

FORT ZUMWALT FAQS

April 2016
Election

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Fort Zumwalt
School District

#ZumwaltPropK

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How did we get here?

In 2006 the state implemented the new Foundation Formula, a system for funding Missouri's public schools. Coupled with a 2004 tax increase, these funds strengthened resources and allowed for

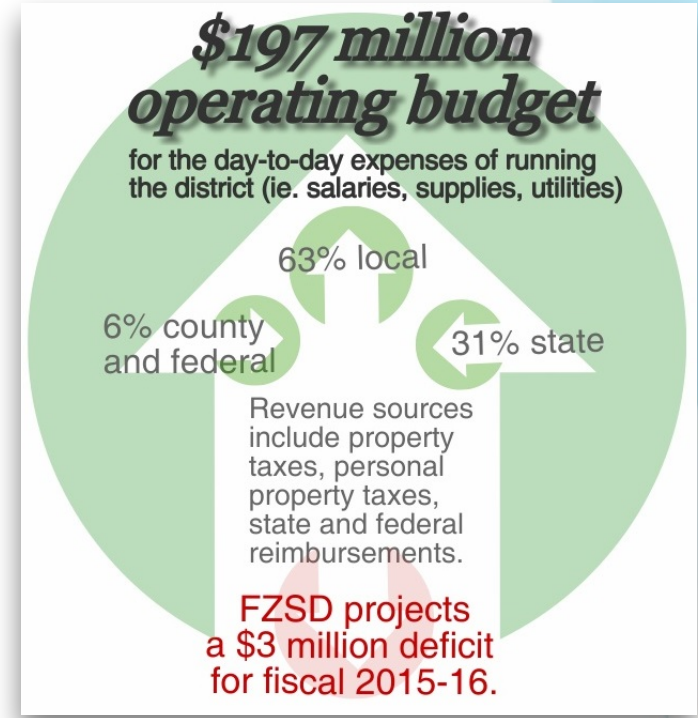
adequate reserves in case of economic crisis. With the economic downturn in 2008, the state cut funding, ultimately withholding about \$11 million from the Fort Zumwalt School District. Coupled with lower home values, revenues were sustained only by federal stimulus funds and by spending down reserves.

Have there been budget cuts?

Yes. Fort Zumwalt School District has a reputation as a strong steward of taxpayer dollars. This tradition of fiscal responsibility is illustrated in the strategies used to get the district through the economy of the past few years. Among other cost cutting measures, administrators and the Board of Education:

- ▶ Implemented a selective hiring freeze, cutting staff through attrition, rather than layoffs.
- ▶ Cut energy costs with more efficient lighting.
- ▶ Cut fuel costs with propane buses.
- ▶ Cut supply budgets by 10 percent.
- ▶ Delayed or phased in curriculum adoptions, postponing millions in textbook and material costs.
- ▶ Cut premiums and fees by converting to a self-insurance model.

What are the numbers?



What has been the impact?

Class sizes have grown while reserves have diminished.

For the past several years, Fort Zumwalt has deficit spent to maintain programs that provide opportunities for our students to compete with those in neighboring districts.

Without increased revenues, a balanced budget can only be achieved by cutting programs for students.

How is student achievement?

Our Annual Performance Report (APR) is our grade from the state. This year Fort Zumwalt scored a 98.6, tied with Francis Howell at the top of St. Charles County. A closer look shows widening gaps.

Where Fort Zumwalt students in grades 6-12 lead the county in many areas, our elementary students rank behind Francis Howell and Wentzville. Elementary students in those districts have support and resources Fort Zumwalt students do not.

What does a 48-cent tax increase mean if my home's market value is:



What are the costs of programs?

The costs of educational programs are the expenses the district incurs to retain highly qualified staff; provide instructional materials such as books, equipment and technology; and keep the utilities on. This year that cost is \$10,458.70 per student.

What will the measure mean for kids?

Resources would be added to support teachers and strengthen students. Technology teachers at each of our 16 elementary schools would introduce skills needed as young students advance to the rigor of middle school and high school in an environment that requires proper computer skills to collaborate on assignments, complete assignments and compete as college and career ready graduates.

Interventionists would be added at each elementary school to work with students in small groups or 1-on-1 on specific skills. Targeting gaps in student learning and providing support on specific skills strengthens student understanding and allows all to reach their potential.

Teacher support in the form of Instructional Coaches would also be put in place at every elementary school. These master teachers provide a resource for faculty that helps analyze student understanding of a specific skill and introduce multiple teaching techniques for faculty to take back to the classroom. Working in tandem, the Instructional Coach and the classroom teacher are able to better meet each student where they are. With the support of the Interventionist, this team of educators can ensure all students achieve at high levels.

How will the ballot read?

Proposition K

Shall the Board of Education of Fort Zumwalt School District of St. Charles County, Missouri be authorized to increase the operating tax levy of the District by \$0.48 per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation

for the purposes of paying costs of educational programs,

technology upgrades

and other operating expenses of the District?

If this proposition is approved, the adjusted operating levy of the District is estimated to be \$4.5436 per one hundred dollars of assessed valuation.

Is this the same as last year?

Yes. In 2015, Proposition B, a ballot measure to raise the tax levy by 48 cents, fell 267 votes short of the simple majority needed to pass. In the year since, the needs of Fort Zumwalt School District have not changed. Deficit spending has continued so student achievement can keep pace with neighboring districts.

What if Proposition K fails?

Without increased revenues, a balanced budget can only be achieved by cutting programs for students. No new resources or support can be added for students.

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What kind of upgrades?

At the secondary level, the 1-to-1 initiative would be expanded beyond high school English classrooms to other subjects and be introduced to the middle schools.

Will this stop deficit spending?

Yes. Resources provided by this proposition would be used to end deficit spending and balance the budget.

How are teacher salaries?

Fort Zumwalt teachers' salaries average the lowest in the county, at \$52,000.

73 percent of our teachers have advanced degrees.

Last year, for the first time in recent memory, teachers cited salary as their reason for leaving Fort Zumwalt. Teacher salaries would be improved to be more competitive with neighboring districts.