

# Official Local Voters' Pamphlet

## Special Election February 8, 2022

### Voting Instructions:

**Vote:**


- Mark your ballot, put your ballot in the security sleeve, then place the security sleeve inside the return envelope and seal

**Sign:**

- Sign & date the voter declaration


**Return:**

- Return your ballot to the Auditor's Office, Election Division by ballot drop box or mail:

 By Official Ballot Drop Box: boxes open January 19; boxes close at 8:00 pm on February 8.

*Locations available for this election:*

1. Bellingham, 210 36th Street
2. Bellingham, 3005 Cinema Place
3. Bellingham, 231 W Kellogg Road
4. Bellingham, 311 Grand Avenue
5. Bellingham, 516 High Street (outside Bond hall)
6. Bellingham, 1880 Bill McDonald Parkway
7. Birch Bay, 4581 Birch Bay-Lynden Road
8. Blaine, 610 3rd Street
9. Custer, 7660 Custer School Road
10. Ferndale, 2095 Main Street
11. Lummi Reservation, 2665 Kwina Road
12. Sudden Valley, Gate 1 at Lake Whatcom Blvd.

 By Mail: No stamp needed. Ballots must be postmarked by February 8. USPS recommends mailing by February 1.

### Voting Center:


Whatcom County Auditor's Office - Election Division


- 311 Grand Avenue, Suite 103, Bellingham
- Phone: 360-778-5102
- Email: [elections@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:elections@co.whatcom.wa.us)
- Hours: Monday - Friday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm  
*Election Day open until 8:00 pm*

Services Available: Accessible voting using visual and audio technology, replacement ballots, voter registration & address updates.

### How to register or update your address:

 Online at **VoteWA.gov** if you have a current Washington State driver license or ID card.

 Complete a Washington State Voter Registration form and return in the mail.

 In-Person at the Whatcom County Auditor's Office, Election Division.

### Registration Deadlines:

**January 31:** Deadline to register or update your registration online or by mail.

**February 1 - February 8:** Visit our office in-person to register to vote or update your registration in time for the special election.

### **Receiving Your Ballot:**

Ballots for the special election will be mailed to registered voters on January 19. Voters should receive a ballot by January 26. Contact the Auditor's office for a replacement if yours is lost or damaged, or go online to [www.VoteWA.gov](http://www.VoteWA.gov) to print a replacement.

### **Participating Jurisdictions:**

- 1.) Bellingham School District 501 Proposition 2022-3 General Obligation Bonds - \$122,000,000
- 2.) Ferndale School District 502 Proposition 2022-1 School Programs and Operations Replacement Levy, and
- 3.) Whatcom County Rural Library District Proposition 2022-2 Establishing the Birch Bay Library Capital Facility Area.

For additional information on this election, visit the Whatcom County Auditor's Current Election website at [www.co.whatcom.wa.us/1732/Current-Election](http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/1732/Current-Election).

### **Voters Requiring Assistance:**

An accessible voting unit (AVU) is equipped with visual and audio technology. Voters requiring assistance may vote on the AVU starting January 19.

### **Meeting Dates & Times:**

Open public meetings will be held in the Election Center, 311 Grand Avenue, Suite B03, Bellingham. Meeting dates, times, and/or locations are subject to change.

January 19	10:00 am	Logic & Accuracy test
Jan 19 – Feb 17	8:00 am - 4:30 pm	Processing of Ballots Livestream webcams available
February 10	10:00 am	Manual Hand Count (audit)
February 17	2:00 pm	Canvassing Board to Review Challenged Ballots
November 18	10:00 am	Canvassing Board Certification of Election

Visit our website for more information (<https://www.whatcomcounty.us/1574/Elections>)

**Bellingham School District 501  
Proposition 2022-3  
General Obligation Bonds - \$122,000,000**

**Language on the Ballot**

The Board of Directors of Bellingham School District 501 adopted Resolution #25-21 concerning this proposition for bonds. This proposition would authorize the District to design replacements to Cozier, Columbia and Roosevelt Elementary Schools; construct a new elementary school; make classroom additions and building improvements throughout the District; improve playfields and structures; acquire necessary sites; and complete remaining 2018 bond projects, to issue \$122,000,000 of general obligation bonds maturing within a maximum of 20 years, and to levy excess property taxes annually to repay the bonds, all as provided in Resolution #25- 21.

Should this proposition be: Approved/Rejected

**Explanatory Statement**

Passage of Proposition 2022-3 would allow Bellingham School District to borrow \$122,000,000 by issuing general obligation bonds. In accordance with Resolution No. 25-21 approving this proposition, the bonds will pay for renovations, upgrades and new construction of school facilities, including an elementary school, Community Transitions facility, additional classrooms at Kulshan Middle School; design replacements for three elementary schools; field and playground improvements; and making necessary capital improvements. The bonds would be repaid out of an additional annual property tax levy over a period of up to 20 years in an amount sufficient to pay bond debt service.

**Statement For**

Providing students with safe and educationally stimulating schools is core to The Bellingham Promise, the district's strategic plan and our community's commitment to Bellingham's children.

Unfortunately, we cannot rely on the federal and state government to fund school construction and maintenance. Therefore, school districts in our state ask local voters to approve bonds to cover these costs.

This bond represents the next step in our work to build a strong future for our community. It was developed collaboratively by a task force comprised of community members, students, parents and staff working together to prioritize key investments, including expansion for our growing community, environmental sustainability and more inclusive playgrounds and spaces for all kids to enjoy. This bond would increase capacity with a new facility for Community Transitions, a program for students receiving Special Education services through age 21, and a new elementary school near King Mountain to accommodate Bellingham's north side growth. The new school would also be a temporary swing space in the future as other schools, such as Carl Cozier, Roosevelt, and Columbia elementary, are rebuilt.

Continue our community's tradition of supporting quality education for generations to come. Vote to approve the Bellingham Public Schools bond!

**Statement For and Rebuttal of Statement Against prepared by:** Citizens for Bellingham Schools; Bradley Swanson, Lynnette Bennett, and Jay Shilhanek

**Rebuttal of Statement For**

At minimum, a clause needs to be added to return any project overestimates to taxpayers. Last year, the highest compensated Bellingham SD administrator collected \$421,531 - twice as much as the governor. Isn't that a little excessive? In 2019-2020, the district was already spending \$19,358 per pupil (including capital outlays and interest on debt). More financial questions need to be answered before this 20+ year bond is added to taxpayers' growing list of debt.

**Statement Against**

We, Washington State citizens, all want properly functioning school buildings for in-person learning. The funding needs to be equitable and fair to taxpayers. Several problems with this measure. First, there should be no more school bonds for the Bellingham SD, period. Only 6 year, frugal, capital levies should be used similar to the Seattle SD saving local taxpayers millions of dollars a year in interest. This \$122M price tag is just principal. Interest and fees will add another 33% or \$40M bringing the total to \$162M. And taxpayers are still paying for the previous 20 year bond started in 2018 and 20 year bonds prior to that. All stacked up. All with interest.

The BSD should not be running any tax measures in February - the lowest voter turnout month of the year. These measures should be on the general election in November - the highest voter turnout month.

As of this writing, the BSD, as a supposed cost analysis for taxpayers on its taxpayer funded website, just shows rates for just 2 future years. Woefully inadequate. This is a 20 year bond. It will tax the next generation of citizens.

For a logical, accurate, taxpayer cost analysis, [www.schooldataproject.com](http://www.schooldataproject.com)

**Statement Against and Rebuttal of Statement For prepared by:**

Jeff Heckathorn

**Rebuttal of Statement Against**

We, the people of Bellingham, want safe and well-functioning schools. We appreciate our district's fiscally responsible approach in utilizing bonds to maintain lower tax rates while maximizing the buying potential to upgrade facilities and responsibly accommodate growth. We work closely with our community, and we have a long history of running successful February campaigns with ample turnout. Help us continue to build a strong future for our kids. Vote to approve Bellingham Public Schools bond.

**Ferndale School District 502  
Proposition 2022-1  
School Programs and Operations Replacement Levy**

**Language on the Ballot**

The Board of Directors adopted Resolution No. 14-2021 concerning educational funding. This proposition authorizes the District to levy the following excess taxes, to replace an expiring levy, on all taxable property within the District, to maintain and support the District’s educational programs and operations, which are not funded or not fully funded by the State:

Collection Years	Approximate Levy Rate/\$1,000 Assessed Value	Levy Amount
2023	\$1.50	\$11,000,000
2024	\$1.50	\$12,000,000

all as provided in the Resolution.

Should this proposition be approved? Yes/No

**Explanatory Statement**

Passage of Proposition 2022-1 allows the levy of \$11,000,000 in property taxes within Ferndale School District 502 for collection in 2023 and \$12,000,000 in 2024, to replace an expiring levy. In accordance with Resolution No. 14-2021, passage of this proposition would fund educational programs and operations, which are not funded or fully funded by the State. If authorized by the voters, and based on projected assessed valuation information, estimated levy rates per \$1,000 of assessed value may be \$1.50 (2023 collection) and \$1.50 (2024 collection). The exact levy rate shall be determined at the time of the levy.

**Statement For**

This levy would continue funding for critical day-to-day operations and pays for people such as nurses, counselors, and support staff beyond state-funded positions. It continues funding for programs that support our students, such as child nutrition programs, social-emotional health, special education, and advanced learning. In addition, our district’s 8-period high school experience also allows more elective and extra-curricular opportunities for students that include: athletics, drama, music, STEM and Career and Technical Education.

Voting yes will not raise your tax rate. This is not a new tax. It replaces the one that expires December 2022. The district listened to voters and reduced the levy amount in 2020. We are asking to continue the same amount through 2024.

A community’s economic vitality depends on appropriately funded schools. We’ve tightened our belt, like everyone else, and we’ve worked hard to make excellent use of our resources. Supporting schools also supports our local economy and adds to our collective quality of life in Ferndale. Passing this levy will allow us to continue to serve our students by maintaining staff and programs.

This levy will ensure we are able to maintain the quality programs that our students and community value through 2024. Please vote yes.

**Statement For and Rebuttal of Statement Against prepared by:**  
Support Ferndale Schools; Jay Julius, Jake Locker, and Larry Brown

**Rebuttal of Statement For**

When assessed values increase, your levy tax payment increases. FSD claims, “we’ve tightened our belt,” but this \$80,000,000 budget is the highest ever; and FSD saved administrative office staff after the 2020 levy failure by moving them to schools. FSD didn’t “make excellent use of... resources” when they fired experienced bus drivers, nor when hiring a now disgraced and fired \$150,000+/year Equity/Inclusion Director. This levy is local voters’ only tool to hold FSD accountable.

**Statement Against**

Voting for this levy means endorsing the actions and policies of this district, which has abandoned the core principle of local control.

FSD, ignoring protests of parents and students, has dutifully complied with Olympia’s every directive: forcing our children to wear dehumanizing masks all-day, despite their demographic being the least vulnerable to COVID; and firing loyal, naturally-immune, and experienced staff. *Did callously firing expert bus drivers, without a replacement plan, help or hurt students? How long until FSD pursues onsite vaccination without parental consent?*

FSD is brainwashing our children by teaching all subjects through the lens of Critical Race Theory, hidden behind the innocuous-sounding “Social-Emotional Learning” and “Diversity, Equity, Inclusion” frameworks. The State and OSPI-approved pornographic Comprehensive Sex Ed curriculum grooms and sexualizes children, teaches kindergartners about the clitoris, and suggests 7th graders build intimacy through mutual masturbation and bathing together.

FSD lost a recent levy when they broke promises to voters about the cost. They risk losing another now by respecting the State more than local parents and taxpayers. It is FSD’s duty to stand up for our local values, not the dictates of the State. *Do you endorse the district’s actions? Vote No!*

**Statement Against and Rebuttal of Statement For prepared by:**  
Responsible Oversight Ferndale; Andrew Gustafson, Dam Pham, Peggy Selby, Ben Davenport, and Matthew L. Aamot

**Rebuttal of Statement Against**

Ferndale Pride: a character built over time and passed through the generations. A commitment to generosity, community and taking care of our neighbors. No one better exemplifies this character than our schools. Every day they reinforce our community values and character. We are the parents of 5 current students, 3 graduates, and alumni. We are proud to support our schools and we ask you to join us by supporting this levy. Ferndale Strong.



**Whatcom County Rural Library District  
Proposition 2022-2  
Establishing the Birch Bay Library Capital Facility Area**

**Language on the Ballot**

The Whatcom County Council adopted Ordinance No. 2021-090 concerning a proposition to establish the Birch Bay Library Capital Facility Area to finance a new library facility in Birch Bay. If approved, this proposition would establish the Birch Bay Library Capital Facility Area with boundaries as described in County Council Ordinance No. 2021-090, authorize it to acquire, construct, furnish and equip a new library in Birch Bay, incur indebtedness to finance such improvements through the issuance of up to \$4,500,000 in general obligation bonds maturing within 20 years, and levy annual excess property taxes to repay such bonds.

Shall this proposition be approved? Yes/No

**Explanatory Statement**

If approved, this proposition would create the Birch Bay Library Capital Facility Area with boundaries as described in County Council Ordinance No. 2021-049. This proposition would authorize acquisition, constructing, furnishing and equipping a new library in Birch Bay. To pay for the library, the proposition allows the Capital Facility Area to incur debt to finance it by issuing up to \$4,500,000 in general obligation bonds maturing within 20 years, and to levy annual excess property taxes to repay these bonds.

**Statement For**

Vote Yes on Proposition 2 to build the Birch Bay Vogt Community Library. In November, 59.29% of voters said yes, missing the required 60% by 26 votes. The measure is back on the ballot because this is an historic opportunity with broad community support. Now we need you to please vote.

A library will help our growing community thrive, affordably and equitably solving limited educational and entertainment resources as well as our lack of indoor gathering spaces. A \$2 million state appropriation provides a rare funding source for this legacy project. Supporters have secured donations to further lower costs.

Property owners will pay approximately \$3.20 a month in property taxes (\$0.11/\$1,000 assessed value; median assessed value \$350,000). This is a low-cost investment that adds substantial value to your home, your life, and your community. Visit [yeswhatcomlibraries.org](http://yeswhatcomlibraries.org) to see how.

Modern libraries provide essential community infrastructure, connecting us with educational materials and programs, meeting rooms, technology and the internet, employment assistance, entertainment and more. Our library will support everyone, from the youngest to the oldest, now and in the future. Voting is always important. This time for Birch Bay it is essential! Please vote Yes! to build our Birch Bay library.

**Statement For and Rebuttal of Statement Against prepared by:**  
Yes! Whatcom Libraries; Doralee Booth, Keith Alesse, and Ruth Higgins

**Rebuttal of Statement For**

Even with a lack of organized opposition, this measure was defeated in November because it is *not* a top priority for a growing community in the same way as schools and emergency services. Neither is it an “affordable” “low-cost” “investment” at \$6,500,000. Don’t be misled into paying for this extravagant expansion for WCLS which will be regularly visited by only a handful of the taxpayers who are asked to fund it. Vote No.

**Statement Against**

Not the Time.

Every request for property tax adjustments is described as small, yet they add up. We already pay a \$.39 per \$1000 value levy for rural libraries. This proposition would increase this to \$.50 per \$1000, the highest such levy allowed by law. We must consider finances and need when planning for Birch Bay’s future. As Birch Bay grows, priorities must be established. A primary school seems inevitable so voters need to demand that a choice be made: School? Library? Other services?

Who is this library intended to serve? This taxing district should be limited to an area whose citizens would benefit from what they are being asked to finance. The proposed Birch Bay Library Capital Facility Area (LCFA) includes Semiahmoo and areas east whose residents drive for vital service such as groceries, post office and medical as well as a library. Blaine, Lynden and Ferndale provide Birch Bay residents with these needed services within a 10 - 15 minute drive. This is not unusual for rural areas.

Birch Bay residents expressed their wishes in November by defeating the library proposition by a fair and legal vote... Listen to the voters.

**Statement Against and Rebuttal of Statement For prepared by:**  
Linda Cummings, Laura Macaulay, and Carole Sullivan

**Rebuttal of Statement Against**

This is not an either/or situation. Birch Bay – an Urban Growth Area – is voting now to build a library and all it represents. The capital facilities proposition is separate from the operations levy and will expire when the building bond is paid. Boundaries reflect service area. Rather than defeating the proposition, voters expressed overwhelming support, missing the 60% supermajority by 26 Yes votes. Please listen to and join your neighbors by voting yes.