

Complaint Description

Susan Wilkins (Tue, 23 Apr 2019 at 5:52 PM)

The Lake Washington School District is running \$120,000,000 6-year levy on the April 23, 2019 ballot in King County. They have incorporated the slogan "No tax rate increase" into all of their informational material. No tax rate increase is actually a campaign slogan or promise so they are indirectly campaigning for the levy. Additionally, the district produced a chart to illustrate that there would be no tax rate increase - and distributed it in their informational mailer that was sent to all addresses in the district. Further information is available in the attached complaint file.

Susan Wilkins (Tue, 23 Apr 2019 at 6:24 PM)

The Lake Washington School District is running a ballot measure in the April 23, 2019 election. The district communications department used its Connections Newsletter to distribute levy videos that were promotional, rather than purely informational. Additionally, the frequency of the email (bi-weekly) containing levy material exceeded what would be considered normal business practices.

Additional information is in the attached files.

What impact does the alleged violation(s) have on the public?

The statement "No Tax Rate Increase" without explanation or supporting data misleads the public into believing that the ballot measures will not cost anything. The Lake Washington School District has manipulated chart data to make believe that the levy will have no impact on their tax bills. Taxpayers who are struggling to pay their ever-increasing tax bills are hurt by this.

The Lake Washington School District has an all-district email list that it uses to distribute its Connections Newsletter. From December through April, the newsletter included articles and videos about the levy that were not strictly informational. By its very nature, the bi-weekly emails targeted school district supporters who were more likely to vote in favor of the ballot measure, thus influencing the outcome of the election. Additionally, funds were used to produce videos and the videos contained sections that were promotional rather than informational, so the district was using public funds and facilities to promote the campaign.

List of attached evidence or contact information where evidence may be found.

List of potential witnesses with contact information to reach them.

Complaint Certification:

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that information provided with this complaint is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

TOPIC: Lake Washington School District's Proposition 1 on the April 23, 2019 ballot in King County, Washington

Section of law violated: RCW 42.17A.555 Use of public office or agency facilities to campaign for the Lake Washington School District's proposed Construction Levy ballot measure. Omission of supporting data to confuse voters with their "no tax rate increase" slogan; and, WAC 390-32-010(4) Deliberate manipulation of data to create the column chart illustrating "no tax rate increase." and, Making a campaign promise that the tax rate would be maintained at \$2.57 per thousand if the levy passed.

Complaint concerns:

- 1.) failure of the Lake Washington School District to provide adequate supporting data for voters to understand the statement "No tax rate increase" and widespread incorporation of the "No tax rate increase" slogan into levy material without proper context amounts to using district resources to campaign for the April 23, 2019 levy.
- 2.) Production of the "No tax rate increase" chart on the back page of the district-wide mailer required manipulated data in order to achieve the appearance of the tax rate remaining unchanged over 6 years.
- 3.) Making a campaign statement "No tax rate increase" - a statement that the Lake Washington School District is not capable of honoring if assessed values decline or if tax laws change in the next 6 years.

Complaint filed by: Susan Wilkins, 18024 NE 99th Court, Redmond, WA 98052

Respondents: Barbara Posthumus, Chief Financial Officer and Associate Superintendent of Business and Support Services, Lake Washington School District, P.O. Box 97039, Redmond, WA 98073

Summary:

At their December 3, 2018 meeting, the Lake Washington School District Board of Directors passed Resolution 2259 authorizing a \$120,000,000 levy for the April 23, 2019 ballot. The 6-year construction levy will be used to put additions on 5 schools in the district and provide safety measures.

It is recognized that school districts have the authority and responsibility to inform the public about ballot measures for levies and bonds that provide funding for school districts. However, school districts may not campaign for or provide information that is intended to influence the outcome of an election.

The Lake Washington School District has included a "No Tax Rate Increase" slogan in its informational material that it has distributed. "No Tax Rate Increase" can be found on printed and electronic material including emails, videos and on the Lake Washington School District's website. (See <https://www.lwsd.org/2019-capital-projects-levy>)

The "No tax rate increase" slogan is dependent on annual increases in property value assessments¹ in order for the "no tax rate increase" claim to be true. This assumption is never explained or footnoted so that the readers (and voters) are left to figure out the meaning of "No tax rate increase."

Table 1. Increasing assessed value and annual school tax bill of a \$1,000,000 home in the Lake Washington School District.

TAX YEAR		Assessed value of house based on 3% or 4% appreciation	Tax Rate per thousand No tax rate increase	Annual School Tax Bill
2020		\$1,000,000	\$2.57	\$2,570.00
2021	4%	\$1,040,000	\$2.57	\$2,672.80
2022	4%	\$1,081,600	\$2.57	\$2,779.71
2023	4%	\$1,124,864	\$2.57	\$2,890.90
2024	3%	\$1,158,610	\$2.57	\$2,977.63
2025	3%	\$1,193,368	\$2.57	\$3,066.96
2026	3%	\$1,229,169	\$2.57	\$3,158.97

By omitting the essential requirement that house values must increase in order for "no tax rate increase" to be true, the district has failed to fully inform the public as to the actual impact and cost of the proposed levy.

RCW 84.52.054 requires that ballots be printed with the total cost of the levy. The ballot must also include an annual estimate of how much the levy will cost per thousand in assessed value. Based on the collection rates published on the ballot, it was calculated that the district estimates that the assessed value of properties will increase by 4% in 2020, 2021 and 2022 and then increase by 3% annually in 2023, 2024 and 2025. (Table 1.)

RCW 84.52.054 is intended to inform the voter about how much a proposed levy will cost collectively and per household. *The legislature never intended for tax rates be used to illustrate that a flat tax rate means that tax bills will stay the same.* And yet, the tax rate has become a campaign slogan.

With 3-4% annual appreciation, the tax bill will rise \$588.97 over 6 years with no tax rate increase.

*Median value of a house in the Lake Washington School District was \$866,000 in 2019. \$1,000,000 house value was used for illustration purpose.

¹ Increases in total assessed value can occur because of new construction or as a result of increasing home valuations. Based on data from the King County Assessor's office, annual new construction accounts for 10-15% of the increased tax base with the remaining increase due to appreciating values in existing homes.

As Table 1 shows, even if the tax rate remains constant at \$2.57 per thousand over 6 years, a homeowner's tax bill will increase year-over-year from \$2,570 in 2020 to \$3,159 in 2026, an increase of \$589 or 23%. What is the purpose of the "No tax rate increase" statement made in all of the district's informational material? Without an explanation that the district is assuming that assessments (house values) will rise, "no tax rate increase" can only be construed to mislead voters into thinking that "no tax rate increase" will have no effect on the total tax bill.

"No Tax Rate Increase" is not a neutral statement. It is intended to promote the levy.

Lake Washington School District's Tax Rate Chart

In addition to repeating the "No tax rate increase" statement in most of its material, the Lake Washington School District has created a chart that illustrates that there will be no tax rate increase if the levy passes. This chart is featured in the district-wide mailer that was produced by the school district and mailed to all addresses in the district. The chart is also featured in the District's 12-minute informational video (<https://www.lwsd.org/2019-capital-projects-levy>)

The 2019 tax bills received by resident living in the Lake Washington School District collected \$2.57 per thousand in taxes for "local schools". Based on this rate, the district produced informational material that states that there will be no tax rate increase above \$2.57 per thousand for the next 6 years if the levy passes.

Maintains LWSO tax rate

The total tax rate will be maintained at the current amount of \$2.57 per \$1,000 of assessed value, with no tax rate increase.



Not only does the chart show that the tax rate will not increase, it makes the statement, "The total tax rate will be maintained at the current amount of \$2.57 per \$1,000 of assessed value, with no tax rate increase." The district does not have the authority to set the tax rate at \$2.57 and cannot change tax bills to honor the *no tax rate increase* declaration. The Lake Washington School District appears to be making a campaign promise that it cannot keep.

The chart shows that the total tax rate will be \$2.57 per thousand in assessed value every year from 2019 through 2025. It's a perfect chart - too perfect. The tax rate values in the chart are based on actual bonds and levies that were passed by voters as well as on current assessments. The data is available from external sources including King County and the Municipal Services Rulemaking Board.

In November 2018, the Lake Washington School Board issued \$71,765,000 in bonds authorized by the 2016 and 2006 bond measures. The official statement below includes the annual cost of paying off the new bonds and previously issued bonds. The district needs to collect the amount in the column titled "Total UTGO Debt Service" (minus about \$2 million from federal Build America subsidies.) The district must collect variable amounts ranging

from \$77 million in 2019 to \$52 million in 2024 to pay the principle and interest due on the bonds. The annual collection total varies so the annual tax rate for the bond collections fluctuates.

From emma.msrb.org Official Statement of Lake Washington School District Bond Issuance in Dec 2018

Page 1

OFFICIAL STATEMENT dated November 15, 2018

NEW ISSUE

NOT BANK QUALIFIED

BOOK-ENTRY ONLY

RATINGS: District's Underlying: Moody's: "Aaa"

S&P Global Ratings: "AA+"

Washington State School District Credit Enhancement Program: Moody's: "Aa1"

S&P Global Ratings: "AA+"

(See "RATINGS" and "APPENDIX C - WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL DISTRICT CREDIT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM" herein.)

In the opinion of K&L Gates LLP, Bond Counsel, assuming compliance with certain covenants of the District, interest on the Bonds is excludable from gross income for federal income tax purposes under existing law. Interest on the Bonds is not an item of tax preference for purposes of the federal alternative minimum tax imposed on individuals. (See "TAX MATTERS" herein for a discussion of the opinion of Bond Counsel.)

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\$71,765,000
LAKE WASHINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 414
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON
UNLIMITED TAX GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS, 2018

Calendar Year	Outstanding UTGO Bonds		The Bonds		Total UTGO Debt Service ¹
	Principal	Interest ¹	Principal	Interest	
2019	\$38,895,000	\$25,805,750	\$9,550,000	\$3,454,594	\$77,705,344
2020	30,605,000	24,045,800	3,820,000	3,025,750	61,496,550
2021	33,760,000	22,614,550	5,675,000	2,834,750	64,884,300
2022	39,735,000	20,926,550	4,980,000	2,566,000	68,207,550
2023	32,280,000	18,939,801	3,500,000	2,317,000	57,036,801
2024	32,435,000	17,837,925	0	2,212,000	52,484,925
2025	40,675,000	16,711,975	0	2,212,000	59,598,975
2026	43,635,000	14,984,111	0	2,212,000	60,831,111

The district estimates that the total assessed value (TAV) will increase at a rate of 4% from 2020 through 2023 and by 3% annually from 2024 through 2026 so the annual collection rate for the bonds is listed below.

LWSD CONSTRUCTION BOND PAYMENT SCHEDULE 2019-2026

Row 1-Total payment each year, Row 3 - Rate per thousand

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Total UTGO Debt Service	\$77,705,344	\$61,496,550	\$64,844,300	\$68,207,550	\$57,036,801	\$52,484,925	\$59,598,975	\$60,831,111
TAV +4% in 2020-2023 and +3% in 2024-2026	\$65,952,909,780	\$68,591,026,171	\$71,334,667,218	\$74,188,053,907	\$77,155,576,063	\$79,470,243,345	\$81,854,350,645	\$84,309,981,165
Rate/1000	\$1.18	\$0.90	\$0.91	\$0.92	\$0.74	\$0.66	\$0.73	\$0.72

*2019 TAV is based on 15% increase in 2018 Bond Assessed Value (p 16) of the Nov 15, 2018 Official Statement for the \$71,765,000 bond issue.

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DISTRICT FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Debt Summary

The following table presents a summary of certain District debt factors including the Bonds.

2018 Population Estimate	198,343
2018 Bond Assessed Value ¹	\$57,350,356,330

It should be noted that in 2022 the district must collect \$68.2 million, and in 2024 the district must collect \$52.5 million (nearly \$15 million less.) The district's chart shows that bond collections will be \$.88 in 2022 and \$.90 in

2024. This should not be the case since the amount collected in 2024 will be \$15 million lower and the tax base will be higher. Similarly, the tax rate for the 2025 bonds should be \$.73 in order to collect \$59 million, not \$.90.

Additionally, the EPO rate (blue columns) is based on a levy that was passed by voters in 2018 to collect funds in 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022. We know that the district is authorized to annually collect between \$59-\$68 million in 2019-2022 (approximately \$.90 per thousand); however, we don't know how much the district will collect in 2023 and beyond - and yet the chart shows that \$.90 per thousand will be collected each year. As a result of the McCleary bill, RCW 84.52.0531 allows annual EPO collection of up to \$1.50 per thousand so stating that the rate will remain at \$.90 per thousand in 2023 through 2025 is speculative.

The chart produced by the Lake Washington School District has stacked columns that clearly show that the tax rate will remain flat and unchanged through 2025 if the levy passes. The chart includes an orange line to reinforce and emphasize that the tax rate will be maintained at \$2.57.

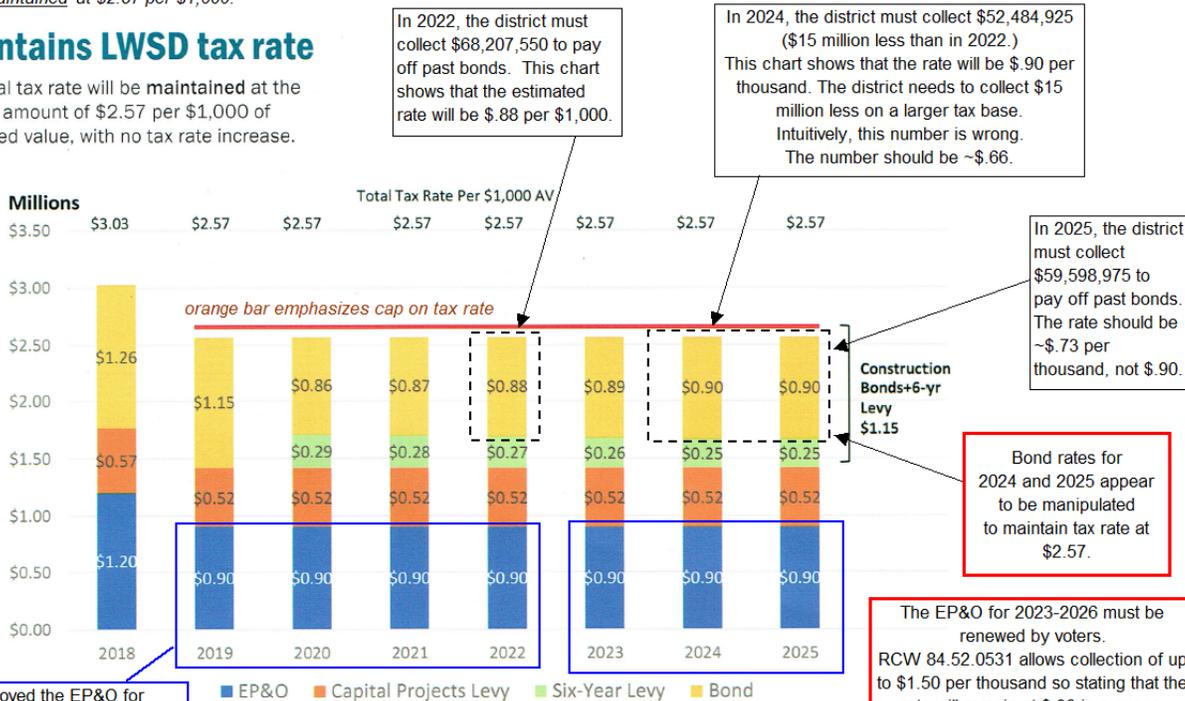
TABLE 2.

This statement clearly tells voters that the tax rate will be maintained at \$2.57 per \$1,000.

Maintains LWSO tax rate

The total tax rate will be maintained at the current amount of \$2.57 per \$1,000 of assessed value, with no tax rate increase.

TAX RATE CHART FROM LAKE WASHINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT'S CAPITAL PROJECTS LEVY DISTRICT-WIDE MAILING



In 2022, the district must collect \$68,207,550 to pay off past bonds. This chart shows that the estimated rate will be \$.88 per \$1,000.

In 2024, the district must collect \$52,484,925 (\$15 million less than in 2022.) This chart shows that the rate will be \$.90 per thousand. The district needs to collect \$15 million less on a larger tax base. Intuitively, this number is wrong. The number should be ~\$.66.

In 2025, the district must collect \$59,598,975 to pay off past bonds. The rate should be ~\$.73 per thousand, not \$.90.

Bond rates for 2024 and 2025 appear to be manipulated to maintain tax rate at \$2.57.

The EP&O for 2023-2026 must be renewed by voters. RCW 84.52.0531 allows collection of up to \$1.50 per thousand so stating that the rate will remain at \$.90 is a guess. We don't know how much the district will be allowed to collect in 2023-2025 so using \$.90 creates a nice chart, but it could also be \$1.50.

Voters approved the EP&O for 2019-2022 in February 2018. This levy expires and must be renewed. \$.90 per thousand is a valid estimation.

See table 3 that contains the official bond statement from the November 15, 2018 UTGO Bond issuance.

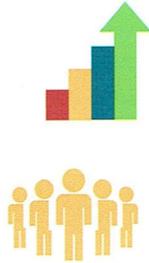
The chart that the district created is persuasive and was carefully constructed to convince the readers that the levy would have no effect on their taxes. It must be noted that a combination of speculative tax rates for the EPO in 2023, 2024 and 2025 along with the manipulated and inaccurate bond rates for 2024 and 2025 create a chart that is beautiful and yet flawed, unreliable and deceptive. The Lake Washington School District is a public agency. It is completely unacceptable that the Lake Washington School District manipulated data on the chart in order to create a positive appearance in an attempt to influence voters.

The Lake Washington School District used funds to create this chart, print it and mail it to all residents. This violates RCW 42.17A.555 that prohibits use of public agency facilities to campaign for a ballot measure.

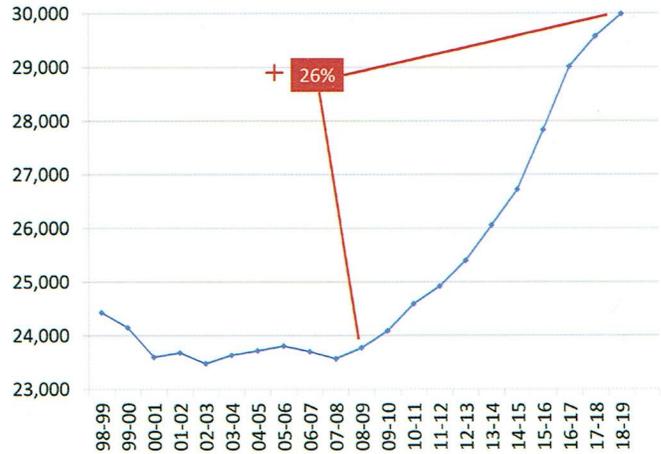
ECRWSS
POSTAL CUSTOMER

Unprecedented Enrollment Growth

- Enrollment has grown by over 6,000 students between 2008 and 2018. That represents **26% growth** over the last 10 years.
- LWSD anticipates an additional 2,000 students by 2022.



Enrollment



Maintains LWSD tax rate

The total tax rate will be **maintained** at the current amount of \$2.57 per \$1,000 of assessed value, with no tax rate increase.



#414-ALL
4 LEARNING COMMUNITIES
1 DISTRICT
4 (FOR) ALL STUDENTS

The Lake Washington School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, gender, marital status, creed, religion, honorably discharged veteran, military status, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability, or the use of a trained guide dog or service animal by a person with a disability, in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

Civil Rights Coordinator	Title IX Coordinator	Section 504/ADA Coordinator
Director of Human Resources 16250 NE 74th Street Redmond, WA 98052 425-936-1266 civilrights@lwsd.org	Director of Student Services 16250 NE 74th Street Redmond, WA 98052 425-936-1289 titleix@lwsd.org	Director of Special Services 16250 NE 74th Street Redmond, WA 98052 425-936-1407 section504@lwsd.org



CAPITAL PROJECTS LEVY

Lake Washington School District will have a Capital Projects Levy on the April 23, 2019 ballot.

- Lake Washington needs more classrooms for students to support our rapid enrollment growth.
- Our highest priorities are creating safe schools and maintaining quality classrooms.

This measure authorizes a six-year levy totaling \$120 million or \$20 million per year for six years.

Maintains 2019 LWSU tax rate for construction with NO TAX RATE INCREASE.



PLEASE VOTE **ELECTION**
April 23, 2019

For more information, including answers to frequently asked questions, visit: www.lwsd.org
425-936-1342 | communications@lwsd.org

THE LEVY WILL PROVIDE:

Critical Projects for Growth

Permanent classroom additions at:

- Lake Washington High School (20 classrooms)
- Rachel Carson Elementary (4 classrooms)
- Benjamin Franklin Elementary (8 classrooms)
- Rose Hill Elementary (8 classrooms)
- Mark Twain Elementary (4 classrooms)



Adds classroom space for **1,052 students.**

Core Facilities/Common Spaces

- Additional auxiliary gymnasium and commons space at Lake Washington High School
- Additional core facilities at:
 - Rachel Carson Elementary
 - Benjamin Franklin Elementary
 - Rose Hill Elementary
 - Mark Twain Elementary



Critical Projects for Safety

- Exterior security cameras at elementary schools.
- Modifications to entrances of:
 - Eastlake High School
 - Lake Washington High School
 - Redmond High School



TOPIC: Lake Washington School District's Proposition 1 on the April 23, 2019 ballot in King County, Washington

Section of law violated: RCW 42.17A.555 Use of public office or agency facilities to campaign for the Lake Washington School District's proposed Construction Levy ballot measure.

Complaint concerns:

- 1.) Lake Washington School District's excessive use of the school district's email server and all-district email address list to announce and promote the April 23, 2019 Construction Levy in the school district's bi-weekly Connections Newsletter.
- 2.) use of school district funds to produce videos that contain campaign material that is meant to influence voters' opinions in favor the proposed 2019 Levy and is not purely informational about the Proposition 1 ballot measure.

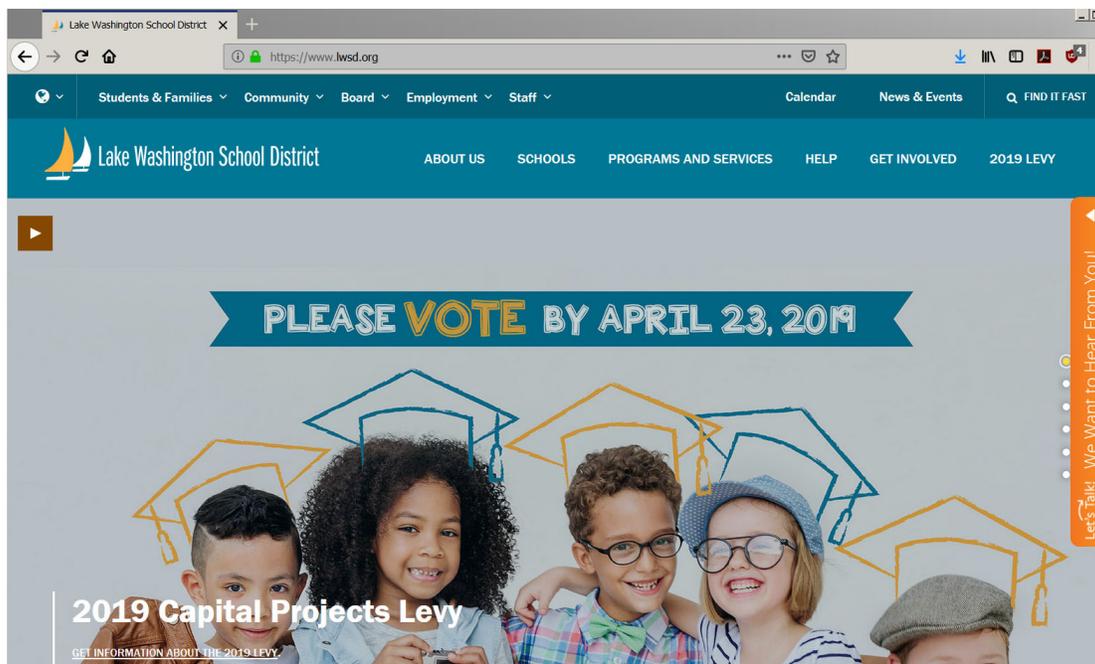
Complaint filed by: Susan Wilkins, 18024 NE 99th Court, Redmond, WA 98052

Respondents: Shannon Parthemer, Director of Communications and Community Engagement, Lake Washington School District, P.O. Box 97039, Redmond, WA 98073

Summary:

At their December 3, 2018 meeting, the Lake Washington School District Board of Directors passed Resolution 2259 authorizing a \$120,000,000 levy for the April 23, 2019 ballot. The 6-year construction levy will be used to put additions on 5 schools in the district and provide safety measures.

Shortly thereafter, the Lake Washington School District created a dedicated web page for the levy on LWSO.ORG. Users could access it by clicking on "2019 Levy" in the site's main toolbar. Additionally, the "PLEASE VOTE BY APRIL 23, 2019" banner was added to the site's dashboard as the introductory page:



Note that the smiling children are wearing drawn-in graduation caps. The picture is more than informative about the 2019 levy since it implies a positive outcome created by the levy and seems to be campaigning. District funds may have been paid to an advertising agency to create this ad campaign for the 2019 Levy.

It is acceptable and expected that the school district will inform the community about the upcoming election, the district's funding and facility needs and how levy funds will be used; however, the school district must present facts that are truthful, correct and accurate. The District must also take care that it is not using its facilities and technology to campaign for the election.

On the LWSO.ORG website, choosing "2019 Levy" from the toolbar or clicking on the "GET INFORMATION ABOUT THE 2019 LEVY" in the dashboard will connect to the **April 2019 Capital Projects Levy** page (<https://www.lwsd.org/2019-capital-projects-levy>)

HOME > 2019 LEVY

April 2019 Capital Projects Levy

Lake Washington School District will have a Capital Projects Levy on the April 23, 2019 ballot.

- Lake Washington needs more classrooms for students to support our rapid enrollment growth.
- Our highest priorities are creating safe schools and maintaining quality classrooms.
- The 2019 levy maintains the current tax rate with no rate increase.

This measure authorizes a six-year levy totaling \$120 million or \$20 million per year for six years.

The levy will provide:



Critical Projects for Growth

Permanent classroom additions at:

- Lake Washington High School (20 classrooms)
- Rachel Carson Elementary (4 classrooms)
- Benjamin Franklin Elementary (8 classrooms)
- Rose Hill Elementary (8 classrooms)
- Mark Twain Elementary (4 classrooms)

Adds capacity for 1,052 students.



Core Facilities/Common Spaces

- Additional auxiliary gymnasium and commons space at Lake Washington High School
- Additional core facilities* at:
 - Rachel Carson Elementary
 - Benjamin Franklin Elementary
 - Rose Hill Elementary
 - Mark Twain Elementary

*pending feasibility



Critical Projects for Safety

- Exterior security cameras at elementary schools.
- Modifications to entrances of:
 - Eastlake High School
 - Lake Washington High School
 - Redmond High School

Maintains 2019 LWSD tax rate for construction with no tax rate increase.

Informational Presentation: 12:11



Levy Overview: 1:39



Critical Safety Projects 1:10



Critical Capacity Needs 1:34



Note the 2nd and 3rd sentences:

- Our highest priorities are **creating safe schools and maintaining quality classrooms.**
- The **2019 levy maintains the current tax rate with no tax rate increase.**

Both sentences are subjective and do not provide factual information.

At the bottom of the page in the blue box it repeats: "Maintains 2019 LWSD tax rate for construction with no tax rate increase."

Statements about tax rates remaining the same or unchanged are campaign slogans and do not belong in any levy presentations.

The tax rate is a function of total assessed value (TAV) of properties in the district as determined by the King County Assessor, as well as the amount of money that needs to be collected annually to fund the levy. The TAV increases or decreases based on demand in the housing market as well as from construction or demolition of structures. To imply that the tax rate will remain unchanged without fully providing the critical information to explain the relationship of TAV, levy collections and tax rates renders the statement "maintains the current tax rate" meaningless and is intended

to confuse the voter into thinking that their taxes will not increase. In providing inadequate information about the relationship of the 2019 levy and the tax rate, statements about tax rates are campaign slogans and school districts are not allowed to campaign.

INFORMATIONAL VIDEOS FOR THE 2019 LEVY

The District made four videos that are available on the lwsd.org website and also have been distributed through the newsletter. The videos were created using district funds and should provide information to the community about the April 23, 2019 levy that is factual and relevant.

Video #1: "Informational Presentation: 2019 Campaign Capital Projects Levy"

Video #2: "Capital Projects Levy Overview"

Video #3: "Capital Project Levy: Critical Safety Projects:"

Video #4: "LWSD Critical Capacity Needs"

The videos can be found on the 2019 Levy page at: <https://www.lwsd.org/2019-capital-projects-levy>

Video #1: "Informational Presentation: 2019 Campaign Capital Projects Levy"

This video is 12 minutes long and contains statements that seem to be promotional and do not provide information that is directly supporting the 2019 levy including:

- Our primary mission in the Lake Washington School District is to make sure that every student will graduate prepared to lead a rewarding and responsible life as a contributing member of our community and greater society.
- Lake Washington School District Vision: Every Student Future Ready: Prepared for College, Prepared for the Global Workforce, Prepared for Personal Success.
- Lake Washington Students are achieving excellence in every area: 93.6% Graduation Rate, High Ranking both nationally and within the state in Language Arts, Math and Science,
- Annually, multiple National Merit Scholars awarded, Countless state and national academic and extracurricular championships, Highly recognized and awarded fine arts programs.

This video also states that there will be No Tax Rate Increase and provides a column chart to illustrate tax rates during the 6 years of the levy (2020 through 2025.)

Video #2: "Capital Projects Levy Overview"

This video contains subjective statements that are not informational about the levy including:

- Lake Washington School District continues to perform at levels that lead the nation.
- That means our students are graduating from our schools prepared for their futures.
- Schools are one part of what makes our community great.
- Good schools attract new families.
- Future bonds will address additional student classroom needs.
- The district is committed to building safe and effective classrooms.
- This levy will maintain the current tax rate because we are paying off past bonds.

Video #3: "LWSD Critical Capacity Needs"

This video includes the statement: "We have been strategically adding classroom space capacity since 1989." (The 2019 levy is supposed to address enrollment growth between 2008 and 2018. "Strategic planning" that occurred beginning in 1989 cannot be relevant. It seems to be promotional.)

Later, the video announcer goes on to state: "The great news is these projects can be completed by combining current district resources and capital projects levy funds with no tax rate increase, because we are paying off old bonds."

Video #4: "Capital Project Levy: Critical Safety Projects:

This video is informative and provides important information about the 2019 levy.

It must be noted that Video #1 was introduced in the district "Connections Newsletter" on March 8, Video #2 was included in the March 25 "Connections Newsletter", Video #3 was included in the April 4 "Connection Newsletter" and Video #4 was in the leading article in the April 18 "Connections Newsletter".

Use of the Lake Washington School District's Connections Newsletter:

The Lake Washington School District maintains an email list that it uses for district-wide announcements that are included in its **Connections** newsletter. Newsletter recipients include parents, teachers, administrators, students, grandparents and general community members. The newsletter is sent bi-weekly to all members of the community from the connections@lwsd.org email address that is managed by the Lake Washington School District Communications Department.

Copies of past Connections Newsletter are available on the district website at:

<https://www.lwsd.org/programs-and-services/communications/connections-e-newsletters>

April 2019 Capital Projects Levy Information

Capital Projects Levy by the numbers

The LWSD Capital Projects Levy will be on the April 23, 2019 ballot. Between now and the election, the district will be providing opportunities to learn more about what is included in the levy proposal in publications like Connections, the district website and elsewhere. Stay tuned for more information as we get closer to April. The [2019 Levy page](#) is now available on the LWSD website for additional information.

Below are some fast facts related to the district's enrollment numbers.



Immediately after the Lake Washington School Board voted in December 2018 to place the levy on the ballot, the district began providing information about the April 23, 2019 levy in the Connections newsletter. The Connections newsletter has included an article about the 2019 levy in every edition beginning December 20, 2018.

The Connections email and online editions for January 15, January 29 and February 21, 2019 all contained the following section with a link to the 2019 Levy page.

The information is accurate and informative except at the bottom it includes the statement (slogan) "Maintains the current tax rate with no tax rate increase."

The March 8, 2019 Connections Newsletter

-contained an advertisement for the April 23, 2019 Levy that Video #1 was embedded in.

-see the online version of the March 8 Connections Newsletter at:

<https://www.lwsd.org/programs-and-services/communications/connections-e-newsletters/connections-march-8-2019>

(screen capture from the Connections Newsletter below:)

April 2019 Capital Projects Levy Information

Learn more about the April 23 Capital Projects Levy

Lake Washington School District is running a Capital Projects Levy on April 23. Watch this informational presentation about the levy and visit the levy webpage at: <https://www.lwsd.org/2019-capital-projects-levy>.



The March 25, 2019 Connection Newsletter

-included an article about the 2019 Levy with a link to Video #2.
-see the online version of the March 25 Connections Newsletter at: <https://www.lwsd.org/programs-and-services/communications/connections-e-newsletters/connections-march-25-2019>

(screen capture from the Connections Newsletter below:)

April 2019 Capital Projects Levy Information

April 23 Capital Projects Levy: Overview

Lake Washington School District is running a Capital Projects Levy on April 23. [Watch this animated presentation about the levy](#), and visit the levy webpage at: <https://www.lwsd.org/2019-capital-projects-levy>.



The April 4 Connections Newsletter

-had an article on the 2019 Levy with links the Video #2 and Video #3.
-see the online version of the April 4 Connections Newsletter at: <https://www.lwsd.org/programs-and-services/communications/connections-e-newsletters/connections-april-4-2019>

(screen capture from the Connections Newsletter below:)

April 2019 Capital Projects Levy Information

April 23 Capital Projects Levy: Critical Capacity Needs

Lake Washington School District is running a Capital Projects Levy on April 23. [Watch this animated presentation about how the 2019 Levy will add space for over 1,000 students in our schools.](#)

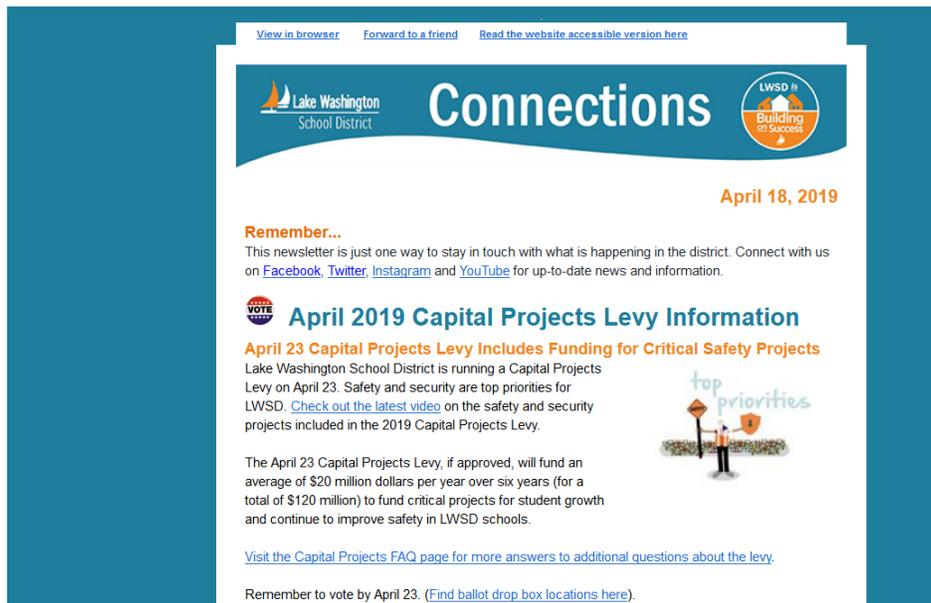


You can also [watch this animated presentation about the levy](#), and visit the levy webpage at: <https://www.lwsd.org/2019-capital-projects-levy>



Remember to vote by April 23. ([Find ballot drop box locations here](#)).

For the April 18, 2019 Connections Newsletter that was distributed to community members across the district, the email subject line was "April 18, 2019 - April 23 Capital Projects Levy Includes Funding for Critical Safety Projects and more!"



The leading article in the Connections Newsletter was the April 2019 Capital Projects Levy that reminded people to watch the video with a link titled "Check out the latest video".

Note that there is also an embedded link in the picture on the right that says "top priorities" and the person is holding a safety sign.

The Lake Washington School District's Communications Department used the Connections newsletter to distribute articles about the 2019 Levy that included subjective statements and images about the district that was targeted at members of the community who would be more likely to vote for the levy because they or their family members are affiliated with the school district. Positive statements like "Lake Washington School District continues to perform at levels that lead the nation" combined with a reminder that a levy is on the ballot on April 23 would unduly influence specific voters to cast ballots in favor of the levy.

Furthermore, the District used its extensive email system to inform and remind voters that a school levy is taking place and the email and videos that were distributed was promotional rather than informational. Altogether, the District sent newsletters that contained levy articles 8 times between December 20, 2018 and April 18, 2019.

The district's email lists and email server are considered to be part of the district's facilities. The videos that were produced for the levy were paid for with school district funds. The district appears to have violated RCW 42.17A.555 multiple times by using district facilities to assist and promote the 2019 levy.