



## **Two-year EP&O Levy – February 14, 2012 – Fact Sheet**

- The Educational Programs and Operations (EP&O) levy is a renewal levy. By law, EP&O levies can only be for a maximum of four years. Like a magazine subscription, the levy expires after the allotted number of years. School districts must go back to their voters and ask for a continuation, or renewal of levy dollar support, at least once every four years.
- Potential funding cuts from the state require that we ask our voters to pay more for our EP&O levy this time around. If the state cuts Local Effort Assistance (LEA) funding, as the legislature is considering, there will be an increase of about 75 cents per \$1,000 valuation for property owners. If the state doesn't entirely cut LEA funds, local tax collections would be reduced to reflect the amount of LEA funded by the state.
- Local tax support is needed more than ever. State and federal funds provide only a portion of most school districts' operating budgets in this state. As the economy has forced cuts at the state level, local levy dollars have played an increasing important role in maintaining key programs and staff.
- An EP&O levy, formerly called a maintenance and operations levy, supports basic school operations. These funds bridge the gap between what the state provides and what the community expects in education.
- The EP&O levy pays for educational programs and services that include teaching staff not paid for by state allocations, additional and expanded instructional programs, athletics and activities, technology and security staff and additional transportation.
- Budget cuts to education in Olympia have widened the gap between what the state pays for in classrooms and what is necessary for student success. With unprecedented cuts to education, passing this levy is even more crucial to continue our good work in classrooms.
- Investing in our children's future is an investment in the community. Without well-educated future generations, our community's potential cannot be realized.
- FWPS is an education leader statewide. We've made some great gains in the past few years, but we can't afford to lose ground.
- The EP&O levy also helps the district provide compensation for additional time and responsibilities (TRI), for teachers and other staff, including counselors, deans, librarians, TOSA's, (teachers on special assignment), and instructional coaches. This funding also bridges the gap between state allocations and the labor market requirements to attract and retain quality employees.
- The EP&O levy allows the district to provide a long list of programs and things for which state and federal dollars are insufficient, including: school resource officers, textbook adoptions, classified substitutes such as custodial staff, certificated substitutes beyond the state's allocation, AVID – a college preparatory program -- at each of our secondary schools, K-8 programs at Woodmont and Nautilus, athletics and activities, AmeriCorps, AFJROTC at Federal Way and Todd Beamer High Schools, Cambridge Program at Federal Way High, International Baccalaureate at Thomas Jefferson and other additional course offerings for high school students.