

“I am more and more interested in the role of other funds. I think savvy districts figure out how to use them to offload as many General Fund costs as possible.”

Some Options for General Fund Relief

- Transportation Fund
- School Foods
- Tuition Fund
- Fund 15 (Donations, Medicaid, etc)
- Technology
- Flexibility
- Building Reserve
 - Traditional Building Reserve
 - Permissive Levy with State Subsidy
 - Voted Safety Levy

Building Reserve Subfunds

Sub-fund Number	Purpose	Primary Funding Source
611	Operational costs of school safety	Transfers from other funds and voted safety levy proceeds
612	Voter-approved building or construction projects	Voter approved levies. By state law, voted Building Reserve levies have a maximum duration of 20 years.
613	School major maintenance or operational costs of school safety	Permissive levy not to exceed 10 mills, with state subsidy beginning in FY2020-21
614	Transition costs of opening a new school	Voter approved levies. By state law, transition levies can have a maximum duration of six years.

Relevant Statutes

20-9-502(5), MCA:

(5) (a) A subfund in the building reserve fund must be created for:

- (i) the funds transferred to the building reserve fund for school safety and security pursuant to [20-9-236](#); and
- (ii) funds generated by a voter-approved levy for school and student safety and security pursuant to subsection (5)(b) of this section.

(b) A voted levy may be imposed with the approval of the qualified electors of the district to provide funding for improvements to school and student safety and security that meet any of the criteria set forth in [20-9-236](#)(1)(a) through (1)(e). A voted levy for school and student safety and security may not be considered as outstanding indebtedness for the purpose of calculating the limitation in [20-9-406](#). The election for a voted levy for school and student safety and security must be conducted in accordance with the school election laws of this title, and the electors qualified to vote in the election must be qualified under the provisions of [20-20-301](#). The ballot for a building reserve proposition must be substantially in compliance with [15-10-425](#).

Relevant Statutes

20-9-236, MCA:

- (1) A school district that has certified to the office of public instruction a current school safety plan or emergency operations plan pursuant to 20-1-401 may transfer state or local revenue from any budgeted or nonbudgeted fund, other than the debt service fund or retirement fund, to its building reserve fund in an amount not to exceed the school district's estimated costs of improvements to school and student safety and security as follows:
 - (a) planning for improvements to and maintenance of school and student safety, including but not limited to the cost of staffing for or services provided by architects, engineers, school resource officers, counselors, and other staff or consultants assisting the district with improvements to school and student safety and security;
 - (b) programs and training for school employees, students, parents, and community members approved by the trustees to support school and student safety and security, including but not limited to active shooter training, threat assessment practices pursuant to 20-1-401(3)(b), and restorative justice;
 - (c) installing or updating locking mechanisms and ingress and egress systems at public school access points, including but not limited to systems for exterior egress doors and interior passageways and rooms, using contemporary technologies;
 - (d) installing or updating bullet-resistant windows and barriers; and
 - (e) installing or updating emergency response systems using contemporary technologies.

Transparency & Marketing

What are the Levy Requests on the Ballot?

General Fund Operating Levies

Montana law requires voter approval for any increase to the amount of “over-base” taxes levied, regardless of the impact on the number of mills levied. The Trustees are requesting an operating levy increase that allows the greatest purchasing power (budget authority) for programs and personnel. This year, the operating levy request is:

High School Annual General Fund Operating Levy (\$380,000)

The High School District (which includes both Bozeman and Gallatin High attendance areas) tax increase would be approximately \$1.73 annually per \$100,000 of a home’s assessed market value.

Due to enrollment fluctuations, the Elementary General Fund will be at its cap without requiring additional voter approval.

School Safety Levies

School safety levies provide a dedicated revenue stream for the ongoing costs of school safety, including counselors and School Resource Officers. If approved, safety-related costs would be removed from the General Funds and coded to the safety levies. This structure is part of the District’s plan to reduce pressure on the General Fund budgets (see ‘Budget Reductions’ on the facing page).

The District is requesting a 4-mill safety levy in the Elementary District and a 2-mill safety levy in the High School District.

Questions?

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