

# HUSKIE Tracks



## Not a New Tax - Countywide Millage Renewal Means \$3 Million for District

Portage School residents, along with all other citizens throughout the county, will be voting on a 1.5 countywide millage renewal in the May 6 election. Portage Schools receives almost \$3 million a year from this operational millage, which covers instructional program expenses. The millage was originally passed in May 2005.

The District is holding informational Open Houses about the vote on these dates:

- Wednesday, April 23, 3:30-4:30, Portage Senior Center
- Wednesday, April 30, 6:30-8 p.m., West Middle School

There is also additional information online from the District's homepage ([www.portageps.org](http://www.portageps.org)), including the following charts:

- PPS Revenue Below Inflation Since Countywide Millage Approval
- State Spending Changes: 2002-03 through 2008-09

This past November, PPS voters approved a bond which is for construction and remodeling, and cannot be used for instructional programs.

Meanwhile, the Board of Education voted unanimously in February to place this renewal before voters. Without the \$3 million provided annually from this millage, students in the District will face cuts in services and programs, such as:

- Cuts in athletic programs, music and theatre programs, textbook purchases and other instructional materials, and busing, resulting in fewer bus stops and more walkers.
- Cuts in teaching staff, media specialists, counselors, and support staff that will reduce up to 40 positions, increase class sizes, and reduce course offerings.
- Cuts in programs that give our students an edge, such as International Baccalaureate and AP fees and support, Education for Employment intern programs, Kalamazoo Area Math & Science Center services, Gifted & Talented (E2) Services, and Reading.

Even with the revenues from this countywide millage, the District has had to make about \$1.3 million in cuts to balance the budget. Since the 2002-03 school year, the District has made \$3.8 million in cuts. Meanwhile, even with a millage renewal, more budget cuts would be likely - and therefore failure of the renewal would result in an even greater shortfall.

Those who need an absentee ballot will find a link on the District's homepage ([portageps.org](http://portageps.org)) to print the form, or those without computer access can pick up the form at their clerk's office or at the PPS Administration Building at 8111 S. Westnedge Ave, just south of Centre Avenue.























