

February 15, 2018

Residents of the Benton School District

Community involvement has shaped the history and achievements of the Benton School District. Community involvement is needed to chart the future of the District for our kids. In September of 2000, the community approved a \$3,990,000 referendum to construct the new elementary school and renovate the high school building. On April 1, 2020, the District will make its final payment on that debt. In 2006, the community rallied behind the District's first three-year referendum to increase operating revenues. This crucial referendum strengthened the District's financial position and sustained programs and services. In 2009, 2012 and 2015, the community continued approving three-year operating referendums to preserve programs and the District's finances. The community placed their trust in the Benton School Board with each referendum approval to secure the financial and academic future of the Benton School District.

To date, the Benton School District has achieved and maintained a strong financial position, eliminating the need and expense associated with short-term borrowing; nearly 50% of the debt issued to pay off the Wisconsin Retirement liability has been repaid within five years; school facilities have been maintained and will be "debt free" in 2020; and, programs and services have been sustained for students' academic and athletic achievements.

The 2015 operating referendum expired this budget year and requires voter approval to continue receiving this revenue. On January 10, 2018, the Benton School Board unanimously approved resolutions for an operating referendum question to be placed on the April 3, 2018 ballot. Detailed information about this referendum will be posted on the District's website and Facebook page. Community informational meetings will be held in the Benton School District Library at 7 p.m. on February 28 and March 19. A detailed presentation will be given about the referendum and the Benton School District, with questions answered at each event. The presentations will also be posted on the District's website.

The School Board is asking the community to get involved in the 2018 Referendum by becoming an informed voter. Please watch the District's website for ongoing additional information explaining the ballot language, what the revenues are used for, the impact on taxes, and much more. We look forward to hearing from you and hope to see you at the meeting.