

Frequently Asked Questions

Will voting for this Renewal Levy raise my taxes?

No. This is NOT a new tax and will not increase your tax payment. This is a renewal of the money that taxpayers currently pay which is \$140 per year, or \$11.67 per month, for each \$100,000 of home value.

Why is this Emergency Levy Renewal being placed on the ballot?

Emergency Levies have a set duration of five, 10 or 15 years before they have to be voted on again. They generate a set amount of revenue per year that does not go up or down with property values. This Levy was first passed by taxpayers in 2005, then was voted on and renewed in 2010 and in 2015. We now need to renew this Levy again in order to avoid an operating deficit.

How much money does this Levy bring in?

This Levy collects the same amount as it did when first passed by voters in 2005 - \$1.1 million per year. This amount is about 5.5% of our current operating budget. Just like at home, these dollars do not go as far as they did 20 years ago, and are an important piece of funding for covering costs at Madison Local Schools.

What does the Levy money pay for?

The Renewal Levy dollars must be used for Current Expenses (salaries, benefits, supplies and equipment), and cannot be used for Permanent Improvements (buildings, plumbing, HVAC, etc.). Like all school districts, Madison Local Schools' biggest expense is employee payroll and benefits, making up over 67% of our general budget. This money helps to support our educators, classrooms and programs for our children.

What has Madison done to reduce expenses?

Madison Local Schools have worked diligently to reduce costs over the last few years. Several cuts have already been made in staffing and programs, saving the district approximately \$1.2 million each year.

How do our Teachers' salaries compare to surrounding districts?

In all cases, they are low. In most cases, they are the lowest. As of 2024, we offer the lowest beginning salary and the lowest highest-earner salary in all of Butler County's 11 districts.

My property taxes just went through the roof and the biggest line item on my bill is Madison Local Schools. Where did that money go?

While Madison Local Schools does receive additional money when property taxes increase, the State Funding Formula offsets that increase by reducing the amount of funding we receive from the State.

My kids aren't in school anymore. Why should I vote for a Renewal?

Statistics vary, but it is said that approximately 68% of Americans live in or near the place where they grew up. This means that when you require services such as a plumber or healthcare, those individuals you are working with will likely be graduates of local schools like Madison. Supporting the Levy will help to ensure that those local workers come from a strong educational background in the future.

What are some other challenges Madison Local Schools may be facing?

There are two unique situations that our district is facing:

- The City of Trenton is annexing adjacent parcels of land inside Madison Township for residential development. The most recent developments are becoming Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts. Trenton will take the first 75% of property tax collected from those properties and use it to pay back the financing for the development (water, sewer, roads, etc.). Madison Local Schools will be 100% responsible for educating any children who live in these homes, but will only receive a portion of the remaining 25% of the tax money collected. These TIF districts last for 10 years, and the school district has no recourse to block it. One of the TIF districts currently under construction will be a development of almost 100 homes, with others in development.
- Our school building is now 20 years old. The Madison Board of Education recently conducted an audit of our facilities to identify potential upcoming repairs and upkeep. It was estimated that our buildings and grounds will require approximately \$4 million over the next five years. The Renewal Levy funds may not be used for these repairs, but will allow the Board to continue to set aside money from other sources each year to meet those obligations.

What happened to the lottery money? Isn't it used to fund schools in Ohio?

While lottery money does go to education, the state reduced other funding by the same amount when those funds were earmarked for education in 1983. The Ohio Supreme Court ruled the funding system unconstitutional, but it was never fully fixed by legislature. Ohio schools must still rely on property taxes and local levies.

It can't all be doom and gloom. What positive things are happening?

There are exciting changes gaining momentum in our district!

- Madison Local Schools was awarded an Innovation Grant to remodel the former high school library into a school-wide learning center. With this we also received a donation from RabbitLaserUSA of a \$7000 laser printer. The update of this area will provide unique and exciting opportunities for our children to explore and learn.
- We are proud to announce that our district has been awarded a grant from the Ohio Attorney General's Office to help support school safety. This funding of \$20,000 will offset the cost of our School Resource Officers allowing us to continue prioritizing a safe and secure learning environment for our students.
- In partnership with Butler Tech, we now have a hands-on Agriculture Program for students in grades 7 through 12. This exciting new course marks a major milestone - for the first time ever, we will be able to offer FFA (Future Farms of America) as part of our student programming! Students will explore real-world experiences in agriculture, animal science, and sustainability - all right here on our campus. Best of all, this is at no direct cost to the district.
- We are excited to introduce a brand-new CTE (Career Technical Education) offering in Digital Visual Arts for students in grades 7 through 12. This innovative program provides an opportunity for students to explore the world of digital design, visual storytelling, and artistic technology.

Thank you for your continued support!

Paid for by Madison Levy Committee