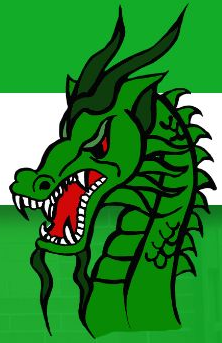


*Investing in the **future** of Siren Schools*



# OPERATIONAL REFERENDUM

**Tuesday, November 3, 2026**

# How Wisconsin Schools Are Funded



- Wisconsin school districts primarily rely on state aid and local property taxes.
- State-imposed revenue limits restrict the amount districts may raise for day-to-day operations.
- Revenue limits do not automatically increase when operating costs rise.
- An operational referendum allows voters to authorize a district's revenue above the state-imposed limit.



# Our Referendum History



- In 2023, voters approved a three-year, non-recurring operational referendum for Siren Schools.
- That funding helped support district operations through the 2025-26 school year.
- This authorization has expired and is no longer available.



# Our Financial Needs



- The Siren School District continues to experience pressure from:
  - Declining enrollment
  - Reduced and fluctuating state aid
  - Rising operating expenses
- Costs for staffing, transportation, utilities, maintenance, and student services continue to rise.



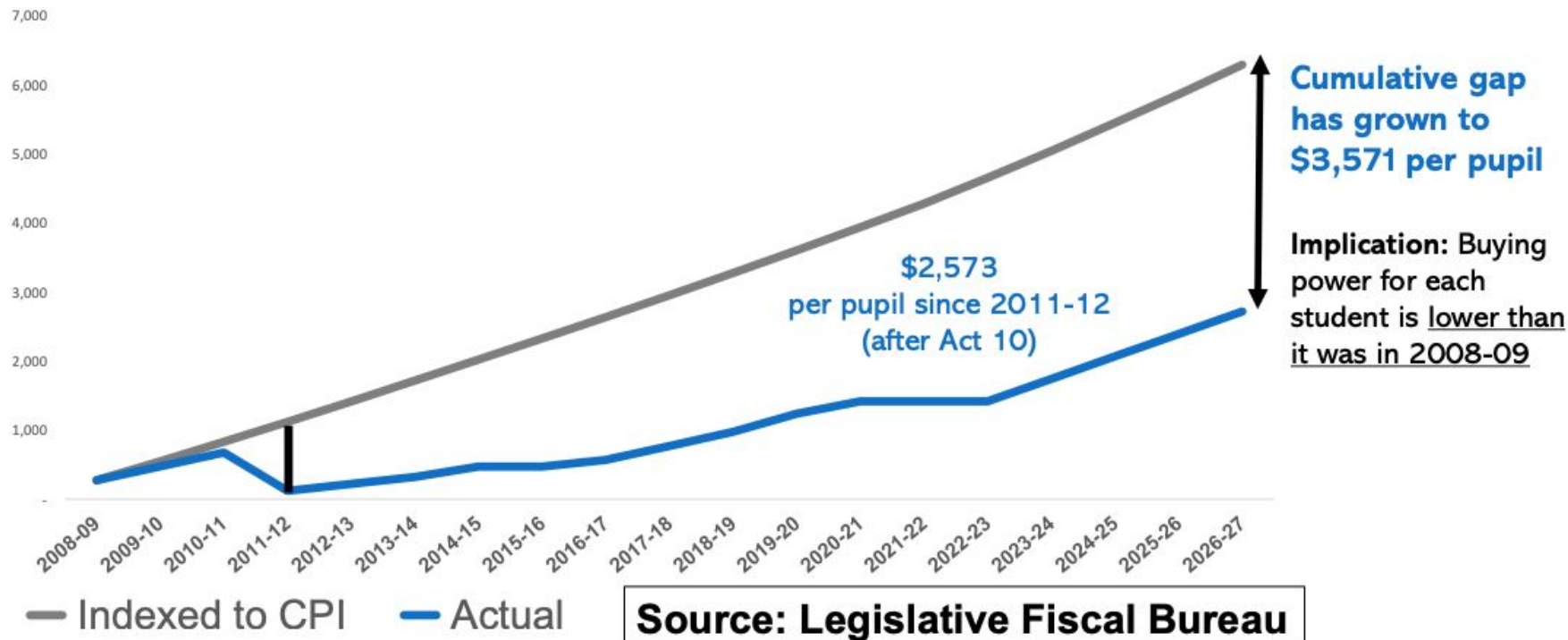
# Our Current Financial Position



- The district can meet its current financial obligations, but our financial position requires close monitoring and proactive planning.
- The district has used fund balance to address gaps between available revenue and operating expenses.
- Continued reliance on fund balance is not a sustainable long-term solution.



# Cumulative annual adjustments in general **school district revenues per pupil** lag inflation by nearly \$3,600 since 2009



# What is Fund Balance?



- Fund balance helps the district manage cash flow, respond to unexpected expenses, and stabilize its budget.
- It is not simply a savings account or the same as cash on hand.
- Using fund balance for recurring expenses reduces the amount available for future needs.
- Our long-term goal is to responsibly rebuild our fund balance.



# Balancing Our Budget



Siren Schools reduced spending by approximately **\$874,864** in 2025. These reductions included:

- 7 full-time-equivalent staff positions
- 5 salary reductions
- Lower benefit costs
- Cuts to services, supplies, maintenance, technology, professional development, travel, and legal expenses



# How Reductions Affect Students



- One elementary classroom is maintained at each grade level.
- 6th grade was restructured as a self-contained middle school program.
- Music, band, and choir staffing was reduced to one K-12 teaching position
- Administrative team was reduced from five positions to three.
- Several departing veteran teachers were replaced with educators at lower salary levels.
- The district has worked to preserve student opportunities while lowering costs as much as possible.

# What's on the Ballot November 3?

- The proposed operational referendum would authorize the district to exceed its state-imposed revenue limit by \$750,000 per year.
- The authorization would last four years, from 2027-28 through 2030-31.
- It is non-recurring and would expire after four years unless voters approve additional authority later.



# Why a Lower Amount?

- In April 2026, voters did not approve a proposed **\$1.8 million** operational referendum.
- The district subsequently reviewed its budget and implemented substantial reductions.
- The November 2026 proposal requests **\$750,000 annually**.
- Lower amount reflects the district's reduced expenses and sensitivity to the property tax impact on our community.
- The amount the district is seeking is less than our **estimated \$1,365,000 annual funding gap**.



# How Would We Use This Funding?

- Maintain educational and elective programming, including art and high school course offerings.
- Support school psychology, mental health programming, academic intervention, and counseling.
- Operate and maintain district facilities, including necessary and preventive maintenance.
- Preserve essential staffing and services for students and families.
- Funding would be for operations – **not** construction projects.



# Property Tax Impact



- Estimated impact: **\$0.31 per \$1,000 of fair market property value**
- For a property with a fair market value of \$250,000:
  - Approximately **\$77.50 per year** or **\$6.46 per month**



# PROPERTY TAXES: YEAR 1 IMPACT



**Year 1: Annual tax increase of \$0.31 for every \$1,000 of property value**

| Property Value | Annual Increase | Monthly Increase |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| \$200,000      | \$62.00         | \$5.17           |
| \$300,000      | \$93.00         | \$7.75           |
| \$400,000      | \$124.00        | \$10.33          |
| \$500,000      | \$155.00        | \$12.92          |

# Without An Approved Referendum

- The district would need to consider additional reductions to align expenses with available revenue.
- Potential reductions could affect:
  - Elementary physical education
  - Core subject staffing in grades 7-12
  - Art, technology education, and family and consumer education
  - Athletics and other student opportunities
  - School psychology, counseling, mental health services, and academic intervention
  - Administration and the Native American home-school coordinator position



# Long-Term Financial Considerations

- Without additional financial support, the district may eventually need to evaluate reorganization, consolidation, or dissolution.
- No decision has been made to pursue any of these options.
- These outcomes would not occur automatically if the referendum is not approved.
- Any action would require formal Board of Education action and a state-established review process.





# LEARN MORE!

*Find more information and answers  
to FAQs by scanning the QR code  
or visiting:*

**SIRENREFERENDUM.ORG**



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*Thank You!*

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