

School Ballot Referendum FAQ Worksheet

The Mexico Public Library has been a cornerstone of the village of Mexico for decades.

We strive to meet all of our patron needs with access to emerging technologies that serve as a gateway to information in our library and around the world.

We especially recognize our responsibility to serve as a place for children to develop lifelong reading skills, as well as to discover the joy of reading and the value of libraries to our communities.

Q: What is the library asking for with this referendum vote?

The library is appealing to our community for a funding increase in the amount of \$10,000, added to the existing \$75,000 for a total of \$85,000.

Q: How will the funding be used?

- The Mexico Public Library relies on our talented staff to meet the needs of our community, from children's programming to computer assistance. The proposed increase will be used to help provide the competitive wages and benefits we need to recruit and retain personnel with 21st century skills.
- Our recent survey to the community showed a strong interest in expanding our programming, especially for adults, so that will be one of our goals.
- Our community partnerships have flourished over the last few years, and we want to maintain and continue to develop these important relationships with local organizations, such as the Food Pantry, Senior Groups and the school district.
- The Mexico Public Library building was built in 1868. Since that time, our services have expanded to keep pace with modern librarianship, in a building that was not designed for 21st century needs. We are constantly moving and adjusting our collection and displays to make the most of our very beautiful but limited space.
- The historical brick exterior is always in need of maintenance and we will be repointing and repairing brickwork on the western wall of the library on South Jefferson Street. In the interior, we will need to replace the carpeting in our brick meeting room.
- Modern library service means providing high-speed internet access (including WiFi), as well as the equipment and infrastructure that make such access possible. In the last few years we have upgraded to High Speed Fiber Optic with Spectrum and FirstLight, which has increased our monthly technology bill.

Q: Why now?

- The library is working towards transitioning all library funding to the school ballot. This increase is the first step toward achieving that shared goal. This gives us a predictable and secure revenue for the future.
- The library has not asked for an increase in funding since May 2016.

Q: Why a referendum instead of a loan or a grant?

Placing a referendum on the school ballot is a sustainable way for the library to ensure it has the means to provide high-quality service to our community. It allows the voters a direct voice in the funding process, and once approved, it's funding the library can rely on year after year.

Q: Are there alternative funding sources available to the library?

The library receives funding from a variety of sources, including the Town of Mexico, the county, and the state. This funding is completely discretionary and is never guaranteed.

Q: How much will the increase cost me as a homeowner?

Our current library tax of \$75,000 has an approximate tax rate of .123 which means that a homeowner with a property assessed for \$100,000 pays approximately \$12.30 a year – less than the cost of one hardcover book to support the library for a year!

An increase of \$10,000 will mean an approximate tax rate increase of .014 per thousand. Therefore, homeowners with property assessed for \$100,000 will see an increase of approximately \$1.40 to support the library's mission for a year.

Q: What is the library's portion of the latest property tax bill?

The library tax is a separate line item on your school tax bill. The tax is separate from the school tax and is not part of the school district budget. All money collected from the library tax goes directly to the library.

Q: What will happen if the referendum does not pass?

Less programming will be planned for the community and building improvements will be put on hold until funds are raised through grants or donations.

Q: When will the vote be held?

The library's school ballot referendum vote will be held on May 17, 2022. Voting is from Noon to 9 PM at Mexico, Palermo and New Haven elementary schools.

Q: Who can vote?

Voters participating in the school ballot election must be at least 18 years of age and registered to vote either with the Board of Elections or the school. To find out if you are registered to vote and your polling place, visit <https://es.findmypollplace.com/mexicocsd/>.