



New Richland-Hartland-Ellendale-Geneva Public Schools

Independent School District No. 2168

District Office

306 Ash Avenue South
New Richland, MN 56072
(507)465-3206
Fax (507)465-8633
Dale Carlson, Superintendent

Secondary School

306 Ash Avenue South
New Richland, MN 56072
(507)465-3205
Fax (507)465-8633
David Bunn, Principal

Elementary School

600 School Street
Ellendale, MN 56026
(507)684-3181
Fax (507)684-2108
Douglas Anderson, Principal

Empowering students with knowledge and skills to succeed.

Our Mission

Empowering students with knowledge and skills to succeed.

Our Vision

To be the school district of choice, inspiring excellence in academics, arts, and activities.

Truth in Taxation

Dale Carlson, Superintendent
December 2020

Our vision as a school community is to *be the school district of choice, inspiring excellence in academics, arts, and activities*. We strive to do this every day by *empowering students with knowledge and skills to succeed*.

I invited our School District Business Manager, Karla Christopherson, to share information about the upcoming Truth in Taxation Public Hearing to be held at 6:00 pm on Monday, December 21, in the Secondary School Media Center. Due to the current guidance about limiting person-to-person contact due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, the December 21, 2020, Truth in Taxation meeting will take place with one or more board members possibly participating by telephone or other electronic means in accordance with Minnesota Statute 13D.021 – *Meetings by Telephone or Other Electronic Means*. The public may access a YouTube livestream and/or recording of the meeting by going to the District Website under *Our District – School Board – School Board Meeting Live Stream/Recordings* or by going to <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeJxHiECouTI90UwNd2p0KA>. The public may submit comments/questions prior to and during the Truth in Taxation meeting using this email address: tnt@nrheg.k12.mn.us. Thank you to Ms. Christopherson for the important work she does in managing the finances of the school district.

A reminder that the School Board conducts its regular monthly meeting on the third Monday of each month. Typically, the location of the meeting is rotated monthly between the NRHEG Secondary School Media Center in New Richland and the NRHEG Elementary School Media Center in Ellendale. However, until further notice, the School Board will hold its regular monthly meetings at the Secondary School Media Center due to “live-stream” technology requirements. The School Board intends to continue live-streaming School Board meetings at least through the COVID-19 pandemic period when restrictions are placed on the number of the public that may attend. The December 21, 2020, School Board meeting and the January 19, 2021, School Board meeting will both be held at the Secondary School beginning at 6:30 pm. Please note the January School Board meeting is on a Tuesday since Monday, January 18, is a holiday. Until further notice, Board members have the option to attend the meeting remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There will be a minimum of one Board member and myself at the designated site. All COVID-19 CDC safety guidelines will be enforced for any public attending. Members of the public may view the Board meeting live via YouTube by going to the link at <https://www.nrheg.k12.mn.us/Page/3436>. Recordings of the Board meeting are available by going to the same link as above. You may also access the link by going to the District Website at <https://www.nrheg.k12.mn.us/pages/NRHEG>. At this time, anyone wishing to make a public comment to the Board will need to attend in person at the designated site.

The School Board will also be holding a special School Board meeting on Monday, January 4, 2021, for the purpose of conducting the annual organizational meeting of the School Board.

We celebrate together in the accomplishments of our students because we are in this journey together as a school community. Thank you for all you do to support NRHEG Public Schools and our students!

What is Truth in Taxation?
Karla Christopherson, Business Manager

"Truth in Taxation" (TnT) is a process first enacted by the legislature in 1988 to enhance public participation in Minnesota's property tax system.

As explained on the Minnesota Legislature website, the TnT process consists of three components:

- Each local government is required to formally adopt a "proposed levy" in September for the upcoming year; the final levy, when ultimately adopted, may not exceed the proposed levy. Final levies may exceed proposed levies in the case of levies approved by voters in referendum elections.
- County auditors generate parcel-specific notices of proposed taxes for all parcels of property based on the proposed levies.
- Each local government is required to hold a public meeting after the notices come out where budget and tax issues are discussed, and where public testimony must be allowed, prior to adopting its final levy.

Prior to TnT, the only involvement most taxpayers had with the property tax system was on the valuation side of the equation. Taxpayers received a market value notice in the spring of the year prior to the tax year, but nothing about how that valuation would actually relate to property taxes. Taxpayers could choose to become involved in tax and budgeting decisions by attending meetings of county commissioners, city councils, and school boards, but few did.

TnT was enacted with a goal of improving accountability by focusing taxpayers on the relationship between budget decisions and property taxes, and providing taxpayers with a greater opportunity to become involved in the local government budgeting process.

As part of the required public hearing, administration will discuss the proposed property tax levy and present an overview of the District budget approved by the School Board in November, 2020. The 2020-2021 budget includes a projected revenue of \$11,654,615 across the four primary funds including General, Food Service, Community Service, and Debt Service, and reflects an increase of 7.62% from the prior year. The budget also includes planned expenditures of \$11,851,650 which reflects an increase of about 7.6% from the prior year. The budget increases are primarily related to the pandemic.

As many of you are aware COVID-19 has greatly affected education as a whole, but thankfully schools have benefited from multiple sources of funding to help pay for unexpected costs to operate safely. As the Minnesota Department of Education website explains, "the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, passed on March 27, provides over \$2 trillion in federal economic relief to protect the American people from the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19. The CARES Act provides assistance for American workers, families, and small businesses, and preserves jobs for American industries. This CARES funding includes an Education Stabilization Fund, which in turn contains two major sources of funding for schools: the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund and the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund. It also contains section 5001, the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF), which establishes \$150 billion in payments to state, local, and Tribal governments navigating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. These three funds together have totaled approximately \$300,000 for the NRHEG school district. We have also received CARES dollars from Waseca County and the City of Ellendale to help us get through these trying times.

At the regular School Board meeting on December 21, the School Board will consider certifying the final payable 2021 property tax levy. The School Board will consider the following resolution.

Whereas, Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes the School Board of NRHEG School District, New Richland, Minnesota, is authorized to make the following proposed tax levies for general purposes:

General	\$ 1,027,530.38
Community Service	87,877.65
General Debt Service	<u>677,886.70</u>
Total Proposed School Tax Levy	\$1,793,294.73

Now Therefore, Be it resolved by the School Board of NRHEG School District, New Richland, Minnesota, that the levy to be levied in 2020 to be collected in 2021 is set at \$1,793,294.73. The clerk of the NRHEG

School Board is authorized to certify the proposed levy to the County Auditor of Waseca County, Minnesota.

The proposed levy of \$1,793,294.73 represents a 5.89% increase over the prior year.

For more information regarding ***Truth In Taxation*** and NRHEG's school levy, please plan to attend the public hearing on December 21 beginning at 6:00 pm in the Secondary School Media Center in New Richland, or visit our school website at nrheg.k12.mn.us to view the power point presentation.