

Talking Points – 25-26 Operational Referendum

When: April 7, 2026

Amount: \$800,000

Type: Recurring Operational

Definition: A **recurring operational referendum** is when a Wisconsin school district asks voters for **ongoing permission to raise local property taxes each year** to help pay for everyday school costs—like teachers, staff, utilities, transportation, and classroom programs—**instead of just for a one-time period**.

If approved, the added funding **continues year after year** and becomes part of the district's regular budget.

Funding Sources Lost by districts in Wisconsin:

- Inflationary increases to the revenue limit have not kept up with inflation for each of the last 17 years: by next school year that means the revenue limit would have been an additional \$3,573 per child.
 - For Black Hawk: 367 students X \$3,573 = \$1,311,291.00 additional funds available next year if inflation was accounted for over the time period.
- ESSER I, GEERS, ESSERII, ESSER III (One Time Federal Funding)
 - ESSER I - \$61,932 (must have been spent by 9/30/2022)
 - GEERS - \$54,348 (must have been spent by 9/30/2022)
 - ESSER II - \$265,021 (must have been spent by 9/30/2023)
 - ESSER III - \$595,715 (must have been spent by 9/30/2024)
- High Poverty Aide – stopped after 2022-2023 Black Hawk received \$21,255

Main Funding Factors:

Per Pupil Revenue Limit: (Primarily controlled by state and referenda)

Argyle - \$12,777.27	Black Hawk - \$11,706.86	Darlington - \$11,650.00
Monroe – 11,739.09	Shullsburg - 11,852.32	

Declining Enrollment:

Black Hawk's Enrollment: (In FTE format including summer school)

2000: 597 Students	2005: 507 Students	2010: 410 Students
2015: 407 Students	2020: 391 Students	2025: 371 Students

Open-Enrollment:

2025-2026 Numbers (In FTE) and corresponding dollar amounts:

In: 56.6 students \$615,028.00

Out: 91.2 students \$971,943.00

Current Net Loss for the district of: \$356,915 (34.6 students)

The state adjusted the transfer amount by \$1140/ Student this year (had averaged \$200-\$300/year). Will be adjusted by another \$928/student next year Assuming the number is relatively stable for open enrollments we will lose another \$32,108.80

Home Schooled

We have 9 families with 19 home-schooled students, which could potentially bring to the district \$222,430.34

Local Mill Rates:

Argyle - .00866037 Black Hawk - .00607298 Darlington - .00646986

Monroe - .00729280 Shullsburg - .00405661

Going to Referendum:

Argyle – No (current \$800,000 Recurring) Black Hawk - \$800,000 Recurring

Darlington – No (current - 5 yr. 1.9 million per year) Monroe - \$2,750,000

Non-Recurring for 4 yrs. Shullsburg - \$750,000 Recurring