

Levy from 1A

Information provided by the SSD, and available to voters at the district's website, www.siuslaw.k12.or.us, provides the public with a comprehensive case for the renewal.

One of the data points provided on the site shows that state funding for Oregon schools has fallen 13.5 percent since 2007.

The current local option has been critical in filling the gap created by this decrease. In the

time the current levy has been in effect, the district has raised more than \$1 million annually, which has gone directly to student services.

While the current local option pays for a small percent of SSD's operational costs, it allows the district to retain important elements of a student's education, such as athletics, music, art and physical education (PE).

It also allows for enhanced learning opportunities through the acquisition of improved technology in the form of new computers, online curriculum

and by the offering of Advanced Placement classes.

Another of the benefits cited by the district to support the continuance of the levy is the improvement in the high school's graduation rates.

SSD figures show there has been significant improvement in this area as matriculation rates have risen from 68.1 percent in 2013-14 to 84.8 percent in 2016-17, due in large part to the additional educational offerings made possible by the current levy.

Among other concerns for Grzeskowiak is the underlying

uncertainty of the results of the state and federal budgetary process and the impact those deliberations will have on the SSD.

"Each year, Oregon develops a funding estimate of what the state believes it would take to adequately fund schools," he said. "For this year, the Oregon Quality Education Model set the state school fund estimate at \$9.9 billion, while the state legislature actually budgeted at \$8.2 billion. Before any school started off the year, there was a 17 percent deficit between actual

operations and full funding."

The district has already begun dealing with the changing fiscal landscape by making major adjustments to the Twilight Education program, condensing many aspects of the after-school program in response to reduced fiscal support from the federal government.

Another important element in this discussion is the security and safety improvements installed and operating due to the funding provided by the current levy.

The safety and security of students is of primary importance, according to the SSD board.

There have also been changes in state mandated school curriculums. These modifications require increased PE minutes for

kindergarten through eighth-grade (HB 3141) and for the implementation of career and college readiness programs in high schools (Measure 98).

These mandates have been passed by the legislature but were not funded. These shortfalls would also be addressed by the renewal of the levy.

Grzeskowiak wants voters to know that their support is indeed needed and greatly appreciated by the students, staff and administration of the district.

"The Local Option Levy is how the community of Florence helps to fill that gap and provide for the future of local children. The continued support of the community in renewing Local Option Levy Measure 20-281 would be greatly appreciated," Grzeskowiak said.

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VOICE YOUR OPINION!
Write a Letter to the Editor:
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Dodger and Gage are two pups who have been in the shelter for NINE long years!

They need your help to finally find a loving home.

Oregon Coast Humane Society in Florence, Oregon, has been trying to help Dodger and Gage find families of their own. Florence is a retirement community and bigger dogs often aren't adopted, but they have so much love to give!

Dodger has been at Oregon Coast Humane Society since 2009. He's 10 years young and a very active senior. He needs to be an "only child" and tends to have separation anxiety. Dodger would do best with a younger, retired person or a couple that can spend a lot of time exercising and playing with him. He's a very sweet dog who just wants to be around people. He's looking for a home where he won't be left alone all day.

Gage is a very sweet, shy guy. It takes him a little while to warm up to new people, but once he does, he'll love you forever! He's currently living in a foster home with three other small dogs. Gage loves to play ball and he's hoping to find a patient person to help bring him out of his shell. He has been at Oregon Coast Humane Society since 2012 and he's approximately seven years old.

Interested in adopting one of these wonderful boys? Please contact Oregon Coast Humane Society in Florence, Oregon at (541) 997-4277 or info@oregoncoasthumane.org.

Rescue Express will deliver the dog to the greater Seattle area for free! You can contact them at www.RescueExpress.org or (541) 525-3232.

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