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Gregory-Portland Independent School District

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**G-PISD Board approves Decrease in Total Tax Rate for 2023
& Annual Budget of \$66 Million for 2023-24**

Gregory-Portland ISD taxpayers will benefit from a Board-approved decrease in the school district’s total tax rate to \$1.1126 for this 2023-2024 fiscal year. “That’s 25 cents less than the total tax rate this district adopted just five years ago, and 10 cents less than last year at \$1.2103,” said Dr. Ismael Gonzalez III, the district’s Assistant Superintendent for Business-Finance and Operations.

“This change is the result of a few key factors including G-PISD's long-standing history of fiscal management spanning several decades, including before my time here, as well as legislative actions at the state level causing tax compression for school districts that allowed us to be able to pass the savings on to our taxpayers while continuing to receive funds that are necessary to operate the school district.” Gonzalez also provided an example, stating that this year due to this favorable tax compression and increased homestead exemption residents with a home value appraised at \$250,000 will save approximately \$850 on this year’s tax bill to G-PISD.

Board President Tim Flinn cited a recent school bond earlier this year, as well as public statements from Trustees over time about the district’s declining total tax rate: “We’ve been saying for the last decade or so that we expected the rate to either be maintained or decline. This decision is the result of promises made and kept to the G-P community, including the fact that we have passed bonds recently with ‘no increase to the total tax rate.’ Thankfully, we can do that for a limited time period due to industry tax contributions.” Local business and industry taxes account for approximately 90 percent of the district’s total tax valuation for school bonds, with residential tax contributions covering the remaining 10 percent.

“It’s important to us that our community sees the decline over time in our total tax rate,” said Superintendent Dr. Michelle Cavazos. “It’s also important to note that the decline equates to our commitment as a school district, as allowable under current law, to ensure we are supporting not only our students yet also those who own a home in the G-PISD boundaries.

“As property appraisals continue to rise, that value is set for a resident’s home or property and the total tax rate is used to determine the tax bill amount. We cannot impact property values in any way, yet we can and do thoughtfully consider our taxpayers when determining the total tax rate.”

The board also approved an annual operating budget of \$66 million for the school year. During a public hearing, they received information about how the expiration of “Chapter 313 agreements” in law last year (2022) will now affect G-PISD. “The district will no longer benefit from supplemental payments and revenue if new industry arrives in our area,” said Gonzalez, “which means we have a limited time, approximately 10 years, before the additional revenues we’ve been receiving will (cease).” Gonzalez said the district is working on a 10-year plan to reduce expenditures and prepare for that change.

Cavazos said the district will continue to work with school and department teams to ensure the strategic alignment of resources, which in turn includes reducing expenditures and ensuring the proper use of existing team budgets and resources. “As we review our budget for this year and future years, one point of pride is that we continue to maintain high, competitive salaries and wages for our employees and we are able to attract and retain highly experienced teachers and staff,” she said. “We are proud of what it means for our people, who deserve even more than we can provide with limited school budgets.

“As we move forward, we aim to continue doing our best for our people within the constraints of revenue limitations that are determined by state law – now without the benefit of local industry supplemental contributions that we know will no longer be available to us in the future. As with any change in law, we will be strategic in planning to support our incredible students, staff, and community.”

