Continuing what our community already supports.

For the past three years, this community has invested in its schools, helping keep programs, services, and staffing steady. That funding **expires in 2027.**

On November 3, 2026, residents will vote on a **$7.1 million recurring operational referendum** to replace the expiring $6.5 million. **The $600,000 increase reflects inflation and feedback from the community survey.**

ELECTION DAY	Tuesday, November 3, 2026

What's on the ballot

Below is the exact language voters will see, set by the resolution the School Board adopted on **August 20, 2026** and filed with the Jefferson and Rock County clerks.

BALLOT QUESTION

Shall the School District of Fort Atkinson, located in Jefferson and Rock Counties, Wisconsin be authorized to exceed the revenue limit specified in Section 121.91, Wisconsin Statutes, by $7,100,000 beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, for recurring purposes consisting of operational and maintenance expenses?

☐ Yes ☐ No

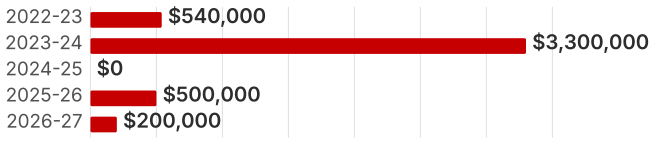
Where the money would go

Operational referendum dollars fund day-to-day costs of running schools such as staffing, programs, transportation, utilities, and maintenance, not new construction.

What the district has already reduced

For several years, the district has been lowering its costs in many ways, such as freezing supply budgets, restructuring benefits, committing to a data-driven compensation system, maximizing state and federal funding for student needs, seeking competitive grants, cultivating local sponsorships, leaving vacant positions unfilled, and issuing layoffs.

Reductions already made, by school year



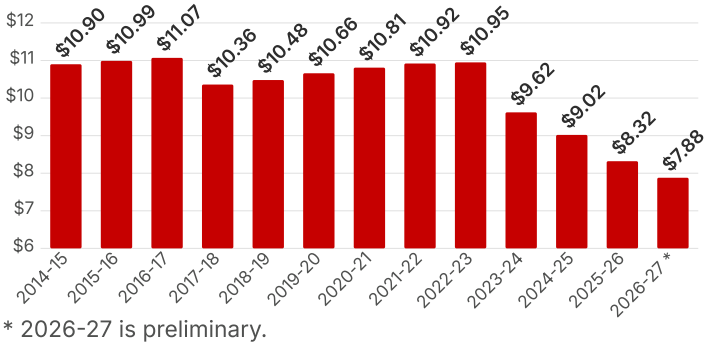
$4,540,000 in confirmed reductions, 2022-23 through 2026-27.

Those reductions are already in the district's budget. Without these reductions, the referendum amount would need to be significantly higher.

A local tax rate that has come down

Careful budgeting has lowered the district's levy rate 27.7% over the past 13 years.

School District of Fort Atkinson tax levy rate, per $1,000 of property value



* 2026-27 is preliminary.

What it would cost you

Work out your own estimate

Find the **Total Estimated Fair Market Value** line on your property tax bill - not the Total Assessed Value, which is lower. Divide it by 1,000 and multiply by **$0.23**. That is roughly how much **more per year** than today the school-district portion of your bill would be. The table opposite does the arithmetic for common home values.

Three things to hold on to. This is the **increase over what you pay now**, not the cost of the whole $7.1 million. It covers the **school-district portion only** - your bill also carries county, municipal, technical college, and state credit lines this referendum does not change. And if approved, it would first appear on the tax bill mailed in **mid-December 2027**. Final rates depend on state-certified property valuations the district does not receive until October, so every figure here is a projection.

Why the cost is smaller than $7.1 million suggests

→ Current referendum: **$6.5 million** (expiring 2027)
→ Proposed referendum: **$7.1 million**
→ What's actually new: **$600,000**

WHAT IS ACTUALLY NEW

$7,100,000 − $6,500,000 = **$600,000**

Estimated increase over today's school-district cost at sample home values, based on $0.23 per $1,000 of fair market value

FAIR MARKET HOME VALUE	PER YEAR	PER MONTH
$150,000	$35	$2.88
$200,000	$46	$3.83
$250,000	$58	$4.79
$300,000	$69	$5.75
$400,000	$92	$7.67

Why now

Under state law the School Board cannot raise more revenue than its state-set limit allows. Only voters can lift that limit.

An existing referendum is expiring

Voters previously approved a $6.5 million operational referendum on a **non-recurring** basis, meaning it was authorized for a fixed period and expires in 2027. The $7.1 million question replaces that expiring authority, adjusted for inflation. Because the new request is **recurring**, it would not need to be renewed again.

A projected shortfall in 2027-28

Without operating revenue from a referendum, the district projects a budget deficit of more than **$10 million** in the 2027-28 school year. These figures are preliminary. Closing a gap of that size without additional revenue would require drastic reductions to staffing, programs, and services.

A local tax rate that has come down

For 2026-27, the School Board lowered the levy rate by **$0.44** to **$7.88 per $1,000** of property value, which is a 5.3% decrease, and the district's lowest rate in more than a decade. The rate has fallen every year since 2023-24, and is down **27.7%** from $10.90 in 2014-15.

How to vote

All registration, polling place, and absentee information for Wisconsin voters is available at myvote.wi.gov.

On election day
Vote at your regular polling location on Tuesday, November 3, 2026. Look up your polling place at **myvote.wi.gov**.

Early by mail
Registered voters may request an absentee ballot at **Vote Absentee By Mail**. Request early to allow time for delivery both ways.

Early in person
In-person absentee voting is available before election day. Dates and locations are set by your municipal clerk. See **Vote Absentee In Person**.

Questions about the referendum?

The full F.A.Q.s are answered at **fortschools.org/vote**, among them the complete ballot language, a line-by-line look at your property tax bill, what the community survey found, and how to register to vote.

As your elected representatives, School Board members welcome your questions about the referendum.

SCHOOL BOARD

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