

## **Prop E FAQ's – 2**

- 1. Has the District considered raising fees and instituting an enrollment fee to bring in needed revenue?**

Some fees were increased for the 2016-2017 school year. All fees, including potential new fees, are reviewed in April and May each year.

- 2. Why is the district considering replacing textbooks when tablets might be a cheaper and better option? And, can you explain why installing WIFI in middle schools and high school is a priority and how it benefits our students?**

Over the last several years, a hybrid approach to curriculum and instruction has emerged across the United States as many large districts cope with financial demands of providing technology and digital content as well as textbook replacement. While parents and teachers want the flexibility of digital content, they also expect that school districts ensure that content can be readily accessed (sufficient bandwidth and WIFI), that students are protected from total internet access through security systems and software, and that electronic resources are organized by course or subject (learning management system).

WiFi at the middle school and high school levels is needed to increase accessibility to technology (hardware, software, and online resources.) These resources are necessary for students to become fluent in researching and acquiring information – skills required of 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners. Wireless access throughout classrooms allows students an opportunity to bring their own devices to school and add mobile devices for small group instruction. This implementation will build upon the innovative resources that District 7 teachers are currently using and will emphasize consistency across all buildings.

While the world of digital curriculum continues to expand, there remains a strong preference for print materials among both students and teachers. It is the District's goal to continue to support a curriculum development process that promotes a hybrid model that encompasses the best of all available print and digital materials. District 7 educators will continue to assess the benefits of a variety of digital resources, which may include E-Texts, Apps and Games, online assessments, open-source materials such as Khan Academy, and access to online databases and video files.

The use of supplemental online resources will complement the instruction students receive on a daily basis. Incorporating digital resources both at school and at home will be necessary to assure District 7 students are not left behind in this technology driven age. Quality digital resources, which are subscription and fee-based, have proven invaluable to

students and parents alike. The need for students to become proficient users of online resources is apparent as the majority of adults are required to use electronic resources in their daily life.

A Learning Management System utilized at District 7 Middle and High School levels would prepare students for a college environment and would provide secondary students with online access to syllabi, schedules, grades, materials linked to specific lessons, presentations, and class notes. In addition, instructors would have the ability to track student progress through assessment features, which enable instructors to give quizzes and tests online. A Learning Management System would also include opportunities for instructors and students to discuss readings and continue class conversations through discussion boards.

Increased accessibility to technology (hardware, software and online resources) is necessary for students to become fluent in researching and acquiring information – skills required of 21<sup>st</sup> Century learners. We can enhance opportunities for our students by providing wireless access throughout all classrooms, increasing the number of devices available, and adding mobile devices for small group instruction. This implementation will build upon the innovative resources that District 7 teachers are currently using and will emphasize consistency across all buildings.

**3. Will the District lower the tax rate if the state repays the funds owed?**

The funds that have been lost as a result of reductions to General State Aid and other State funds since 2009 will never be paid. The funds lost are not “owed” to the District – they have simply been cut.

**4. Does the Illinois State Board of Education require that we maintain financial stability when the State of Illinois is the reason we can’t maintain financial stability?**

Yes. The State of Illinois has the statutory authority to implement the sanctions allowed under the law regarding districts’ continual placement on the State’s Financial Watch List since 2009.

As a result of this designation, the District is subject to financial monitoring by the Illinois State Board of Education (initiated during the 2015-2016 school year as a result of the 2014-2015 year-end audit).

As a next step, District 7 could receive a Certification of Financial Difficulty designation in 2017 as a result of ending both 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years with negative operating fund balances.

Once “certified” by the ISBE, District 7 may be subject to financial oversight by the State of Illinois by June 2019 – a solution that no one finds acceptable on any level.

Increasing the Education Fund tax rate is the only mechanism that will prevent the state taking control of our finances as early as June 2019.