

April 23, 2015 Northville Record

Vote yes for Northville's future

On May 5, Northville Public Schools will ask local voters to approve a renewal of the sinking fund levy. In my mind, this is a win-win proposal for the schools and residents. As a resident, you will see no tax increase and the local schools will continue to see much needed updates to their buildings and infrastructure.

The .9978 mil levy renewal equates to approximately \$250 of tax on a \$500,000 home – and, unlike the regular school tax, all of the money is allocated to Northville Public Schools. We have all seen and are able to enjoy the improvements from the initial sinking fund levy: parking lot and drainage upgrades at Amerman, a safer and more aesthetic entrance to our football stadium, energy-efficient heating and cooling enhancements, and advances in technology throughout the district.

Our property values remain high in Northville and Novi due in large part to our strong public school system, and it is important for us to support these local schools by maintaining our buildings, equipment and property.

I urge you to vote yes on the sinking fund proposal on May 5, not just for our future leaders but for our community as a whole.

Amy Storm
Northville

Vote yes, protect investment

As the chair of the Citizens Committee that supported the Northville Public Schools technology bond that was approved by voters November 2012, I am so grateful for the support of the community. This initiative ensured that each dollar collected stayed in Northville and provided the much needed resource to replace aging technology for our kids.

The school district's Sinking Bond Renewal request is a very similar initiative in that each dollar brought in will be used on many projects identified through a Facility Condition Assessment. Resources will be allocated to updating building safety and security, improving classroom learning environments for our kids and keeping buildings operational. The Sinking Bond Renewal will help preserve the General Fund dollars for instruction and student learning.

A yes vote Tuesday, May 5 will not only help protect our investment in our schools but, more importantly, in our community and our kids.

Debbie Grant-Kelterborn
Northville

April 16, 2015 Northville Record

Support school millage renewal

Voters in the Northville Public Schools have an opportunity to retain education excellence in our community by supporting the renewal of the district's sinking fund on May 5.

This renewal — not an increase — of less than a mill (0.9978 mill) will provide critical funding to make necessary and much needed repairs to the district's school buildings and other facilities. The renewal of the millage — originally approved by voters in 2011 — will allow the district to pay for necessary facility repairs as well as safety and building code upgrades without compromising operating funds critical to classroom learning.

The reduction in the state's per pupil allocation during the past decade has challenged school districts across Michigan to maintain quality instruction and student learning while grappling with fewer classroom dollars.

In the past seven years, Northville's per pupil spending has been reduced nearly \$440 per student. To take operations money away from the classroom for facility repairs would compromise the district's ability to deliver the quality education that is the hallmark of Northville Public Schools.

The five-year 0.9978-mill renewal will provide approximately \$2.5 million each year to upgrade HVAC systems, lighting and emergency systems as well as replace windows, improve roof systems and make other necessary repairs and upgrades necessary to maintain school building safety and a sound environment for student learning.

Renewal of the school district's sinking fund request will go a long way in protecting our community's investment — not only in our school buildings, but in our children and their future.

Michele Fecht
Northville

April 1, 2015 Northville Record

Approve Sinking Fund millage renewal

On May 5, there will be a second issue on the ballot. The Northville Public Schools is asking voters to renew its Sinking Fund for another five years. There is no increase in the amount of millage (it's still less than one mil). As you know, Northville has one of the best school systems in the state of Michigan. It's important to maintain this excellence for students and allow Northville to be a community of choice because of its educational system.

The Sinking Fund can only be used for infrastructure changes and improvements. This covers such items as school building enhancements for better learning, maintaining the safety and security of facilities, improving energy efficiency and reducing operating costs. It's important to maintain and improve existing structure without having to use general fund dollars that are for classroom learning and staffing.

Many of you already have students who have graduated from NPS and others presently have children in the school system or will have shortly. I urge all of you to vote yes on this proposal. The renewal of the Sinking Fund will allow us to continue to enhance one of the gems of Northville — its public schools.

Richard Brown
Northville

Vote yes in support of Northville schools

On May 5 we need your support. Voters are being asked to renew the Sinking Fund millage. This millage is a little less than 1 mil, and every penny goes directly to support our Northville Public Schools. This is a renewal. Voters first passed this millage in 2010.

The name Sinking Fund is an awkward name. However, these funds are essential to the health and survival of our schools. Sinking Fund money is used for basic maintenance, repair, and replacement. Over the past four and a half years we have replaced roofs, boilers, lighting, painted classrooms, installed new flooring, and improved our athletic facilities.

When the board first came to voters, we were facing a \$470 per pupil cut in funding. The state constitution does not allow school districts to ask voters for money to fund operations, that is, to fund classroom instruction. We are allowed to ask voters to fund maintenance, repair and replacement with a Sinking Fund. Without this help, we would have had to make severe cuts in classroom instruction in order to pay for these repairs.

Our board has been very frugal with the spending of these Sinking Fund dollars over the past four and a half years. Projects have been completed on time and often under budget.

The district has completed a careful study of our building repair, maintenance, and equipment replacement needs for the next five years. Your money will be well spent. We need voters to step forward and continue supporting Northville Public Schools. It is in all of our best interest to maintain educational excellence in Northville.

Scott Craig
Northville

March 26, 2015 Northville Record

Vote yes on Northville school millage

I am writing to ask voters who live in the Northville Public Schools' district to vote yes on the district's Building and Site Sinking fund renewal May 5. This millage is a renewal and will not result in any tax increase.

What it will do is allow the district to continue to collect an existing millage used to maintain district buildings and infrastructure. A sinking fund is one of the few ways the school district can collect money from residents and have that money stay in our district without going through Lansing. This is an issue of vital importance to our community, which is why I agreed to co-chair the Citizens Committee to help pass the renewal.

Without the sinking fund renewal, the district would have to spend money from its general fund in order to pay for basics such as roof repair, window replacement, and parking lot repairs. This would leave less money for classroom needs. The money will not be used for new building construction. But, will simply be used to help maintain the infrastructure we currently have.

This is a renewal of a millage the voters approved in 2011. At that time, the Board of Education chose a five-year renewal cycle so voters could see the benefits of the millage to our community, and to demonstrate that the district would use the sinking fund dollars wisely.

As a former member of the Board of Education for almost 13 years, I believe the district has proven itself on both accounts. For example, the replacement of the rooftop air conditioner chillers at Northville High School, the roof replacement at Thornton Creek Elementary School, and the replacement of the gym floors at Silver Springs and Winchester Elementary schools were all done with revenue from the sinking fund approved by voters in 2011. If those funds were not available, the projects would not have been done, or would have used up classroom money.

For supporters of public education, and people interested in maintaining the property values of homes and businesses in our community, voting yes on the sinking fund millage renewal makes sense. If you want to keep Northville tax dollars at home, you should also vote yes.

For those interested in additional information, a detailed analysis is available at the district's website at www.northvilleschools.org. For those seeking to lend their support to the renewal, you may contact us through our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/VoteYesForNPS, or at Voteyesnps.org.

Ken Roth
Citizens for Northville Schools co-chair

Millage renewal not an increase

Nearly 14 years ago and after much research, our family moved to Northville specifically to put our two kids into the Northville Public School District. In the following years, the teachers, administrators, staff members and board members have continued to work together to give any Northville kid who wants one, an extremely good education. Despite severe reductions in the state's per pupil allocation over the last decade, the Northville Public School District made many tough but smart financial choices and has continued to deliver incredible educational opportunities to each of its students. Having such a strong school district assuredly attracts homeowners and businesses to Northville, further attesting to the strong correlation between our wonderful schools and higher property values.

Voters should understand that voting yes on May 5 will not increase their taxes, but will improve the energy efficiency and maintenance of certain buildings along with improving various safety and security measures throughout the district. It should also be noted that protecting our collective investment in this way will not in any way diminish dollars dedicated via the General Fund to the district's core mission of student learning.

It is with great pride, love for and belief in Northville Public Schools that I write in support of the Sinking Fund Millage Proposal up for renewal on Tuesday, May 5. Please remember to vote!

Mindy Herrmann
Northville Township trustee

Renew sinking fund millage

Renewal of our Northville Public Schools Building and Site Sinking Fund Millage is a must!

As a 19-year Northville resident and member of the initial Sinking Fund Study Committee four years ago, I am

voicing my support once again for the Sinking Fund millage. Our school district is known for the quality of our schools, which includes the condition of our facilities. Given the significant reduction in funds received by the district over the years, it has become increasingly more challenging to fund needed repairs and upgrades to our buildings.

The Sinking Fund millage provides a way for our district to fund repairs and needed improvements without placing additional strain on the Operating Fund. The Operating Fund, which covers items such as salaries and benefits, textbooks, technology equipment and buses, has historically been the source for funds needed for repairs and improvements as well. A renewal of the Sinking Fund millage, which would remain at the current amount, will provide the funding needed over the next five years for specific repairs/improvements. These specific repairs/improvements are not "nice to haves" but necessary to preserve the quality-learning environment, which defines our district. Further, using a Sinking Fund millage as a funding source offers a lower cost approach to paying for these needed building repairs/improvements. The district receives only the funds allocated for specific projects in a given year, which eliminates the interest expense typically incurred with a bond issuance.

The health of our community is inextricably linked to the quality of our schools. The condition of our facilities contributes to the world-class education our district provides. Additionally, the quality of our schools is paramount to attracting and retaining Northville residents and businesses, which in turn, affects our property values.

For all these reasons, I urge you to vote yes to renew the Sinking Fund Millage on May 5.

Audrey Mistor
Northville Township