

Strong Schools = Strong Community

Our Tradition of Excellence



Levy FAQ

Why does the school district need an operating levy now?

In June 2015, the state of Ohio reduced the amount of money it is sharing with local school districts through elimination of the Tangible Personal Property (TPP) tax reimbursements in the state budget. This means a reduction of \$2,109,026 to Wickliffe Schools, which is equivalent to 10% of the district's annual budget.

When was the last operating levy?

The last operating levy passed in 2011. The Wickliffe Schools promised the community that the levy would last 3-4 years. The schools have kept that promise, and until the state changed the budget, did not plan to ask for a new levy for at least two more years. When the state decreased its funding, the district was forced to return to the voters sooner than anticipated.

How will the funds from the levy be used?

This operating levy is needed now just to maintain current educational program efforts. Funds will be used to cover the operating costs of the School District, including teachers, support staff, transportation, utilities, maintenance and upkeep of the buildings and grounds.

How much will the new levy cost me?

Homeowners will pay \$20.17 per month per \$100,000 valuation of their home.

What is the value of my home for tax purposes and how is it determined?

The Lake County Auditor appraises the marketing value of each property in Lake County. You can determine the market value and appraised value of your home at <http://www.lake.iviewauditor.com>.

How much money will be raised through passage of the levy?

One Mill in Wickliffe is equivalent to \$278,284. A 7.9 Mill operating levy will raise \$2,198,444 annually. Collection would begin in January 2016.

What are the Wickliffe Schools doing to find other funding?

As a premiere school district, the Wickliffe Schools are always pursuing different ways to increase revenue that do not affect local property taxes. This is most often done through educational grants and business partnerships.

One example is the grant for a new STEM lab at the middle school that will focus on providing students with the 21st century instruction they need in science, technology, engineering and math. Another example is the physical education grant (PEP) that allowed the schools to create new workout facilities at the high school and middle school and improve overall physical education opportunities for children throughout the district.

The Wickliffe Schools continue to explore collaborative opportunities with area corporations, organizations and businesses to benefit the educational experiences for its students.

- over -



Wickliffe Schools Strong Schools = Strong Community

Our Tradition of Excellence

Levy FAQ

What has the school district done to manage its budget each year?

While remaining a premiere school district and without impacting the educational opportunities, the Wickliffe Schools had to cut \$1 million from its annual budget each year for the last 5 years (\$5 million total) in order to balance its budget. The district will be cutting an additional 5% in this year's budget.

The school district's finances are reviewed by the State Auditor's office each year, and each year, Wickliffe Schools has had a clean financial audit.

How does the school spend its money?

School districts are people intensive and wages and benefits are its largest expenditure. To save costs in this area, employees are paying more for health care, and there has been limited salary increases. The district has also reduced staff when possible without impacting education.

What cuts will the district have to make if the levy fails?

Significant reductions will need to be made in order for the school district to balance its budget. The administration will review all its expenditures and make reductions that will unfortunately have a direct impact on the education of our children.

How will the outcome of this operating levy affect the education Wickliffe children are receiving?

It is important that Wickliffe not fall behind neighboring districts. The school district not only needs to maintain its position as an excellent district, but it needs to build on its efforts to ensure the future success of its students.

What is House Bill 920?

House Bill 920 is an Ohio law passed in 1976. It forces most school districts to go back to local residents every few years to ask for more funds. This house bill freezes the income school districts receive from each levy the moment the levy passes. Even when home values increase, a school district's revenue remains the same because of House Bill 920. School districts have no way to meet cost increases caused by inflation.

If I am 65 or older, will the levy have the same cost?

The Homestead Exemption allows senior citizens and permanently and totally disabled Ohioans to reduce their property tax burden by shielding some of the market value of their home from taxation. To find out more information about this opportunity, please visit <http://www.lakecountyohio.gov/auditor/Taxes/HomesteadExemption.aspx>.

Do students pay for extracurricular activities?

Student athletes pay a participation fee and a transportation fee. Students that use school district instruments, pay a rental fee.

How are my local income taxes used?

Local income taxes are paid to the City of Wickliffe. The school district does *NOT* receive any income tax.

Will the state change the budget or give more funding to the school district?

The state has been very unpredictable with its funding and education policy. The school district will continue to be fiscally responsible to ensure it is maintaining excellent schools.