



Great Meadows Regional School District: Tax Levy Facts & Clarifications

As our community prepares to consider a potential tax levy adjustment, we want to provide accurate information to clarify common questions and misunderstandings.

1. No Increase Over Cap Last Year

- In 2023, the district did **not** raise taxes above the 2% cap.
- A preliminary \$300,000 increase was approved, but it was **voted down** at the final vote a month later.

2. Referendum Funds Are Restricted

- The recent **referendum funding is limited** to HVAC upgrades and security improvements only.
- These funds **cannot be used** for general operations or staffing.
- 34% of the cost** of these upgrades was covered by the **state**, which would not have been available without the referendum.
- If we had completed these upgrades in phases without the referendum, we would have received **no state aid**.

3. Budget Growth Has Been Minimal

- From **2016–2017 to the 2024–2025** budget, the **total budget** has grown by **only 4.67%**. That's less than 5% over 9 years.
- This limited growth is due largely to **state aid reductions** that caused the District to **reduce teaching staff costs by 27% and Administrative costs by 12%**.
- Like everyone, our building operating expenses are increasing, such as the 17%- 20% increase in the cost of electricity.
- State aid portion** of the budget has dropped from 31% of the total (2014-15) to 9% (2024-25). However, the **Tax levy portion** of the budget has only increased from 66% to 75% in the same timeframe.

4. Staffing Cuts Have Already Happened

- Due to funding challenges, the district has had to eliminate **27 positions**—including projected cuts for 2025–2026, 60% (16) of which were classroom teachers.

5. Class Sizes Are Increasing

- In the upcoming year, **only Kindergarten and 2nd grade** are expected to have average class sizes under 22 students.

6. Federal Funding Is Uncertain

- GMRSD currently receives approximately **\$320,000 in federal funding**.
- This amount is **not guaranteed** and may be reduced or eliminated in future budgets.

7. Tax Levy Increase Range.

- The district is currently considering a tax levy increase ranging from **3.05% to 8.5%**.
- This range includes both the **2% state cap** and any **banked cap** from prior years.
- A preliminary budget was approved on March 13 with a 3.05% increase that included the use of banked cap

8. No Final Decision Made

- No final decision** has been made yet on the tax levy increase amount.
- Next steps:** the board votes on it Thursday, April 10th. If an increase is approved, the new amount will be reflected in the proposed General Operating Budget, the public hearing for which will occur on May 1, 2025.

9. How Additional Funds May Be Used

Depending on the final amount approved, increased levy funding could be used to:

- Restore **four (4) positions** cut in this year's budget
- Hire a **part-time speech therapist**
- Bring back **up to 6-7 classroom teachers**
- Add a **guidance counselor**
- Add a **behaviorist**
- Reinstate an **assistant principal**