FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Fayette County Board of Education Announcing Proposed Property Tax Increase Over Rollback Millage Rate

Fayetteville, Georgia – August 1, 2022– The Fayette County Board of Education announces its intention to adopt the maintenance and operations (M&O) millage rate at 19.150 mills compared to 19.334 mills the prior year. This is a reduction in the 2022 tax digest M&O millage rate of 0.184 mill. In addition, the bond millage rate will be set at 0.85 mill compared to 1.1 mills the prior year. The combined millage rate reduction is 0.434 mill.

The Board of Education adopted the FY2023 general fund (M&O) budget of $242.9 million on June 27, 2022. The budget includes a 7% cost of living adjustment for teachers and other staff. In addition, the budget includes provisions to maintain smaller classroom sizes, retain current employees, and recruit staff for positions such as bus drivers, paraprofessionals, custodians, and after school program and school nutrition workers.

The millage rate change takes into consideration changes in the tax digest values and exemptions. Gross tax digest values increased 16.54% over the prior year, but total exemptions increased 35.66%. Since the increase in exemptions outpaced the increase in the property values on the digest, the net digest increased only 9.63%. Tax exemptions are now equal to nearly one-third of the gross digest at 30.89%.

Of special note is the floating homestead exemption (L7) enacted by the state legislature for Fayette County last year. The floating tax exemption only applies to school system M&O tax revenues. The exemption caps the increase in assessed value on a homestead property to the lesser of the prior calendar year’s consumer price index (CPI) or 3%. For 2020, the CPI was over 8% so the increase in net assessment value for homestead properties was capped at 3% unless the property changed ownership.

On the 2022 tax digest, there are 20,509 properties that qualify for the floating homestead exemption. On average, these properties have a $43,000 exemption that equates to approximately $840 in exempted property taxes per property. In total, the floating homestead exemptions equate to over $17 million in exempted tax revenues.

Other residential property exemptions include exemptions for senior citizens (age and income qualifications), disabled persons, and military veterans.

Each year, the board of tax assessors is required to review the assessed value for property tax purposes of taxable property in the county. When the trend of prices on properties that have recently sold in the county indicate there has been an increase in the fair market value of any specific property, the board of
tax assessors is required by law to re-determine the value of such property and adjust the assessment. This is called a reassessment.

When the total digest of taxable property is prepared, Georgia law requires that a rollback millage rate must be computed that will produce the same total revenue on the current year’s digest that last year’s millage rate would have produced had no reassessments occurred. The rollback rate for 2022 is 17.422 mills. The intended millage of 19.15 mills will effectively raise property taxes the Board of Education will levy this year by 9.92 percent over the rollback millage rate.

The fiscal year 2023 budget adopted by the Fayette County Board of Education requires a millage rate higher than the rollback millage rate; therefore, Georgia law requires three public hearings be held to allow the public an opportunity to express their opinions on the proposed increase.

All concerned citizens are invited to participate in the public hearings on this tax increase to be held at the LaFayette Educational Center located at 205 LaFayette Avenue, Fayetteville, Georgia on August 15, 2022 at 11:00 AM and 6:00 PM, and August 22, 2022 at 6:30 PM. [www.fcboe.org](http://www.fcboe.org).

The millage rate adoption is scheduled to occur August 22, 2022 at 7:00 PM at the location listed above.

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