

# REFERENDA

## LEOPOLD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

### Full Text of Question 1

#### QUESTION NUMBER I

"Shall the following Initial Resolution be approved?"

INITIAL RESOLUTION  
AUTHORIZING GENERAL OBLIGATION SCHOOL BUILDING BONDS  
IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$14,500,000

BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of the Madison Metropolitan School District, Dane County, Wisconsin that there shall be issued pursuant to Chapter 67 of the Wisconsin Statutes, general obligation school building bonds in an amount not to exceed \$14,500,000 for the public purpose of paying the cost of constructing and equipping a second school at the Aldo Leopold Elementary School site; renovating, remodeling, equipping and adding to the Aldo Leopold Elementary School; and making related site improvements."

Source: <http://www.madison.k12.wi.us/budget/ref05/q1.htm>

#### **Ask these questions before voting:**

Has the Madison Board of Education and administration

- 1) conducted its due diligence in considering alternatives, consequences and financial impacts upon the school budgets and upon the ability of the taxpayer to pay for increasing property taxes?
- 2) responsibly managed the financial resources it has at its disposal?
- 3) been trustworthy in spending District monies effectively and efficiently?
- 4) been accountable for its decisions and communications?
- 5) Can the taxpayer and the community continue to tax and spend more and more money to support the ways in which the majority of the Board of Education and the administration conduct the business of the school district?
- 6) Can the community trust the Board and administration with "blank" checks to spend more and more money, most of which will not go directly toward the instruction of students?

**Consider a few facts:** Overall, the taxing formulas of the state and district require Madison taxpayers to pay a nearly 60% premium in shared revenues to the state for increasing the revenue caps by referenda approval. In dollars and cents, approval of the three referenda for a total of \$48.1 million will actually cost Madison school taxpayers approximately \$76 million. That total adds up to over \$27 million in taxes paid to the state which cannot be used in the Madison school district for the ‘privilege’ of raising the revenue caps in Madison to support the three referenda. Following are specific impacts of referenda related to issues and costs for the Leopold Elementary School.

The **Referenda 1** proposal will actually levy for taxes that will cost nearly **\$23 million** to district taxpayers to yield the \$14.5 million, due to state shared revenue requirements.

The Board

1. has no long range plan for dealing with enrollment growth on the west side of Madison and how that relates to the Leopold Elementary attendance area
2. considered no other options over the last four years other than building another building at the Leopold campus site, nor were the costs of any other options considered
3. rejected every alternative for school building closings and boundary changes throughout the district regarding space availability and over-crowding
4. did not consider costs of operating another school building and the impacts on future operational budgets
5. does not know what will happen with the Ridgewood Apartment complex and the resultant elementary school enrollment (the future of the complex is unknown due to recent fires, code violations, changing ownership and lack of re-development plans)
6. will likely overbuild space now for the short term accommodation for families of new homes built in the area who will progress beyond the elementary grades in less than ten years.

The above information is intended to be instructive and constructive. Active Citizens for Education is committed to working together with all members of the Board of Education and with the citizens of the school district to move forward in positive ways to improve the effectiveness and results of the education of our students in this community; the operations of the district; and, communications with and the engagement of the community in the educational enterprise.

For more information, or to make comments, contact Active Citizens for Education, Don Severson, President, [info@activecitizensforeducation.org](mailto:info@activecitizensforeducation.org) or call 608/238-8300.  
Web site: [www.activecitizensforeducation.org](http://www.activecitizensforeducation.org)

For additional information and comments on the referenda and other school issues connect with  
[www.schoolinfosystem.org](http://www.schoolinfosystem.org)  
[www.madison.k12.wi.us](http://www.madison.k12.wi.us)