

RESOLUTION 2022-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA, DIRECTING THE BREVARD COUNTY COMMISSION TO CALL A REFERENDUM ELECTION TO DETERMINE IF THE ELECTORS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA, APPROVE AN ADDITIONAL AD VALOREM TAX MILLAGE FOR FOUR YEARS TO BE USED FOR SCHOOL OPERATIONS TO INCLUDE MAINTAINING A HIGH QUALITY WORKFORCE THROUGH COMPETITIVE COMPENSATION FOR TEACHERS AND STAFF TO ENSURE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT; PROVIDING FOR NOTICE OF THE REFERENDUM ELECTION; PROVIDING FOR APPROVAL OF THE REFERENDUM QUESTION AND BALLOT TITLE.

WHEREAS, the School Board of Brevard County, Florida (the “Board”) acts as the governing body of the School District of Brevard County, Florida (the “District”), and,

WHEREAS, the Board is charged with operating public schools within Brevard County, Florida, and,

WHEREAS, the Board has a primary goal to continue elevating student achievement for students attending its public schools, and,

WHEREAS, the education funds available to the Board through the Florida Educational Finance Program funding formula do not provide all of the resources to sustain essential educational programs and opportunities that prepare its public school students for the future they deserve, and,

WHEREAS, the Florida Educational Finance Program flat funding, inflationary costs, and state unfunded mandates have resulted in over \$38 million in operating budget reductions, limiting the Board’s ability to consistently provide competitive wage increases to its employees, and,

WHEREAS, the national teacher shortage and an alarming increase in the number of resignations and retirements have created a large vacancy rate in Brevard Public Schools, and,

WHEREAS, Brevard Public Schools is 2nd in the state in the percent of the most experienced teachers, providing a high level of instructional expertise to public school students, and,

WHEREAS, the recent increase in state categorical funding for raising the minimum teacher salary and required minimum wage increase has resulted in significant disparity (also known as wage compression) among experienced teachers/employees making the same or similar salaries as beginning teachers/employees, for Brevard Public Schools’ most experienced educators and staff, and,

WHEREAS, Brevard’s average teacher salary is below the state average, including below the average teacher salaries in Orange County Schools, Seminole County Schools, and Indian River County Schools, and,

WHEREAS, the Board has concluded that a significant increase in teacher compensation, particularly for experienced teachers, is critical to recruiting and sustaining a highly qualified faculty work force, and,

WHEREAS, the Board further faces a shortage of various support services positions, primarily due to pay significantly lower than the private sector for similar services, and,

WHEREAS, the Board is aware that voters in 20 school districts in Florida have been asked to approve a similar millage increase and did in fact, approve additional millage for school operations, creating a competitive advantage for them, and,

WHEREAS, other school districts with a voter approved additional millage have used the additional revenue generated by increased millage to increase compensation for teachers and staff, maintain and/or expand academic programs, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programs, to hire additional personnel such as teachers and school support staff, and,

WHEREAS, by improving pay for talented and experienced teachers, schools will be able to better retain their best teachers while students directly benefit from having a well-trained and experienced teacher in their classroom, and,

WHEREAS, dedicated state funding sources exist for many other instructional needs, but there is no specific funding source for the arts and athletics, and,

WHEREAS, the Board intends that the revenue generated by the additional millage for operational purposes shall be used to recruit and retain instructional and support staff personnel including teachers, support staff, administrators, to make its compensation more competitive with surrounding counties, and,

WHEREAS, the Board further intends to use some of the revenue generated by the additional millage to expand staffing in early childhood education programs, maintaining and expanding Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs for students, to enhance art, music and athletic programs, to expand access to educational programs and launch the modernization of classroom technology learning environments, and,

WHEREAS, the funds raised by the additional one (1) mill will be proportionately shared with public charter schools based upon student enrollment, pursuant to Section 1011.71(9), Florida Statutes, and,

WHEREAS, an oversight committee comprised of independent citizens will be appointed by the School Board. Annual reporting of the status of funded priorities (expenditures) will be presented to the School Board and must be available for public review, and,

WHEREAS, a high-quality education system benefits all residents of Brevard County, regardless of whether they have children in school, and,

WHEREAS, Section 1011.73(2), Florida Statutes (2021), authorizes the qualified electors of Brevard County to vote on an additional millage for operational purposes, and,

WHEREAS, the Board finds it is in the best interest of the students in public schools that the qualified electors be given the opportunity to approve additional millage for school operations.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the School Board of Brevard County, Florida, in a public meeting duly called and assembled:

1. **REFERENDUM ELECTION ORDERED:** That pursuant to Section 1011.73(2), Florida Statutes (2021) the Board of County Commissioners in and for Brevard County, Florida, is hereby directed to place the required referendum election on the ballot of the general election to be held on November 8, 2022, for the qualified electors of Brevard County Public Schools to vote whether to increase an ad valorem millage by one (1.0) mill for a period of four (4) years. The additional millage shall be limited to operating expenses of the School District as described in this resolution.
2. **OFFICIAL BALLOT:** The substance of the millage referendum question and the ballot title shall read as follows:

AD VALOREM MILLAGE TO INCREASE TEACHER PAY AND OTHER PURPOSES

For increasing teacher and staff pay, funding for technical training for students, and other similar purposes, shall the School District of Brevard County authorize a one mill ad valorem millage for four years to ensure student achievement, recruit and retain teachers and staff with competitive salaries, and distribute funds as statute requires to charter schools based on their proportionate share of district enrollment, with all expenditures to be reviewed by an independent Citizens' Oversight Committee.

_____ YES - FOR ADDITIONAL MILLAGE

_____ NO - AGAINST ADDITIONAL MILLAGE

ADOPTED at a Meeting of the School Board of Brevard County, Florida the 26th day of April 2022, with a quorum present and voting.

SCHOOL BOARD OF BREVARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: Misty Belford
Misty Belford, Board Chair

EXHIBIT A

PLAN FOR USE OF AD VALOREM MILLAGE PROCEEDS

- 1.** Pursuant to Section 1011.73(2), Florida Statutes, operational expenses to be funded by proceeds of the Millage shall be for:
 - a.** Teacher and staff compensation and/or benefits
 - b.** District-wide financial supplements for additional duties such as: Athletic Coaches, Teacher Mentors, Academic Team Sponsors, etc.
 - c.** Career and Technical Education and Academic Programs, Supplies and Staff
 - d.** Early Childhood Instructional Support Staff
 - e.** Athletic Programs, Supplies and Fees
 - f.** Performing Arts Programs, Supplies and Staff
 - g.** Classroom Technology – Launch of the “Classrooms of the Future” initiative

- 2.** To ensure proper fiscal stewardship of the Millage proceeds, an oversight committee comprised of independent citizens will be appointed by the School Board. Annual reporting of the status of projects funded (expenditures) utilizing these funds will be presented to the School Board and shall be available for public review.