



WEST CLERMONT LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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West Clermont Local School District

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West Clermont Takes First Step Toward Placing Emergency Levy on the March Ballot

At the October 21 meeting, the West Clermont Board of Education members in attendance unanimously took the first step toward placing a 7.99-mill emergency operating levy request on the March 17, 2020 presidential primary ballot. If passed, the levy will fund the day-to-day operations of the district such as staffing, utilities, and supplies.

“Our situation is urgent and our most vital need right now is stabilization to protect our current programming and services,” said Natasha L. Adams, superintendent. “This is the lowest possible amount we can request and still provide the kind of education that people expect in this community.”

School Board Vice President Jim Rudy agreed. “We are to a point where additional funding is needed if we are simply to maintain what we have right now. It is never easy to ask residents to make a financial investment and this is not a decision that we take lightly, but we are out of options and this is about our students and the experience we create in our schools - it is about providing what our students need to achieve success both in the classroom and workplace,” he said.

It has been 15 years since West Clermont passed an operating issue in 2004. Since that time, the district has made deep cuts due to a funding shortage, which has had a direct impact on the district’s ability to keep pace with student needs in the classroom and changes in curriculum.

“West Clermont Schools has a long track record of doing more with less, but now we have done all we can and we are still facing significant operational needs. A look at our five-year financial forecast reveals that even funding the current level of services and programs is not sustainable,” said Kelly Sininger, treasurer.

According to the 2018 Cupp report, West Clermont’s per pupil spending ranks in the bottom 5% of all Ohio public school districts. In fact, the average cost to educate a child at West Clermont is 24% lower than the state average and substantially lower than comparable districts and so is the residential taxpayer share of the daily costs, which, according to Sininger, means the district is doing more with less to maximize resources. Added to that, state funding continues to show minimal increases.

“The reality is, our local community is increasingly responsible for funding our schools through local taxes and the state cannot be relied upon to fully fund our schools,” continued Adams. “Our students simply can’t afford any more cuts to the experiences they are receiving in our schools, and now it is up to our community to decide what the future of our schools will be.”

If passed, the March 2020 operating levy would be collected for 10 years and is expected to cost taxpayers \$23.30 per month per \$100,000 of appraised value.