

DMEA TEMPO

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Des Moines Education Association

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"LAST CHANCE!"

The DMEA is temporarily setting aside other issues so that all of us can **concentrate on passage of the sales tax referendum on November 23rd.** DMEA Faculty Representatives have unanimously endorsed passage as they did during the first two efforts.

Our suburban colleagues have also endorsed the effort. Together, the DMEA and the Polk Suburban Uniserv Unit represent over 4000 members. That is a significant block of voters. But we all need to do more. **Members need also to volunteer for additional activities to convince other voters.**

This will likely be the last opportunity to approve the sales tax increase. Without approval, the district will turn to the sale of bonds. Those elections require 60% approval, cost huge amounts in interest, and will not come close to producing enough funds to solve the infrastructure problems.

Your Faculty Representative will coordinate activities in your building. The activities will include:

- An opportunity to vote absentee by mail or at an absentee satellite location.
- An effort to determine yard sign locations and distribute them the week-end of November 6.
- An effort to call members who have not voted absentee.

Research tells us that parents and school supporters rely most on teacher opinions when considering school issues. We can have a huge impact on this campaign.

You may want to financially support the tax measure by contributing. Make the check payable to Schools First and send to Schools First, Park Fair Mall, 100 E. Euclid, Suite 101, Des Moines, Iowa 50313

Absentee voting is easy and secret.

Here are the steps:

1. Your FR will distribute postcards. This postcard requests that a ballot be sent to your school or home address by the County Elections office.
2. You will then receive a ballot. Fill it out, seal it, and we ask that you return it to the FR or mail it. Let your FR know when you have voted so they can check your name off of the list. Then you will not receive a call later in the campaign. Satellite polling places will also be available later for those that don't use the mail ballot. These are usually located in schools or public libraries.
3. Of course, you can vote the old-fashioned way by going to your voting place on November 23rd.



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Questions and Answers

How much revenue would be generated?

The local sales tax for schools is expected to generate more than \$56 million in its first year, and all of these dollars will be distributed directly to school districts services. Polk County residents specifically for building construction and repair needs.

What can the school districts do with these funds?

By law, these funds can be spent only on the construction or improvement of school buildings or to repay debt incurred for that purpose. They cannot be used for salaries, benefits, or other programs and expenses. See Iowa Code section 422 E.1(3).

How is this better than traditional bond-issue financing?

Passing a bond issue would place new burdens on your property taxes. Also, a bond issue requires substantial interest payments. The local sales tax for schools allows schools districts to make improvements on a pay-as-you-go basis, saving taxpayer dollars.

How long would this remain in effect?

As your ballot itself states, this will remain in effect ten years. After ten years, this can only be extended if a majority votes in favor of it. The county Board of Supervisors, the city councils, and the school boards can not extend this. Only majority of Polk County voters can ever do that.

What about state funding to meet these building needs?

Our legislative leadership has made it very clear that no state dollars will go to local school districts for their local building needs. If the legislature did provide state dollars to our local schools, the amount available for Polk County after statewide distribution would not be nearly enough to take care of all of our needs.

What about Prairie Meadows money?

Prairie Meadows' own projections show total direct community charitable contributions of only \$4.5 million per year. Even if all of these dollars were earmarked specifically for schools, they would not satisfy the urgent building and reconstruction needs in our local school districts.

Member to Member

Shirley Daniels,

*"My mentor Mary McLeod Bethune said it best - "I leave you, finally, a responsibility to our young people." Our students deserve the best possible education in safe environments. Let's fix our school buildings! **Vote YES** for the Local Option Sales Tax. It is our responsibility to take care of our greatest resource - our children."*

**Pat Papenheim,
Hiatt**

*"I would urge you to **vote yes** for the one-cent sales tax for Polk County. What will be gained if Des Moines School district employees vote no? Des Moines schools have been my "life" for years as it has for many of you. **Vote yes** for the future of kids in Des Moines."*

**Jim Patch,
Central Campus**

"I will spend 5 to 10 hours making phone calls and door knocking, I hope every other teacher would do that too."