

## Special Education Millage Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. When is the election?



The election will be held in every local school district served by Marquette-Alger Regional Educational Service Agency (MARESA) on Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The polls will be open from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. Absentee ballots will be available after March 23<sup>rd</sup> and can be cast through Election Day.

### 2. What is on the ballot?

Registered voters residing in school districts served by Marquette-Alger RESA will vote on a 20-year Special Education Millage Proposal that calls for a 1.5 mill tax increase.

### 3. What is the primary purpose of the election?



Special education services that are required by law have not been fully funded by the State of Michigan. Therefore, this year the school districts within the Marquette-Alger RESA boundaries will be forced to make up the \$5 million shortfall from their general operating budgets. The shortfall will reduce the revenue available to pay for programs and services provided to all 9,063 students in Marquette and Alger Counties.

If approved by voters, the Special Education Millage Election will eliminate the special education funding shortages, providing Marquette and Alger Counties' twelve local school districts and one public school academy with annual relief to their operating budgets.

**4. What school districts are served by Marquette-Alger RESA and are affected by this election?**

- AuTrain-Onota (Alger County)
- Burt Township Schools (Alger County)
- Gwinn Area Community Schools (Marquette County)
- Ishpeming Public School District (Marquette County)
- Marquette Area Public Schools (Marquette County)
- Munising Public Schools (Alger County)
- Negaunee Public Schools (Marquette County)
- NICE Community Schools (Marquette County)
- North Star Montessori Academy (Public School Academy - Marquette County)
- Powell Township School District (Marquette County)
- Republic-Michigamme (Marquette County)
- Superior Central School District (Alger County)
- Wells Township School District (Marquette County)

**5. How will the revenue from the Special Education Millage Election be used?**



Revenue from this election will benefit all 9,063 students served by local school districts and one public school academy in Marquette and Alger Counties. Each local school district will determine how the revenue returned to its general operating budget will be used.

Local public school districts may plan to spend their unrestricted general fund relief dollars on investments such as:

- smaller class sizes
- mental health programs and specialists
- safety and infrastructure updates
- reading specialists
- advanced placement opportunities
- school safety



**6. How much revenue from this election will be retained by Marquette-Alger RESA?**

NONE. All revenue will be distributed to Marquette-Alger RESA's twelve local school districts and one public school academy.

**7. How are the revenue distributions to local districts determined?**

The distribution of millage revenue to local school districts is consistent with the special education funding priorities jointly established by local school district superintendents and Marquette-Alger RESA in 2023.

The distribution formula is part of the Marquette-Alger RESA's Special Education Plan reviewed by local school district superintendents and submitted to and approved by the Michigan Department of Education.

**8. How much money will each local school district receive if the Special Education Millage is approved by the voters?**

If voters approve the Special Education Millage Election, all revenue will be distributed to Marquette and Alger Counties twelve local school districts and one public school academy.

The approximate amount of revenue that will be returned to the local districts is based upon the cost to educate the number of special education students residing in the district.

**9. What will the Special Education Millage Election cost?**



The 1.5 mill proposal will cost a Marquette or Alger County homeowner living in a home with a \$200,000 market value \$12.50 per month or about 42¢ per day. Some Marquette and Alger County homeowners will pay more and some will pay less.

To calculate your exact cost, multiply the taxable value of your home by 0.00150. The taxable value of your home is a maximum of one-half its market value. For example, if you live in a home with a \$200,000 market value, the taxable value will be no more than \$100,000. Multiply \$100,000 by 0.00150 to get your annual cost of \$150 per year, or about 42¢ per day. See other examples on the next page.



- \$0.31 per day for a home with \$150,000 market value
- \$0.42 per day for a home with \$200,000 market value
- \$0.62 per day for a home with \$300,000 market value
- \$1.03 per day for a home with a \$500,000 market value
- \$1.54 per day for a home with a \$750,000 market value

**10. Will homeowner property values be affected if voters approve the Special Education Millage Election?**

Research indicates that real estate values tend to be higher in communities with school districts that offer students a quality education program.

**11. What special education programs/services are provided for students in Marquette and Alger Counties?**



Michigan law requires school districts to provide special education programs and services to individuals with disabilities from birth to age 26, or upon graduation from high school.

Students are eligible for services under one or more of 13 disability areas, including:

- Autism
- Cognitive Impairment
- Deaf-Blindness
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Early Childhood Developmental Delay
- Emotional Impairment
- Otherwise Health Impairment
- Physical Impairment
- Severe Multiple Impairment
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech and Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment

The Marquette-Alger RESA Educational Services Department, in conjunction with providers in local school districts, provides programs and services that support the academic and functional achievement of over 1,600 students with disabilities. These students comprise approximately 18% of Marquette and Alger Counties' student population.

Over 350 special education personnel are needed to provide the necessary programs and services for the 1,600+ students with disabilities in our two-county area. These

individuals provide a variety of support to meet students' academic needs. To support the full range of young learners, Marquette-Alger RESA operates a Transition Program School for students 18-26 years of age and early childhood programs.

**12. In school ballot questions, a YES vote means that you approve of the ballot proposal. Is that the case this time?**

Yes. Section 485 of the Michigan Election Law requires ballot questions to be worded so that a "yes" vote will be a vote in favor of the subject matter or issue and a "no" vote will be a vote against the subject matter or issue.

**13. What will happen if voters do not approve the May 2<sup>nd</sup> Special Education Millage Election?**

The twelve local school districts and one public school academy will be required to take money from the general operating budget to cover the collective \$5 million special education shortfall. This will negatively affect educational funding for school districts in Marquette and Alger Counties.

**14. Who can vote in this election?**



Marquette and Alger County residents who are 18 years of age or older, and are registered to vote, can vote in this election.

**15. Where can I get information about voting (such as how to register, where to vote, and absentee voting)?**

Go to the Michigan Voter Information website ([www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote)) or call the Clerk's Office in the municipality or county where you reside.



**16. Do I need to update my voter registration?**

Registered voters need to update their voter registration only if they have changed their name or address since the last time they voted. This can be updated online ([www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote)), at any Secretary of State Office, or at the Clerk’s Office where you reside.

**17. Can registered voters vote by absentee ballot?**

Yes. Any registered voter can request an absentee voter application from their local clerk or online at [www.michigan.gov/vote](http://www.michigan.gov/vote). After March 23<sup>rd</sup>, absentee ballots will be mailed to registered voters who have submitted an absentee voter application. Absentee ballots can be cast by Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, 8:00 p.m.

**18. What is on the ballot?**

Below is the exact ballot wording.

Proposal Section
<b>Intermediate School District</b>
<b>Marquette-Alger Regional Educational Service Agency Special Education Millage Proposal</b>
<p>This proposal will increase the levy by the intermediate school district of special education millage previously approved by the electors.</p> <p>Shall the limitation on the annual property tax previously approved by the electors of Marquette-Alger Regional Educational Service Agency, Michigan, for the education of students with a disability be increased by 1.5 mills (1.50 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) for a period of 20 years, 2023 to 2042, inclusive; the estimate of the revenue the intermediate school district will collect if the millage is approved and levied in 2023 is approximately \$4,765,811 from local property taxes authorized herein?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/></p>

**For more information:**



- Go to [www.maresa.org](http://www.maresa.org) and click on Special Education Millage Election.
- Scan the QR code below.
- Call Marquette-Alger RESA Educational Services Department at (906)226-5100.
- You may also contact your local school district superintendent.