



Tazewell County School Districts to Place Sales Tax Question on November 3 Ballot

Tazewell County, Illinois – (May 21, 2026) – School districts in Tazewell County will come together to ask voters to consider a November 3 ballot question for a new county sales tax to support local schools. This referendum proposal would provide critical funding to improve school buildings, enhance safety, and support mental health services for students.

The proposed sales tax approach helps ease the burden on local property taxpayers. **It is estimated that nearly 60% of the revenue would come from nonresidents and visitors, who, by shopping in Tazewell County, would help fund school improvements and distribute the financial responsibility beyond homeowners.** This approach reduces the reliance on property taxes, which would otherwise need to be raised to fund such projects and support services. The majority of Illinois' 102 counties have already approved a County School Facility Sales Tax, including every county that neighbors Tazewell.

If approved, the sales tax would be applied at a rate of 1% to retail purchases, including restaurants and online sales in Tazewell County, while exempting groceries, medications, vehicle purchases and certain other items. Revenue generated would be distributed based on student enrollment in Tazewell County public schools, with each district determining how best to allocate funds within the state's guidelines.

If approved, funds could be used for:

- Renovations, new construction, and repairs to school buildings
- Safety improvements, including fire prevention and energy efficiency upgrades
- Funding for School Resource Officers, school security, and mental health professionals
- Technology infrastructure and durable equipment

"We know residents in Tazewell County continue to see property taxes increase. This proposal will help school districts in our county maintain our aging buildings and infrastructure with a lower individual tax burden because it is estimated nearly 60% of these funds come from people who live outside of our county. If this sales tax referendum passes, it would bring Tazewell County into alignment with our neighboring counties—all of which already have a sales tax that is successfully maintaining their school infrastructure," said Leonard Ealey, Superintendent of Pekin Public Schools District 108.

Districts in the county are working together to keep residents informed about the referendum by providing educational materials, a dedicated website with FAQs, and informational meetings leading up to the November 3 vote. Visit TazewellForStudents.com to learn more.

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The 18 school districts in Tazewell County include District 50 Schools, Central SD 51, Washington SD 52, Creve Coeur SD 76, Robein SD 85, N Pekin & Marquette Hght SD 102, Pekin PSD 108, South Pekin SD 137, Pekin CSD 303, Washington CHSD 308, Spring Lake CCSD 606, Deer Creek-Mackinaw CUSD 701, Tremont CUSD 702, Delavan CUSD 703, Morton CUSD 709, Illini Central CUSD 189, Midwest Central CUSD 191 and Eureka CUD 140.