



WASHINGTON

Community High School District 308

County Schools Facility Sales Tax

On April 2, 2019, voters in Tazewell County will again have the opportunity to vote on the County Schools Facility Sales Tax. Whether this is the first time you have read this proposal **or** if you have extensive knowledge, the purpose of this article is to provide our local community with a comprehensive overview regarding this item on the April ballot. Additionally, we believe it is our obligation to bring school funding alternatives to our local learning community so our constituents have a voice in establishing the direction regarding the long-term financial plan of our educational facilities in Washington Township.

The County Schools Facility Sales Tax represents an alternative approach to funding public school facility improvements. This law, based on a similar law in Iowa, went into effect in 2007 and is currently supported in 50% of Illinois counties. In recent months, school boards representing a majority of students enrolled in Tazewell County districts approved a resolution to place the sales tax proposal on the April 2 ballot. This proposal requires a county wide simple majority for approval.

Listed below are 10 informational FAQs regarding the County Schools Facility Tax:

- 1. What is the county sales tax for schools?** It is a sales tax. The proposal asks voters to approve a countywide, one-cent sales tax. The revenue from this sales tax would go towards funding school facility improvements across the county *and* provide an opportunity for school districts to reduce the reliance on local property tax.
- 2. How will funds from the sales tax be used for Washington Schools?** Funds from this sales tax can be used **only** for maintaining, renovating and upgrading existing school facilities, for new construction and for abatement of property taxes.
- 3. Can revenue from the sales tax be used for any purpose other than facilities and property tax abatement?** No. By law, the revenue is dedicated to **public school** capital improvements and/or property tax reduction. Funds from the sales tax may *not* be used for salaries, benefits, buses, furniture and fixtures or other operating expenses.
- 4. How will the sales tax lead to reduced property taxes?** The financial resources will fund school facility maintenance and improvements that would otherwise be funded through local property taxes. Washington Community High School Board of Education has committed to the abatement of existing bonds.
- 5. How much revenue will the sales tax generate for schools?** This funding alternative is projected to generate nearly \$2,900,000 for Washington District Schools and about \$900,000 for WCHS.
- 6. Will every school district in the county benefit from this sales tax?** Yes. Every public school district will receive funds from the sales tax, which will be collected from all towns in the county and then distributed based on district enrollment.
- 7. How much of the revenue generated by the sales tax will come from people who live outside of Tazewell County?** It is projected that approximately 20-30% of the total annual revenue would come from people who live outside of Tazewell County, such as tourists, frequent shoppers or simply traveling through the area. This would result in approximately \$750,000 coming from patrons living outside our county.
- 8. How will county residents on a fixed income and businesses be protected under this plan?** The county sales tax for schools will NOT apply to the following purchases: Groceries | Medication (over the counter and prescription) | Cars, trucks and ATVs | Boats and RVs | Mobile homes | Farm equipment and parts. Basically, if an item is not currently subject to a sales tax, it will NOT be subject to the countywide sales tax for schools.
- 9. How does this benefit our local economy?** Investing in school improvements and construction in Tazewell County will bring job opportunities to our local economy. Many of the local building trades, unions and contractors will see significant job growth and will put people to work across Tazewell County and the surrounding area. Job creation means economic growth for our communities and a better quality of life for everyone in our county.
- 10. How will the proposal appear on the April 2, 2019 ballot?** *Proposition for a 1% Sales Tax for School Facility Purposes "Shall a retailer's occupation tax and service occupation tax (commonly referred to as a "Sales Tax") be imposed in the Tazewell County at a rate of 1% to be used exclusively for school facility purposes?"*

The goal of this correspondence is to **inform** and **educate**, which represent the two important components of our mission and commitment to our learning organization and local community. For more information, you can search online using "Illinois County School Facility Sales Tax" or you may contact the school.