



# OPERATIONAL REFERENDUM APRIL 7, 2026

Our district is facing critical financial challenges that need to be addressed with additional revenue. Our communities will consider a \$800,000 recurring referendum.

## FAQ #8 WHY DOESN'T THE BLACK HAWK SCHOOL JUST DISSOLVE? WHAT HAPPENS TO OUR TAXES IF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT DISSOLVES?

**FACT: There has not been a successful school dissolution in WI in the past 30 years.**

Ultimately, it is a difficult process and many factors are considered in this decision. It is not an overnight decision and the school board does **NOT** have the final say.

**FACT: There are four districts in Wisconsin, currently considering dissolution and going through the initial financial analysis part of the process.**

This should send a message how school districts are really struggling and there is a definite need for financial support increase to school revenues across Wisconsin.

**FACT: You will pay school taxes to whatever district your property is part of.** If Black Hawk dissolves, property owners will pay the school tax mill rate of one of the surrounding districts. (Monroe, Argyle, Darlington, or Shullsburg). **Note that properties are assigned to districts, individual tax payers do not get to choose what district they pay taxes to.** By the time this could happen, those mill rates will likely be higher than what is currently being proposed for the Black Hawk referendum. **If there is any remaining debt from the Black Hawk district (including the capital referendum), it would be added on top of the new district's mill rate for taxpayers in the Black Hawk district.** Many surrounding districts rely on operational referendums to fund their operations, and Black Hawk is the last district in the area to consider such a referendum. In fact, 90% of school districts in the state have turned to operational referendums as a funding source.

**School taxes do not just go away if a school dissolves.**

If the district decided to dissolve, there are several things that have to happen in order for it to officially occur:

1. The board would need to vote to initiate the dissolution process.
2. A financial and feasibility analysis would need to be completed. This takes time and money.
3. Neighboring districts have to be willing to accept debt and facilities owned by the district.
4. Neighboring districts have to be willing to take on additional students, add teachers and support for those students.
5. Neighboring districts need to be willing to transport students.
6. The WI Department of Public Instruction would need to approve the plan. Many plans are not approved because of many factors which could include:
  - a. Long distance to transport students (on the bus too long). It is important to note that Black Hawk is already one of the biggest geographic districts around.
  - b. District residents have the capacity to support the school, but have just chosen to not support referenda. (This is not a reason for dissolution.)
  - c. There has to be a significant reason to justify the state approving dissolution.
7. Ultimately, most dissolution inquiries result in the state telling the board and community they need to "Figure it out" and get a referendum passed.

With a successful referendum passage, the mill rate for 2026-27 will go to \$8.71 for property owners. The mill rate is the only thing that the district has any influence on. The district has no influence on property values or the rate you are taxed by the county, municipality or the technical college.

If you have questions please contact District Administrator,  
Willy Chambers at [chawil@blackhawk.k12.wi.us](mailto:chawil@blackhawk.k12.wi.us) or 608-234-1581