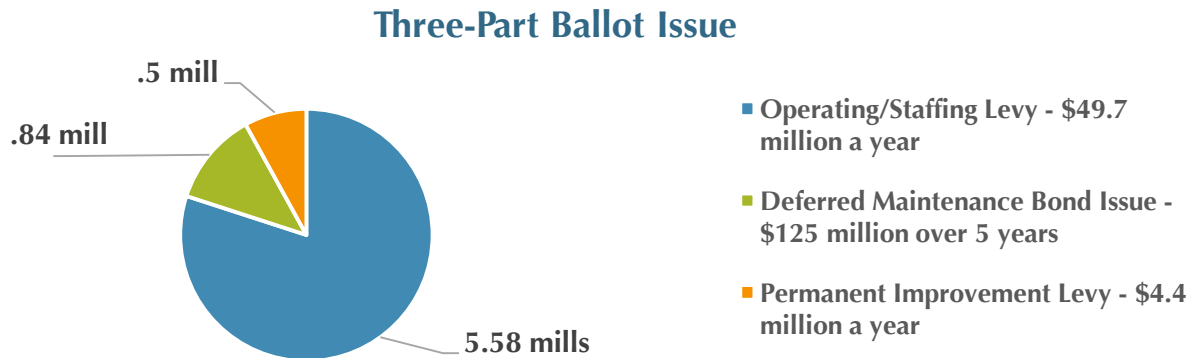


Columbus City Schools Propose Issue 57 on the Fall Ballot: A Nonpartisan Guide

KidsOhio.org | 1907 Leonard Ave., Suite 150 | Columbus, OH 43219

October 12, 2016

School Board Proposes Issue 57: A Three-Part Ballot Issue



- On July 21, the Columbus Board of Education voted to place a levy on the November 8 ballot worth 6.92 mills. One mill raises \$8.9 million a year.
- The proposed ballot issue has three parts: 1) a proposed 5.58-mill operating/staffing levy would provide more special education intervention specialists, prekindergarten teachers, instructional assistants, social workers, school nurses, and other staff; 2) a proposed 0.84-mill bond issue would address deferred maintenance needs (plumbing, HVAC, safety systems, paving, and roofs); and 3) a proposed 0.5-mill permanent improvement levy would address ongoing repair and replacement needs.
- The official ballot language for Issue 57 can be found in a certified issues list document for the November 8, 2016 general election on the Franklin County Board of Elections website at: <http://vote.franklincountyohio.gov/public/documents/PDF/070692D4-90D7-0E32-648B647569ACDB89.pdf>

Estimated Financial Impact of Issue 57

Estimated Annual Cost of Issue 57		
Description	Millage	Annual Revenue
Staffing/Operating Levy	5.58 mills	\$49.7 million
Deferred Maintenance Bond Issue	0.84 mills	Issue bonds for \$125 million over 5 years
Permanent Improvement Levy	0.5 mills	\$4.4 million
Total Millage	6.92 mills	
Additional taxpayer cost per \$100,000 home value*		\$242.20
Percent increase in school property tax		17.7%

*1 mill = \$35 for every \$100,000 in home value. Current school property tax per \$100,000 home is \$1,365, which includes a 12.5% rollback for owner-occupied homes. The proposed millage is the additional amount that would be added to a homeowner's current annual tax bill. **Note:** The proposed 2013 levy would have raised school property taxes by 24%.

Proposed Increased Staffing over Five Years

- The district reported 8,777 staff in June 2016. The operating levy would phase in 324.5 additional staff for an estimated 3.7 percent increase in staff over five years.

Current Staffing (as of June 1, 2016)	
Staff Description	Number
Teachers	3,917
Classified (e.g., bus drivers, food service & secretaries)	3,107
Substitute Teachers	647
Part-time Hourly	430
Substitute Classified	297
Administrators	292
Substitute Administrators	66
Full-time Hourly	21
Total Staff	8,777

Columbus City Schools Students

- 89% are economically disadvantaged*
- 17% have a special education need
- 27% switch schools during the school year or during the summer
- 15% are enrolled in an English as a Second Language course

**Most recent estimate based on USDA calculations. Districts provides meals at no cost to all students.*

Proposed Staffing Increase for Next Five Years

District Rationale	New Staff
Special Education Intervention Specialists: The demand for special education services across all grade levels is growing as more students are identified, many with multiple needs. Many students are educated in a regular classroom.	76
Early Childhood Education/Prekindergarten: The district offers more than 1,700 seats in its prekindergarten programs. Approximately 300 four-year-olds are on a wait list. In response, the district plans to add up to 25 classrooms over the next five years and open an early childhood education center in Linden in October.	41
Instructional Assistants: Will work with teachers in lowest performing schools to reduce adult-to-student ratio and improve student performance.	36.5
Gifted and Talented Instruction: Expand program to serve more students and build skills of all students across the district, particularly those in underrepresented demographics.	34
English as a Second Language Instruction: Students speak more than 106 languages at home. Will add more classrooms with up to 16 teachers and up to 16 instructional aides.	32
Social Workers: Help students, teachers, and families address non-academic barriers to academic success.	25
Buildings, Grounds, and Information Technology Staff: Address backlog of infrastructure needs and be proactive in the future with the implementation of a yearly refresh/replacement initiative.	19
Career-Technical Education: District has pledged to double the number of students enrolled in career-technical education courses, most of which offer college credit. Will also enable more middle and high schools to offer career courses on-site.	16
Licensed School Nurses: 70 schools do not have a full-time nurse. To improve the prompt diagnosis and treatment of health problems, the district is partnering with physical and behavioral health providers, such as Nationwide Children's Hospital.	16
Safety and Security Personnel: Coordinate with principals and teachers to provide a safe learning environment in every school.	10
Teaching and Learning/Academic Services: Provide additional curriculum services to teachers and administrative support at the building level for in-demand programs and schools.	9
Accountability/Internal Auditor: Accountability staff to provide additional oversight to ensure data integrity. Internal Auditor monitors operations.	4
Student Transportation: Adds three dispatchers to assist over 700 bus routes.	3
Human Resources: Strengthen proactive recruitment and retention of staff across all classifications of employees and improve personnel services.	3
Total Increased Staff over Five Years	324.5

Proposed Deferred Maintenance Bond Issue

- The 0.84 mills in the proposed bond issue are earmarked for deferred maintenance. The district plans to issue \$125 million in bonds – similar to a home repair loan – which will be paid back over the next 30 years through the proceeds from the 0.84-mill increase in property taxes.
- **Background:** By January 2017, 46 school buildings will have been completely renovated or replaced since 2000. Columbus schools paid 70% of the cost (excluding locally funded initiatives), which generated a 30% state match. Approximately 40% of the district’s students attended these schools in 2015-2016. The local funds Columbus school district voters approved in 2002 and 2008 for new building construction have been spent. The district would need to pass a new facility bond issue to qualify for state matching funds and build new schools.
- Another 64 buildings, with an average age of more than 65 years old, served the remaining 60% of students in 2015-2016. The district reports that most of these buildings need repairs.
 - No state funds are available for these building repairs.
 - The district is also considering the sale of 13 unused properties for an estimated \$20-\$30 million and to use the proceeds to address deferred maintenance needs.

Proposed Repairs for \$125 Million Bond Issue over the Next Five Years	
Proposed Repairs	Estimated Cost/Range
Ageing Heating and Cooling Systems: At least 21 buildings need significant upgrades, including repairs to existing air conditioning units, to make the school more comfortable and energy efficient. 53 older buildings remain without air conditioning. There are often great differences in temperature among classrooms, which undermines student attentiveness.	\$75 - \$85 million
Leaking Roofs: 28 schools have roofs that need repairs, including 9 with roofs that need major repairs or replacement.	\$21 - \$24 million
Outdated Electrical Systems: An estimated 15 schools need to replace electrical systems or upgrade electrical safety systems.	\$8.25 - \$9.5 million
Outdated Fire Alarms, Emergency Lighting, and Safety Devices: More than 30 schools need to upgrade secure entryways to control access from outside, add improved emergency communications and lighting systems, or replace wired glass with safety glass.	\$5.75 - \$7.25 million
Outdated Water Pipes, Hot Water Tanks, and Student Restrooms: At least 60 buildings need to replace hot water tanks and old water pipes, some of which leak. Many have restrooms with toilets or sinks that don't work or need to be replaced and updated.	\$3.25 - \$4.25 million
Potholes and Cracks: More than 55 schools have playgrounds, sidewalks, or parking lots that need to be replaced or resurfaced.	\$1.5 - \$2.25 million
Inadequate Lighting: An estimated 24 schools need upgraded and energy-efficient lighting.	\$650,000 - \$750,000
Total Cost over Five Years	\$125 million*
*The estimated costs for proposed repairs range from \$115.4 - \$133 million. The bond issue will raise \$125 million over five years.	

Proposed Permanent Improvement Levy

- The proposed 0.5-mill permanent improvement levy would generate \$4.4 million annually, earmarked specifically for an ongoing schedule of maintenance, repair, and replacement, aimed at preventing future backlogs including:
 - **School Buses:** The district transports an average of 35,000 students daily. More than 100 of its 800 buses are 16 years old or older. The district says it will replace all buses purchased before 2000.
 - **Service Vehicles:** The district operates more than 180 vans, trucks, and other service vehicles. More than half of these vehicles are 15 years old or older. The levy would allow the district to establish a 10-year replacement cycle.
 - **Asphalt Sealing:** The district would launch a 5-year sealing cycle to improve the life of asphalt parking lots, drives, and playgrounds.

- Eleven of 16 Franklin County school districts have established permanent improvement levies.

11 Franklin County School Districts with a Permanent Improvement Levy	
School District	Millage Amount
Bexley City (New – on November 8 ballot)	0.5 mills
Columbus City School District (Current – for 45 new schools only)	0.5 mills
Gahanna-Jefferson City	2.16 mills
Grandview Heights Schools	2.0 mills
Groveport Madison	1.47 mills
Hamilton Local	2.0 mills
Hilliard City	2.0 mills
Reynoldsburg City	0.5 mills
South-Western City	2.0 mills
Upper Arlington City	2.0 mills
Westerville City	3.95 mills
Whitehall City	0.5 mills
Source: Ohio Department of Education, most recent data available [millage rate = tax year 2015 (fiscal year 2017)].	

Academics

- For the district’s 2015-2016 state report card, see: <http://reportcard.education.ohio.gov/Pages/District-Report.aspx?DistrictIRN=043802>
- For the district’s 2014-2015 state report card, see: http://reportcard.education.ohio.gov/Archives%20TS/043802/043802/043802_2014-2015_DIST.pdf

How to Vote this Fall

Vote early, starting October 12, 2016, at 1700 Morse Road

OR

Mail absentee ballots by November 7, 2016

OR

Vote on Election Day, Tuesday, November 8, 2016 between 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 pm

Where to vote (find your polling location): vote.franklincountyohio.gov



www.KidsOhio.org
kidsohio@kidsohio.org
 614.705.2115