



# 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

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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.

<b>Revenue Summary</b>	<b>Statewide</b>	<b>Kirtland</b>
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

