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Granton School to Host Operational Referendum Meetings

GRANTON, WI — The Granton Area School District will host a series of town hall meetings to inform community members about the district's financial needs and the operational referendum on the ballot Tuesday, April 7.

Attendees will hear from administrators and Board of Education members, and have opportunities to ask questions and provide feedback. The meetings will take place Monday, February 23, and Monday, March 23. Both sessions will be held in the Central Gym at 7:00 p.m.

"We want every member of our community to have accurate information and a clear understanding of what this proposed operational referendum would mean for our students, staff, and taxpayers," said Superintendent Nancy Popp. "These meetings are an opportunity to ask questions, share feedback, and be part of an open and transparent conversation about the future of our district. We value community input and hope you will join us as we work together to make informed decisions that support our students and protect the long-term strength of our school."

The proposed operational referendum would authorize GASD to exceed its state-set revenue limit by \$1.25 million through the 2030-31 school year.

Financial forecasts indicate the district will face a \$820,574 budget deficit in 2026-27, with the annual deficit projected to exceed \$4.48 million by 2030-31.

The financial challenges are largely related to declining enrollment, rising expenses, and the fact that GASD has received insufficient state aid for many years. If state aid had maintained the rate of inflation since 2009, the district would receive more than \$3,500 more per student annually today.

The district has made spending cuts in recent years to address its financial issues, but without an approved operational referendum, the board and administration will be forced to implement further budget reductions. This could include staff reductions, increased class sizes, elimination of some extracurricular activities, and deferred facility maintenance.

Since 2019, GASD's mill rate has fallen by 58 percent and today stands at \$4.44 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. With an approved referendum in April, the mill rate would rise to \$10.05 in 2026-27, then fall to \$8.97 by 2030-31.

More information about the proposed operational referendum for GASD, including answers to frequently asked questions, is available at www.grantonreferendum.org.