

## **FAQ - Riverdale Referendum April 2025**

### **What does a Yes vote mean for the referendum question, and what does a No vote mean?**

A yes vote means you support the school district raising the revenue limit for the next five years. A no vote to the question means you do not favor the district raising the revenue limit for the next five years.

### **Most of the cuts we are talking about are program cuts. Has the staff taken any benefits or wage cuts?**

The Riverdale School District is in a consortium of school districts when negotiating insurance benefit packages. This year the district received a 0% increase in insurance benefits from negotiating with the consortium of schools. Next school year it is capped at a 5% increase and 6% increase after that. The consortium negotiates with different insurance providers every three years.

The school board voted to go with the CPI this past school year of 4.12% salary raise for staff and administration at Riverdale. It is important to continue to compensate the staff at a competitive level. Many districts have made offers to our staff members to join their districts. We continue to maintain excellent staff because of our fair and equitable compensation.

### **There is a lot of talk about staff reduction. What about a reduction in administration? Are the Dean of Students considered administration?**

At this time we have four administrative positions in the school district. There is an elementary principal, JH/HS principal and district administrator who work on full year-round contracts. The fourth administrative team member, the Director of Special Education, works the school year and eight additional summer days. The Dean of Students at both schools are not administrators. They are teachers who have hours in their teaching schedule to deal with school discipline issues.

### **Why is the district paying for students to take college credits?**

Wisconsin school districts are required to pay for up to 18 college credits through programs like Early College Credit Program and Start College Now. The district does get a small reimbursement from the state for Early College Credit Program courses. At Riverdale, many students take courses the district does not pay for. Through the Youth Apprenticeship program through CESA 3, many students are getting the courses paid for through CESA. This saves money for the school district and allows the student to gain real world work experience in their field while also receiving paid related instruction. Last year Riverdale had 41% of the eligible student body as youth apprentices and over 50% of the senior class. The state average is 8%.

### Has there been consideration for reducing the number of bus routes in the district?

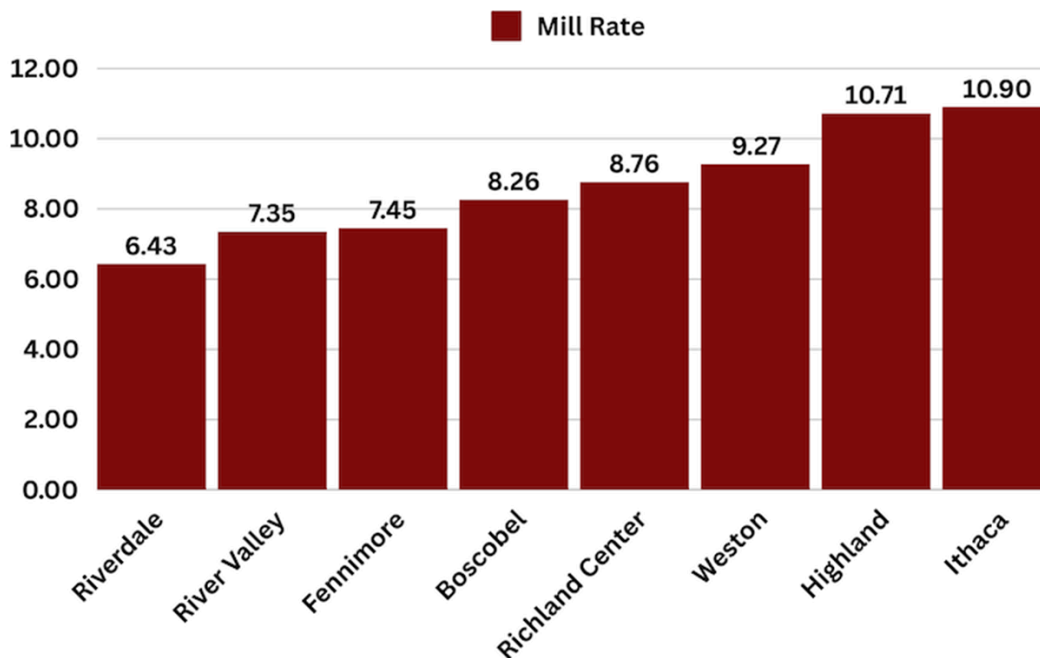
The school district must provide transportation to all students within a two mile radius of the school district. All students who fit that criterion must be placed on a bus route, regardless of whether they ride consistently. The district works with a bus software company that helps develop these routes and considers several factors, including student ride time.

### Why was a softball field constructed in 2022?

Title IX requires school districts to provide equal and fair facilities for both boys and girls sports. Before the softball field construction, the school used the village JC Park for softball. There were several inconsistencies between the athletic facilities. The construction of the softball field allowed a facility to be on the school campus, provide dugouts, playing surface, lights and concessions comparable to the baseball facility. This made Riverdale compliant and provided our female student-athletes with an equitable facility.

### What is the mill rate and how does Riverdale's rate compare to other districts in our area?

The mill rate is the tax payable per dollar of a property's assessed value. It is a figure that represents the amount per \$1,000 of the assessed value of the property, which is used to calculate the amount of property tax. Riverdale's mill rate is the lowest in the area compared to neighboring schools at \$6.43 per \$1,000 of property value. The graph below compares Riverdale to other school districts.



### What will the mill rate increase to if the referendum is passed?

The mill rate is estimated to increase to \$7.49, which will still make our mill rate one of the lowest in the area. Several other factors contribute to the mill rate each year. The graph below illustrates Riverdale's mill rate in the last seven years.

Year	Mill Rate
2018-2019	\$10.10
2019-2020	\$9.76
2020-2021	\$8.64
2021-2022	\$8.56
2022-2023	\$7.45
2023-2024	\$6.93
2024-2025	\$6.43
	*(increase to \$7.49 if passed)

\*This is an estimated cost, several other factors contribute to the mill rate.\*

### Explain the tax impact duration of \$106 per \$100,000 property value throughout the referendum.

The tax impact of \$106 per \$100,000 of property value is only the increase in the first year of the referendum. The tax impact **does not** increase by \$106 per \$100,000 yearly for the duration of the referendum.

### The school district just purchased three used buses. How was the district able to make this purchase?

The school district always looks for ways to improve its transportation fleet without purchasing new equipment. A school board member came across a sale for three used buses at \$85,000 total. The total cost for a new bus is estimated at \$140,000. The buses were in great condition and had half the mileage of many of the buses within our fleet. The board decided to move forward with the purchase from the district's fund balance and put the three older buses up for sale. This was a fiscally responsible move towards keeping Riverdale with an up to date fleet while maintaining control of their transportation department. Past quotes have estimated a \$250,000 to \$300,000 increase with switching to a private carrier.