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## **PWSSD Board Approves Capital Referendum Question for Ballot April 1, 2025**

PORT WASHINGTON, WI — At its Monday meeting, the Port Washington-Saukville School District Board of Education approved a capital referendum question that will appear on the ballot Tuesday, April 1, 2025.

If it's approved by voters, the \$59.4 million referendum would allow the district to build a new Saukville Elementary School to replace the current aging building. This school will be built on a different site from where the school currently sits, as district leaders are reviewing options for a potential location in the Village of Saukville or directly adjacent to the Village's boundaries.

The new building will provide modern and flexible classrooms and spaces that will allow students to truly engage in 21st century learning. Additionally, the district would be able to use referendum funds to make maintenance, accessibility, and safety improvements across all buildings.

"While our schools are a big point of pride in our community, our facilities have a series of needs that we must address soon to ensure our students continue to have access to a top-quality educational experience," said Superintendent Dr. Michael McMahon. "We believe the proposed solution represents a thoughtful approach that addresses our needs while limiting the impact on our property taxpayers. We appreciate the input and engagement of our community throughout this process so far, and we hope this continues as we move forward."

A voter-approved referendum would have a property tax impact of 26 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value. The owner of a home assessed at \$300,000 would see a property tax impact of about \$78 per year (\$6.50 per month). Even with this increase, the district's portion of the property tax rate will remain below what it was in the 2022-23 school year.

In making this decision, the board carefully reviewed the input provided by community members, including through a recent survey. The decrease in the referendum's overall amount from \$66.7 million down to \$59.4 million, along with a reduction of over \$27 per year in the tax impact on the average home, is due to adjustments in the district's maintenance plans for Thomas Jefferson Middle School.

“The feedback we received through the survey and other engagement opportunities with our community led to the board deciding to reduce the amount of the proposed referendum by about \$7.3 million,” said School Board President Sara McCutcheon. “The survey presented options for either replacing or building a new middle school in the future. By structuring the current plan to only replace the roof at TJMS, the district is allowing for future planning. We will continue to seek the input of our community as we move forward with this process, right up to election day.”

The district will soon launch a webpage featuring more details on the planned projects, including answers to frequently asked questions. The district will also share information and updates via social media, its website, email, and other channels.

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