

Durango 9-R Mill Levy

The big news on the local education front is the decision made recently by Durango School District 9-R to go ahead with a \$3.2 million Mill Levy Override on the November ballot. Because of the state cut backs in funding to schools, District 9-R has had to reduce teachers and staff, increase class sizes, and postpone or discontinue classroom program and technology purchases. As the state continues to decrease financial support of the district, the district will need to increase their operating revenue from local funding. The Mill Levy Override, if passed, will add approximately \$5 a month to the property taxes for a \$400,000 home.

A survey was done in June, 2010 by Harstad Strategic Research of Boulder, Colorado based on a random selection of 302 likely voters. Participants were asked a number of questions concerning their perception of the direction of general and economic conditions in Durango, level of property taxes, funding of schools, feelings toward Durango schools, teachers, principals, etc. They were also asked to give a grade (A-F) to Durango schools. 80% of parents and 55% of non-parents gave the schools a grade of A or B. When asked the question of whether or not they would support a mill levy override 63% said they definitely or probably would support it.

The district has appointed a committee of 32 staff, board members, and community members to promote the passage of the Mill Levy Override. The effort has been named “Invest in Durango Education and Students” (**I.D.E.a.S.**) Erica Max is the chairperson and there are nine subcommittees. Expect to hear much more about this in the future.
-Ann Flatten

[Ed. Note: LWV members Ann Flatten and Julie Levy, who is also a school board member, are serving on the I.D.E.a.S committee.]