

San Juan Island Park and Recreation & San Juan Island School District
Levy Partnership
April 27, 2021 Election
Frequently Asked Questions

Why is there a need for a levy to fund school sports?

Small school districts are disadvantaged by the state's per-student funding formula. They do not have the economy of scale that large districts have. It simply costs more to educate students at smaller schools. Additionally, the cost of the athletic program is significantly higher compared to mainland districts due to travel expenses, from ferry tickets to referee and officials' fees. The San Juan Island Park and Recreation District (Island Rec) levy funds the high school athletic program and allows the San Juan Island School District (SJISD) to focus all federal, state and local support on maintaining exceptional academic programs. Voters have approved this partnership since 2010.

Why partner with Island Rec?

Island Rec and the school district share a common goal of providing opportunities for healthy activities and growth. As a junior taxing district, Island Rec is once again requesting voter approval for funding to support school athletics, allowing the school district to apply its limited revenue to a strong academic program.

Who currently runs the high school athletic program?

Through this levy, Island Rec currently funds the majority of the cost for the school district's middle and high school athletic programs. SJISD coaches and the athletic director are employees of the school district which will continue to run all aspects of the athletic program. With the renewal of this levy, Island Rec will continue to reimburse the district for costs in excess of student fees and private donations.

Why does the district's athletic program need the 10 cents (of the 38.5 cents) requested in the Island Rec levy?

Student athletes pay a fee to participate in each sport, which along with private donations, fund 15% of the athletic program costs. This money will pay for the athletic budget not covered by fees and donations and will fund the current operational budget, post-season expenses, uniform expenses, and capital equipment items. It is the goal of the SJISD, and of Island Rec, to maintain the current school athletic program as it exists.

Is this an increase in the levy amount from 6 years ago?

No. The 38.5 cents is the same levy rate that Island Rec has been collecting for the last 6 years.

Why not raise the student participation fee?

Students currently pay a one-time ASB card fee of \$30, and a participation fee of \$150 dollars per sport. This is already one of the highest fees among any of the high schools in the state.

Why should I pay for a program that doesn't involve me?

A strong, healthy community supports programs that foster positive connections and healthy choices for youth. There has been much educational research done related to the benefits of high student participation in athletics; e.g. better classroom attendance, higher academic performance, and a stronger school culture. On San Juan Island, one of the most important qualities of high school athletics is that it crosses all boundaries of our high school-age population. High school athletics are available to all homeschool students, private school students, and public school students who meet the academic eligibility requirements. An average of 335 student athletes participates on the 16 sports teams offered in the middle school and high school. Because of the levy, every student has the opportunity to engage in a healthy, team-based, self-competitive program that leads to physical fitness, mental discipline and emotional connections with teammates. Positive choices for youth are vital to a healthy community.

What's the arrangement with John O. Linde Community Park?

Linde Community Park has been built on land that is owned by the school district and developed through private donations and volunteer efforts. The community park is maintained and operated by Island Rec. It provides 4 playing fields for high school and youth sports with a playground and a walking path for community use.

How has COVID impacted the need for this levy?

The COVID pandemic has had a huge financial impact on school district budgets across the state. The SJISD is facing a decrease of approximately \$600,000 in state funding in the 2020-21 school year. This deficit will impact regular student instruction, and further underscores the importance of this levy, in order to continue with an athletic program and allow our student athletes to participate and compete in high school sports.

The COVID pandemic has highlighted the social emotional needs of our students. Athletics is a major component in meeting those needs. The state has indicated that in order to address the impacts of the past year, students need a 'double dose' of activities that will help with their social emotional growth, making an athletic program more essential than ever before.

The school sports program was not able to operate at its normal level for the last 10 months. Where did the cost savings go?

The on-again, off-again nature of the sports program has meant the athletic program had to be ready to resume its sports teams on short notice. They did experience a surplus of about \$60,000 which has been spent on some overdue capital expenses such as video equipment to live stream competitions and new weight room equipment that will be used by all athletes and students of the school.

If you have questions, concerns, or need more information about the high school athletic program, please contact Brock Hauck, SJISD Athletic Director, at (360) 370-7115 or email brockhauck@sjisd.org or Superintendent Fred Woods at (360) 378-4133 or email fredwoods@sjisd.org.

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