

R Schools

YOUR SOURCE FOR ROCKY RIVER SCHOOL NEWS

Levy Facts

- March 6, 2012 election
- 5.9 mills / 1 mill generates \$712,000
- \$15.00 per month per \$100,000 of home valuation
- Last levy was in 2008
- 2008 levy money was stretched for an extra year
- Tax dollars raised will stay in Rocky River
- Funds used for operating expenses
- Funds used to update technology & programs

Important Voting Dates

- 1/21/12 - Absentee Ballots mailed
- 2/06/12 - Voter Registration closes
- 3/02/12 - Voting in person at the Board of Elections ends
- 3/03/12 - 12:00 PM - Deadline for applications by mail for an absentee ballot to be mailed
- 3/05/12 - All Vote by Mail ballots must be postmarked on or before this date
- 3/06/12 - 6:30 AM - 7:30 PM - **Election Day**
- 3/06/12 - All Vote by Mail ballots returned in person must be received at Board of Elections by 7:30 PM
- 3/06/12 - All overseas Vote by Mail ballots must be postmarked on or before this date and received on or before March 16, 2012

Important Dates

- 1/24/12 - 12 PM - *State of the Schools*, Civic Center
- 1/30/12 - 7 PM - *Levy Information Night*, Rocky River Public Library
- 1/31/12 - 10 AM - *State of the Schools*, Senior Center

VOTER'S GUIDE

Dear Rocky River Residents,

The Rocky River City School District is asking you to approve a 5.9 mill operating levy, which will be placed on the March 6, 2012 ballot.

Over 82% of our revenues are generated from local sources. Ohio law (House Bill 920) restricts growth in school revenue despite increased property valuation. As property values rise, the voted millage used to fund schools is rolled back by a like amount. Therefore, growth in school income is severely limited even though school operating costs continue to increase. Thus, school districts must return to the voters periodically to keep up with inflation, unfunded state and federal mandates and other operating increases.

Our request to you this time is also impacted by cuts in funding to our district from the State of Ohio. In its latest budget, the State of Ohio cut funding to the Rocky River City School District a total of \$3.5 million over the next four years.

- Tangible Personal Property Tax reimbursement will be phased out on a much shorter timeline than what current Ohio law requires. **This is a loss of \$2,698,888 over four years.**
- SB3/Electric Deregulation/KwH reimbursements is to be phased out immediately for the RRCSD. **This is a loss of \$767,020 to our District over four years.**

In response to these cuts from the state, the District has worked to reduce expenses.

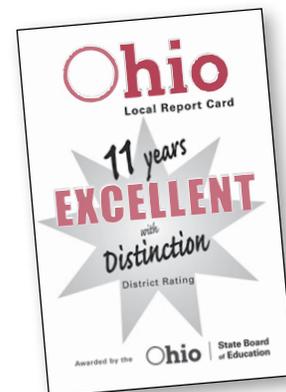
- RRCSD staff members agreed to 0% salary increase and health benefit concessions for a total of \$1.6 million savings over 2 years
- Reduction of 5.8 positions
- Department budgets cut 10%.

This voter's guide provides additional details on how your tax dollars are spent. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns at 356-6715, or by email at shoaf.michael@rrcs.org. Additional information is available on our website at rrcs.org.

I invite you to join me for the annual *Superintendent's State of the Schools* lunch and presentation on January 24, 2012 at 12 PM at the Civic Center. Please make reservations online at rrcs.org or by calling 356-6715. The *State of the Schools* will also be presented at the Rocky River Senior Center on January 31, 2012 at 10 AM - no reservation necessary.

We will hold a *Levy Information Night* for residents on January 30, 2012 at 7PM at the Rocky River Public Library.

Sincerely,
Michael G. Shoaf, Ed.D.
Superintendent



FAQ

When will the levy be placed on the ballot?

March 6, 2012

How many mills will the levy be?

5.9 mills, which equals \$15.00 per month per \$100,000 of home valuation. 1 mill generates \$712,000.

Why are we asking for 5.9 mills?

The State of Ohio has cut funding to the Rocky River City School District a total of \$3.5 million over the next four years. This loss stems from the accelerated phase-out of the tangible personal property reimbursement and SB3/KwH/Utility Deregulation reimbursement.

The District did plan for the eventual elimination of these revenue sources through fiscal year 2018 based upon current laws, but it did not foresee the complete elimination of these dollars over the next two years. The District will be required to take steps to mitigate the \$3.5 million loss starting in Fiscal Year 2012.

What has the District done to cut its budget?

The District aggressively worked to lower personnel costs in the form of measured reductions in staffing levels over the last two years in addition to securing recent concessions from bargaining and non-bargaining employees for a total of \$1.6 million over the next two years. All staff have a two-year salary freeze and significantly higher staff contributions to health care. Budget cuts were also made in all departments.

What is the difference between a bond and a levy?

A bond is for permanent improvements while a levy is for district operations, salaries, benefits, technology and programs.

When was the last levy?

In 2008, voters passed a 5.9 mill

operating levy. Although the District's traditional levy cycle is three years, the District was able to extend this to four years based on a two-year salary freeze, personnel reductions, significantly higher staff contributions to health care and budget cuts in all departments.

Why do schools need to increase taxes every few years?

Ohio law (House Bill 920) restricts growth in school revenue despite increased property valuation. As property values rise, the voted millage used to fund schools is rolled back by a like amount. Therefore, growth in school income is severely limited even though school operating costs (electricity, fuel, technology, books, insurance, staffing, etc.) continue to increase. This forces school districts to return to the voters periodically in order to keep up with inflation, increases in student enrollment, unfunded state and federal mandates and other operating increases. Despite efforts to reform school funding, the major source of income for Ohio school districts continues to be property taxes. In fact, over 82% of our school district's revenues are generated from local sources.

What is the Homestead Exemption?

If you are age 65 or older or totally and permanently disabled and own and reside in your own home, you are eligible for the Homestead Exemption. This exemption will reduce your taxable property value. Call 216-443-7050 to request an application form. Filing deadline is the 1st Monday in June.

What if the levy does not pass?

The district will need to make significant cuts to teaching, administrative and support staff as well as technology and programs.

Voter Registration Information

Voters must be registered in Cuyahoga County in order to vote in any election. In order to vote in Cuyahoga County, you must meet the following requirements:

- You must be a United States Citizen
- You must be at least 18 years old on the day of the General Election
- You must be a resident of Cuyahoga County for at least 30 days
- You must register to vote at least 30 days before an election to be eligible to vote.
- 17 year old residents can register and vote in a Primary Election if they will be 18 on or before the General Election. 17 year-olds can vote for candidates only.

Voter registration for the March 6, 2012 election closes on 2/6/12.

Voter Registration Locations in Rocky River

Magnificat High School
20770 Hilliard Road, 44116

Rocky River City Hall
21012 Hilliard Road

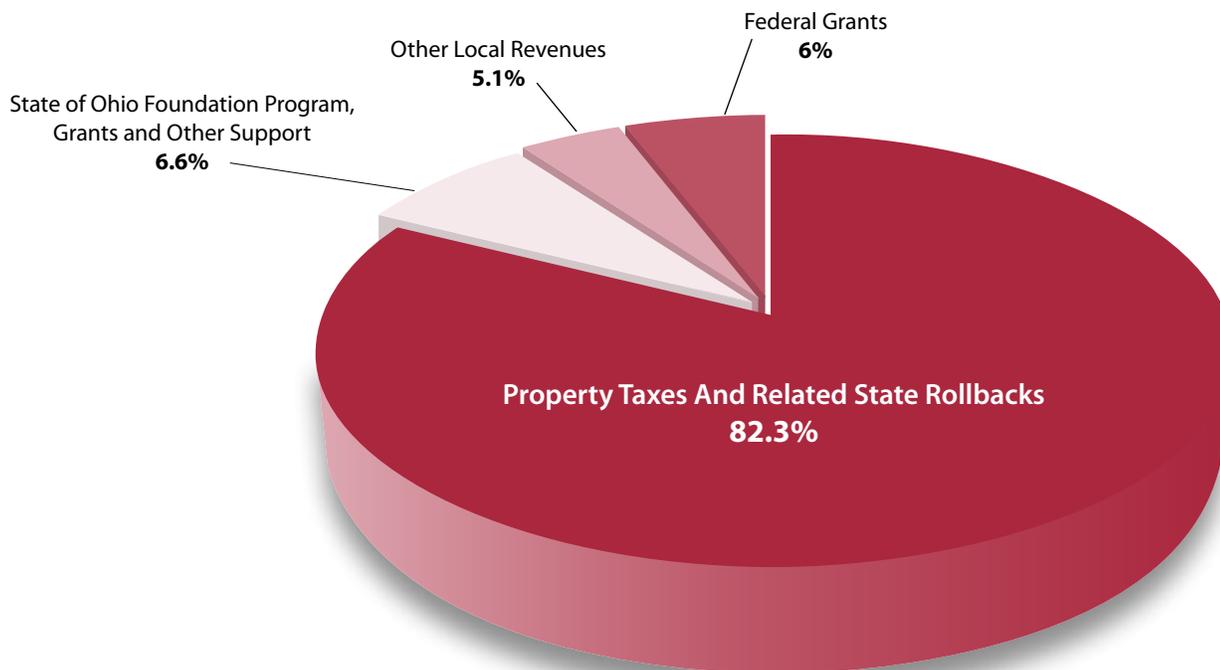
Rocky River High School
20951 Detroit Avenue, 44116

Rocky River Public Library
1600 Hampton Road, 44116

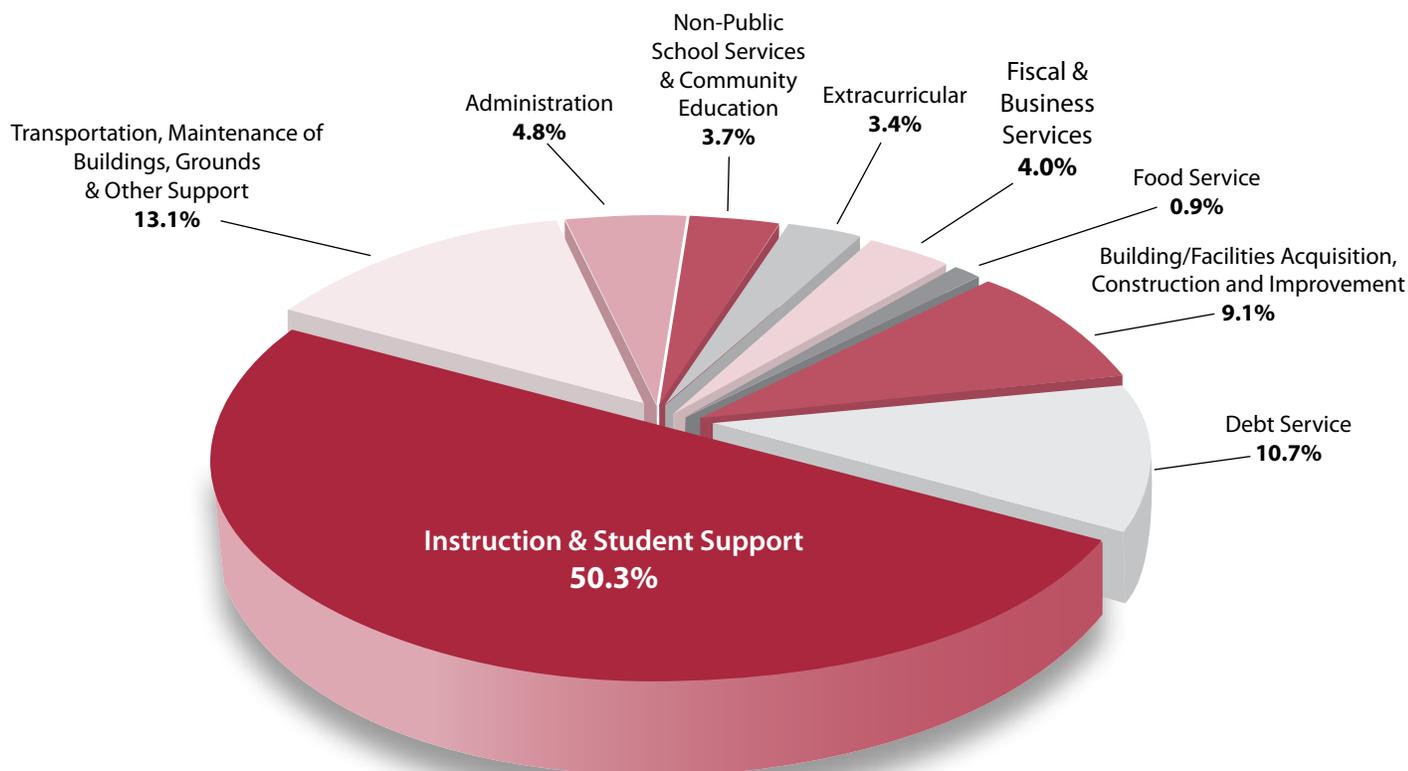
To request an absentee ballot, call (216) 443-3298 or visit <http://boe.cuyahogacounty.us>.

Financial Information

Operating Revenues Fiscal Year 2011

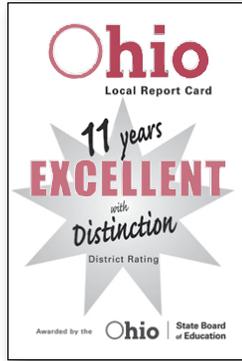


Expenditures - Fiscal Year 2011



Academic Achievements

- ✓ **Top rating from Ohio Department of Education 11 years in a row**
- ✓ **#1 District in Northeast Ohio**
- ✓ **#2 District in Ohio**
(ODE, 8/11)



#1 Westside District

(Cleveland Magazine, 6/11)

Kensington Intermediate School National Blue Ribbon Award

(U.S. Department of Education, 11/11)



Rocky River Board Of Education

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Superintendent's State of the Schools

Luncheon & Presentation

Tuesday, January 24, 2012
12:00 - 1:30 PM

Don Umerley Civic Center

21012 Hilliard Blvd.
Rocky River, OH 44116

Presented by:

Dr. Michael Shoaf
Superintendent of Schools

- *Update on programs, curriculum & technology*
- *Financial summary*
- *Review of facilities*
- *Ask questions, get answers and learn about the Rocky River Schools*

Reservations requested by January 12, 2012

Online: www.rrcs.org/rsvp.aspx

Email: info@rrcs.org

Phone: 440/356-6715

Levy Information Night

Monday, January 30, 2012
7 PM

Rocky River Public Library

1600 Hampton Road
Rocky River, OH 44116



Globally Competitive

Exceptional Opportunities

Caring Environment

Successful Students