

# Issue 75: Columbus City Schools' Proposed 2008 Operating Levy & Bond Issue



**Presentation to: Columbus Education Association  
September 11, 2008**

# Issue 75 Summary

- 7.85-MILL LEVY: \$77 M a year in new operating funds
  - 78% for cost increases in current operations
  - 22% for new initiatives, including hiring 302 educators
- BOND: \$164 M to replace or renovate 10 to 12 schools and purchase new buses, textbooks and computers
- ANNUAL COST TO HOMEOWNER:
  - \$275 per \$100,000 in valuation

# Why is Columbus City Schools Coming to the Ballot?

- Last levy passed in Nov. 2004
- Past property tax levies don't grow with inflation
- Local levies provide 54% of district income
- State funding not expected to grow; provides 32% of district income

# Changing Student Body = Higher Costs

## Trends: 2000 to 2008 (see page 1)

- Enrollment declined from 63,589 to 52,894
- Disadvantaged students rose from 57% to 73%
- Limited English Proficiency rose from 3% to 9%
- Special education needs rose from 12% to 16%

# Columbus Schools: Progress Despite Rising Poverty and Special Needs

- State report card grade improved to “C” 2 years in a row
- Graduation rate rose from 60% to 71%
- 59% of schools met the new state standard for annual academic growth— compared with 56% of all public schools statewide

# More on Academic Improvement

- Only urban 8 district to improve its Performance Index for 7 straight years
  - Met 6 state indicators, up from 5
- 33 schools rated “A” or “B,” up from 24
- 40 schools rated “C,” down from 59
- 50 schools rated “D” or “F,” up from 40

# New Initiatives Include Hiring 302 Educators (see page 4)

1. Restore 40 minute period to school day; add 164 more teachers
2. Add 44 science teachers, 6 special education teachers and 23 counselors for Ohio Core
3. Open four college-prep regional theme schools with 3 new educators each
4. Reduce average class size from 28 to 25 in grades 1 through 3 by adding 53 teachers

# What Reductions Does the Levy Proposal Include?

- 6 buildings closed by June 2011 and 300 fewer staff due to declining enrollment
- \$76 M in additional reductions by June 2013

# **Proposed Bond Issue: Renovate 10 to 12 Columbus Schools**

**2002: State recommends renovating all schools. Voters pass \$392 M bond issue, earn 30% state match.**

## **Since then the district:**

- **Closed 21 schools due to declining enrollment**
- **Replaced/renovated 23 schools, 11 more in 2009**
- **Replaced roofs and boilers for 42 schools**

**The 2008 bond proceeds would renovate/replace 10 to 12 more schools at a cost of \$123 M**

# Bond would pay for new school buses, textbooks and computers: cost \$41M

- **BUSES:** *60% of the district's buses are more than 15 years old. Many have more than 200,000 miles.*

**Bond Proposal:** Spend \$22 M to replace half of the district's buses.

- **TEXTBOOKS:** *Many textbooks are outdated.*

**Bond Proposal:** Spend \$11 M to purchase new textbooks including science books for grades 6-12 and social studies books for grades K-11.

- **COMPUTERS:** *10,950 desktop computers are 7+ years old.*

**Bond Proposal:** Spend \$8 M to replace aging desktop and laptop computers.

# The District's 2008 Accountability Pledge Includes:

1. No new levy until 2012
2. Continue the Audit and Accountability Committee's financial oversight
3. Continue issuing a quarterly fiscal report card
4. Report annual academic progress.

# Voting Open September 30<sup>th</sup> to November 4<sup>th</sup>

- Early voting begins September 30<sup>th</sup>
- 1/3 of Franklin County voters expected to vote early
- In a mock election the Columbus ballot took 9 minutes to complete
- For more information, contact the *Franklin County Board of Elections* at **614.462.3100** or **[vote.franklincountyohio.gov](http://vote.franklincountyohio.gov)**

# Available at [www.KidsOhio.org](http://www.KidsOhio.org)

- *A Nonpartisan Guide to Issue 75: Columbus City Schools' 2008 Combined Levy and Bond Issue*
- This PowerPoint
- Issue 75 Ballot language
- School Board Resolution on Accountability