Kirtland Local School District

Jan. 22, 2018

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

The Kirtland Board of Education voted unanimously at its Jan. 22 meeting to place a new 5.9-mill 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 for a treasurer, bus mechanic, food service program, and facilities, custodial and maintenance supervisor; 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."

"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 operating levy will cost homeowners an additional $17.20 per month per $100,000 in home value.

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Empowering all students to achieve their educational goals, to direct their lives, and to contribute to society