



Kirtland School District  
 9252 Chillicothe Road, Kirtland, OH 44094  
 440.256.3311

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
 CLEVELAND, OH  
 PERMIT NO. 1723

# THE **Kirtland** CONNECTION

A Quarterly Newsletter for Kirtland Local Schools

Winter 2018

## KIRTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION VOTES TO PLACE 5.9-MILL 10 YEAR OPERATING LEVY ON MAY BALLOT

The Kirtland Board of Education voted unanimously at its Jan. 22 meeting to place a new 5.9-mill 10 year operating levy to avoid an operating deficit on the May 8 ballot to preserve the academic excellence achieved by the Kirtland Local Schools.

The Board and administration have had ongoing discussions regarding the systemic revenue problem our district faces. During meetings with the community, Superintendent Bill Wade shared that revenue has remained relatively flat since the 2012 levy and has actually declined the past two school years.

The district took aggressive measures to reduce costs, including staffing reductions; shared service agreements; and increased employee contributions for healthcare benefits. These efforts kept district spending at half the state and national averages. But it's not enough.

"Kirtland Schools have a reputation for academic excellence and fiscal responsibility. We have worked hard over the past several years to strengthen our academic standards while at the same time being

responsible stewards of the public money," Superintendent Wade said. "But the reality is that we have hit the wall. If we do not address the fiscal reality, we will have to make decisions that will have an adverse academic impact on our district."

**"It's important for our community to keep our schools strong and preserve our schools."**

"This is a difficult decision. Yet it's important for our schools and our community to keep our schools strong and preserve our schools," said Board of Education member Shannon Green. "We have the best teachers and staff in the area, and our students are getting a wonderful, high quality education – and we want to maintain that."

The 5.9-mill 10 year operating levy will cost homeowners an additional \$17.20 per month per \$100,000 in market home value.

\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSEDDM\*\*\*\*\*  
 RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER  
 KIRTLAND, OH 44094

### BOARD OF EDUCATION

**President: Timothy Cosgrove**  
 tim.cosgrove@kirtlandschools.org  
**Vice President: Tom Meyer**  
 tom.meyer@kirtlandschools.org  
**Shannon Green**  
 shannon.green@kirtlandschools.org  
**Kathryn Talty**  
 kathryn.talty@kirtlandschools.org  
**Jonathan Withrow**  
 jonathan.withrow@kirtlandschools.org

**Superintendent: Bill Wade**  
 bill.wade@kirtlandschools.org  
**Director of Pupil Services: Becky Rowell-Malinas**  
 becky.malinas@kirtlandschools.org  
**Treasurer: Daniel L. Wilson**  
 dan.wilson@kirtlandschools.org

*Kirtland Elementary School*  
**Principal: Chad VanArnhem**  
 chad.vanarnhem@kirtlandschools.org  
 9140 Chillicothe Road, Kirtland, OH 44094  
 440.256.3344

*Kirtland Middle School*  
**Principal: Scott Amstutz**  
 scott.amstutz@kirtlandschools.org  
 9152 Chillicothe Road, Kirtland, OH 44094  
 440.256.3358

*Kirtland High School*  
**Principal: Lynn Campbell**  
 lynn.campbell@kirtlandschools.org  
 9150 Chillicothe Road, Kirtland, OH 44094  
 440.256.3366

*Athletics*  
**Athletic Director: Matt Paul**  
 matt.paul@kirtlandschools.org

### FOLLOW US

Bill Wade on Twitter @KirtlandSuper  
 Kirtland Schools on Facebook @KirtlandSchoolsOH  
 Kirtland Schools on Twitter @KirtlandSchools  
 Kirtland Elementary School on Twitter @KESHornets  
 Kirtland Middle School on Twitter @KMShornets  
 Kirtland High School Principal Lynn Campbell on Twitter @KirtlandHS-Prin  
 Kirtland Hornets athletics on Twitter @kirtlandsports

Kirtland Athletics at [www.kirtlandhornet.org](http://www.kirtlandhornet.org) | Kirtland Local Schools at [www.kirtlandschools.org](http://www.kirtlandschools.org)



*Please join us....*  
 for a Community Presentation  
 on the Operating Levy on the May 8 ballot  
 with Superintendent Bill Wade  
**Tuesday, March 6, 2018**  
**7:00 pm**  
 Location: Kirtland High School Gym



**WORKING TOGETHER TO PRESERVE EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE**



## LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



To Our Kirtland Schools Families,  
2018 is shaping up to be a busy year with a spring levy issue, adoption of a strategic plan and three new Board of Education members.

Based on the most recent five-year forecast and the trend toward deficit spending, the Kirtland Board of Education voted at its Jan. 22 meeting to place a 5.9-mill 10 year operating levy on the May ballot. Despite aggressive efforts to curb spending, the district is on track to post a \$2 million budget deficit in the 2020-2021 school year. The issue will allow the district to maintain opportunities for students without compromising educational programming.

The school district is working with the Educational Service Center of Cuyahoga County on a long-range strategic plan. The process involves a variety of stakeholders formulating mission and vision statements, establishing policies, and creating goals for the school district.

School and community teams will develop action plans to address the goals identified by the original stakeholders. The result will be a strategic plan presented to the Board of Education this spring.

Finally, we welcome new Board of Education members Jonathan Withrow, Kathryn Talty and Shannon Green, as we recognize the contributions of outgoing members Ron Stepanovic, Kat Torok and Joe Solnosky.

You can keep up to date on the latest information of your school district on our website at [www.kirtlandschools.org](http://www.kirtlandschools.org).

Bill Wade  
Superintendent

## STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS MOVING KIRTLAND FORWARD

The strategic planning process is moving forward as the Kirtland Local Schools use key stakeholders to engage with the community in developing a long-range plan for the district.

Staff, parents and community members who represent diverse voices within the school district are working to engage the community in public dialogue that leads to positive change.

Using data gathered from the community, the strategic planning committee will meet for a two-day planning session in March to identify beliefs, formulate mission and vision statements, establish policies, review focus group feedback, identify strengths and challenges, determine needs, and create goals for the school district.

A draft of the plan was shared at the State of the Schools and now school and community teams are developing action plans to address the goals identified by the original stakeholders. A complete strategic plan will be presented to the Board of Education this spring.



## KIRTLAND ROBOTICS TEAMS SCORE AT COMPETITION, SHARE EXPERTISE

The Kirtland High School FIRST Tech Challenge Team hosted a Robotics Weekend in December, welcoming 16 teams. The Electric Hornets finished in the middle of the pack, using the weekend as practice for competition at Cuyahoga Community College in early January, where the team finished seventh out of 28 teams. This was the second-highest Robotic Competition finish in team history. The high school team will take their skills to the Kent State University District Competition next as they make a bid to advance to a third straight Ohio State Competition.

The Electric Hornets also participated in community outreach events at Hattie Larhnam, the Kirtland Cub Scout Pinewood Derby and the University of Akron. The team continues to mentor teams from Willoughby-Eastlake School of Innovation, Mentor Memorial Middle School and Eastlake Middle School. Several team members also taught a math lesson to Kirtland Elementary School (KES) students using FLL NXT Robots.

High school team members also took on the roles of volunteer, referee, judge and coach at the Kirtland Middle School (KMS) FIRST LEGO League (FLL) Regional Tournament at KES in December. KHS senior and FIRST Tech Challenge Dean's List Award Winner Kelly Rudder delivered the keynote address at the event, and junior Kirk Brauer won the Coach's award for his work with Mentor Memorial Middle School's fledgling program the ThunderBricks.

The KMS FLL Team Buzz Buzz Sting Sting placed in the Top 5 at the North Canton Regional Tournament in December. Aiden Knaus, Grace Dikowicz, Danny Frederick, David Frederick, Ian Borthwick, Jimmy Ensinger, Dylan Bottesch, Sarah Fisher, Lucy Heller and Tabitha Blankenship represented Kirtland at the HydroDynamics-themed contest. The team created an innovative solution for distilling water with a home kit, showed excellent teamwork skills and created a high-scoring robot.

Grego Cosimi advises the Electric Hornets and Heidi Grunenberg advises Buzz Buzz Sting Sting.



## SPORTS SHORTS

The KHS Football team finished second in the state in the Division VI OHSAA State Playoffs. Coach Tiger LaVerde was named a winner of the Bib Ritley Award, the News-Herald's football coach of the year.

KHS Women's Soccer finished second in the state. The team finished a historic season ending in an OHSAA Division III State Runner-Up finish.

The KMS 7th and 8th grade volleyball teams won their respective District Championships this fall.

Sydney Snyder of the Lady Hornets basketball team scored a game-high 22 points in the first half of the Chagrin Valley Conference Division opener against Berkshire, pushing her past the 1,000-point milestone.

For the second year in a row, Kaley and Evan Ream represented Ohio at the 2018 Mid-States 14 & Under All-Star Championships in Indianapolis. Kaley, a KMS eighth-grade student, took 8th place in the 200m butterfly, 9th place in the 1650m freestyle and 12th place in the 500m freestyle. Evan, a fourth-grade student at KES, took 9th place in the 100m butterfly, 13th place in the 200m freestyle and 16th place in the 50m butterfly. Brother and sister are part of the Great Lakes Sailfish Swimming Club.

## KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR 2018-2019

Kindergarten registration for the 2018-2019 school year will take place on **May 18**. You must call the Kirtland Elementary School (KES) office to set up an appointment at 440-256-3344. Your child must be 5 years old by Sept. 30 to enter kindergarten. All required enrollment documents are on the Kirtland Local Schools website under the Parents tab. If you need a paper copy, please stop in the KES office. **Parent(s) and child will both attend registration.**





## KHS PROGRAMS SUPPORTED BY KINETICO TEEN EDUCATION GRANT

Kirtland High School was awarded a \$1,000 Kinetic Teen Education Grant to support a motivational speaker and a veterans breakfast last fall.

Reggie Dabbs, part of The Youth Alliance, spoke to high school students about positive behavior and relationships. Dabbs focused on the idea of “You can’t change your past, but you can change your future,” giving students hope.

In November, in honor of Veterans Day, KHS hosted a breakfast to honor local veterans, followed by an assembly for grades 6-12. School Resource Officer Al Taddeo, a U.S. Navy veteran, was guest speaker at the assembly, which featured veterans and the American Legion Color Guard, as well as staff and student presentations.

Kinetic Inc. offers annual grants to middle and high schools in Geauga, Lake and Ashtabula counties. The grants support programs that educate students on topics affecting teens.

Both the motivational speaker program and veterans breakfast also were supported by KHS’ school-wide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports initiative.



## KHS STUDENT SCORES PERFECT 36 ON ACT

Kirtland High School junior Jake Grdadolnik scored a perfect 36 on the ACT exam.



Jake is a member of the KHS cross country team and KHS First Tech Challenge team. He was honored last spring by the Northeastern Ohio Local Section of the American Chemical Society (NEOACS) as a Young Scientist Award Winner. He intends to study math/science/engineering in college.

## BOARD WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS FOR 2018

Three new Board of Education members were sworn into office after winning seats in the November election. Jonathan Withrow, Kathryn Talty and Shannon Green join Timothy Cosgrove and Tom Meyer on the Board.

At its Jan. 8 organizational meeting, the Board elected Cosgrove as president and Meyer as vice president. The Board also set its 2018 meeting schedule, which can be found online at [www.kirtlandschools.org](http://www.kirtlandschools.org).

Withrow is a patent attorney and a partner at Rankin, Hill & Clark LLP in Willoughby. He has an undergraduate degree in civil engineering from The Ohio State University and earned his law degree, summa cum laude, from Cleveland State University. Withrow and his wife, a teacher at the School of Innovation in the Willoughby-Eastlake School District, have two children in the Kirtland Schools.

Green, a former teacher with the Beachwood City School District, has three children in the Kirtland Schools. She most recently served as president and 2nd vice president on the Kirtland PTA Board. During her tenure the PTA earned the National School of Excellence Award. She has an undergraduate degree in communication from Ohio University and a master’s degree in K-8 education from Ursuline College.



Kathryn Talty, a 17-year resident of Kirtland, is a registered nurse with three children who have attended the Kirtland Local Schools. Talty regularly volunteers with the schools, putting together after school programs for art enrichment and working with children with special needs.

Outgoing Board members Ron Stepanovic, Kat Torok and Joe Solnosky were recognized for their dedication to the Kirtland Local Schools in December. The trio was praised for their support, guidance and contributions, which played a critical part in improving the Kirtland Schools.

## KIRTLAND FACES CHALLENGES IN FUNDING HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION

The Kirtland Local Schools are committed to academic excellence and being responsible stewards of the community’s tax dollars. Our mission is to focus on operating in a lean and efficient manner, cutting costs while continuing to provide an excellent education experience for our students.

Based on the most recent fiscal forecast, which shows a more than \$2 million deficit by the 2020-2021 school year, the Board voted to place a 5.9-mill 10 year operating levy on the May 8 ballot. The Board came to this decision by monitoring spending vs. revenue, personnel costs and ending cash balances.

It has been six years since the community approved the last operating levy in 2012. Since that time, operational costs have increased, but operating revenue has not. In fact, district revenues have been relatively flat since 2012. In the last two years, revenue declined by 2.95% and 0.59% for a total loss of \$516,636.

Since 2012, federal funding for Kirtland Schools decreased by 36%, while state funding fell by almost 11%. These losses must be absorbed by the district’s general fund budget to cover mandated services - many of which are unfunded - shifting the school funding burden to local taxpayers.

Despite aggressive fiscal oversight, the dynamics of public education funding in Ohio results in virtually no annual growth in operating revenue to offset the inflationary growth in expenses. This challenges school districts to fund high quality education while facing escalating expenses.

The levy will help provide appropriate and updated educational tools balanced with proven teaching methods that will allow our schools to meet the changing needs of our community and enable our students to compete in the global economy.

Our district takes its fiscal responsibility to the community seriously. The district has worked hard to manage expenses by reducing staffing, outsourcing services and finding alternative revenue sources.

The \$1.9 million this levy will generate will give the district the revenue needed to preserve the educational excellence upon which the district is built. Failure to find additional revenue will have a drastic impact on our educational programming. The Board of Education and administration will have to evaluate and make decisions for the next budget on reductions that will have a direct impact on services and education.

## KHS WRITERS WINNERS IN CLEVELAND CLINIC EXPRESSIONS CONTEST

Ten Kirtland High School students were named winners in the Cleveland Clinic eXpressions program.

**eXpressions**<sup>™</sup> Cleveland Clinic eXpressions is an educational initiative that engages high school students in the exploration of science and medicine through creative expression. Students translate research studies conducted by Cleveland Clinic high school interns by producing artistic, literary and mathematical interpretations of the science.

In the Language Arts category, four KHS students earned Blue Ribbons – Isabel Anness for “The Reaction,” Kirk Brauer for “I Am Sickled,” Lilly Kelemen for “Grasps of Addiction,” and Schuyler South for “Definitions.” Schuyler’s entry was selected as Best of Show.

Red Ribbons were earned by Madison Burris for “Renewal,” Morgan Carpenter for “The Burden,”

Alexandra Cemelich for “All They See,” Brandi Martz for “Breaking Beautiful,” and Eva Shepard for “Untitled.”

Cassidy Ruckel earned a White Ribbon for “The Fix.” Winning projects will be featured in the eXpressions catalogue, on the Cleveland Clinic eXpressions website, and in the 2018 eXpressions Art, Language and Math eXhibition at the Global Center for Health Innovation Feb. 15-March 23. The grand opening will be held Feb. 15.

Kirtland students competed against about 1,700 art, language and math projects from 61 schools. Blue Ribbon winners receive a \$100 gift card, Red Ribbon winners receive \$75, White Ribbon winners \$50 and Honorable Mentions \$25. Each teacher of an award-winning student also receives a \$100 educational grant. KHS teachers who supported their students in this effort are Meriah Duncan and Eric Eye.



# Kirtland Local Schools May 8, 2018 - Operating Levy Q&A

The Kirtland Local Schools are exceptional, ranked in the top 5% of schools in the United States by Niche.com. To continue this tradition of excellence in education our community has come to expect, our Board of Education and administration are recommending a 5.9-mill, 10-year operating levy on May 8.

## Why do the Kirtland Local Schools need a levy?

It has been six years since the community approved the last new operating levy in 2012. Since that time, operational costs increased, but operating revenue has not. In fact, district revenues have been relatively flat since 2012. In the last two years, revenue declined by 2.95% and 0.59% for a total loss of \$516,636.

Since 2012, federal funding for the Kirtland Schools decreased by 36%, while state funding fell by almost 11%. These losses must be absorbed by the district's general fund budget to cover mandated services - many of which are unfunded - shifting the school funding burden to local taxpayers.

The district began deficit spending by \$526,000 in the 2016-2017 school year. Even after aggressive reductions, the district is deficit spending by \$1 million this year. The additional \$1.9 million this levy would raise will provide the district with the resources to address the revenue shortfall over the last two years, cover anticipated inflationary expenses **and** preserve the educational excellence the community expects of its schools, as predicted by the assumptions made in our current five-year forecast.

The levy will help provide appropriate and updated educational tools, balanced with proven teaching methods that will enable our students to compete in the global economy.

## What is at stake with the May 8 levy?

The levy will give the district the revenue needed to preserve the educational excellence upon which the district is built. Failure to find additional revenue will have a drastic impact on our educational programming. The Board of Education and administration will need to evaluate and make decisions for the next budget on reductions that will have a direct impact on services and education.

## What have the Kirtland Local Schools done to reduce costs and tighten its belt?

Our district takes its fiscal responsibility to the community seriously. The district has worked hard to manage expenses through the following actions:

- Reduced 14 positions since the 2011-2012 school year:
  - 2.5 administrative positions -- eliminated an assistant principal at Kirtland Elementary School and reduced to part-time the positions of treasurer, buildings and grounds supervisor, and transportation director
  - 5 teacher positions
  - 6.5 support staff positions
- Increased efficiency and reduced costs by outsourcing the following services:
  - Bus maintenance
  - Food service department
  - Human resource/payroll/healthcare benefits management
- Alternative revenue sources:
  - \$1.75 million State of Ohio Straight A Fund grant for modernization of learning spaces, 1:1 computer initiative and professional development - all at no cost to taxpayers.
  - \$225,633.20 Ohio EPA Diesel Emissions Reduction Grant to buy four new school buses.
  - A Lake Health partnership provides \$125,000 in sponsorship funds -- the district used \$37,000 of these funds to extend classroom renovations and expand modernization into the middle school, and \$13,000 for the music program -- and a \$26,000 reduction on physician and trainer services.
  - Cleveland Construction Inc. and architect Tony Bertone, along with several other companies, donated the full cost for a new agility room and stadium restrooms.
  - Kirtland PTA donated \$22,000 and Kirtland Athletic Boosters donated \$11,000 toward a new electronic message display sign at no costs to taxpayers.
  - \$18,000 annually in cell tower revenue supports instruction and operational needs.
- The average annual salary schedule increase for Kirtland teachers and support staff from 2012 to 2016 is 1.25%, compared to the state average of 1.47% and 1.64%, respectively.
- Since 2012, the typical teacher's contributions to health care increased from \$30 to \$202 per month.

## What will the May 8 levy cost?

The levy will cost the local taxpayer \$17.20 per month per \$100,000 of market home value.

## What makes Kirtland Local Schools great?

Kirtland Local Schools delivers a comprehensive, quality education to its students that consistently meets or exceeds increasing state and federal educational requirements. Over the last six years, we focused attention on personalized learning for each of our students. Our teachers are individualizing instruction and

utilizing technology when appropriate to meet the needs of all students. This helps prepare our students for life after Kirtland by encouraging creativity, collaboration, communication and critical thinking. Through professional development, we continue to provide teachers with training and support to polish those skills.

This issue will allow the district to preserve the educational excellence expected from the community:

- Ranked in the Top 10% of schools in Ohio and Top 5% in the country for 2018 by Niche.com.
- A "Best School Districts in America" as ranked by the National Council of Home Safety and Security (Top 2%).
- A comprehensive K-12 art and music program that has been maintained to provide a well-rounded educational experience to meet the needs of the whole child.
- 29 athletic teams and 32 clubs/activities in grade 7-12 at no additional costs to our families, because our schools value educating the whole child and providing opportunities to teach teamwork, self-discipline and self-confidence to handle competitive situations.
- Technology classes that begin at the middle school to ensure our students have the skills necessary to compete in a global economy.
- Digital citizenship integrated K-12 to keep our students safe and better prepare them for the digital world.
- A 1:1 computer initiative in grades 5-12, with plans to expand to grades 3-4 in 2018-2019, that provides our students and teachers with the tools necessary to maximize each student's potential and meets the needs of our changing educational landscape in real time.
- Kirtland High School (KHS) students are engaged in 68 different online courses that provide unique learning opportunities that otherwise would be cost prohibitive.
- KHS offers Dual Enrollment where qualified Kirtland educators teach Lakeland Community College courses for college credit right at KHS. These include English Composition and U.S. National Government.
- KHS offers 18 Advanced Placement courses to challenge our students to meet the demands and rigor of college.
- Kirtland Local Schools named to the 8th Annual AP District Honor Roll for the second time in five years.
- Increased K-3 intervention support to identify and assist struggling students, to reduce gaps and to guide them on a path to success.
- Increased college and career counseling at the high school to allow more productive discussions with our students, to align student strengths and interests to post-secondary goals, and to improve student outcomes post-graduation.

## Where do operating dollars come from?

Public education in Ohio is primarily funded by the local communities and the state. Additionally, the federal government partially funds programs for students with specific learning barriers. Below is a breakdown of revenue sources for Kirtland Schools.

Revenue Summary	Statewide	Kirtland
Local Revenue	41.79%	76.08%
State Revenue	43.57%	15.36%
Other Non-Tax Revenue	7.51%	6.41%
Federal Revenue	7.12%	2.14%

Local revenue includes residential property taxes, commercial property taxes and public utility property taxes. State revenue includes state education subsidies, property tax roll back, homestead exemption payments, and casino revenue payments. Other non-tax revenues include students fees, interest income, facility rental income, revenue for services provided, and miscellaneous income.

The traditional funding system requires local property tax funding as the primary source of revenue. The state subsidies are based on the community's income wealth and property tax values. Last year, the State of Ohio provided \$596.09 per student to Kirtland, which compares to a statewide average of \$3,906.99. This figure is based on the identification of Kirtland as a high-wealth school district by the state.

Our effective millage rate of 49.98-mills ranks 5th out of the 9 Lake County school districts. Even with passage of this issue, the district remains in the middle of school taxes in Lake County while providing an exceptional education.

## For more information, contact:

Bill Wade, Superintendent  
440.256.3311  
bill.wade@kirtlandschools.org

www.kirtlandschools.org/operating  
Facebook: www.facebook.com/KirtlandSchoolsOH  
Twitter: @KirtlandSchools

