Dear School District of Wisconsin Dells Community Members,

In the Wisconsin Dells area, November can bring mild, almost summer-like weather or cold, nasty winter weather, reminding us that colder temperatures are on their way. This is a good time to remind everyone how the district will inform families if it faces a closure, delay, or early release because of inclement weather. The district will make a final decision and inform the public no later than 6:00 am and will send a text message to families and post on the district's Facebook page. If an early release is necessary, the district will utilize the same practices and look to make this decision no later than 11:00 am for a 12:30 pm release. If the district deems it necessary to early release students because of inclement weather and you have elementary-age children, please make sure that we have your alternative transportation arrangements in advance and on file at one of the elementary offices or communicated in advance with our classroom teachers. This will greatly assist office staff, as well as classroom teachers and aides, who ensure your children are on the correct bus or follow any alternative pre-approved arrangements. Please make sure your family has a plan for any late starts or early releases due to weather conditions.

DPI SCHOOL REPORT CARDS

On Tuesday, November 17, 2026, DPI will be releasing the annual state-required school report cards. When released, the district looks forward to sharing this information as our schools continue to see positive academic trends in a variety of areas. Internally, we know our student achievement remains at or near the top when comparing the district's academic assessment data with fence-line neighboring districts and the state average. One emphasis this school year is continuing to focus on student achievement growth. In short, the district must ensure the academic growth of every student. At times, we think growth only needs to occur in certain groups of students, but we must continue to have a laser-like focus on growing the academic skills of all students.

The report card scores provide strong feedback on what the district and its students are doing well, and they also point to areas where the district needs to improve in the current year and in years ahead. The district has had the school report card data for about the past six weeks but was not able to share it until DPI releases the final data. Having this data in advance has allowed the district to set our current 26-27 school goals based on which academic areas need improvement or greater attention this year. As such, the district uses early release days as a resource that allows teaching staff to collaborate and focus on the improvements needed to advance student learning.

MILL RATE & TAX LEVY ESTABLISHED

As part of the October 26, 2026, Board of Education meeting, the board adopted the 2026 levy. Specifically, the board approved two levies. The first levy was approved at $23,788,168, establishing a $5.84 mill rate, down from the previous year's $6.11. This is the amount that will be levied if the referendum is successful. The second levy was also approved at the same amount listed above, but only if the referendum fails. Alternatively, the district would pre-pay building debt owed on WDHS. Both figures represent a year-over-year levy increase of 1.56%, nearly half the rate of inflation over the past year. One key variable to limiting the year-over-year levy increase is that the district has a net surplus of

students open enrolling into the district. Specifically, 50 more students are enrolling in the district than leaving it. This year, each regular education student open enrolling into the district carries a value of $11,030, and each special education student open enrolling into the district, where space is available, carries a value of $14,882. This surplus of open enrollment students generates more than $500,000 for the district. Overall, these variables, combined with previous advanced planning, have kept the overall levy with a small increase and well within the rate of inflation. Finally, when the district looks at per-pupil spending, it will likely continue to spend well below the state average. In previous school years, the district has spent about $2,300 below the state average on a per-pupil basis.

WDHS PROUDLY PRESENTS

Attention everyone! Please mark your calendars for the upcoming production "Clue," with shows scheduled for Friday, November 6th @ 7:00 pm, Saturday, November 7th @ 7:00 pm, and Sunday, November 8th @ 2:00 pm. All shows will take place at the Nelson Performing Arts Center, and tickets are $12 for general admission and $6 for students. Come on out and support the fine arts at WDHS; we hope to see you there!

Finally, please take note that there is a scheduled early release on Wednesday, November 11, 2026. Additionally, both WDES and WDHS will host Veterans Day programs. WDHS & WDMS will join forces, with the program taking place in the high school gymnasium and starting at 8:30 am. The elementary program will take place in the WDES gymnasium and will begin at 10:00 am. Finally, please note that Thanksgiving break begins at the end of the school day on Tuesday, November 24, 2026, and classes resume on Monday, November 30, 2026. Enjoy this well-deserved extended break!

In closing, we thank you for the opportunity to serve our communities' children, for they are both our highest priority, and it is our privilege to do so!
Sincerely,

Terrance R Slack