

Third of schools plan levy election

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BOISE— Idaho's school boss predicted Thursday about a third of Idaho's 115 school districts will call for special levy elections this year.

Jerry Evans, state school superintendent, said he has no exact count, but estimates some 40 school districts will schedule override levies to cope with the financial draught experienced by the 1 percent tax limitation levy. In addition, the largest school district in the state, Boise, does not need to call elections, as it is a charter district and generally goes over the 27 mills.

Evans noted New Plymouth passed a bond levy only Tuesday, and predicted most levy proposals will be approved.

In view of the 1 percent tax initiative, Evans reiterated that public schools got preferred treatment, under the circumstances.

"I think we will have some tax relief but what worries me is that people are expecting too much."

Increased fees

Evans acknowledges that some school districts will slap on increased fees for extra curricular activities, such as for athletics, drama and recreation. However, under the

Supreme Court ruling, school districts are forbidden to charge fees for essential school service, such as textbooks and libraries.

Evans noted the amount school districts would receive for increased public school appropriations applies for most school districts, based on their student enrollment in January.

However, some school districts, such as Idaho Falls 91, have lost students and will suffer a tremendous \$400,000 loss from the \$563,000 increase predicted, with a net gain of \$163,000. Idaho Falls lost some 156 students since January.

However, Bonneville 93 may get more than the \$280,525 anticipated because of increased enrollment.

Evans noted East Bonneville 93, Meridian, Kuna, Post Falls and Coeur d'Alene are the five fastest growing school districts in the state.

Evans said most school districts which have held override levies in the past likely will hold them again this year.

The best dollars spent are those in local districts," he said.

Evans observed school districts would get a 6 percent increased funding, but this is more than offset by the 9 to 10 percent invlation rate.

Fourteen school districts will lose money and two of these are in East Idaho, Madison 321, to suffer \$114,488 loss and Sugar-Salem 322, a modest \$19,361 loss. This is mainly due to the fact new expensive homes were built to replace those lost in the 1976 Teton flood and are appraised at a far higher value.

Evans noted the 115 school districts from the school formula will receive \$224,513,889, a \$7,201,000 increase over the current fiscal year of \$217,312,998.

Other East Idaho school districts anticipating appropriation gains include Snake River 52, \$97,739, Blackfoot 55, \$227,943, Aberdeen 58, \$67,283; Firth 59, \$52,865; Shelley 60, \$98,835.

Swan Valley 92, \$13,356; Arco 161, \$31,976; Challis 181, \$62,174; Mackay 182, \$36,215; Fremont 215, \$137,265; Rigby 251, \$131,473; Ririe 252, \$36,416; Salmon 291, \$53,478; South Lemhi 292, \$21,905, and Teton 491, \$47,101.

Evans was elected last fall after having served as deputy superintendent three and one-half years, superintendent at Caldwell and Cascade 15 years, and previously as mathematics and science teacher at Cascade.

His predecessor, Roy Truby, vacated the position for his unsuccessful election attempt as First District congressman.