SCHOOL CITY OF WHITING

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Dear Whiting Parents/Guardians

As we plan for the future, I want to take a moment to share important information about the district's current financial outlook and the challenges ahead. Over the past several years, changes to Indiana's school funding and property tax structure—most recently through **Senate Enrolled Act 1 (SEA-1)**—have created significant financial pressures on public school districts across the state. These changes include increased homestead deductions, expanded property tax caps, and reductions in local revenue streams that directly support school operations. The School City of Whiting is looking at losing around 800,000 because of **Senate Enrolled Act 1 (SEA-1)**.

Locally, Whiting's net assessed value (NAV) is projected to decline slightly in the coming years, resulting in less revenue from local property taxes even as **operational costs** continue to **rise**. We are currently working hard to balance the budget by reducing expenses. However, since **2024**, Whiting Schools has been using funds from the Rainy-Day account to cover shortfalls. However, this is not a long-term solution. Without additional local support, our ability to maintain class sizes, student programs, extracurricular activities, and essential services could be at risk.

To ensure the long-term financial stability of our schools, the Board of Education and administration are exploring the possibility of placing an **operating referendum on the November 2026 ballot.** An operating referendum would allow Whiting voters to decide whether to provide additional funding dedicated to sustaining high-quality educational programs, retaining qualified staff, and maintaining safe, well-functioning school facilities.

It is important to emphasize that no final decision has been made. Starting early in **2026,** we will engage with our community to discuss the district's financial needs, explain how property tax changes affect local revenue, and outline what an operating referendum would mean for Whiting taxpayers and schools. Transparency and collaboration will be at the heart of this process.

We are proud of the tradition of excellence that defines the School City of Whiting. Together, we can ensure that our students continue to have access to the opportunities and resources they deserve. Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership.

All Oilers! All In!

David A. Verta

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Superintendent of Whiting Schools