

## Albuquerque School Bond Issue - Recommend a NO vote

Does APS need millions more of your money, or are taxpayers in need of honesty and accountability? APS officials will continue to spend every dime taxpayers give them, so it's up to voters to decide if this makes sense.

In 2019 voters approved a property tax mill levy of \$2.00 per each \$1,000.00 of net taxable value for property within the Albuquerque Public School (APS) District for the tax years 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024. It was estimated that tax would produce over \$600 million over six years.

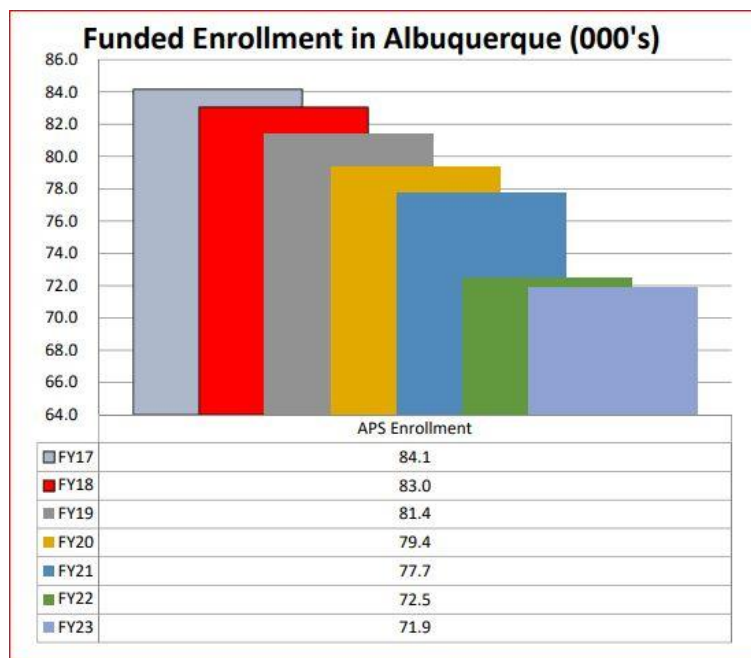
In 2021 voters approved a property tax mill levy of \$3.838 per each \$1,000.00 of net taxable value of residential property and \$4.344 per each \$1,000.00 of net taxable value of non-residential property allocated to the APS District for tax years 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026 and 2027. It was estimated this tax would generate over \$700 million over six years.

Now in 2023, voters are being asked to continue the property tax mill levy passed in 2019, saying it will generate less in years 2025-2030 taxes than they estimated back in 2019. APS says the money will be used for various projects like air conditioning, heating, security, technology, leaky roofs, and in some cases, complete renovations of aging schools. But the 2023 mill levy is also requesting tax dollars to purchase new properties. No matter how you look at it, the numbers don't add up.

While it is true that if voters approve the mill levy this year the current tax being imposed will not increase, what APS is not telling you is that your property taxes will go down in 2025 if it does not pass.

A major point for voters to consider is that APS enrollment is down 20% over the past 10 years and continuing to decline. While there are legitimate needs for maintenance, APS has failed to account for past spending and to consolidate/downsize where appropriate. It seems clear that APS is not in need of expanding.

Taken from APS data, here is the student enrollment over the last seven years:



Voters generally approve APS requests, but when they are tired of the lack of accountability and an honest presentation of APS's needs, they don't. The last time a bond issue failed, the district put together a reasonable proposal the following year that addressed the needs and not the fluff. It passed and APS was not devastated in the meantime, nor did buildings fall apart.

NMBC understands voters generally agree that we need to provide our children with well-maintained and safe schools. We agree too; however, given the declining student population and the seemingly disingenuous request for items that are clearly not needed, voters need to take a serious look at this request and consider whether or not it has merit.

**Sometimes, it takes voters' strength in saying 'NO' to finally get honesty and accountability in requests for their hard-earned dollars.**