

fact\$ *in a backpack*

April 2007

WCSD continues fiscal balancing act

The West Carrollton School District has adopted a new middle name in recent years: "accountable."

District officials have confronted the realities of declining revenues and declining enrollment and met the challenge to balance the budget by trimming expenses.

The district's enrollment is in decline because its population of school age children has shrunk. The result of that is a need for fewer staff members.

"Our communities are great places to live and people are staying in them long after all their children have graduated," said Supt. Rusty Clifford, Ph.D.

"That means there are fewer opportunities for new families to move into the district and add to the student body. More than 90 percent of the students who are here, however, are choosing West Carrollton Schools."

Between 2003 and 2006, WCSD trimmed \$4 million from its general fund expenses. Most of that has been accomplished by eliminating teaching positions.

"We don't like to lose good people," Clifford said. "But the reality is that we couldn't and can't justify keeping positions we don't need."

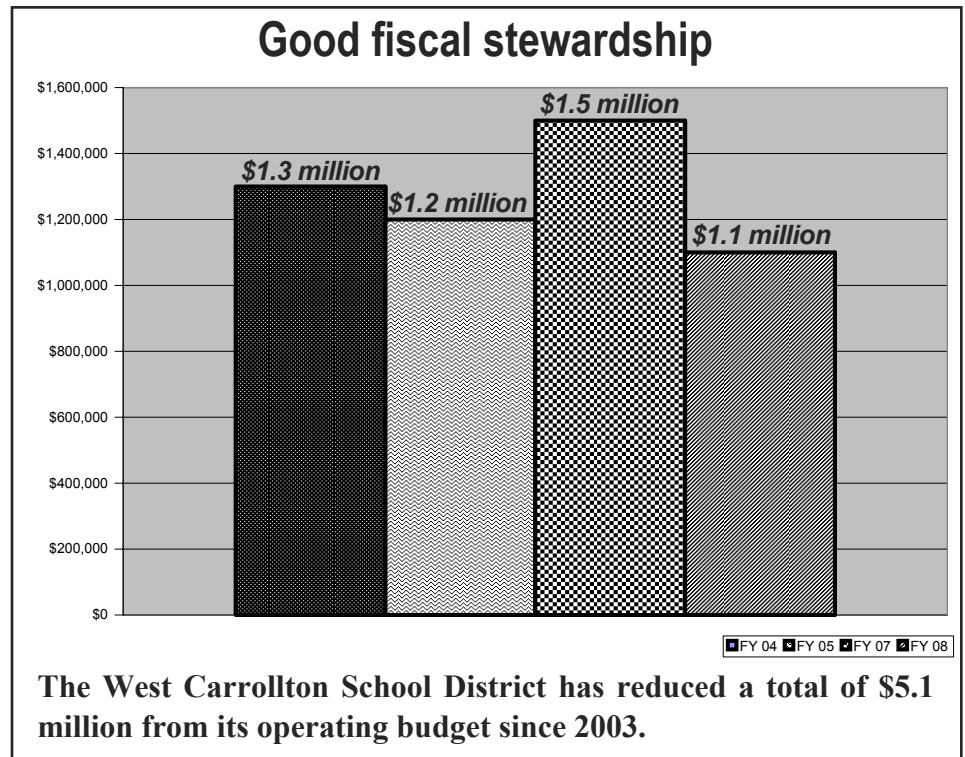
Another round of reductions for 2007-2008 will add \$1.1 million to that list of trimmed expenses.

After the district's 5.9 mill levy failed in May of 2006, officials sought ways to reduce more expenses before returning to voters with another request.

"We knew we needed to come back and we knew the millage amount needed to increase," Clifford said. "We worked hard to keep the millage as low as possible and we're looking forward to the community's support of Issue 12 on May 8."

The district is asking voters to support a 6.5 mill levy that will fund operating expenses for three years.

It's not unusual for school levies to double when a year goes by without new revenue, Clifford added. However, by reducing another \$1.1 million from the general fund expenses, the district was able to keep the May 2007 levy request



reasonable. The \$1.1 million includes two of four directors at central office; 16.5 faculty and staff positions; reductions in all building and department budgets and longer term planning of textbook and technology replacements.

The district focuses on keeping quality teachers in classrooms. Clifford points directly to the teaching staff as a strong reason for the community to support the May 8 levy. The district has improved

academically for seven straight years. In 2005-2006, the district met 80 percent of the indicators on the state report card. Over the seven years, the district has seen an increase in performance of 167 percent.

"We're asking for a three-year levy because we want to be held accountable for continuing these trends of academic excellence and sound financial management," Clifford said. "Our middle name is accountable."

The owner of a \$100,000 home will pay an additional \$199 in taxes — but not until January 2008. This is true no matter when in 2007 the levy passes. Waiting until November does not save you money.

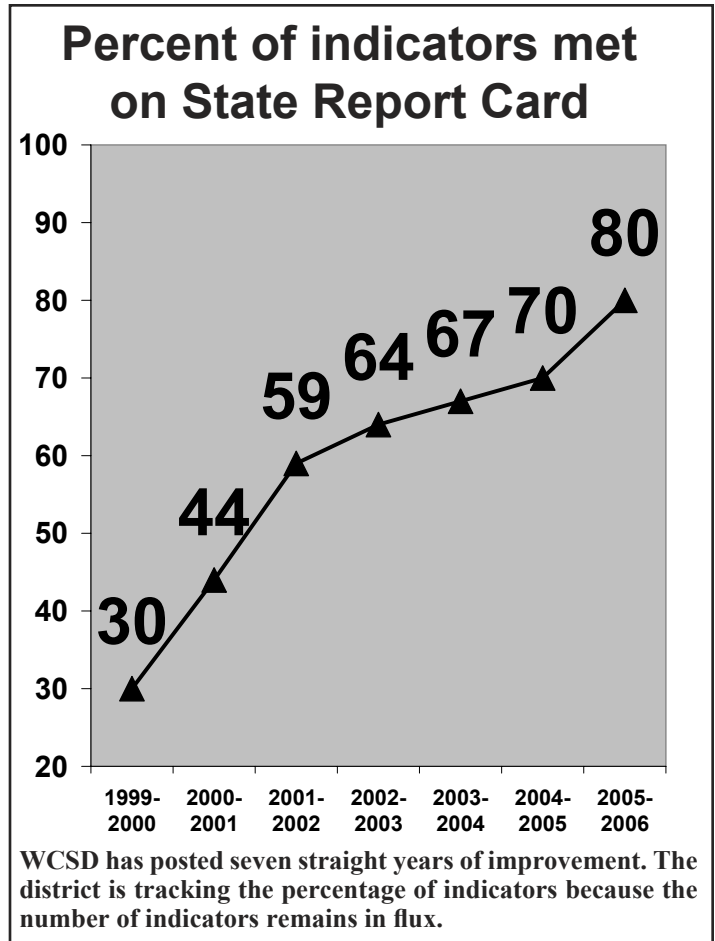
May 8 election an opportunity

The West Carrollton School District is proud of the support it receives from the community. WCSD officials are hopeful that support will continue on May 8 with passage of Issue 12: a 6.5 mill, 3-year, operating levy.

Passage means the WCSD will not be back on the ballot, for any reason, until at least May 4, 2010. Delaying passage until later in 2007 does not save taxpayers money because new taxes will not be collected until January, 2008.

Unfortunately, delaying passage until later in 2007 does cause a number of changes to go into effect. (See list below.)

Clifford points to the district's receipt of the Ohio Award for Excellence in 2004; to the 167 percent improvement on the state report card over the last seven years; and to the careful trimming of the district budget that resulted in a \$5.1 million reduction in expenses



If the levy fails May 8, the following will take effect for the summer and the beginning of the 2007-2008 year:

- buildings and facilities will be closed to the public including city rec leagues, day camps and activities
- NO sports
- NO band, orchestra or chorus, including band camp
- NO performing arts: concerts, plays, musicals
- NO clubs at any grade level
- NO transportation to WCHS or any other high school
- NO transportation within 1.5 miles of WCMS and elementaries
- NO field trips
- NO before and after school daycare

If the levy passes in August or November, these effects would be reversed. If the levy does not pass in 2007, the list is PERMANENT.

since 2003.

“We know that we are making a difference,” Clifford said. “With your help, we will continue to make a difference in the lives of every student that comes into our school district.”

WCSD is fortunate to be part of such a quality community, he added, noting that quality is a choice, not an accident.

“The wise choice for all of us is to tell everyone we know that we are going to the polls to support the West Carrollton Schools, and then do it,” he said.

Clifford welcomes questions on the levy campaign. Contact him at 859-5121, ext. 1117 or rclifford@wcsd.k12.oh.us.

If the levy passes on May 8, the district will not be on the ballot for any reason until at least May 4, 2010.