



October 22, 2008

Voice of the People

School levy needed

My fellow citizens who live within the area of the Fremont School System.

As a business owner, wife, mother and grandmother, I am asking you to please consider voting yes on the Fremont School levy, which will be on the Nov. 4, election ballot.

As a business person, I know that when a company is considering locating in an area, they usually study two important issues. The educational systems and health care. This is also true of our local industries in regard to their expansion and retention considerations. A vital part of our economy.

As a wife, mother and grandmother, I want my family and yours to have the best education possible to prepare our children for their adult lives.

This can be accomplished if we vote yes on the school levy Nov. 4.

The levy is in part a renewal of a former levy used for the operations of the school system and in part to build a much-needed middle school.

Especially now in these rough economic times, we need to prioritize our spending. I am asking you to consider the levy among your top priorities.

-- Charlotte Urban

Fremont



October 23, 2008

Vote yes on levy

If the state offered you \$10,000 for home improvements and the only stipulation is that you finance \$55.24 of the home improvements, would you accept? I cannot imagine that a person would not accept the offer to improve the quality of their home and their life.

The state is offering Fremont City Schools \$8.8 million to help fund a new middle school, which is desperately needed. This will cost the average homeowner only \$55.24 per year and will improve the quality of our children's education and life. I want our community to accept the generous offer from the state and help our children! This kind of offer does not come around every day, so please vote YES for the levy Nov. 4, and give our children a safe environment to learn.

– Kathy Aldrich,

Do it for the school

I urge all voters to approve the Fremont School Levy tax for a new middle school to be located next to the high school.

The district will receive \$8.8 million from the Ohio School Facilities Commission for the construction of the \$27.5 million facility. The OSFC deemed our middle school as the number one building in of new construction in Ohio.

If we don't approve the 3.45-mill permanent improvement/bond levy we will lose the \$8.8 million from the OSFC. The district is reducing the current permanent improvement levy from 2 mills to 1.35 mills. If your home is valued at \$90,000 your semi-annual increase for the 3.45 mill bond levy will be \$27.70.

-- **Marv Mullholand**

Fremont

Invest in education

Putting money into education is an investment that Ohioans should make.

Education is an essential ingredient of success and prosperity for individuals and communities. The Ohio Board of Regents' Report on the Condition of Higher Education in Ohio: Meeting the State's Future Needs, states that, "Ohio needs educated college graduates in the numbers and disciplines required to meet the workforce needs of a thriving 21st century economy."

Ohio is falling behind in economic prosperity. This trend will likely continue unless Ohio graduates more students from college, retains more graduates in the state, and attracts more well-educated individuals to Ohio.

The OBR Chancellor has challenged the state's two and four-year colleges to enroll 23,000 more students each year for the next 10 years. To do this, it is necessary to increase participation and completion rates throughout the education pipeline.

Earlier this year, "America's Promise Alliance" reported that, "Nationally, about 70 percent of U.S. high school students graduate on time with a regular diploma; about 1.2 million students drop out annually." Ohio is somewhat ahead of the national average with a graduation rate of 71.4 percent (except in some metropolitan areas).

Fremont is not a metropolitan area, but some factors inhibit the desire for education regardless of geographic area: (1) social and cultural barriers that discourage the pursuit of education; (2) lack of information about need-based financial aid and how to pay for education; and (3) lack of encouragement and emotional reinforcement to pursue an education.

How does this relate to facility needs? Support for a middle school, replacing an outdated 117 year-old building, demonstrates support by parents and significant role models for students to stay in school. It is a worthwhile investment.

-- **Sue P. Babione, Ph.D., CFRE**

Executive Director

Terra College Foundation and Resources Development



October 25, 2008

In favor of the school levy

Last year the Fremont City School District worked with the Ohio School Facilities Commission on the development of a comprehensive school facilities master plan. Further, last fall, the school district applied for an Exceptional Needs Program grant and the Fremont Middle School received the highest score on its application. Applications are ranked according to degree of severity in five categories (health, life safety, structure, heating and ventilation and electrical).

Our district will receive \$8.8 million for the construction of a new \$27.5 million middle school as long as we raise the local contribution by approving the proposed bond issue and tax levy on the Nov. 4 ballot. The \$8.8 million award is made on a "use it or lose it" basis and will be returned to the state for another community to use if our district does not raise its local contribution.

The current middle school lacks proper ventilation and has structural cracks in the walls and foundation. Further, there are water leaks inside the walls from old cracked pipes, the chimney is disintegrating and classrooms lack appropriate electrical wiring to support upgrades in technology.

Rough approximations of repair costs for minimal permanent improvement projects are over \$4.6 million for the Fremont Middle School. The building continues to have additional maintenance needs due to its age. It is just not cost effective to maintain the current building. The longer we wait to build a new middle school to house grades six through eight, the more costs will increase. This will mean more expense for our district in the long run.

Strong schools protect property values and encourage new businesses to locate in our district. Please join us in voting for the bond issue and levy on the Nov. 4 ballot.

-- Jay and Kimberly Bowers

Fremont

School levy needed

As President of the Fremont Ross Academic Boosters, I am writing on behalf of our officers in support of the proposed middle school and Ohio school facilities funding. Our goal as an organization is to promote academic achievement and quality curriculum. The advances in technology and science that a new school building could offer are significant and essential for preparing our students for their futures in the workforce. The use of technology and hands-on science opportunities in the classroom can spark students' interest in learning. Our children deserve an education which helps them reach their full potential and provides them the skills needed to succeed.

Faye Eishen,

President, Fremont Ross Academic Boosters

Lindsey



October 27, 2008

Vote yes on levy

A community is only as strong as its schools.

We ask you to vote yes on the proposed bond issue levy.

Voting yes will enable us to receive the \$8.8-million Exceptional Needs Grant towards the construction of a new middle school which our community surely needs.

If you attended our 100 year old middle school (or, depending on your age, it was your high school) we imagine you have fond memories. Have you visited the school recently?

We have, and it's falling apart. The money it would take to repair it far exceeds the cost of building a new school. Using the grant money from the state and building now, at today's costs, is the most economical choice for Fremont. The additional daily cost for each of us is less than the price of this newspaper.

Over the past several years we have been involved in recruiting new physicians and other health professionals to Fremont.

Their first question is always "How are the schools?" They tour the schools; they ask questions; they look for evidence of community pride in the schools. These potential home town physicians and their families are sought after by multiple communities. They will choose the community with the best schools.

We urge you to invest in Fremont's future. Vote yes to build a new middle school. Our kids deserve it. Our community needs it.

-- Al and Diane Gorman

Fremont

Rebate for schools

A rebate of \$8.8 million? Yes, that is what the State of Ohio wants to give us to build a much needed middle school.

The new school will only cost the average household about \$50 more a year.

You have no doubt heard and read about how bad the current building is, if you are not convinced, take one of the scheduled tours and see for yourself.

This is a offer that we can not afford to pass up.

Vote yes for the state to give us money to build a new school for our children and community.

-- Tom and Pegi Hoffman

Fremont



October 28, 2008

Voice of the People

Levy is necessary

I support the proposed new Fremont Middle School. I think that the new building will not only be healthier and safer for our children but also give us, as a community a secure feeling of accomplishment.

I strongly believe in the education of our children after all they are our future.

Last fall, FMS received the highest score on the Exceptional Needs Program grant application. And the Ohio School Facilities Commission has deemed our middle school as the number one building in need of new construction in Ohio.

The OSFC does not recommend renovating buildings in the Exceptional Needs Program. FMS was given the highest priority ranking for ENP indicating the need to provide an alternative educational structure for the district.

The Sandusky County Health Department has determined our middle school "safe" in the short term for students and staff. And the award was made on a use it or lose it basis and if district does not raise its local contribution the \$8.8 million will be returned to the state and given to another school district and community.

As a parent I want a healthy and safe environment for my children so I will support Fremont City Schools on this November ballot.

– Maricela Z. Chavez

Fremont



October 29, 2008

Support levy

The financial uncertainties of our national economic crisis may cause Fremont voters to consider not supporting the ballot issue that will allow us to build a new Fremont Middle School.

One certainty, however, is the need to educate our children. To do so in a safe, healthy environment is a must. We WILL need a new middle school in the near future. We are on borrowed time as the building deteriorates. These needs are documented, and the option to renovate is not well-advised. Why then would we not want to utilize this fabulous opportunity to recover some of our tax dollars from the state of Ohio? A 32 percent discount on purchases is always an enticement to shop at a certain store. If your employer provided a 32 percent match on your 401(k) plan, you would gladly take it. The \$8.8 million available now from the Ohio School Facilities Commission to help build this school makes even more sense considering today's economy. Your "YES" votes on Nov. 4 on this issue are needed to take advantage of this opportunity and we ask your support.

-- Gail and David DeFrance

Tracy and Rob Lytle

Fremont



October 30, 2008

Yes on school levy

The voters of the Fremont City School District have a unique, if not difficult, decision to make on Nov. 4.

The State of Ohio has offered to help pay for a new Middle School to replace the aging structure we currently have. While this structure has served generations of students very well, for over 100 years, the cost to maintain and improve it has far exceeded its value. A new building located next to the

current high school will offer the district; the advantages of an energy-efficient, technology friendly facility in close proximity to other district resources. Not only will this new, bright, healthy building be more cost-effective to operate, its location near the board office, high school, sports facilities, parking lots, and the bus garage will mean even more ongoing logistics savings to the district and its constituents.

The difficulty for the voters will be "Is this the right time?" With bad economic news facing us each evening when we turn on the news it would seem like the worst time to be considering taking on such project. But the reality is there is never a good time to take on this project. We have the opportunity to partner with the state and share the cost to replace what the state has identified, as one of the buildings most in need of replacement in entire state.

If we do not act now we will eventually be mandated to replace the structure with no matching funds to subsidize the district. We need to act now to not only help our students, but to help ourselves in the long run.

-- Bruce and Lynn Schrader

Fremont

New school needed

The present middle school building needs to be replaced, for a variety of reasons, apart from the educational aspects.

I was active in the general contracting business for more than 50 years, and the firms I worked for built many more than 100 educational-use buildings in Ohio and southern Michigan.

About half of these buildings have been razed and replaced in the last 15 years. These were buildings built in the 50s and 60s, making them 30 to 40 years old when they were replaced. The building in question is more than 100 years old.

It is only a matter of time before there is a structural, mechanical or electrical problem that causes major property damage and possibly personnel/student injuries, to say nothing of the cost of both repairs and probable lawsuits.

While to some people it may seem wasteful, there is no reason to pour more money into the existing building. It won't get any cheaper downstream to replace it.

Do it now!

-- Charles F. Hutchings

Fremont

Levy would help

After attending an open house and tour of the Fremont Middle School on Oct. 22, it became very clear to me that something must be done.

The middle school building is 100 years old and is badly deteriorated. The building has reached the point to where it is no longer economically viable to repair and fix. Aside from the major structural issues of the building, the middle school is very inefficient in its use of energy, and it is severely out

dated. In fact the middle school has been the given the highest priority, replacement, ranking for school buildings in OSFC's Exceptional Needs Program.

A yes vote on Nov. 4 would allow the Fremont City Schools to take advantage of an \$8.8 million contribution from the OSFC. This would allow the Fremont City Schools to build a new middle school for 68 percent of the total cost being paid for locally. The estimated net property tax increase to property owners is extremely marginal. When compared to the cost of continued band-aid repairs to the existing middle school building this is good deal for FCS. If this funding levy does not pass, the \$8.8 million from the State of Ohio will move to another school district in need.

The timing for a bond issue such as this is considered by many to be less than ideal. However, when compared to the cost of continuing to operate the current middle school, the cost of building a new middle school can be viewed as pennies on the dollar in the long run. Please, do the right thing and vote yes for the Fremont City School levy.

In addition to voting yes for the levy, I am asking you to vote Brad Smith for Juvenile/Probate Judge, and vote to keep Judge Roger Hafford.

-- C. J. Szymanowski II