# WCS School Safety Referendum

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What will the School Safety Referendum fund?

The referendum will continue funding:

- Five School Resource Officers (SROs)
- Five Mental Health Counselors
- Alternative Education programming for middle and high school students
- Safety equipment, resources, and staff training

These services help ensure that our schools remain safe, secure, and supportive environments for all students.

### 2. Didn't voters already approve a School Safety Referendum in 2018?

Yes. The current School Safety Referendum was approved in 2018 and expires at the end of 2026. This referendum is designed to continue funding the safety programs and services that have been in place since 2018.

### 3. Is this a new tax in addition to the 2018 referendum?

No. The 2018 referendum is expiring. This proposal would replace the current referendum and continue funding existing school safety programs.

### 4. How many students currently receive mental health counseling services?

During the 2025-2026 school year, WCS Mental Health Counselors provided parent-approved support services to 196 students. These services help address concerns before they become crises and provide students with access to support they may not otherwise receive.

### 5. Are parents required to give permission before a student receives mental health counseling services?

Yes. Parent or guardian consent is required before a student may receive ongoing mental health counseling services through Wa-Nee Community Schools.

### 6. What happens if the referendum is not approved?

Without referendum funding, WCS would be required to significantly reduce student support and safety services, returning staffing levels to approximately what existed before 2018:

- One School Resource Officer district-wide

- No Mental Health Counselors
- Limited Alternative Education support at the secondary level

The loss of funding would also impact safety training, equipment, and other student support services.

## 7. How much will the referendum cost?

The referendum would generate up to $1.75 million annually for eight years to sustain current school safety programs and services.

## 8. How will this affect my property taxes?

Based on current assessed values, the maximum tax rate would be $0.10 per $100 of assessed valuation.

For a home assessed at $250,000:

- Approximately **$114 per year**
- Approximately **$9.50 per month**

The current referendum costs approximately $75.96 annually, or $6.33 per month, for the same property value.

## 9. What role do School Resource Officers serve in our schools?

Each WCS school is assigned a full-time, nationally certified School Resource Officer employed through local law enforcement partnerships. SROs provide:

- Immediate emergency response
- Safety planning and preparedness
- Student mentorship and relationship-building
- Support for staff and families

## 10. How does Alternative Education benefit students?

Alternative Education provides flexible pathways for students who need additional academic, behavioral, or social-emotional support. During the 2024-2025 school year, 79 students participated in middle and high school alternative education programming. The program achieved a 100% graduation rate among participating seniors.

## 11. Has the referendum made a measurable difference?

Yes. Since 2018, referendum funding has helped WCS maintain:

- Five School Resource Officers
- Five Mental Health Counselors
- Alternative Education programming

- Enhanced security technology and facility improvements
- Comprehensive staff safety training

These investments have strengthened school safety, increased student support, and contributed to improved student outcomes.

## 12. Why is continued funding important?

School safety is not a one-time investment. Maintaining trained personnel, mental health supports, alternative education opportunities, and security measures requires ongoing funding. The referendum ensures these services remain available for current and future students.