



# PLATFORM

## PRESERVE THE PROGRESS — PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

This Platform is presented in support of Marietta City Schools' five-year permanent improvement levy and a five-year operating levy which will go before the voters on May 8, 2007. Both levies have been reviewed with regard to current circumstances, past performance and plans for the future of Marietta City Schools. Marietta City Schools Levy Committee members urge you to learn the facts and make an informed decision on these very important issues.

### WHAT ARE WE VOTING FOR?

In support of Marietta City Schools, a committee of volunteers is asking you to vote YES on two five-year levies to continue important funding that is currently in place and has been in place for 15 years:

- ✓ Permanent Improvement Levy
- ✓ Replacement Operating Levy

### PERMANENT IMPROVEMENT LEVY

Our board is asking you to approve a five-year, 2.95 mill Permanent Improvement Levy to make upgrades to all facilities in the Marietta City School District. You may recall that a 4.64 mill levy was approved in 1990 to refurbish Marietta Middle School and Washington Elementary School. Both projects were managed efficiently and have been well-received by the community.

The proposed 2.95 mill levy replaces funds provided by the 4.64 mill levy.

The term "Permanent" means that improvements must last at least five years. The levy itself is not permanent. It will be in effect from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2012.

Funds generated under a permanent improvement levy may be used only for upgrades, maintenance, repairs and improvements. The levy will generate about \$1,222,000 per year for five years for permanent improvements such as:

- ✓ Buses
- ✓ Classroom Equipment
- ✓ Computers
- ✓ Energy-efficient Windows
- ✓ Handicap Accessibility
- ✓ Heating Systems
- ✓ Paving
- ✓ Playground Equipment
- ✓ Restrooms
- ✓ Roofing
- ✓ Safety
- ✓ Security Systems
- ✓ Technology
- ✓ Textbooks

As a community, we have made a substantial investment in buildings and other facilities that can help provide a positive learning environment as well as save us money in the long run. Since no new buildings are planned, it is prudent to protect our investment through regular maintenance and upgrades.



WE URGE YOU TO RENEW THIS LEVY ON  
**MAY 8, 2007** AND PRESERVE THE PROGRESS  
MADE OVER THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS.

## REPLACEMENT OPERATING LEVY

A Replacement Operating Levy renews the existing levy at the same millage as originally approved. The 8.5 mill Replacement Levy will be used to maintain and enhance present programming — including all-day, every-day kindergarten.

Operating levy funds generated annually will be about \$3,500,000 and will be used for:

- ✓ Academic Curricula
- ✓ Curriculum Upgrades
- ✓ Educational Materials
- ✓ Employee Salaries and Benefits
- ✓ Engineering and Mathematics:  
College and Career Curricula
- ✓ Professional Development

Funds generated by a series of 8.5 mill levies have provided continuous funding for 15 years. The first one was approved in 1992. Voters approved renewals in 1997 and 2002.

## SO, WHAT IS THE TOTAL COST?

Homeowners will pay an additional \$5.60 per month, about 19¢ per day, per \$100,000 of assessed value if both the permanent improvement levy and the operating levy are approved.

If your property is re-appraised at a higher value during the term of these levies, the school system does not receive additional funds. The millage is actually reduced.

## CAN WE SPEND LESS?

Our board is committed to cutting every possible cost that does not diminish the educational opportunities available to our students. Here are a few examples of good fiscal management by Marietta City Schools:

- ✓ Energy savings improvements will total \$2,096,000 over the next several years
- ✓ A grant of \$261,500 was effectively applied to energy savings improvements
- ✓ Since 2003, expenses have been reduced by about \$3 million
- ✓ Sale of property and stadium have generated revenues and have reduced operating costs

Savings and economies by the board minimize the millage needed to function responsibly, however these savings do not and cannot replace the revenues needed from the proposed replacement permanent improvement levy and replacement operating levy.

Marietta City Schools' annual budget is about \$21,750,000. Without local funding, the district cannot continue to provide current academic programs at current levels.

## CONTINUED SUPPORT MEANS CONTINUED PROGRESS.

Knowledge is expanding at an exponential rate. The academic success of our students depends largely on our ability to maintain and enhance the curriculum, activities and services. This is especially true as we prepare our students for the world of the 21st Century, a world in which our children and grandchildren must compete in a global marketplace.

Have you considered the value of our public school system to our community?

*Expansion Management Magazine* of Cleveland recently published its annual educational edition. Chief Editor Bill King said, "In today's knowledge-based global economy, nothing is more important to companies than the ability to find, and employ, an increasing well-educated work force."

# PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE

Yes, good schools can help attract companies who bring us good jobs. Good schools certainly help prepare our children and grandchildren for higher education and careers, the professions, careers in industry and the military.

In the 2006 Annual Corporate Survey compiled by *AreaDevelopment Magazine*, two of the most important factors cited by companies considering new locations are:

- ✓ Availability of skilled labor
- ✓ Ratings of public schools

Good public schools contribute a great deal to the quality of life and economic success of our community.

## KNOWLEDGE IS EXPANDING AT AN INCREDIBLE RATE.

Did you know that:

- ✓ More than 3,000 new books are published daily?
- ✓ *The New York Times*, in one week, publishes more information than the founders of Marietta were likely to find in their entire lives?
- ✓ More new information will be generated worldwide this year than in the previous 5,000 years?
- ✓ The amount of new technical information is doubling every 2 years and that the rate of discovery is predicted to double every 72 hours by 2010 — just two years into our proposed five year levies?
- ✓ Unless we invest in our students today, the American workforce will be less educated in 2020 than it is today?

## Schools have to keep up!

In the interest of creating opportunities for better jobs and meeting the needs of existing employers, it is extremely important to our local economy that our schools provide up to date academic and career-oriented educational options.

## LOOK AT OUR RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT.

- ✓ Over the past two years, three of our buildings have been rated "Excellent" by the State of Ohio.
- ✓ According to Marietta City Schools Performance Index issued by the State of Ohio, our Performance Index has increased over the past three years. Our Performance Index Score has moved from 86.8 to 95.5, indicating that many of our students score at the advanced or accelerated rate on state testing.
- ✓ All schools in the system are able to demonstrate a trend of improvement over the past three years.
- ✓ In Marietta, 78.3 percent of our teachers have at least 10 years experience.
- ✓ Marietta City Schools has a comprehensive special education program and a gifted program.
- ✓ Marietta High School is the only high school in this area of Ohio to offer "Project Lead The Way," a pre-engineering program for high school students.
- ✓ Comprehensive Advanced Placement courses at Marietta High School are taught by our faculty. These courses provide college credit, pending national testing.
- ✓ A comprehensive Visual and Performing Arts program is available to students in Grades 6 – 12. Many of our students and programs annually receive awards and recognition. In addition, Marietta City Schools maintains an art and vocal music program at the elementary level—many districts have eliminated or reduced this type of programming.
- ✓ MHS has won the SEOAL "All Sports" trophy four of the last six years. We are currently in the lead this year.

## WHAT IS THE BOTTOM LINE?

The Marietta City Schools Levy Committee asks you to support both levies for the best of reasons:

- ✓ Quality education for all students
- ✓ Maintain facilities, positive learning environment
- ✓ Help attract new jobs to the community
- ✓ Help educate local students for existing jobs
- ✓ Provide basis for further education and careers

## WHAT ABOUT THE STATE?

Currently, Marietta City Schools is number 414 on the Ohio School Facilities Commission list. That means there are no immediate plans for the State of Ohio to assist Marietta City Schools. There is a coalition proposing a constitutional amendment to "fix" school funding in Ohio and Governor Strickland has promised to review school funding from all perspectives. However, changes, if any, are years away — possibly 2014 or 2015.

Marietta City Schools, like most districts, cannot wait years. We have children to educate and budget to balance every year. Funding for public education here in Marietta has been a local matter since our founding in 1788. It will continue to be a local matter for at least a few more years.

Here is a quick look back at the tradition of school funding in our community and our state.

## THE HISTORY OF FUNDING IN OHIO

Our system of local funding for public education was established more than two centuries ago. Clearly providing for the establishment of public schools in the Northwest Territory, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 states, "Schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged."

When settled in 1788, the founders of Marietta quickly raised money for the founding and construction of a school, Rufus Putnam being the largest contributor.

Until the Ohio Constitution was written in 1802, and Ohio became a state in 1803, the Northwest Ordinance was the governing document that provided for public education. In 1825 the General Assembly mandated that each district must levy taxes for the support of schools. Ohio's second constitutional convention in 1850-51 produced the document by which we are governed today. Property taxes became the major source of revenue in the 1850s.

Other significant changes were made in the 19th and 20th centuries that have shaped the system of school funding we have today.

For example, we vote on millage, but we are actually locking in a dollar amount for the school district and that amount cannot increase under the approved levy. Even if property is re-appraised during the course of a levy, our schools do not receive additional funding. In fact, the millage is rolled back or reduced. Funding is not increased.

## LOCAL HISTORY

During our 219 year history of support for education, Marietta has been a pioneer in public schools at least twice. In 1926 Marietta High School (now the Middle School) was built and was called "The finest school of its kind in the state." In 1991 voters approved a bond issue for capital improvements in the district, the highlight of which was the complete renovation of Marietta Middle School.

The proposed five-year permanent improvement levy continues the funding for needed improvements to facilities, but there are no plans for renovations on the scale of the Middle School project. There are no plans for the construction of new buildings.

In the 1970s the Ohio General Assembly passed legislation which effectively prohibited local schools from receiving increasing revenues which match inflation (H.B. 920) as property values increase.

## WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Contact members of the Marietta City Schools Levy Committee, board of education or administration, or visit the committee website. If your group would like a presentation, please contact any of the following people:

Susan Barengo, Co-Chair  
**373-5721**

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PRESERVE THE PROGRESS

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