



**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

110745

**Michael Bonds, President
Milwaukee Board of School Directors, District 3**

3519 N. 50th St., Milwaukee, WI 53216
Phone (414) 520-3890 ■ Fax (414) 442-1161

September 23, 2011

Mr. Ronald Leonhardt
City Clerk
200 E. Wells Street
City Hall Room 205
Milwaukee WI 53202

CITY OF MILWAUKEE
2011 SEP 26 AM 10:45
RONALD D. LEONHARDT
CITY CLERK

RE: Transparent Tax Levy Information

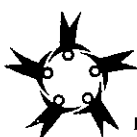
Dear Mr. Leonhardt:

In an effort to provide improved fiscal transparency to the taxpayers of the City of Milwaukee, on September 22, 2011, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors approved the following:

RESOLVED, That the Milwaukee Board of School Directors respectfully requests that the City of Milwaukee officials, including the Treasurer and the Comptroller, include the tax levy attributable to the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program on documents that are distributed to City of Milwaukee property taxpayers as part of the issuance of the annual property tax bills, to begin with the 2011 property tax bill; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Office of Board Governance and the MPS Administration cooperate with City of Milwaukee officials on this effort and work to facilitate a convenient process by which to provide accurate and timely information related to the voucher tax to City of Milwaukee officials in order to facilitate and expedite this effort.

The Milwaukee Board of School Directors further directed that a letter from either, or both, the Superintendent and the Board President be transmitted to the individuals and or



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Milwaukee Board of School Directors
5225 W. Vliet St., Room 273 ■ Milwaukee, WI 53208
Phone: (414) 475-8284 ■ FAX: (414) 475-8071 ■ governance@milwaukee.k12.wi.us
www.milwaukee.k12.wi.us Click on Milwaukee Board of School Directors

FY12 Transparent Tax Levy Information

offices within the City in relation to the implementation of the above-mentioned resolution and that MPS work with City of Milwaukee Officials to improve fiscal transparency related to the funding of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program and the various components of the MPS-related tax levy to present as full and transparent a picture as possible.

MILWAUKEE PARENTAL CHOICE PROGRAM FUNDS

The state of Wisconsin's current method of funding the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MCPC) attributes the cost of this program to the Milwaukee Public Schools. Property taxpayers in the City of Milwaukee do not currently receive any information informing them of the cost of the MPCP within the documentation provided to them in association with the City of Milwaukee property tax bill.

Given the current lack of transparency, property taxpayers may understandably assume that the levy figure presented as that of Milwaukee Public Schools within the City of Milwaukee's tax bill and the information provided by the City Comptroller's Office is wholly attributable to costs associated with the Milwaukee Public Schools. In addition, property taxpayers may also understandably assume that the increase in the tax levy's figure presented as that of MPS is wholly attributable to costs associated with Milwaukee Public Schools.

Therefore, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors respectfully requests that the City of Milwaukee officials, including the Treasurer and the Comptroller, include - either as part of the existing document, or as an additional, informational document - data disclosing the amount of the tax levy attributable to the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program. (For example, in 2010, \$50.2 million raised by tax levy - 17% of the tax levy attributable to the Milwaukee Public Schools for Fiscal Year 2011- was actually directed to fund the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program pursuant to WI. Stats. Sec 119.23.) In an effort to facilitate this revised tax levy disclosure, we have developed a draft (see enclosure) of how this information could be incorporated into the Comptroller's "Combined Property Tax Report" current format. Should it be determined that an additional handout is necessary, the Board has set aside \$5,000 to cover any additional costs incurred related copying or postage.

District staff also stands ready to work collaboratively with City staff to develop a convenient process by which to provide accurate and timely information related to the voucher tax to City of Milwaukee officials to facilitate and expedite this effort to provide improved fiscal transparency to the taxpayers of the City of Milwaukee.

The Milwaukee Board of School Directors also seeks to pursue, and hereby requests that the Common Council authorize approval for the appropriate City department or officials to request of Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) or other State officials, a waiver under WI Stats. Sec.74.09 (4m)(3) to include, beginning with the 2012 issuance, the tax levy attributable to the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program to be separately identified on the actual City of Milwaukee property tax bill documents.

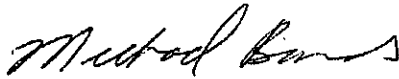
FY12 Transparent Tax Levy Information

Should you require further information or documentation, or if staff from Milwaukee Public Schools may be of further assistance in the development of the requested documentation to be distributed to the City of Milwaukee property taxpayers, beginning with the 2011 property tax bill, please contact Superintendent Gregory Thornton or Board Clerk Lynne Sobczak for assistance.

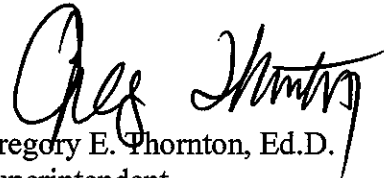
Beginning with the transmittal of the adopted amended FY12 Milwaukee Public Schools Budget Resolutions, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors will include the information regarding the tax levy attributable to the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program with its annual Adopted Amended Milwaukee Public Schools Budget Resolutions certification.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. We look forward to working together to provide our City taxpayers with as full and transparent tax levy information as possible. I trust we stand united in our efforts, especially given the current economy, to fully inform our Milwaukee property taxpayers where their dollars are spent.

Sincerely,



Michael Bonds, Ph.D.
President,
Milwaukee Board of School Directors



Gregory E. Thornton, Ed.D.
Superintendent,
Milwaukee Public Schools

Enclosure

CC: Mayor Tom Barrett
Willie Hines
Wayne Whittow
Mary Reavey
Milwaukee Board of School Directors

The Components of Your Tax Dollar

Comparative Property Tax Rates Per \$1,000 of Assessed Value

Units of Government	2009 ¹	2010 ²	Change
City of Milwaukee	\$8.89	\$9.12	\$.23
Milwaukee Public Schools ⁴	\$8.94	\$9.04	\$.10
Milwaukee County	\$4.43	\$4.65	\$.22
Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC)	\$2.06	\$2.02	\$ -.04
Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD)	\$1.43	\$1.52	\$.09
State of Wisconsin	\$.18	\$.18	\$.00
Total	\$25.98	\$26.57	\$0.59

The total tax levy for all units of local government decreased by \$1.7 million, or 0.2%, compared to last year. As shown in the table below, tax levies decreased for the City of Milwaukee, Milwaukee Public Schools, Milwaukee Area Technical College, and the State of Wisconsin. Tax levies increased for the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District and Milwaukee County.

Due mainly to a decrease in assessed property values, your combined property tax rate increased by \$0.59 compared to last year.

Tax rates increased for most units of government, including the City of Milwaukee (23 cents), Milwaukee Public Schools (10 cents), Milwaukee County (21 cents), and MMSD (9 cents). The MATC tax rate decreased (4 cents), and the State of Wisconsin rate remained unchanged from 2009.

(Excludes Lottery & First Dollar Tax Credits)

¹ Funds the 2010 Budget.

² Funds the 2011 Budget.

³ Rates must be used with 2009 assessed value to determine 2009 net taxes as shown on your tax bill.

⁴ School Tax Credit (\$1.72 in 2009 and \$1.81 in 2010) is included in Milwaukee Public Schools rate.

Citywide Tax Levies

Levy by Unit of Government	2009 ¹	2010 ²	Change ³
	(\$IN MILLIONS)		
City of Milwaukee	\$246.8	\$246.7	0.09%
Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) ⁴	\$241.2	\$243.3	0.9%
Milwaukee County	\$124.4	\$126.7	1.9%
Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC)	\$57.3	\$54.6	-4.7%
Milwaukee Parent Choice Program (MPCP)	\$54.6	\$50.2	-8.0%
Sewerage District (MMSD)	\$39.7	\$41.1	3.49%
State of Wisconsin	\$5.8	\$5.0	-5.6%
Total	\$769.3	\$767.6	-0.2%

¹Funds the 2009 Budget.

²Funds the 2010 Budget.

³Percent change of tax bill may differ due to a change in the assessed value of your property. ⁴Excludes school tax credit.

The Lottery Credit and First Dollar Credit

The Lottery Credit and the First Dollar Credit will further reduce your property tax bill. This year the Lottery Credit is \$93.56 for each qualifying property. The State Constitution limits the Lottery Credit to a homeowner's primary residence. The First Dollar Credit is \$74.20.

Elected City Officials Involved In The City Budget

John Barrett, Mayor
W. Martin Moneys, CPA, Comptroller

Common Council Members
 Willie L. Hines, Jr., President
 15th District: **Walter**

1. Stuart Hamilton
 2. Joe Davies Sr.
 3. Nick Kovacs
 4. Robert J. Bauman
 5. Jim Boni
 6. Michael Cogg
 7. Willie G. Wade

8. Robert G. Donovan
 9. Robert W. Penick
 10. Michael J. Munnis
 11. Joe Dirliko
 12. James N. Wilkowski
 13. Terry L. Wilkowski
 14. Tony Zielhuis

For Information On
 Tax Bill Payment 286-2240
 City Budget 286-3741
 This Report 286-2301

Please contact other units of government for information regarding their budgets.