



April 2008

Dear Citizens of the Ypsilanti Area:

On May 6, 2008 voters who live within the boundaries of Ypsilanti Public Schools will be asked to consider Proposal F on their ballot. I'm sending this message so that you will be an informed voter regarding this proposal that is vital to the education of our children.

The Operating Millage Proposal is NOT levied against owner-occupied homes but rather includes industrial, commercial, business, rental and second homes. This mill, sometimes referred to as the Headlee restoration millage, enables school districts across the state to levy the statutory rate of 18 mills.

I want to assure home and property owners that the passage of this proposal will NOT increase your property taxes. Currently non-homestead property owners are assessed 18 mills under voter approved Proposal A and we want to continue that same support level that has been in place since 1994. We are not asking for more revenue, we are simply asking voters to maintain what already exists. Passage of Proposal F means that annually over 9.6 million dollars will continue to be generated to support the education of our students. Without the passage of the proposal the district stands to lose over \$420,000 annually.

Currently we serve almost 4,000 students and employ over 600 staff. In these trying economic times we cannot afford to reduce our already lean budget. Any loss of operational funding could potentially have adverse consequences for classroom instruction.

Our district is in the process of completing curriculum mapping and establishing Professional Learning Communities to sharpen the skills of our teachers to improve student achievement. We are seeing improvements on every grade level, yet there is still much work to complete. There is an urgency to raise the educational standards for all students and a drastic reduction in funds will reverse the hard won student achievement victories.

I'm appealing to you as conscientious citizens to continue to champion the education of our students by voting May 6, 2008 to keep our schools Strong From Start to Finish.

Sincerely,

James Hawkins, Superintendent
Ypsilanti Public Schools