



WILLOUGHBY-EASTLAKE LEVY CAMPAIGN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)



YES on 3

RENEWAL ISSUE NO NEW TAXES

THE CHILDREN OF WILLOUGHBY-EASTLAKE NEED YOUR HELP.

THESE ITEMS WILL BE CUT IF ISSUE 3 DOES NOT PASS:

- Educational programming critical to student development
- Elementary Music & Band
- High School Transportation
- Middle School Athletics
- 9th Grade Athletics
- School of Innovation

VOTING YES ON ISSUE 3:

- Prevents cuts that will make Willoughby-Eastlake schools unrecognizable.
- Keeps everything the same. \$4.8M/year in funding will be renewed.
- Preserves the 12.5% tax reduction to property owners already paying this tax. The State of Ohio will pay this 12.5% only if Issue 3 is renewed on November 8th, 2022.



ELECTION INFORMATION

What is Issue 3?

Willoughby-Eastlake voters are being asked to renew a \$4.745M, 10-year levy for school operating expenses. This represents approximately 5% of the W-E School District Budget.

When will W-E Schools Issue 3 be on the ballot?

Willoughby-Eastlake schools are on the ballot on November 8th without a tax increase. Early and Absentee Voting begins on October 12th.



TAXPAYER INFORMATION

How much will Issue 3 cost taxpayers?

This is a school RENEWAL issue. There are NO NEW TAXES and there is no additional cost to taxpayers.

How much would my tax bill be reduced if this Issue 3 does not pass?

Property taxes fund a variety of programs and there is no guarantee that an individual's property taxes will go down if Issue 3 does not pass. A homeowner will contribute \$74.73 per year (est.) for every \$100,000 of home value if this funding remains in place. This estimate includes a 12.5% property tax reduction from the State of Ohio.

Issue 3 comprises

5%

Of W-E Schools Budget

ELECTION DAY:



NOT A NEW TAX!



Homeowner Cost:
\$74.73/year (est.);
that is just 21¢ per
day for every
\$100,000 of
home value.



Why is a renewal issue so crucial for taxpayers?

Issue 3 is eligible for the Homestead and Rollback credits which means the State of Ohio pays 12.5% and taxpayers fund 87.5%. Should this levy go back on the ballot in 2023, it would become a new money levy and would be ineligible for these tax reductions, leaving taxpayers to foot 100% of the levy, versus 87.5%.



Won't this renewal just go back on the ballot if it fails?

This renewal issued failed on May 3rd, 2022. November 8th is the last election in 2022. W-E Schools will not have another chance to renew this levy before it expires on December 31, 2022. Passing the renewal on November 8th is taxpayers' FINAL chance to keep the tax reductions from the State of Ohio.



DISTRICT FINANCIALS

What will this levy fund?

Passage of this renewal keeps current programming in place. Without this renewal the district will lose nearly \$5 Million per year and will need to make cuts to avoid a state takeover.

How much does it cost to run the district?

W-E Schools current operating expenses are roughly \$8M per month, or nearly \$100M per year. [Monthly Financial statements](#) can be found on the Treasurer's page of the District's website.

How do W-E operating expenses compare to other districts?

W-E is at the state average for spending per student. The district employs fewer administrators than similarly sized districts, including Mentor Public Schools. [\(See Ohio Department of Education's District Profile Reports \(Cupp Report\)\)](#)

| District | District Total Expenditure Per Pupil |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Perry Local SD | \$ 17,460.37 |
| Mentor Ex Vill SD | \$ 14,279.96 |
| Painsville City Local SD | \$ 14,220.58 |
| Willoughby-Eastlake City SD | \$ 13,537.38 |
| Kirtland Local SD | \$ 12,958.87 |
| Fairport Harbor Ex Vill SD | \$ 11,192.30 |
| Riverside Local SD | \$ 11,066.42 |
| Madison Local SD | \$ 10,720.85 |



Why is the District asking for more money?

W-E Schools are not asking taxpayers for new money. This renewal would keep everything the same. Not passing this issue is the equivalent of defunding our schools by \$4.745M annually.

Isn't the District always asking for more money?

House Bill 920 was passed in 1976 to protect homeowners from inflation. That froze school funding. Ohio schools must ask for additional money from taxpayers to keep up with rising costs. However, W-E Schools are NOT asking for new money. Issue 3 is a RENEWAL and passing it will NOT increase taxes for a property owner.

What about the new school buildings in our District?

Levies are for learning. Building construction costs are paid for by bonds. Willoughby-Eastlake passed a bond issue in 2015 that paid for the North, South, and Longfellow buildings. No money from bond issues can legally be used for district operations.



Why did the District purchase a large building for its main offices?

W-E Schools had replacement insurance on the old board office and the insurance adjuster approved a replacement office in the amount of \$7,881,427.74. The District only received this amount in insurance if the new building met or exceeded that estimate.

The insurance settlement from the fire at the old BOE building paid for the purchase and renovation of the new BOE building.



Is the district using all the space? If so - what for?

The board building houses administrative offices and professional training spaces for staff development. All floors are currently occupied except for the second floor. The District is in discussions with one perspective tenant for the open space and details will be shared once finalized.

The District rents roof space for cell towers, generating \$1,900/month.

Does the building bring in any income for the District and if so, how much?

- Cell towers on the roof generate \$1,900/month.
- Various District Organizations (PTOs/Boosters, etc) work the parking lot for Lake County Captains games and receive all of those funds for their respective organizations.
- Frasier Video rents a portion of the 2nd floor. In lieu of cash payments, the “Base Rent” for the Leased Premises for each contract year of the Term is sixty (60) hours of video production for the District. This video production is has an estimated value of Twenty-Four Thousand Dollars (\$24,000.00).

Various school related organizations earn money by working the parking lot for Captains games.

Why does 70% of my tax bill go to schools?

Schools are heavily reliant on property taxes. Unlike City income tax, even though your property value and property taxes go up, the funding received by the District does not change. The amount a District can collect on an Emergency Levy is frozen at the amount that voters originally passed. Even with new homes, total funding does not increase. In the event of new construction, taxes are decreased for other homeowners.

Why do Ohio Schools go on the ballot?

In Ohio, the majority of school funding comes from local tax revenue. With limited options from State and Federal resources, roughly 70% of W-E School funding is generated from residential property taxes. When costs increase, school districts go on the ballot to ask property owners for help with those costs. This method of funding schools has been ruled unconstitutional by the Ohio Supreme Court. To date, it has not been resolved by our state legislature.

Why are W-E Schools on the ballot so often?

Ohio schools can put permanent or time-limited levies on the ballot to collect property taxes. Willoughby-Eastlake is in the small minority of school districts in Ohio that rely on emergency, or temporary, levies to operate. W-E schools appear on the ballot when they need new money AND when they need to renew current funding. The district is not seeking additional funds during this election. Voting YES on Issue 3 renews an emergency operating levy. Emergency levies have a limit of 10 years unless renewed. If Issue 3 does not pass, funds will stop in December 2022.





Why don't W-E Schools have a permanent funding model?

In Ohio, schools can issue a property tax or an income tax. Property taxes can be issued continuously or for a period of time, up to 10 years. Historically, W-E homeowners have rejected continuous operating levies. Most recently, a permanent levy was defeated in the November 2019 election. This leaves W-E Schools in the minority of school districts in Ohio that primarily rely on temporary funding to operate.

Why can't the District fund by other means? (Sales or Income Tax?)

Only counties can issue a sales tax. Schools can either place a property tax or income tax on the ballot. Income tax is more supported in rural communities due to the large amounts of land that farmers, for example, would own. They would rather pay on their income vs their land. In Willoughby-Eastlake however, 100% of your income tax goes to your city of residence. This is their primary source of funding. As your salary goes up, so does the amount they collect.

Why do emergency levies cost taxpayers more money?

Relying on emergency levies to fund our schools is expensive. Each time a question goes on the ballot, it costs money. Since 1987, our district has paid over \$300,000 in fees to the Board of Elections. This does not include the costs associated with running a political campaign. School districts that rely on emergency levies become bigger credit risks and pay more interest on borrowed money. Bonds, for example, are impacted by a school's credit rating.

Who pays for Issue 3 campaign expenses?

Ohio school districts are not allowed to use taxpayer dollars to fund political campaigns. The Willoughby-Eastlake School District pays to put a question on the ballot. Beyond that, all yard signs, educational materials, mailings, and other expenses related to campaigning for Issue 3 are funded by a Political Action Committee. The Willoughby-Eastlake Levy Campaign is run by a volunteer committee and operates independently of the Willoughby-Eastlake School District.

Per Ohio law, no District funds can be used for the Levy campaign. All funds come from private and corporate donations.





ISSUE 3 SCHOOL IMPACTS

What is at stake?

If Issue 3 does not pass, the W-E School District must rebalance their budget to comply with state regulations. Cuts were approved after the renewal issue failed in May.

Why did the district already publish a list of cuts?

The State of Ohio requires school districts to file a 5-year financial forecast twice annually ([most recent filing in May 2022](#)). The next filing deadline is November 30th. If Issue 3 is not renewed, the district must immediately update their forecast to reflect the loss of funds to avoid a state takeover. If Issue 3 passes, the cuts will not go into effect.

When will these cuts go into effect?

If the renewal issue fails, the district will stop receiving funds in January. Most of the operational and staffing changes will go into effect in the 2023-24 calendar year to avoid disruption to student schedules. However, field trips and athletics will likely be eliminated immediately.

| Position | Cost Savings |
|--|--------------------|
| Outsource Food Service or reduce costs | \$300,000 |
| Elementary Music/band program | \$325,000 |
| Transportation Supervisor | \$100,000 |
| Central Office Support - PR, Treasurer, Pupil Services | \$130,000 |
| Technology Staff | \$50,000 |
| Educational Software | \$350,000 |
| High School Transportation | \$1,285,000 |
| Middle School Athletics | \$200,000 |
| 9th Grade Athletics | \$100,000 |
| No Field trips | \$50,000 |
| Consumer Science Teachers | \$170,000 |
| Librarians | \$60,000 |
| SOI - closed | \$1,500,000 |
| Ten Percent Cut to Building Budgets | \$100,000 |
| Consider Redistricting of the district | yes |
| Total | \$4,720,000 |

Can teams or clubs fundraise to play sports and go on trips?

The law requires that students be treated equally. If Issue 3 does not pass, all field trips, middle school athletics, and 9th grade athletics will be eliminated across the district without exception.

Who will lose bussing?

If Issue 3 does not pass, bussing will be eliminated for all W-E high school students. This includes transportation services to non-public schools as well. Some District High-School students could end up walking five miles just to get to school.

How can W-E Schools cut transportation?

Ohio law requires schools to offer transportation to all students in grades K-8 who live more than 2 miles from their school. High school transportation is not mandatory.

What does it mean to consider redistricting?

There is no immediate plan to redistrict W-E schools. In the event of an Issue 3 failure, the School of Innovation will close. SOI is housed in one of the district's newer buildings while other buildings need significant maintenance and repair. The board would review student populations and building conditions should they pursue a redistricting plan.

What will happen to W-E teachers and staff?

If Issue 3 does not pass, several teacher and professional staff jobs will be eliminated.





ISSUE 3 COMMUNITY IMPACT

How will the cities of Willoughby-Eastlake Schools be impacted by Issue 3?

Strong schools attract people to our cities. Graduates of our schools are more likely to remain in the area where they grew up if they feel comfortable raising families here.

What will happen to property values?

When schools cut critical programming, more people are likely to leave the area. Families relocating will impact property values negatively. Young families are unlikely to buy homes in a community without looking at the schools. Investing in our schools means investing in our community.

What will happen to local businesses?

Many local businesses are facing staffing shortages. Educating our children in public schools and making our cities places they want to live after they graduate is the best way to support local industry.

Protect your investment by investing in them.

Strong schools build strong communities.

Keep W-E School District an attractive place to live and grow.

ON NOVEMBER 8TH, VOTE

YES on 3
<http://supportweschools.org>

**RENEWAL ISSUE
NO NEW TAXES**



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