

NEWS

South Kitsap, Bainbridge Island school levies passing

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Initial voting results released Tuesday showed favorable returns for the South Kitsap and Bainbridge Island school districts, each hoping to renew levy funding set to expire at the end of the year.

For South Kitsap, 50.5% of the votes tallied on Tuesday support a new Educational Programs and Operations levy. The Kitsap County Auditor's Office has more ballots to count, including those postmarked on election day on Feb. 9, meaning the 193-vote margin could narrow.

But SKSD Superintendent Tim Winter said Tuesday night he was pleased with the initial results. A simple majority is needed for the levy to pass.

"We're happy where it is right now," he said.

Election results are expected to be certified on Feb. 19.

South Kitsap's current EP&O levy expires at the end of 2021. With state and federal dollars funding 85% of SKSD's operational budget, the new levy would cover costs such as nurses, counselors, librarians, paraeducators, special education and support staff, transportation, technology, maintenance, athletics and extracurricular activities.

"I'm really grateful for all the people in the community that supported the levy," Winter said. "It's supporting kids, and it's supporting kids for the next four years."

The new levy will either maintain the current tax rate of \$2.50 per \$1,000 of assessed home value or be capped a maximum amount based on student enrollment, whichever is less. Maintaining the \$2.50 rate would generate an estimated \$127.5 million over four years.

Bainbridge Island voters provided overwhelming support for an Enrichment and Operations levy (68.5% approval) and a Technology levy (72.2% approval).

“The local Bainbridge Island community continues to impress me with its outpouring of support of our schools,” BISD Superintendent Peter Bang-Knudsen said in a press release. “Our students and staff are incredibly fortunate to live and work in a community that places such a high value on public education.”

The Bainbridge E&O levy is expected to generate roughly \$29.5 million between 2022-2024, while the technology levy will generate an estimated \$7.5 million between 2022-2024.

School District levy vote results

SKSD Educational Programs and Operations Levy

Yes: 9,118

No: 8,925

BISD Enrichment and Operations Levy

Yes: 5,612

No: 2,583

BISD Technology Levy

Yes: 5,193

No: 2,281

*Levies require 50 percent plus 1 vote for approval