

BOARD OF EDUCATION  
The School District of Independence

12375

The Board of Education met for a Tax Rate Levy Hearing on Tuesday, August 9, 2022, at 5:45 p.m. in the Board Room at the Board of Education Office, 201 North Forest Avenue, Independence, Missouri.

Members Present: Mr. Eric Knipp, President  
Mr. Blake Roberson, Vice President  
Mrs. Carrie Dixon, Treasurer  
Mrs. Jill Esry, Director  
Mr. Greg Finke, Director  
Mrs. Denise Fears, Director  
Mr. Anthony J. Mondaine, Director

Also Present: Dr. Dale Herl, Superintendent  
Dr. Lance Stout, Dr. Cindy Grant, Dr. Randy Maglinger, Dr. Pam Boatright, Dr. Tony Robinson, Mr. Dean Katt, Mrs. Leslie Hochsprung, Mrs. Sherry Potter, Mr. Todd Theen, Mr. Salum Stutzer, PTA, INEA, staff members, patrons, and Ms. Annette Miller.

The meeting was called to order by the President, Mr. Eric Knipp, and minutes of the meeting were recorded by the secretary, Ms. Annette Miller. Mr. Knipp stated the purpose of this meeting was for a public hearing on the proposed 2022-2023 Tax Rate Levy.

Dr. Herl reviewed the proposed Tax Rate Levy for the 2022-2023 school year. He shared a recap of the District's Tax Levy history and Assessed Valuation. This year's estimated Assessed Valuation is \$1,272,676,041 compared to last years' of \$1,214,144,871. Dr. Herl said based on the preliminary Assessed Valuation dated June 30, 2022 from the Jackson County Clerk's office, the Administration is recommending a Tax Rate Levy for the 2022-2023 school year of \$4.1190 for the Operating Fund and \$1.3181 for the Debt Service fund for a total of \$5.4371 per \$100 of Assessed Valuation. The District submits the Tax Rate Summary to the County Clerk's Office and then to the State Auditor's Office annually, using the State's forms for their approval.

The Board of Education expressed appreciation for the School District for being good stewards of the District's funds.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Education, the motion was made by Denise Fears, second by Blake Roberson, at 5:50 p.m. to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

  
Secretary

  
President

The Board of Education met in regular session Tuesday, August 9, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room at the Board of Education Office, 201 North Forest Avenue, Independence, Missouri.

Members Present: Mr. Eric Knipp, President  
Mr. Blake Roberson, Vice President  
Mrs. Carrie Dixon, Treasurer  
Mrs. Jill Esry, Director  
Mr. Greg Finke, Director  
Mrs. Denise Fears, Director  
Mr. Anthony J. Mondaine, Director

Also Present: Dr. Dale Herl, Superintendent  
Dr. Lance Stout, Dr. Cindy Grant, Dr. Pam Boatright, Dr. Randy Maglinger,  
Dr. Anthony Robinson, Mr. Dean Katt, Mrs. Leslie Hochsprung, Mrs.  
Megan Murphy, Mrs. Sherry Potter, Mr. Todd Theen, Mr. Salum Stutzer,  
INEA, interested patrons, reporters, staff, and Ms. Annette Miller.

The meeting was called to order by the President, Mr. Eric Knipp, and minutes of the meeting were recorded by the secretary, Ms. Annette Miller. Mr. Knipp welcomed those in attendance.

Greg Finke made the motion to approve the August 9, 2022 Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Blake Roberson and unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Mr. Knipp said that several individuals had requested to address the Board of Education this evening. He read Policy 0412 regarding the process when addressing the Board of Education.

Sarah Nelson, 17101 East George Franklyn Drive, Independence 64057. She said she is a teacher in the Independence School District and President of INEA. She discussed the use of pronouns such as she, her, hers, etc. She asked the Board of Education to reverse banning the Cats vs Robots book from elementary school libraries and change the process regarding challenged materials. She said the committee was not inclusive and that it excluded key stake holders. She asked that the investigation be reopened and reconsider the process using more inclusive representation. Mrs. Nelson said this decision has caused hurt to staff, the community, and students. She also addressed the change in transportation for secondary students from 1 mile to 1.5 miles and how this decision was made. She talked about Item number 10 under New Business: Approval to Explore a Four Day Instructional School Week. She asked who would be involved as a variety of stakeholders should be included. Mrs. Nelson asked the Board to extend the public speaking at times when numerous requests to address the Board have been received. She asked that everyone work together proactively to show staff and the community that you are willing to work with them.

Brent Clark, 18804 Hanthorn Drive, Independence 64057. Mr. Clark said he was upset that the Cats vs Robots book was removed from elementary school libraries. He asked if the Board considered the message it sent to non-binary people. He said the appropriate action would be for parents to request that their student not be allowed to read the book. Mr. Clark said he was donating 35 copies of the book Cats vs Robots Now With Fleas to the School District and would also donate copies of the book that had been removed. He asked the Board of Education to reinstate the book in the elementary libraries.

Jason Vollmecke, 2914 South Vermont Avenue, Independence 64052. He said it has been two months since the District's decision to remove the Cats vs Robots book from the elementary school libraries. He cited an ACLU decision regarding banning books based on respect to student groups, age appropriateness, and uses of pronouns-nouns. He said if the meaning of non-binary had not been looked up, he was providing guidance for the future: biological sex - male or female; gender identity - man, woman, or both; gender expression - public expression; and gender presentation - how others see them.

Dr. Vollmecke said the Board of Education failed to see what they were doing with removing the book Cats vs Robots from the elementary school libraries.

Andrea McClain, 16712 East 51<sup>st</sup> Terrace Court South, Independence 64057. She said she and her husband have three children and 10 years ago they moved them from private to public education. During this time, she has seen many changes in the School District: the academies, building projects, and advances in technology capabilities. Mrs. McClain said the last two years have been challenging due to the COVID pandemic which forced people to

forge through the unknown. She said the ISD was a forerunner among the area school districts with their diligent leadership during this time. She said the District has been creative and forward thinking regarding finances and the expansion and beautification of the facilities. She said people should not focus on the negatives but look at the positives. She urged the School District to keep up the good work by further investing in greater resources and personnel. Mrs. McClain said that she recognizes the role of a Board member or Administrator is a tireless and thankless job. She wants the Board and School District to know that they have people that support what they are doing to improve the School District.

Justin Ferguson, 1809 South Leslie Avenue, Independence 64055. Mr. Ferguson expressed concern over the book *Cats vs Robots* being removed from elementary school libraries. He said that people in education don't understand the difference between students' gender and sex. Mr. Ferguson said students stopped reporting issues at school because nothing was being done. He said teachers are afraid to speak out and therefore they are leaving the ISD due to this environment. He stated that more parents and educators voices need to be heard. He said he was simply asking the Board to reflect on if what they are doing is the right thing and they should talk with people in the community. Mr. Ferguson asked the Board to fix this broken policy that results in other students being hurt.

Mr. Knipp thanked each person for presenting their issues, concerns, and suggestions to the Board of Education this evening.

Dr. Herl said the Bills List total for this month is \$10,667,904.41 which is very comparable for the District this time of year.

Denise Fears made the motion that the Board of Education approves the August 9, 2022 Consent Agenda as printed.

1. Minutes – July 12, 2022
2. Approval of August 9, 2022 List of Bills totaling \$10,667,904.41
3. Approval of Personnel Recommendation #3
  - A. Request to Hire (Certificated Staff) for the 2022-2023 School Year.
    1. Mark Allred, Freshman Academy
    2. Holly Beck, Elementary Teacher
    3. Amber Choat, Math Teacher
    4. Casey Dudek, Physical Education Teacher
    5. Faith Irvine, English Teacher
    6. Rodney Keuck, Alternative Teacher
    7. Marilyn Padgett, Spanish Teacher
    8. Laura Rohrer, Foundation Teacher
    9. Theo Scott, Journalism Teacher
    10. Kaycee Speiser, Elementary Teacher
    11. Rusty Westling, ROTC

The motion was seconded by Jill Esry and unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Dr. Herl reported that the 2022-2023 school year starts on Monday, August 22, and the New Teacher Academy started today. He said the Facilities crew has done a phenomenal job even with all of the Bond Issue projects that are going on. The projects will be going on right up to the last week before school starts. The secure entries at all of the schools should be ready except for Three Trails as it will be done next year along with other projects there. Dr/ Herl said that every district is struggling to hire bus drivers. Spare drivers have to obtain a CDL license and be familiar with the routes. Currently, the District has no spare drivers and there are still three open routes. A communication was sent out and the District received 14 applications in two days and it takes two weeks to train new drivers. The District may revisit moving the secondary walk boundaries at semester if the bus driver issue is resolved. Dr. Herl said several notifications have been sent by voice mail and e-mail for families to complete their student(s) enrollment online. The on-line enrollment is at 13 224 students compared to last year at 12,552

Several items under New Business were presented for the Board of Education's consideration.

Mr. Stutzer presented information on the Bond Issue projects. He said we are at the last couple of weeks before school starts and he is confident in the ability to get projects done so they will not impact instruction at each of the sites even though material procurement and the construction work force have provided challenges recently. Van Horn cafeteria – the expanded 3,000 square feet area is down to the wire for completion. The subcontractor is installing acoustical ceiling tile and then lighting fixtures. The floors in the cafeteria prep area are complete, walk-in cooler has been installed, along with prep tables, ice machines, etc. Secure Entries – going through punch lists now for all of the sites. Bridger work underway with crews working into the weekend. Hanthorn - office work station has been installed, case work done, and doors installed. Randall progress is similar to Hanthorn with counter tops

being installed and the office furniture has been delivered. Christian Ott's entrance work is well underway along with work on the office area, still waiting on the glass for the west windows. William Southern - canopy is being installed at the new entry, sidewalk work is underway, casework and counter tops are going in. Mill Creek- installing their vestibule and the art room is almost complete. Sugar Creek – mainly working on exterior by pouring the new stairs and the planter stations are in place. Performing arts area – due to the sheet metal union workers strike, duct work still needs to be completed.

Dr. Herl reviewed information shared at the 5:45 p.m. Special Meeting for the Tax Rate Levy hearing. The Operating levy is \$4.1190, Debt Service is \$1.3181 for a total levy of \$5.4371 for 2022-2023 which is the same as last year's total levy. Dr. Herl said that patrons of the District have passed an \$85 million, \$38 million, and \$43 million Bond Issues over the last 13 years and the District's levy has increased less than one cent. The Administration is recommending a total levy of \$5.4371 for the 2022-2023 school year.

The motion was made by Greg Finke that the Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent, or his designee, to set the Tax Rate Levy at \$5.4371, with an Operating Tax Levy of \$4.1190 and Deb Service of \$1.3181, for the 2022-2023 school year and to authorize the Superintendent, or his designee, to submit the Estimate of Required Local Taxes to the Jackson County Clerk.. The motion was seconded by Denise Fears and unanimously approved by the Board of Education. (Page 12379)

Dr. Stout explained that Nutrition Services had issued an RFP for grocery prime vendor contract in April and no bids were received. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education acknowledged that this served as an appropriate emergency basis to utilize noncompetitive sole source procurement measure to identify an appropriate grocery distributor capable of performing the necessary services. The Administration is recommending approving Springfield Grocers for the prime vendor contract of three years at a cost of \$2,750,000.

The motion was made by Denise Fears that the Board of Education approves Springfield Grocers for prime vendor needs in the estimated amount of \$2,750,000 for the 2022-2023 school year. The contract is for a three-year term with renewable options for a fourth and fifth year. The motion was seconded Greg Finke and unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Dr. Herl said the Administration is recommending setting the District's tuition rate for the 2022-2023 year at \$12,358.39. The calculation is based on the cost of educating a student the previous year. This would apply to students whose parents/guardians own property in the Independence School District but live outside the District.

Jill Esry made the motion, second by Carrie Dixon, that the Board of Education approves the recommendation to set the 2022-2023 tuition rate at \$12,358.39 as presented. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Dr. Stout said the Administration is recommending approval of membership in the AEPA, Buy Board, Education Plus, Kansas City Suburban Joint Purchasing Cooperative, NCPA, NPPGov, Omnia Partners, PEPPM, Sourcewell, and TIPS-USA Cooperatives. He said this is a cost saving measure for the District to use in buying products and supplies quickly at reduced prices and there is no cost for the District to join.

Denise Fears made the motion that the Board of Education approves District membership in the following Cooperatives: AEPA, Buy Board, Education Plus, Kansas City Suburban Joint Purchasing Cooperative, NCPA, NPPGov, Omnia Partners, PEPPM, Sourcewell, and TIPS-USA. The motion was seconded by Greg Finke and unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Dr. Stout said that the Administration is recommending approval to purchase a Dell VxRail Backup System. This system will run as a duplicate system that could be used in case of major crisis situations. This would allow the District to still have a system running in order to keep technology and the servers going. The cost is \$122,179.48 by using the (MHEC) Master Agreement Contract.

The motion was made by Denis Fears, second by Jill Esry, that the Board of Education approves the purchase of the Dell VxRail Backup System for \$122,179.48 using the (MHEC) Master Agreement Contract. The motion was unanimously by the Board of Education.

Dr. Herl reported that the William Chrisman High School dance room renovation is being funded through a donor's contribution so no District funds are being used. This is located in the lower area under the gym and will be used for practices by the dance and cheerleading teams. The Administration is recommending approving the bid of \$151,000 from Bruner Contracting.



**Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Division of Administrative and Financial Services**

**ESTIMATE OF REQUIRED LOCAL TAXES**

(Submit to county clerk of each county where district has assessed valuation on or before September 1)

To County Clerk (Name): **Mary Jo Spino**

Name of County: **Jackson**

County District Code: **048-077** District Name: **Independence School District 30**

Mailing Address: **201 N. Forest Avenue  
Independence, MO 64050**

Telephone Number: **816-521-5300** Fax Number: **816-521-2806**

In compliance with Section 164.011, RSMo, we the undersigned, hereby submit an estimate of the amount of school money necessary to maintain the public school for a term of      months, and certify that the data shown are correct.

Name of President of Board of Education: **Eric Knipp**

Signature of President of Board of Education:

Date

**8/10/2022**

Name of Secretary of Board of Education: **C. Anette Miller**

Signature of Secretary of Board of Education:

Date

**8/10/2022**

Assessed valuation in this county as certified in accordance with Section 137.245, RSMo, or amended prior to September 1. **\$1,272,676.041**

Year Beginning July 1,      Year Ending June 30, **2023**

Length of school term authorized is: Number of days **170** and **1,150.34** hours in session.

A separate vote was cast in accordance with Sections 164.121, 164.131, 164.141, 164.151, RSMo, to provide for a bond issue (where applicable).

Yes	No
	<b>x</b>

**Tax Rate <sup>a</sup>**

Fund	Tax Rate Ceiling	Unadjusted Levy <sup>b</sup>	Actual Tax Levy (Adjusted Levy <sup>c</sup> )	Prop C Roll Back
1. Incidental <sup>d</sup>	<b>\$ 4.1190</b> 411.90 ¢	<b>\$ 4.1190</b> 411.90 ¢	<b>\$ 4.1190</b> 411.90 ¢	\$ -
2. Teachers	0.00 ¢	\$ - 0.00 ¢	\$ - 0.00 ¢	\$ -
3. Debt Service <sup>e</sup>	<b>\$ 1.6082</b> 160.82 ¢	<b>\$ 1.3181</b> 131.81 ¢	<b>\$ 1.3181</b> 131.81 ¢	N/A
4. Capital Projects	0.00 ¢	\$ - 0.00 ¢	\$ - 0.00 ¢	N/A
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$5.4371</b> 543.71 ¢	<b>\$5.4371</b> 543.71 ¢	<b>\$ 69,196,669.03</b>

a. Pursuant to Section 137.073, RSMo.

b. Unadjusted levy is equal to the tax rate ceiling less a voluntary reduction. It is not reduced for Proposition C Rollback.

c. Adjusted levy - Reduced by Proposition C, Section 164.013, RSMo.

d. Operating Funds tax rate ceiling.

e. Debt Service fund ceiling.

**Estimated Revenue from M & M Surcharge Tax in this county: \$ 1,250,000**

**Estimated Revenue from State Assessed Railroad and Utilities in this county: \$ 3,020,000**

Article X, Section 11(C), Constitution of Missouri provides that in any school district where the Board of Education is not proposing a higher tax rate for school purposes, the last tax rate approved shall continue and the tax rate need not be submitted to the voters.

Greg Finke made the motion that the Board of Education approves the bid of \$151,000 from Bruner Contracting for the dance room remodel at William Chrisman High School. The motion was seconded by Blake Roberson and unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Dr. Stout presented information regarding proposals for cab services supporting the McKinney Vento Program. He said students that quality for McKinney Vento who reside in temporary housing outside the district need to be transported in cabs to District sites. Dr. Stout said the Administration is recommending approval of the proposals from Assist Services, EverDriven, Safe Keepers, and WHC KCT for cab services to support the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

The motion was made by Carrie Dixon, second by Blake Roberson, that the Board of Education approves the proposals from Assist Services, EverDriven, Safe Keepers, and WHC KCT for cab services to support the McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Dr. Stout said the District is required to transport some students who reside outside the school district boundaries that require specialized services: that some students' IEPs require they have an attendant on board when transported; and some students are required to use a car seat/booster seat due to their size or age. He stated that the District is recommending accepting the proposals from Assist Services, EverDriven, and Safe Keepers for specialized cab services.

The motion was made by Jill Esry, second by Denise Fears, that the Board of Education approves the proposals from Assist Services, EverDriven, and Safe Keepers for specialized cab services. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

Dr. Herl explained that the Administration is recommending exploring a four day instructional school week. He said that it would not be for the upcoming 2022-2023 school year. Based on research, over 25% of the school districts in Missouri operate on a four day instructional week. He said the Administration is proposing exploring this option and realize that it will require forming a number of committees to research information on the effects involving the Business Office operations, payroll options, certificated staff, custodians, bus drivers. Nutrition service employee, etc. Dr. Herl said the District this is not based on a cost saving method but it is about attracting and retaining quality staff. He said surrounding districts are talking about shortages of employees: teachers, bus drivers, nutrition service workers, substitutes, etc. The Administration wanted to share with the Board of Education, staff, and community about researching this option. Dr. Jon Turner, Missouri Southern State University professor, has compiled information on this option and will share it with the School District. Dr. Herl said there are a number of issues that will have to be addressed by the various committees in order for a four day instructional week option to be successful.

Greg Finke made the motion that the Board of Education approves the Administration exploring a four day instructional week. The motion was seconded by Anthony Mondaine and unanimously approved by the Board of Education.

There being no further information to come before the Board of Education, Greg Finke made the motion, second by Denise Fears, to adjourn the meeting and go into executive session for legal, real estate, and personnel issues at 7:10 p.m. The motion was approved as follows:

Ayes:	Eric Knipp	Nays:
	Blake Roberson	
	Carrie Dixon	
	Jill Esry	
	Denise Fears	
	Greg Finke	
	Anthony J. Mondaine	

  
Secretary

  
President