



SUPERINTENDENT UPDATES

October 28, 2022

Good afternoon:

On November 8, our Rockford Public Schools community will be asked to vote on two important issues facing our district.

The first issue is our non-homestead millage RENEWAL. On the ballot are two questions.

First, here are several important reminders:

- This is a RENEWAL
- The district has passed this renewal several times before, most recently in 2018.
- Non-homestead is a millage on business/commercial property and second homes.
- This millage supports our general fund budget.

Question one on the ballot asks voters to renew the current millage at 16.5992.

Question two asks the voters to allow the district to levy the full 18 mills allowed by state law and approved by state legislators.

Every district in the state is required to vote on a non-homestead millage because in 1994 the state changed school funding. Since 1994 the state has allocated a per pupil allocation to each district. This per pupil allocation comes from two sources – the state allocation and the funds raised through each district's non-homestead millage.

The per pupil funding makes up our general fund and pays for utilities, maintenance, supplies, and salaries and benefits. This is different from our bond program which funds capital improvements throughout the district and cannot be used to pay for salaries and benefits or day-to-day operations of the district.

If a district does not pass a non-homestead millage the state subtracts that amount from the per pupil allocation. In Rockford, our non-homestead millage raises approximately \$7 million dollars for the general fund. That equates to approximately \$900 per student of our per pupil allocation. If the millage does not pass the state would deduct \$900 per student from our per-pupil allocation.

The state of Michigan requires every district in the state of Michigan to vote on a non-homestead millage and has required this since school funding changed in 1994. Our district has been asked to vote on a non-homestead millage multiple times since 1994 and has renewed it several times since it was initially approved in 1994.

The second issue for voters this fall is our Board of Education election. We have three four-year seats and one two-year seat up for election this fall. We have seven candidates running for the three four-year seats and two candidates running for the two-year seat. Please carefully consider the candidates and vote for those candidates who support the vision of the district.

Our district is a vital part of our community. Our community benefits from the district and the district benefits from the community.

I visit schools each week and see the good work that our teachers and staff do. We engage students in meaningful and important learning. We not only teach content – reading, writing, math, history – we also teach students skills in collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking. We provide opportunities in the arts, in career-related fields, and in multiple extra- and co-curricular activities. We support all students and all families. We need members of the Board of Education who also support our mission and support all of our students and families.

Be sure to vote on November 8.

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We have had a tremendous start to the school year. A few fall highlights:

- Our girls' golf team placed fifth in the state. Individually, junior Jessica Jolly tied for third overall.
- Our Rockford High School marching band is having a tremendous season in the Michigan Competing Band Association. They will compete for the state championship on Saturday, November 5.
- Our boys' soccer team won the district and regional championships. They play in the state semifinals on Wednesday, November 2, at 6:00 PM in Grand Ledge against Detroit Catholic Central.
- Our football team was undefeated, won the OK Red Conference title, and is hosting the first round playoff game on Friday, October 28, at 7:00 PM.

Our fall play – The Play That Goes Wrong – has four performances starting November 11. The comedic murder mystery promises lots of action and mayhem. Tickets are available at rocktix.org. It promises to be a wonderful evening. Please come and support our students.

On a personal note, I enlisted the assistance of our Beyond the Rock team to help me share with my Mom some of the great things that go into being the Superintendent in the Rockford Public Schools. My Mom enjoyed the first of what I hope will be many video postcards. I thought you might like to see it as well. Here is a link to the first video Postcard to Mom. (A short ad on YouTube may play before the video – I apologize.)

[Postcards to Mom FRIDAY NIGHTS - YouTube](#)

If you want to see occasional highlights of our schools, I share some of the things I see on my visits to the schools through Twitter and Instagram - @docsmatthews.

As always, if you see me at an event, downtown, or grocery shopping, feel free to say hi or to share a concern or a compliment.

Steve

Dr. Steve Matthews
Superintendent
Rockford Public Schools