

ST. VRAIN VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1J
TO: ALL REGISTERED VOTERS
NOTICE OF ELECTION TO INCREASE TAXES

St. Vrain Valley School District No. RE-1J
City and County of Broomfield, and Boulder, Larimer and Weld Counties, Colorado

Election Date: Tuesday, November 1, 2005
Election Hours: 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Local Election Office Address and Telephone Number:
Broomfield County Clerk and Recorder
One DesCombes Drive
Broomfield, Colorado 80020
Telephone: (303) 464-5899

Ballot Title and Text:

BALLOT ISSUE 3A:

SHALL ST. VRAIN VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1J TAXES BE INCREASED \$17,323,000 ANNUALLY, OR BY SUCH LESSER ANNUAL AMOUNTS AS MAY BE AUTHORIZED UNDER THE PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE ACT OF 1994 ("ACT"), AS AMENDED FROM TIME TO TIME, TO CONSTITUTE AN OVERRIDE MILL LEVY, TO BE USED FOR THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

REDUCE THE STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO AT EVERY SCHOOL,

RECRUIT AND RETAIN THE BEST TEACHERS,

REPLACE OUTDATED TEXTBOOKS,

OFFER ADDITIONAL ACADEMICALLY CHALLENGING COURSES, AND

PROVIDE OPERATING FUNDS TO COVER ADDITIONAL COSTS DUE TO INCREASED STUDENT ENROLLMENT,

SUCH TAXES TO BE LEVIED BEGINNING IN 2005 FOR COLLECTION IN 2006 AND CONTINUING EACH TAX YEAR THEREAFTER, AND

NO FUNDS WILL BE USED FOR CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION, AND PROVIDED FURTHER THAT A CITIZENS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE SHALL ANNUALLY REVIEW AND RECOMMEND TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION THE USE OF THESE FUNDS FOR THE ABOVE PURPOSES,

SUCH TAXES TO CONSIST OF AN ADDITIONAL AD VALOREM MILL LEVY IMPOSED WITHOUT LIMITATION OF RATE (OR WITH SUCH LIMITATIONS AS MAY BE DETERMINED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION) AND IN AMOUNTS SUFFICIENT TO PRODUCE THE ANNUAL INCREASE SET FORTH ABOVE, AND SHALL THE REVENUES RECEIVED FROM SUCH INCREASED MILL LEVY, AND ANY EARNINGS FROM THE INVESTMENT OF SUCH REVENUES, BE RECEIVED, INVESTED, AND SPENT BY THE DISTRICT IN ANY YEAR WITHOUT REGARD TO ANY SPENDING, REVENUE-RAISING, OR OTHER LIMITATIONS IMPOSED BY, OR CONTAINED IN, ARTICLE X, SECTION 20 OF THE COLORADO CONSTITUTION, SUCH AMOUNTS TO CONSTITUTE A VOTER-APPROVED WAIVER OF SUCH LIMITATIONS?

Total District Fiscal Year Spending:

Fiscal Year	
2005-2006 (estimated)	\$163,955,000
2004-2005 (actual)	\$146,471,285
2003-2004 (actual)	\$137,459,019
2002-2003 (actual)	\$137,768,662
2001-2002 (actual)	\$136,531,865

Overall percentage change from 2001-2002 to 2005-2006	20.1%
Overall dollar change from 2001-2002 to 2005-2006	\$27,423,135

District estimates of maximum dollar amount of tax increase and of District fiscal year spending without the increase for first full fiscal year of each proposed tax increase:

Estimated Maximum Dollar Amount of Tax Increase for 2005: \$17,323,000
Estimated 2006 Fiscal Year Spending without Proposed Tax Increase: \$163,955,000

Summary of statements submitted in favor of Ballot Issue 3A:

The children of the St. Vrain Valley require textbooks, teachers, courses and classroom environments which will help them to reach their highest potential. We have it within our means to make this a reality. Our communities need to stand up now and support our kids for great teachers and great schools!

It's a matter of meeting the essential needs of students and teachers in every classroom to get funds locked in for educational programming to raise the bar for student achievement. We need this now - the District lost 58 teachers this fall; student-teacher ratios went up. We can change this.

- This Override can reverse the increasing student-teacher ratio trend in all our schools. The extra focus on grades K-3 is the needed support when children need it the most. The student-teacher ratio in our District is 2.4 students more than the Colorado average and 2.8 students more than the national average.
- All these dollars go to our schools - the state does not control the distribution of the funds. A Community Review Committee will provide public oversight which will demand accountability at every turn.
- No funds will go to central administration.
- Teacher compensation levels need improvement to attract and retain the best. Neighboring districts with overrides have advantages in this marketplace.
- Investing in this citizen-prioritized funding will allow textbook replacements to resume and continue uninterrupted.
- This will add more challenging classes at elementary, middle and high schools, which build the foundation for higher achievement. The District's average math and verbal SAT scores are now the highest they have been in five years. We need to continue this trend.
- Override funds will open the remaining new schools as soon as possible to alleviate current overcrowding. Class size will be affected until the new schools open.
- This will update technology including software and hardware support initiatives.
- Students need a full-time counselor at each elementary and a Student Resource Officer at every middle school.
- Per pupil funding lags the national average by \$2,303 per student. This Override will close the gap by \$814 for each student, including charter school students.
- There are 178 school districts in Colorado; 81 have overrides and can supplement state funding. Our District deserves the same support from its residents.

Our District has made real progress toward restoring public trust and confidence by collaborative planning and financial accomplishments that have been recognized by state leaders who say that the St. Vrain Valley School District is now one of the most financially accountable districts in the state.

There is no better reflection of the quality of our communities than the quality of our schools. We have to make our schools a priority. We cannot send our youth into the world, work force or college without the best preparation. Now IS the time to invest in our kids and our communities - it will lead to Great Teachers - Great Schools!! Vote "Yes" on 3A!

Summary of statements submitted in opposition to Ballot Issue 3A:

We cannot afford to gamble our children's education and the local economy on a risky scheme run by unaccountable bureaucrats.

- Proposal throws millions of dollars at an unaccountable bureaucracy every year forever.
- No end date, no guarantee of results; only guarantee is increased taxes.
- To regain trust, why wasn't a sunset clause included?
- In 2003, the State Treasurer forced SVVSD to reduce administrative expenditures. Once released from State oversight in 2004, they immediately began to approve administrative raises and replace administrative positions.
- SVVSD promises not to use any 3-A funds for increased administrator salaries. Will 3-A money free up other funds for that purpose?
- Proposal costs everybody who owns or rents a home in the district.

The following would occur:

Average residential property in Longmont already pays \$914.68 + this tax increase of \$198.87 = \$1113.55
Average residential property in rural Boulder County already pays \$1558.84 + this tax increase of \$338.94 = \$1897.78

- Puts strain on local businesses; some already close to layoffs or discontinuing; employees in jeopardy.
Business property valued at \$250,000 already pays \$2906.52 + this tax increase of \$631.98 = \$3538.50

Other property values will see proportional increases.

SVVSD has plenty of money.

- SVVSD now operating in the black, having erased the \$13.9 million deficit caused by mismanagement.
- Generous bond approvals from taxpayers have covered more than growth - have also renovated existing buildings and paid for computers and other improvements. SVVSD still owes more than \$430 million over next 20 years in principal and interest on existing bonds!
- District claims it needs money for student educational materials. But district was forced by the state last spring to spend money they had already collected for these items or face losing accreditation.
- Amendment 23 guarantees that school funding increases faster than enrollment growth and inflation combined. SVVSD Per Pupil Operating Revenue from the State has increased 19.2% since 2001.

Taxpayers, and more importantly, the children, have gotten poor results for the money.

- Poor CSAP results:
 - Most SVVSD students flunk (sub-Proficient) some or all parts of the CSAP.
 - Results slide as kids spend more time in the SVVSD.
 - In tenth grade only 32% pass Math, though test written at sixth grade level.
- Failure to meet even minimal standards of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP):
 - Of 178 Colorado districts, only three missed more (AYP) targets than SVVSD.
 - St. Vrain missed as many targets as the 127 best districts combined!
 - Of 20 districts with the most targets attempted (generally large, diverse districts), St. Vrain finished 18th in percent of targets made.
- Nobody held accountable for poor results:
 - Students moved from grade to grade, though far behind grade level.
 - Worst teachers earn same pay as the best.
 - Administrators rarely fired.

Everybody agrees that students deserve better educations. Smart voters will realize that pouring money into a broken system hurts students by subsidizing wasteful bureaucracy and discouraging accountability. Vote "No" on 3A!