

Operating Levy is Needed to Maintain Opportunities for Dover Students

It's hard to believe that the final weeks of summer are upon us! I hope everyone is finding time to have both an eventful yet relaxing summer. We will have students in our hallways and classrooms before we know it.

The summer has been busy for Dover City Schools. This month, our Board of Education took the initial action of placing an emergency operating levy on the November 6, 2018, ballot. This levy is not about add-ons, rather, it will allow us to keep up with inflation and pressures on our budget that are beyond our control. The new levy will generate \$3,357,000 per year for five years.

After years of conservative fiscal management and stretching the levy cycle 10 years, additional operating funds are needed to preserve the excellent opportunities we provide our students. It will ensure our students have up-to-date technology, programs, and opportunities that will prepare them for the world they will encounter in today's colleges and the workforce.

It will also enhance the safety and security of our schools. For example, additional funding will allow us to maintain and enhance personnel who provide counseling and other supports to our students.

These funds will allow the district to maintain well-rounded opportunities for our students, such as, physical education and overall health and wellness programs from kindergarten through eighth grade. We will be able to continue to offer a variety of visual and performing arts programs, which are valued by the entire community.

Despite our best efforts to live within our means and spending *22% less than the state average per pupil*, we now find ourselves at a crossroads. Our district has been impacted by many financial pressures, including unpredictable state funding, increasing cost of utilities, healthcare costs, state and federally managed programs, and required testing. This, combined with the loss of the tangible personal property tax replacement funds that the state had previously provided, has created this financial situation for the district.

The fact remains: without additional funds, our school district will have to reduce programs and opportunities, which will significantly impact our students. It will also impact the quality and variety of educational programs we are able to offer. There's a lot at stake this November.

Over the next several months, we will be reaching out to our community to share the importance of the November 6, 2018, ballot issue and how it will impact our schools and community. We want to make sure our community is well-informed before voters head to the polls this fall.

Again, thank you all for being such a supportive community when it comes to our schools. Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions or concerns about the upcoming emergency operating levy.