

**TO ALL REGISTERED VOTERS
NOTICE OF ELECTION TO INCREASE TAXES ON A REFERRED MEASURE
ST. VRAIN VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1J IN
BOULDER, LARIMER, WELD AND BROOMFIELD COUNTIES, COLORADO**

Election date: November 6, 2012

Election hours: 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Local election official address and phone number: Broomfield City and County Clerk, One DesCombes Drive, Broomfield, CO 80020, (303) 464-5857.

Designated Election Official for District: Therese M. Schueler, 395 South Pratt Parkway, Longmont, CO 80501, (303) 682-7201.

BALLOT TITLE:

ST. VRAIN VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1J BALLOT ISSUE NO. 3A: ST. VRAIN VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1J MILL LEVY OVERRIDE TO MITIGATE STATE FUNDING CUTS TO MAINTAIN TEACHER AND STAFF POSITIONS, ATTRACT AND RETAIN HIGH QUALITY TEACHERS AND STAFF, AND TO UPGRADE TECHNOLOGY AND EXPAND/ENHANCE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION.

BALLOT TEXT:

SHALL ST. VRAIN VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1J TAXES BE INCREASED \$14,800,000 IN TAX YEAR 2012 FOR COLLECTION IN YEAR 2013 (AND BY WHATEVER AMOUNTS MAY BE COLLECTED ANNUALLY THEREAFTER) FROM A MILL LEVY INCREASE NOT TO EXCEED 6.27 MILLS, AS DETERMINED ANNUALLY BY THE DISTRICT'S GOVERNING BOARD, THE REVENUES FROM WHICH SHALL BE USED FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES (WHICH INCLUDES THE DISTRICT'S EXISTING SIX CHARTER SCHOOLS), SUCH PURPOSES TO INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

MAINTAINING TEACHER POSITIONS AND REASONABLE CLASS SIZES,
ATTRACTING AND RETAINING HIGH-QUALITY TEACHERS AND STAFF,
UPGRADING TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE STUDENT LEARNING, AND
EXPANDING AND ENHANCING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN);

SUCH TAX INCREASE TO BE AN ADDITIONAL PROPERTY TAX MILL LEVY IN EXCESS OF THE LEVY AUTHORIZED FOR THE DISTRICT'S GENERAL FUND PURSUANT TO, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 22-54-108, C.R.S., AND TO CONSTITUTE A VOTER APPROVED REVENUE CHANGE AND AN EXCEPTION TO THE LIMITS WHICH WOULD OTHERWISE APPLY?

Actual historical and current estimated fiscal year spending information:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Fiscal Year Spending</u>
2007-2008 (actual)	\$153,355,636
2008-2009 (actual)	\$167,164,707
2009-2010 (actual)	\$193,102,886
2010-2011 (actual)	\$199,908,752
2011-2012 (unaudited)	\$199,486,415

Overall percentage change in fiscal year spending over the five year period from 2007-2008 through 2011-2012:	23%
Overall dollar change in fiscal year spending over the five year period from 2007-2008 through 2011-2012:	\$46,130,779
Estimated 2012-2013 fiscal year spending without taking into account the tax increase authorized by ballot issue 3A:	\$210,634,943
Estimated 2012-2013 tax increase authorized by ballot issue 3A:	\$14,800,000

Summaries of written comments on ballot issue 3A filed with the election officer:

The following summary was prepared from comments filed by persons FOR the issue:

St. Vrain Valley School District has made incredible progress in recent years, with some of the best performing schools in the state and nation.

Our school district has three high schools that rank among the top 5% in the nation, our students outperform the state average in 93% of CSAP exams, and nearly 80% of our schools are ranked with the two highest academic accreditation levels.

Your investment in our local schools—and the incredible efforts of our students, teachers, parents and staff—is why St. Vrain Valley School District has made such strong progress.

Unfortunately, state funding to our school district has been cut by more than \$20 million over the past three years. Per-pupil funding is lower now than it was three years ago, even with the 2008 mill levy override in place.

To balance its budget, St. Vrain Valley School District has made permanent cuts to administrative and central support—now just 2.9% of the district's total budget. This is one of the leanest administrative budgets of any district on the Front Range.

The district has also been forced to make cuts at the classroom level, including no longer funding technology and textbook replacement cycles, increasing student-teacher ratios for two consecutive years, and cutting budgets by 25% for classroom supplies, education materials and professional development.

Without additional local funding, another significant round of cuts will need to be made at the classroom level. St. Vrain Valley School District does not have a choice.

Your YES vote on Measure 3A will keep our schools moving forward, with 100% of our investment staying in our school district. NONE of the mill levy override money will go back to the state.

Passage of Measure 3A will provide funding in four critical areas:

- Recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers and staff
- Maintaining class sizes
- Protecting pre-school and full-day kindergarten programs

- Maintaining instructional technology and rigorous programming

Passage of the mill levy override also offers our community benefits beyond the classroom. Quality schools are essential to attracting and retaining employers, professionals and young families. In fact, quality schools are among the top-three criteria of businesses seeking to relocate or expand.

Quality schools are also a key driver when it comes to property values and public safety.

3A is a monthly investment of \$4.16 per \$100,000 of a home's market value. It's a modest investment with significant returns for our kids and our community.

Your YES vote on Measure 3A will positively impact more than 27,000 children in the St. Vrain Valley School District, now and in years to come. These kids are our future and they deserve our support.

The following summary was prepared from comments filed by persons AGAINST the issue:

VOTE NO ON 3A. IT'S BAD FOR KIDS, AND IT'S BAD FOR THE COMMUNITY

Once again, the St. Vrain Valley School District (SVVSD) comes to taxpayers asking their approval of yet another tax increase. It has been proven that throwing more dollars into the education system does not provide improved outcomes. School districts with their insatiable appetite for more funding must learn to live within their means just as taxpayers must. Studies show the best way to improve the quality of our children's education is to increase parental involvement. During this time of economic chaos is not the time to ask for more funding. Here are the facts:

- 1) SVVSD taxes already too high:
 - a. Mill levy rates for the 19 school districts in Boulder County and Weld County range from 8.683 to 48.991. SVVSD taxpayers pay the highest rate in Boulder County, and the second-highest rate in Weld County, at 47.614.
 - b. The average (mean) of the 19 districts is 31.050, so SVVSD rate is already 53% above average.
- 2) Tried this before; didn't work:
 - a. Before the 2008 election, the SVVSD budget was \$264 million. We approved the mill levy override and the bond issue in 2008, and the total budget has averaged over \$400 million per year over the past two years.
 - b. In 2008, average SVVSD CSAP passing rate across all grade levels and topics for the general student population was just 4.4 percentage points above state average. Now, that small lead has declined to 3.6 percentage points.
 - c. In 2008, SVVSD ACT Reading was 0.87 points ahead of state average. Now, 0.18 points ahead.
 - d. 2008: SVVSD ACT Science 0.82 points ahead. Now, 0.19 points ahead.
 - e. 2008: SVVSD ACT English 0.72 points ahead. Now, 0.39 points ahead.
 - f. 2008: SVVSD ACT Math 0.28 points ahead. Now, 0.07 points BEHIND.
 - g. 2008: SVVSD ACT overall was eighth best among state's 16 largest districts. Now, we have slipped to ninth.
- 3) Many ways to improve results and save money:

- a. Stop wasting money on basic textbooks and workbooks – put all simple things (spelling lists, vocabulary lists, math worksheets, etc.) online.
 - b. End social promotion; show students that education matters.
 - c. Stop paying worst teachers on same pay scale as best teachers.
 - d. Stop giving increased pay based on sensitivity.
 - e. End counterproductive practice of bonus funding for schools performing poorly.
 - f. Trim non-teacher staff, especially in administration.
- 4) Would hurt local economy:
- a. Money spent on extra taxes could not be spent supporting local businesses.
 - b. Money spent on extra taxes by businesses could not be used for hiring or raises.
 - c. Many businesses and landlords would have to increase prices.
 - d. High taxes tend to discourage new employers from locating here.
- 5) Would hurt students:
- a. Delays implementation of badly needed reforms.
 - b. Takes money from parents, money that could directly help children.
 - c. Sends bad message about passing on costs of irresponsible behavior to others.