMPLIENDO NUESTRAS PROMESAS

ES HORA DE RENEVAR

Las Escuelas Públicas de Richfield acordó por unanimidad llevar a cabo este referéndum para pedir a los votantes que renueven y aumenten los Fondos Locales para el aprendizaje de los estudiantes. En la boleta hay dos preguntas.

**VOTE EL 7 DE NOV. O ANTES** **INFORMESE VOTE** **VOTE EL 7 DE NOV. O ANTES**

[RICHFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG/VOTE](http://RICHFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG/VOTE) [RICHFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG/REFERENDUM](http://RICHFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG/REFERENDUM)

**1**

**Pregunta #1:**  
Renovar el impuesto de tecnología existente.

- Personaliza la instrucción.
- Proporciona simulaciones del mundo real para la ciencia, los estudiantes.
- Prepara a los estudiantes para un mundo en evolución.
- Apoyará a los estudiantes que tienen dificultades.
- Estabilizará la financiación de las escuelas para el futuro.

**2**

**Pregunta #2:**  
Revocar y reemplazar el referéndum operativo existente para que sea más equitativo con los distritos vecinos.

**\$16 mensuales**  
\$16 en mensual por una propiedad valorada en \$300,000

- asegurar una financiación más equitativa.
- mantener el tamaño de las clases.
- personalizar el aprendizaje.
- apoyarán a los estudiantes que tienen dificultades.
- estabilizarán la financiación de las escuelas para el futuro.

**POR CORREO**  
(PUEDE TOMAR DOS SEMANAS)

Paso 1: Rellene una solicitud de voto en ausencia.  
Paso 2: Entregue la solicitud de voto.  
Paso 3: Reciba una boleta de voto.  
Paso 4: Entregue su boleta de voto en persona o por correo. Todas las boletas deben ser entregadas antes de las 8 p.m. el día de las elecciones, martes, 7 de noviembre.

**TEMPRANO, EN PERSONA**  
A PARTIR DEL 22 DE SEPTIEMBRE

Richfield City Hall | Edina City Hall  
6700 Portland Ave. | 4801 W. 50th St.

del lunes a viernes  
del 22 de septiembre al 3 de noviembre (8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)  
o el sábado, 4 de noviembre (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.)  
o el lunes, 6 de noviembre (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

**EL DÍA DE LAS ELECCIONES**  
7 DE NOVIEMBRE | 7 A.M. - 6 P.M.

Encuentre su lugar de votación [www.sosmn.gov/elections](http://www.sosmn.gov/elections)

¿Está registrado para votar?  
En Minnesota puede registrarse o actualizar su registro cuando vaya a votar, ya sea en su lugar de votación o en un lugar de votación temprano.  
[www.sosmn.gov/elections/online/register-to-vote/](http://www.sosmn.gov/elections/online/register-to-vote/)

**Más información** **Vote** desde el 22 de septiembre hasta el 7 de noviembre

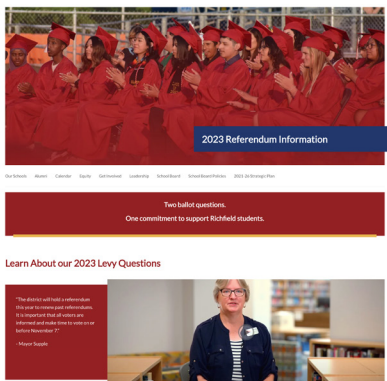
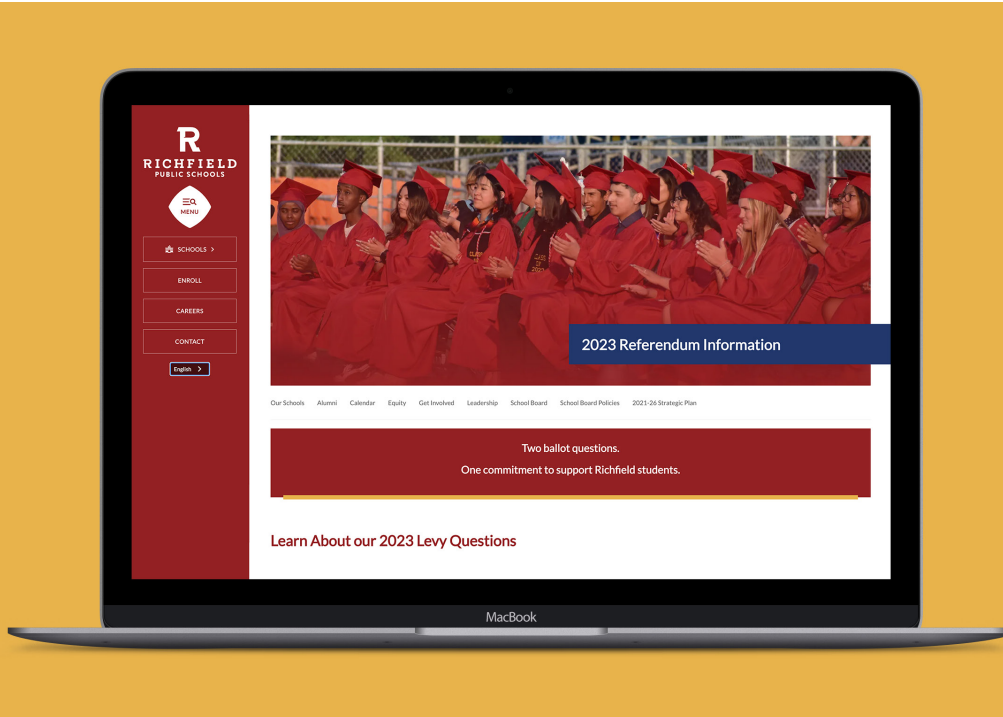
**¿PREGUNTAS?**  
612-798-6000  
referendum@rpsmn.org  
richfieldschools.org/referendum

English

Spanish



## WEBSITE



**additional**  
Renews at the current rate.  
No new tax impact.

**Question 1: Renew the existing technology levy.**  
This levy is the primary source of funding for technology in our district. It expires at the end of the school year and will be renewed by voters in the November 2023 election or the District will need to raise more than \$4 million in budget cuts. We are asking to renew the levy at the same rate. This levy was started in 2003 and was renewed by voters in 2013. The technology levy helps:

- Provide day-to-day maintenance for science
- Enhance teacher advancement
- Provide laptops for students (changing weight)
- Provide laptop access to students from anywhere, at any time
- Make school operations more efficient
- Enhance security for people, property and data

**per month**  
Additional \$16 per month on a property valued at \$300,000.

**Question 2: Revoke and replace the existing operating referendum to be more equitable with neighboring districts.**  
Richfield voters have long supported our students with our operating referendum. The operating referendum was last approved in 2007. However, it generates about half the amount per student that what our district receive. We are asking that voters take an investment:

- Ensure more equitable funding
- Support student health, safety, technology and social-emotional
- Support teacher learning
- Support school funding for the future

You can use the **Tax Impact Calculator** to see how much this would affect your property taxes.

Ensuring Equitable Funding for Richfield Students

Operating Referendum "Dollars per Student" vs. District

Our Financial Future Without the Levies

CLICK HERE FOR VOTING INFORMATION

**Frequently Asked Questions**

▶ HOW MUCH MONEY?

▶ DOES THE STATE LEGISLATURE INCREASE SCHOOL FUNDING THIS YEAR?

Contact Us  
LEVY INFORMATION  
levy@richfieldschools.edu  
Call 412-798-4000

**additional**  
Renews at the current rate.  
No new tax impact.

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- Provide laptops for students (changing weight)
- Provide laptop access to students from anywhere, at any time
- Make school operations more efficient
- Enhance security for people, property and data

**per month**  
Additional \$16 per month on a property valued at \$300,000.

**Question 2: Revoke and replace the existing operating referendum to be more equitable with neighboring districts.**  
Richfield voters have long supported our students with our operating referendum. The operating referendum was last approved in 2007. However, it generates about half the amount per student that what our district receive. We are asking that voters take an investment:

- Ensure more equitable funding
- Support student health, safety, technology and social-emotional
- Support teacher learning
- Support school funding for the future

You can use the **Tax Impact Calculator** to see how much this would affect your property taxes.

Ensuring Equitable Funding for Richfield Students

Operating Referendum "Dollars per Student" vs. District

Our Financial Future Without the Levies

CLICK HERE FOR VOTING INFORMATION

**Frequently Asked Questions**

▶ HOW MUCH MONEY?

▶ DOES THE STATE LEGISLATURE INCREASE SCHOOL FUNDING THIS YEAR?

Contact Us  
LEVY INFORMATION  
levy@richfieldschools.edu  
Call 412-798-4000

**DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES**

IT'S TIME TO RENEW

**CUMPLIENDO NUESTRAS PROMESAS**

ES HORA DE RENOVAR

CLICK HERE FOR VOTING INFORMATION

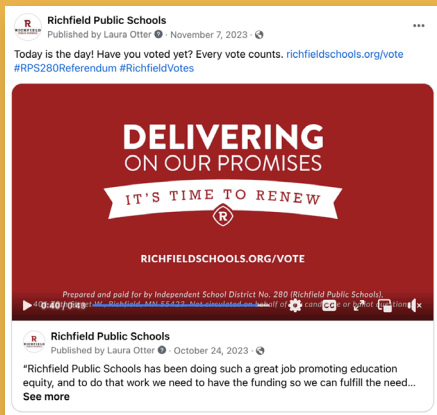
**Frequently Asked Questions**

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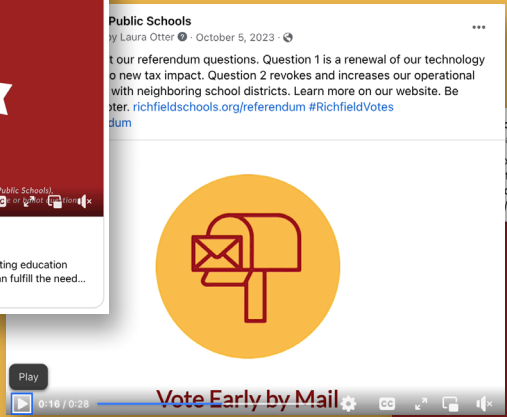
## SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS



**Richfield Public Schools**  
Published by Laura Otter · November 7, 2023 ·  
Today is the day! Have you voted yet? Every vote counts. [richfieldschools.org/vote](https://richfieldschools.org/vote)  
#RPS280Referendum #RichfieldVotes

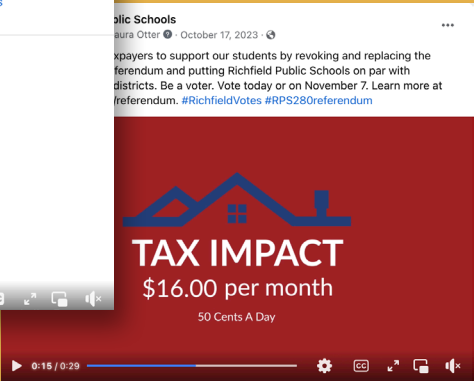
**DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES**  
**IT'S TIME TO RENEW**  
RICHFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG/VOTE

Prepared and paid for by Independent School District No. 280 (Richfield Public Schools)



**Richfield Public Schools**  
Published by Laura Otter · October 5, 2023 ·  
Today we ask voters to answer our referendum questions. Question 1 is a renewal of our technology levy with no new tax impact. Question 2 revokes and increases our operational levy with neighboring school districts. Learn more on our website. Be a voter. [richfieldschools.org/referendum](https://richfieldschools.org/referendum) #RichfieldVotes #RPS280Referendum

**Vote Early by Mail**



**Richfield Public Schools**  
Published by Laura Otter · October 17, 2023 ·  
Today we ask voters to answer our referendum questions. Question 1 is a renewal of our technology levy with no new tax impact. Question 2 revokes and increases our operational levy with neighboring school districts. Learn more on our website. Be a voter. [richfieldschools.org/referendum](https://richfieldschools.org/referendum) #RichfieldVotes #RPS280Referendum

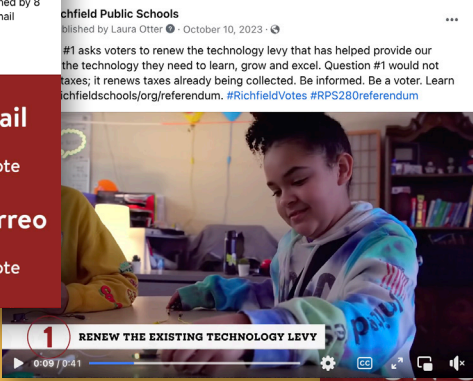
**TAX IMPACT**  
**\$16.00 per month**  
50 Cents A Day



**Richfield Public Schools**  
Published by Laura Otter · September 28, 2023 ·  
Early voting in Richfield is underway! Here are 4 steps to voting early by mail:  
Step 1: Complete an absentee ballot application.  
Step 2: Return your ballot application.  
Step 3: Receive an absentee ballot.  
Step 4: Return your ballot either by mail or in person. All ballots must be returned by 8 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 7. Be sure to allow a couple of weeks for mail service.  
Find details on our website: [richfieldschools.org/vote](https://richfieldschools.org/vote)  
#RichfieldVotes #RPS280referendum

**Vote early by mail**  
Learn more:  
[richfieldschools.org/vote](https://richfieldschools.org/vote)

**Temprano por correo**  
Más información:  
[richfieldschools.org/vote](https://richfieldschools.org/vote)



**Richfield Public Schools**  
Published by Laura Otter · October 10, 2023 ·  
Today we ask voters to answer our referendum questions. Question 1 asks voters to renew the technology levy that has helped provide our students with the technology they need to learn, grow and excel. Question #1 would not increase taxes; it renews taxes already being collected. Be informed. Be a voter. Learn more on our website: [richfieldschools.org/referendum](https://richfieldschools.org/referendum) #RichfieldVotes #RPS280referendum

**1 RENEW THE EXISTING TECHNOLOGY LEVY**



**Richfield Public Schools**  
Published by Laura Otter · November 8, 2023 ·  
Today we ask voters to answer our referendum questions. Question 1 asks voters to renew the technology levy that has helped provide our students with the technology they need to learn, grow and excel. Question #1 would not increase taxes; it renews taxes already being collected. Be informed. Be a voter. Learn more on our website: [richfieldschools.org/referendum](https://richfieldschools.org/referendum) #RichfieldVotes #RPS280referendum

**DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES**  
**THANK YOU**

**THANK YOU**  
On behalf of the entire Richfield Public School District community, we want to thank you for... (most recently) your investment in our students. The November referendum strongly reflects our community values strong public schools and quality education. We are #OneRichfield.

## SOCIAL MEDIA CALENDAR

Referendum Social Media Plan

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Extensions Help

100%

Image options Replace image

**Key Dates**

- Early voting starts September 22
- RRS Conferences October 5 (evening)
- RMS Conferences October 17 (evening) and 18 (all day)
- Pre-K-5 Conferences November 1 (evening) and 2 (all day)
- Election day is November 7


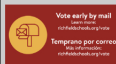



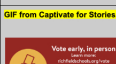




**Key Messages**

- Three ways to vote
  - 1. Vote early by mail
  - 2. Vote early in-person
  - 3. 40-year polling place on Election Day
- Technology referendum
- Operating referendum
- Why it matters

**Channels**

- Facebook
  - District Page
  - School Pages
  - PTO Groups
  - Community Page
- District Instagram
- District X (Twitter)
- District LinkedIn

**Content with Graphics**

Topic	Date & Platform	Content	Graphics
Referendum Basics	September 18	Facebook: This fall, voters in the Richfield School District have the opportunity to support our schools on two referendum questions. Question 1 is a renewal of our technology levy, which has no new tax impact. Question 2 revokes and increases our operational levy to be on par with neighboring school districts. Question 2 would be an increase of approximately \$15 per month (based on a \$300,000 home). Learn more on our website. Be informed. Be a voter. <a href="http://richfieldschools.org/referendum">richfieldschools.org/referendum</a> #RichfieldVotes #RPS28referendum	Pull through web image or: 
Referendum Overview	October 5 (evening) *aligns with 9-12 conferences	Facebook: Early voting in Richfield is underway! Here are 4 steps to voting early by mail. Step 1: Complete an absentee ballot application. Step 2: Return your ballot application. Step 3: Receive an absentee ballot. Step 4: Return your ballot either by mail or in person. All ballots must be returned by 8 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov. 7. Be sure to allow a couple of weeks for mail service. Find details on our website: <a href="http://richfieldschools.org/vote">richfieldschools.org/vote</a> #RichfieldVotes #RPS28referendum	   
Vote: Election Day	November 7	Facebook: Early voting in Richfield starts today! You can vote in person at City Hall on weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., on Saturdays, Nov. 4, from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m., or on Monday, Nov. 6, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Find details on our website: <a href="http://richfieldschools.org/vote">richfieldschools.org/vote</a> #RichfieldVotes #RPS28referendum	   
Thank voters (assuming levies pass)	November 8	Facebook: Thank you to all voters who participated in the referendum process. We appreciate your input and support for our schools. The results will be announced soon. #RichfieldVotes #RPS28referendum	

<p>Facebook: Early voting in Richfield starts today! You can vote in person at City Hall on weekdays between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., on Saturdays, Nov. 4, from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m., or on Monday, Nov. 6, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Find details on our website: <a href="http://richfieldschools.org/vote">richfieldschools.org/vote</a> #RichfieldVotes #RPS28referendum</p> <p>Instagram: Early voting in Richfield starts today! Find details on our website at the link in bio. #RichfieldVotes #RPS28referendum</p>	<p><b>GIF from Captivate for Stories.</b></p> <p>Vote early in person <a href="http://richfieldschools.org/vote">richfieldschools.org/vote</a></p> <p>Templano en persona <a href="http://richfieldschools.org/vote">richfieldschools.org/vote</a></p> <p>VOTE EARLY, IN-PERSON BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 22</p> <p>Templano en persona A PARTIR DEL 22 DE SEPTIEMBRE</p> <p>Vote early by mail <a href="http://richfieldschools.org/vote">richfieldschools.org/vote</a></p> <p>Templano por correo <a href="http://richfieldschools.org/vote">richfieldschools.org/vote</a></p> <p>VOTE BY MAIL A PARTIR DEL 22 DE SEPTIEMBRE</p> <p>Por correo A PARTIR DEL 22 DE SEPTIEMBRE</p>	<p>coming education equity, and do that work we need to have the best of our students and our teachers." – Board Chair Paula Cole</p> <p>It's time to renew our commitment to our schools, our students and our community today. Find more information <a href="http://richfieldschools.org/referendum">richfieldschools.org/referendum</a> #RichfieldVotes #RPS28referendum</p> <p>our current operating levy is about half of what neighboring districts provide for their students. Question #2 will revoke our current operating levy and place it. The increased funding needed to replace \$4.5 million (Federal funding that is expiring) allow us to maintain small class sizes and support all students. The additional investment is about \$16 per month on a \$300,000 home. Be informed. Be a voter. Learn more <a href="http://richfieldschools.org/referendum">richfieldschools.org/referendum</a>. #RichfieldVotes #RPS28referendum</p> <p>uesday, November 7, is Election Day! Polling places are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Visit our website for polling locations and their important information. Your site matters! <a href="http://richfieldschools.org/vote">richfieldschools.org/vote</a> #RichfieldVotes #RPS28referendum</p>	<p>Video Clip #5 Social Cut</p> <p><b>DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES</b> IT'S TIME TO RENEW Be informed. Be a voter.</p> <p><b>DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES</b> IT'S TIME TO RENEW Be informed. Be a voter.</p>
<p>Facebook: Early voting in Richfield starts today! Find details on our website at the link in bio. #RichfieldVotes #RPS28referendum</p>	<p>Video Clip - #1 Voting Social Cut Final</p>	<p>Repost with this caption: Today is the day! Have you voted yet? Every vote counts. #RichfieldVotes #RPS28referendum</p>	<p>Video Clip - #4 Why It Matters, Social Cut_Final (REPOST/RESHARE)</p>
<p>Facebook: Thank you to all voters who participated in the referendum process. We appreciate your input and support for our schools. The results will be announced soon. #RichfieldVotes #RPS28referendum</p>	<p>November 8</p> <p>- District Facebook - Facebook Community Page - District Instagram - District Twitter - LinkedIn - Check slides on website</p>		

### FLYERS

**DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES**

IT'S TIME TO RENEW

BE INFORMED. VOTE

VOTE ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 7

RICHFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG/VOTE

BE INFORMED. VOTE

VOTE ON OR BEFORE NOVEMBER 7

RICHFIELDSCHOOLS.ORG/REFERENDUM

**Two ballot questions. One commitment to maintain existing class sizes and support for student learning.**

*The Richfield School Board has unanimously agreed to hold a referendum this fall to ask voters to renew and increase local funding to support student learning. There are two questions on the ballot.*

**#1: Renew the existing technology levy.**

100% of our educational technology is funded through a local technology levy, which expires in 2024. It must be renewed by voters or the District will face more than \$4 million in budget cuts. This local levy started in 2003 and was renewed by voters in 2013. We are asking to renew the levy at the same rate as it has been since 2003. Question 1 would not increase taxes; it renews taxes already being collected. The technology levy (or capital projects levy):

- Personalizes instruction
- Provides real-world simulations for science
- Enhances student achievement
- Prepares students for a rapidly changing world
- Provides equitable access to schoolwork from anywhere, at any time
- Makes school operations more efficient
- Enhances security for people, property and data

**#2: Revoke and replace the existing operating referendum to be more equitable with neighboring districts.**

Richfield voters have long supported our students with a local operating referendum. The operating referendum was last approved in 2017. However, it generates about half the amount per student that most districts receive. We are asking local voters for an increase.

- To ensure more equitable funding
- To maintain small class sizes
- To personalize learning
- To support students who struggle (academically and social-emotionally)
- To stabilize school funding for the future

**Operating Referendum "Dollars per Student" vs. District**

**How much is needed?**

Question 2 will ask to revoke our existing referendum of \$1,114.60 per student, and to replace it with a new authorization of \$2,202.89 per student. The increase would generate \$4.3 million annually for day-to-day operations, including hiring and retaining great teachers, supporting learning, purchasing instructional materials, paying utilities and transportation, etc. Approval of this increase would cost an additional \$16 per month on a property valued at \$300,000. More detailed information is available on our website.

**Learn more at richfieldschools.org/referendum**

**QUESTIONS?**

- 612-798-6000
- referendum@rpsmn.org
- richfieldschools.org/referendum

VOTE BY MAIL

VOTE EARLY, IN-PERSON  
BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 22

VOTE ON ELECTION DAY  
NOVEMBER 7 | 7 A.M. - 8 P.M.

### English

Los votantes de Richfield han apoyado a nuestros estudiantes con un referéndum operativo local que fue aprobado por última vez en el 2017. Sin embargo, sólo genera la mitad de la cantidad por estudiante que reciben la mayoría de otros distritos. Pedimos a los votantes locales un aumento para:

- Assegurar una financiación más equitativa
- Mantener el tamaño de las clases
- Personalizar el aprendizaje
- Apoyar a los estudiantes que tienen dificultades
- Estabilizar la financiación de las escuelas para el futuro

**¿Cuánto se necesita?**

La pregunta 2 pedirá revocar el referéndum actual de \$1,114.60 por estudiante y reemplazarlo con una nueva autorización de \$2,202.89 por estudiante. El aumento generaría 4.3 millones de dólares anuales para las operaciones diarias, que incluye la contratación y retención de maestros excelentes, el apoyo del aprendizaje, la compra de materiales educativos, el pago de servicios públicos y transporte, etc. La aprobación de este aumento costaría \$16 mensuales para una propiedad valorada en \$300,000. Más información en nuestra página Web.

**Más información en richfieldschools.org/referendum**

**¿PREGUNTAS?**

- 612-798-6000
- referendum@rpsmn.org
- richfieldschools.org/referendum

POR CORREO

TEMPRANO, EN PERSONA  
A PARTIR DEL 22 DE SEPTIEMBRE

EL DÍA DE LAS ELECCIONES  
7 DE NOVIEMBRE | 7 A.M. - 8 P.M.

**Operating Referendum "Dollars per Student" vs. District**

### Spanish



## BOOKMARK

**BE A VOTER!**  
Vote September 22- November 7

**3 WAYS YOU CAN VOTE IN MINNESOTA**

**VOTE EARLY, IN-PERSON**  
BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 22

Richfield City Hall | Edina City Hall  
6700 Portland Ave. | 4801 W. 50th St.  
Monday-Friday  
Sept 22 - Nov 3 (8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)  
or Saturday, Nov 4 (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.)  
or Monday, Nov 6 (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

**VOTE BY MAIL**  
*(Allow a couple of weeks for mail service)*

**Step 1:** Complete an absentee ballot application.  
**Step 2:** Return your ballot application.  
**Step 3:** Receive an absentee ballot.  
**Step 4:** Return your ballot by mail or in person.  
All ballots must be returned by 8 p.m. on Election Day, Tuesday, Nov 7.

**VOTE ON ELECTION DAY**  
NOVEMBER 7 | 7 A.M. - 8 P.M.

Find your voting location at  
[www.pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/](http://www.pollfinder.sos.state.mn.us/)

**RICHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS REFERENDUM**

**LEARN MORE**

**QUESTIONS?**

- 612-798-6000
- [referendum@rpsmn.org](mailto:referendum@rpsmn.org)
- [richfieldschools.org/referendum](http://richfieldschools.org/referendum)

**DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES**  
IT'S TIME TO RENEW



## EMAILS

Richfield Public Schools

Richfield Public Schools posted in Richfield Public Schools

**Have you voted yet? Be a voter!**

# DELIVERING ON OUR PROMISES

**IT'S TIME TO RENEW**

Life is busy. To make it easier to vote, the State of Minnesota offers early, in-person voting!

- Simply walk into your City Hall and complete [this form](#).
- An election judge will give you a ballot ([see a sample ballot here](#)).
- Fill in your ballot and give it back to the election judge.
- Proudly wear your I VOTED sticker! It's that easy!

You can vote at City Hall now through November 6:


- Weekdays through November 3 from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
- Saturday, Nov. 4, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Monday, Nov. 6, from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.

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Richfield Public Schools

Richfield Public Schools posted in Richfield Public Schools

**Learn About Our Referendum Questions**



**DELIVERING  
ON OUR PROMISES**


**IT'S TIME TO RENEW**

The Richfield School Board has unanimously agreed to hold a referendum this fall to ask voters to renew and increase local funding to support student learning. There are two questions on the ballot.

Dear RPS Community,

As many of you have likely heard by now, we have two referendum questions on the November ballot, as well as a school board election. It is important that our community understands the questions and votes on or before November 7.

The technology referendum (Question 1) is a renewal of an existing levy and there is no new tax impact. The operating referendum (Question 2) seeks to increase funding for our schools and would mean a \$16 per month increase on a property valued at \$300,000.

 **Question 1: Renew the existing technology levy.**

This levy is the primary source of funding for technology in our District. It expires at the end of this school year and must be renewed by voters in the November 2023 election.

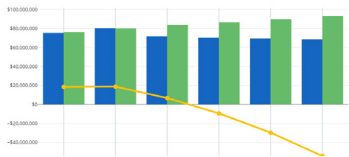
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Dear RPS Community,

Election day is almost here! If you have not already voted, please take a few minutes to learn about our referendum questions before you cast your ballot on Tuesday, November 7.

Without the renewed technology levy or operating levy increase, the District will be required to make significant program reductions starting with the 2024-25 school year. (The revenue projected in this chart includes new funding from the state.)

**Projected Financial Summary**



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Superintendent Unowsky posted in Richfield Public Schools

**Thank you for your investment in Richfield students!**

Dear Richfield Community,

On behalf of the entire Richfield Public School District community, we want to thank you for your support, partnership and (most recently) your investment in our students. Yesterday's referendum results show how strongly our community values strong public schools and cares about Richfield students.

**Question 1: Renewing our Technology Levy:** With an 81% **YES** vote, we will be able to fund reliable technology in our District, which will allow us to personalize instruction, enhance student achievement, prepare students for a rapidly changing world, provide equitable access to schoolwork, make school operations more efficient and enhance security for people, property and data.

**Question 2: Replacing the Operating Referendum:** With a 72% **YES** vote, our schools will have more equitable funding. We can maintain small class sizes, personalize learning, support students who struggle (academically and social-emotionally) and stabilize school funding for the future.

We want you to know that we take your trust in us very seriously. We will continue to be good stewards of the funds invested in our schools. We will continue to provide a high-quality education that meets students where they are and helps them gain the skills and confidence they need to reach their dreams.

We are proud of our teachers and staff, of our students and families, and of our community. We will continue to deliver on our promises. We could not be more proud to serve as your Richfield Public School District leaders.

Sincerely,

Superintendent Steven Unowsky & the RPS Board of Education

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