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February 2007

WCSD puts 6.5 mill levy on ballot Clifford: 'We don't want to go to 2008'

Tuesday, May 8 will be a critical day in the life of every member of the West Carrollton School District community. District officials are asking voters to approve a 6.5 mill, 3-year, fixed-term operating levy.

"In May of 2006, we asked for 5.9 mills. We said then that if we weren't successful we'd be back in May of 2007 and the millage would increase," said Supt. Rusty Clifford, Ph.D.

Clifford also emphasizes the critical nature of the levy. "We don't want to go to 2008," he said. "The cumulative effect of not getting new money for two years is catastrophic."

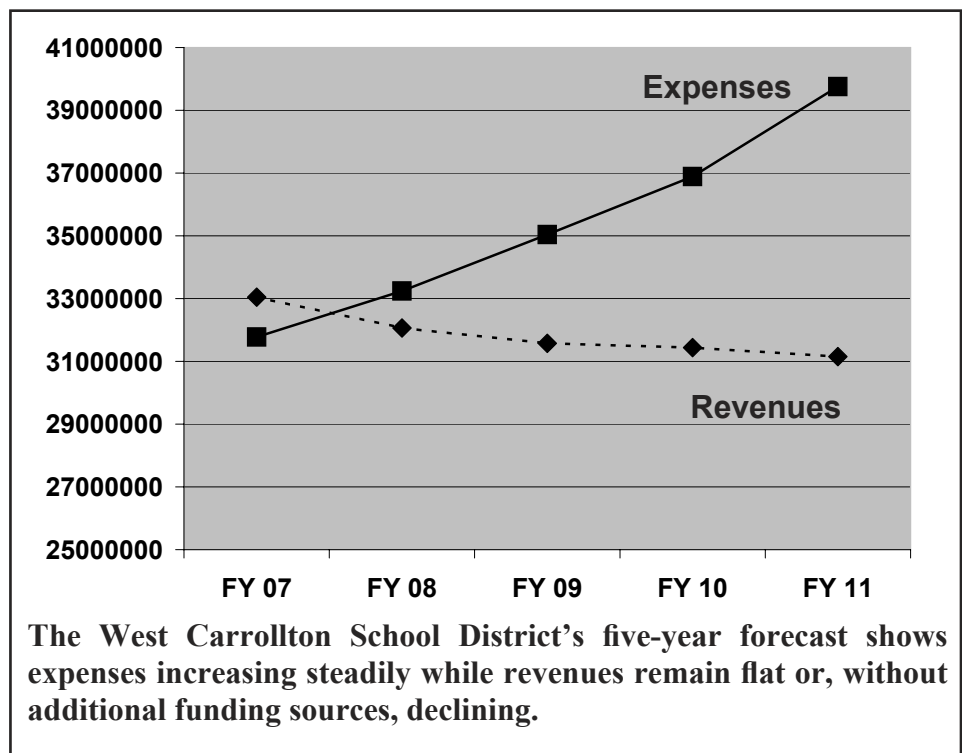
Why do we need more money?

School districts in Ohio are on fixed incomes and expenses continue to increase. The fixed income status is a result of House Bill 920 which was passed in 1976 to protect property owners from unvoted tax increases.

When voters approve a tax levy, they agree to pay a specific amount of money for a specific purpose over a specific time period. A homeowner's share of that amount depends on how much their home is worth.

Reappraisal of properties – which took place in 2006 – means the collection of the same amount of taxes by redistributing the property taxes to be collected. Some property owners pay more, some less and some the same. While the total tax dollars raised stays the same because schools are on a fixed income, an individual taxpayer's share will be based on his new property value. In this way, House Bill 920 equalizes the burden of a voted tax.

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.



What's the money for?

The 6.5 mill levy will generate approximately \$2.8 million in revenue for day to day operating expenses. Salaries and benefits account for 80 to 85 percent of those expenses for every school district in Ohio.

In West Carrollton, 82 percent of the general fund budget goes to salaries and benefits.

"We are a people business," Clifford said, "and we continue to balance staffing and enrollment levels."

Our academic performance is strong

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.

Our middle name is 'accountable'

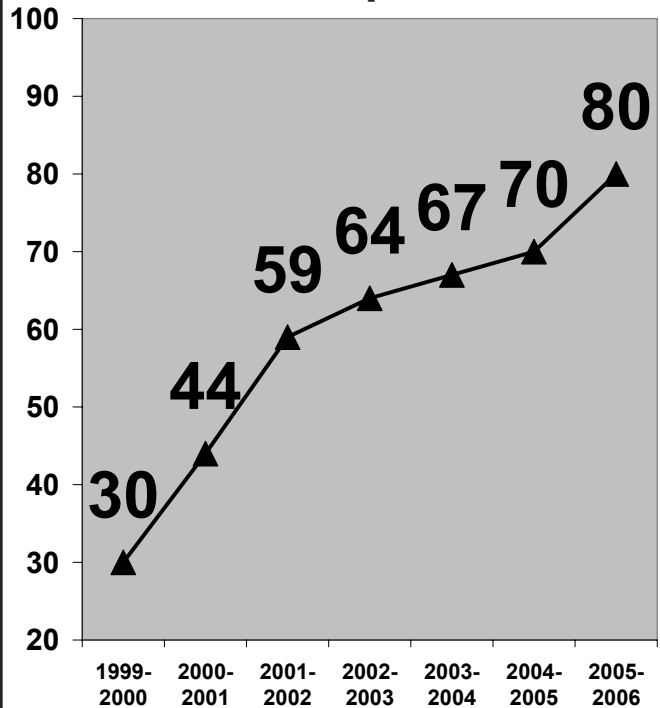
The district is also proud of its strong fiscal stewardship. Officials have worked to trim costs wherever possible to keep the millage amount lower.

“Over the last four years, we have reduced our general fund budget by an average of \$1 million per year,” Clifford said. “To keep the 2007 levy request as low as possible we have reduced our budget by an additional \$1.1 million for the 2007-2008 school year. That adds up to \$5.1 million in reductions over the past five years.”

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

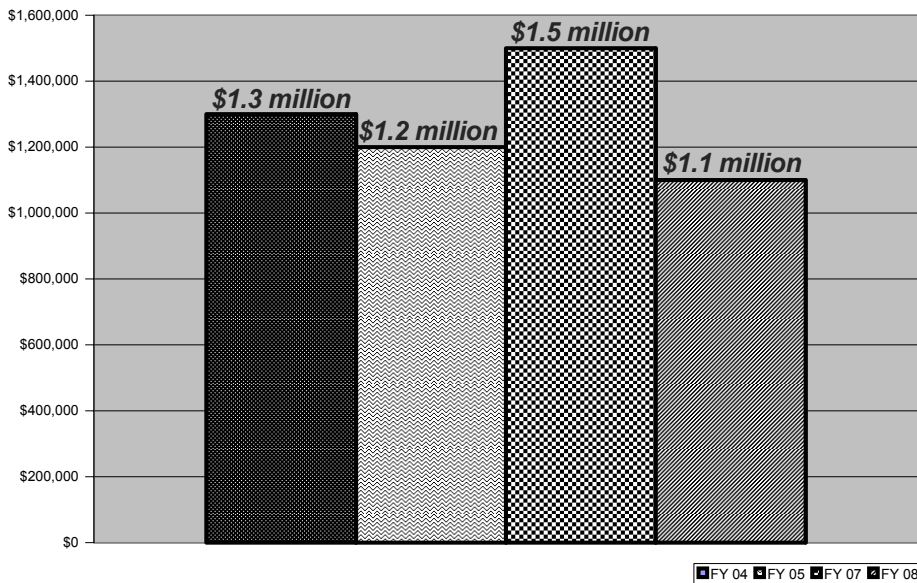
“We’re asking for a three-year levy because we want to be held accountable for continuing these trends of academic excellence and sound financial management,” Clifford said. “Our middle name is accountable.”

Percent of indicators met on State Report Card



WCSD has posted seven straight years of improvement. The district is tracking the percentage of indicators because the number of indicators remains in flux.

Good fiscal stewardship



The West Carrollton School District has reduced a total of \$5.1 million from its operating budget since 2003.

***If the levy passes on May 8,
the district will not ask for new
money again until at least May 4, 2010.***

**If you have
questions about the
levy or would like
to help with the
campaign, contact**

Supt. Rusty

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