



# Northridge Local School District

[www.northridge.k12.oh.us](http://www.northridge.k12.oh.us)

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## Ballot Issue Is About Students and Education

*By Superintendent Scott Schmidt*

*Dear Northridge Local Schools Residents,*

**M**ay 7, 2019 is an important day for our community. That is when voters will decide the outcome of a combined bond and permanent improvement levy that will impact all students in the school district. This newsletter provides information about that issue and how it may impact our schools moving forward.

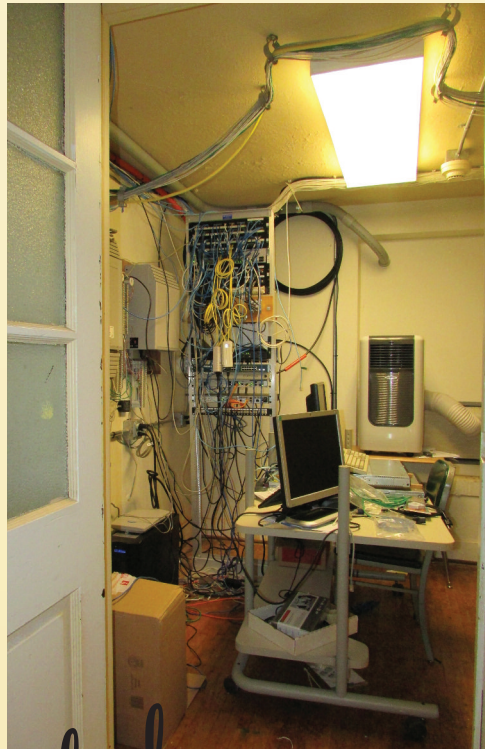
The technical details of this issue include a combined 27-year, 4.3-mill bond and a 0.5 percent earned income tax permanent improvement issue. This money will be used to build a new pre-kindergarten through fifth grade school as well as provide dedicated funds for upgrades and maintenance at the elementary, middle and high school buildings.

However, the reality is that this issue is actually about students and education. Currently our elementary school lacks a properly secured entrance, enough space to house all of our students, or classrooms with appropriate technology and learning resources. The mechanical systems are failing and there are structural concerns. Our students deserve to have modern learning environments that provide adequate space for them to learn and grow, as well as spaces that are safe and that we are proud of in our community.

Our middle and high schools need upgrades, new camera systems and upkeep with basic maintenance. This is not about luxury. It's about ensuring that our students have what they need to be successful and that our community is taking steps to make appropriate and efficient plans for the care and upkeep of our schools.

Please read through the factual information provided in this newsletter. Should you have any questions or wish to take a tour at the Primary School, please contact the district. Please also make sure your voice is heard on Election Day. We need everyone to vote and help us decide the future direction of our schools. ★

Sincerely,  
**Scott Schmidt**  
*Superintendent*



**Scott Schmidt**  
*Superintendent*



*Needed:*

- A new pre-kindergarten through fifth grade school
- Upgrades at the middle and high school buildings
- A properly secured entrance at our middle and high school
- Enough space to house all of our students
- Classrooms with appropriate technology and learning resources
- Structural and mechanical systems integrity
- New camera systems
- Basic maintenance and upkeep





**Northridge Local Schools is working to support ALL students and building the future.**

**Here are some answers to frequently asked questions about the May 7 ballot issue.**

### **Q. What is on the May 7 ballot?**

**A.** Northridge Local Schools is asking residents to approve a 27-year combined 4.3-mill bond issues and a 0.5 percent Earned Income Tax issue. This ballot issue is for construction of a new elementary school as well as important updates to the security and mechanical needs at the middle school and high school. It will also address ongoing maintenance and upkeep at all the elementary, middle and high schools. All students will benefit from this proposal.

### **Q. Why does the district need both the bond and permanent improvement?**

**A.** The bond issue will allow the district to build a new elementary school that is economical to operate and safe for students. The earned income will provide dedicated permanent improvement funds that will provide updates and repairs at the middle school and high school. The permanent improvement funds will also be used to maintain the buildings for the next 27 years, protecting the taxpayers' investment.

### **Q. Why ask for the bond and permanent improvement as a single request?**

**A.** This is one project with two different sources of funding. Feedback from the community indicated support for splitting the funding of the project between property tax and earned income. The combined ask is required to address the critical updates necessary to bring the schools up to modern day standards and meet the increasing educational, structural and safety issues that currently exist in the district's schools.

### **Q. Why has the millage rate increased from the previous request?**

**A.** The plans for the new elementary school have not changed. The new building will offer a good quality learning environment. However, due to the continued rise in construction costs, the cost of materials and increased construction labor wages, the same building now costs more to build. The past plan included using some funds from the permanent improvement and deferring some permanent improvement projects to the future. However, with the delay in voter approval, the future is here and the needs at the middle school and high school are real. These permanent improvement funds must be made available to address the needs at the middle and high school.

### **Q. What happens if voters approve the issue?**

**A.** With the passage of this issue, the district will have enough funds to build a new preK- fifth grade elementary school that will replace the district's outdated K-third grade primary school and move the fourth and fifth grade students out of the trailers. Additionally, the district will be able to update the middle and high schools to meet today's educational needs.

### **Q. Is there any money available from the state?**

**A.** Yes, Northridge Local Schools qualifies for \$1,000,000 in funding as part of a new state program, the Alternative Facilities Assistance Program. Under this program, the Commission provides a smaller portion of the state funds to





## QUESTIONS

assist eligible districts in constructing a classroom facility consistent with their Master Facilities Plan. This alternative plan is perfect for Northridge Schools because in the past the requirements for qualifying for the state funds would have cost more than the actual funds we would receive. Under this alternative plan, Northridge qualifies for \$1,000,000 and has more flexibility to create a scope of work without all the design manual requirements, making it feasible to apply for the funds.

### Q. What will happen to the Homer and Alexandria Buildings?

**A.** Both Homer and Alexandria buildings will be demolished and the area returned to usable green space. There is specific language in the ballot issue to clarify that this is part of the project. The district no longer owns the Hartford building so that building would remain. The district is open to conversations should there be interest in the two remaining buildings from any organizations with the means to operate them.

### Q. What will be included in the new elementary school?

**A.** The new elementary school is designed for 600 students. This includes 26 classrooms, (four classrooms per grade level for kindergarten through fifth grades and two preschool rooms) small group tutoring spaces, cafeteria, art room, music room, library, and a gymnasium. The new school also includes important safety features in addition to being designed to be practical, budget-friendly and easy to maintain.

### Q. What are the benefits of building the new elementary at the main campus?

**A.** There are several benefits to having a centralized elementary school on the same property as the middle and high schools.

The school resource officer will always be close to all schools, thus increasing student safety.

Teachers and operations staff members currently travel between the schools. With the current configuration, each staff member spends the

equivalent of a week traveling back and forth between the two buildings. This regained time allows for more flexibility in the scheduling of classes and provides much better availability of staff to meet the needs of students.

Fourth and fifth grade students will no longer ride the bus with middle and high school students as they would ride with the kindergarten through third grade students.

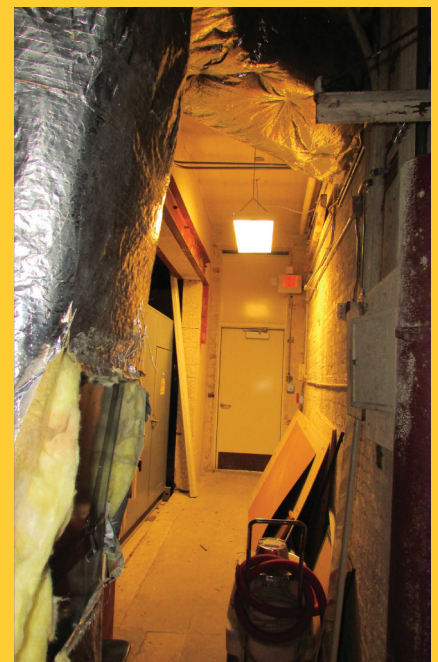
Travel to the school will be equal distance (approx. seven miles) from each of the communities the district serves.

### Q. I thought the issue passed in November of 2018?

**A.** In November 2018, voters approved the renewal of an operating issue. The district is grateful for the support of the operating renewal. Those funds pay for day-to-day operating expenses such as teachers, technology and utilities. It was first approved by residents in 2009 and is reviewed every 5 years. This issue did not raise taxes. The issue before voters on May 7 is strictly for improved facility and maintenance needs.

### Q. Why not build a new high school and combine the elementary with the current middle and high school building?


**A.** There was much community input and work to create a master facility plan. Building a new elementary is the most cost-effective option. The cost of a new high school would be significantly larger than the elementary school. Additional money would be needed to renovate the current middle school and high school to address elementary student needs. The high school was designed with high school students in mind and the district's youngest learners deserve an environment designed around their needs.



# Important Dates

 **ELECTION DAY**  
Tuesday, May 7



 **GRADUATION**  
Sunday, May 26, 2:00 p.m.



 **LAST DAY OF SCHOOL**  
Thursday, May 30



 **FIRST DAY OF 2019-2020  
SCHOOL YEAR**  
Tuesday, August 20



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## NORTHRIDGE LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BALLOT ISSUE

## ELECTION DAY!

Tuesday, May 7 – Polls open from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

## Facts about the May 7 Ballot Issue

Voters will decide the outcome of a combined bond and permanent improvement issue on May 7, 2019. Here are some basic facts about the issue and the school district.

**FACT** { Northridge Local Schools is the second highest academically performing school district in Licking County



**FACT** { The district has the lowest tax rate in Licking County

**LOWEST TAX RATE IN  
LICKING COUNTY**

**FACT** { Even with the passage of this issue, Northridge Local Schools will still have the lowest tax rate in the county



**FACT** { The high school bond issue collection has ended, saving approximately \$100 each year per \$100,000 home property value



**FACT** { The bond and permanent improvement issue are both for 27 years, thus securing funding for necessary building improvements without overly burdening tax payers for years to come

**FACT** { The new elementary school plans include 26 classrooms, small group tutoring spaces, ample cafeteria, art room, music room, library and gymnasium

**FACT** { The issue includes dedicated funds for important safety upgrades including secured entrances and new camera systems at the middle and high school



**FACT** { The ballot initiative includes funds for repairs and replacement of mechanical systems as well as ongoing maintenance for the middle and high schools

