

## CITY COUNCIL AGENDA TOPIC

Bellevue School District Levy Renewal – informational update

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **INFORMATION ONLY**

Bellevue School District (BSD) staff, Superintendent Dr. Kelly Aramaki and John Harrison, will present information about the district's proposed renewal of its levy, set to appear on the February 10, 2026 special election ballot.

Tonight's presentation is an opportunity to learn about the school district's proposed levy renewal and how it may be relevant to Bellevue residents attending BSD schools. Councilmembers will have a chance to ask questions.

## RECOMMENDATION

N/A

## BACKGROUND & ANALYSIS

The King County February 10 special election ballot will include renewal propositions to renew property tax levies that fund BSD. These local levies comprise roughly one-quarter of the school district's funding, with the remainder coming from state funding and federal sources.

There are two propositions to Bellevue voters:

- Proposition 1: Educational Programs and Operations Levies (EP&O)
  - Continues funding for day-to-day operations
  - Fills the gap between state funding and what the district needs to operate schools
  - High quality teaching and learning, and additional classroom staff
  - Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and facilities at middle schools and high schools, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) learning
  - World languages in middle schools, including Heritage and dual language instruction
  - Orchestra, band, music programs
  - Athletics
  - Art in elementary schools
  - After school activities
- Proposition 2: Technology & Capital Projects Levy
  - Continues funding for technology, safety, security, capital improvements
  - Access to updated technologies and software
  - Integrated digital curriculum and collaborative STEM learning
  - A computer or tablet for every student
  - Technology support including cybersecurity
  - Safety and preparedness training for students, staff, and families
  - Safety audits, threat assessments, and cybersecurity

- Automated external defibrillators (AEDs), cameras, and visitor management systems
- Roofing, carpeting, and heating/cooling systems
- Repairs to and maintenance of school buildings

If approved by voters, each of the two propositions would be funded by four-year levy renewals, which collect roughly an equivalent amount of funding, depending on a range of factors.

### **Snapshot of Bellevue School District in 2025**

In the 2025-26 school year, BSD has more than 19,000 students enrolled across the district. In total, BSD students speak 117 languages and include 125 countries of birth. The district has 2,727 employees, and on average teachers in BSD have more than 12 years of teaching experience, and 63% of educators have at least a master's degree.

Bellevue Public Schools' students have a 93% graduation rate and an 86% passing rate for advanced placement (AP) exams. Every one of the Bellevue School District high schools are among the 30 best high schools in Washington state, with four in the top 10 – as ranked by U.S. News and World Report (2023). Scholars have 83% grade level proficiency in English & language arts and 80% grade level proficiency in math.

Programming at BSD is broad and innovative. In the 2022-23 school year, BSD earned 23 Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) academic or athletic state titles. BSD students are ambitious and eager to connect to the community: the class of 2023 completed 16,217 hours of community service, and BSD students earned 8,076 college credits earned through College in the High School program.

BSD enrollment is up by approximately 200 students in 2025-26 compared to the prior year, with some of its most robust growth in the kindergarten grade. Kindergarten is currently up to 1,200 students, a number not seen since 2020. In-district student enrollment grew at the elementary level, and non-resident enrollment grew by 300 students from the prior year, both of which stabilize the district enrollment as a whole and allow BSD to maintain its current level of programs and electives.

### **Levy Governance**

On October 16, 2025 the BSD Board of Directors voted to approve the two levy renewal measures for submission to King County Elections to appear on the February ballot. The financial summary of the four years of the levy receipts, if passed by voters, is summarized below:

#### **Proposition 1 - EP & O - \$0.75 / \$1,000**

- 2027 \$88,300,000
- 2028 \$93,200,000
- 2029 \$97,900,000
- 2030 \$103,000,000

#### **Proposition 2 – Technology & Capital - \$0.54 / \$1,000**

- 2027 \$64,000,000
- 2028 \$67,000,000
- 2029 \$70,000,000
- 2030 \$73,000,000

For Proposition 1, the levy collection formula estimates that these levies would collect the lesser of \$2.50/\$1,000 assessed value (AV) of an owned property or \$3,851 per pupil in calendar year 2026. BSD currently has a comparatively small local schools tax rate per \$1,000 AV, with more than 15 King County cities having higher school levy rates than Bellevue.

## **POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS**

### **Policy Impact**

N/A

### **Fiscal Impact**

The BSD Board of Directors has advanced the two four-year levy renewals to the February special election on February 10. Depending on a handful of factors, these levies should have a roughly revenue neutral impact on residents and property owners compared to 2025. If the levies were not approved by voters, the District may seek City partnership or collaboration in trying to identify other funding sources in order to maintain existing programs beyond 2026.

## **OPTIONS**

N/A

## **ATTACHMENTS**

N/A

## **AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY**

N/A