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Voters to decide on new middle school

News-Messenger reports

FREMONT -- Voters headed to the polls today in the Fremont City School District have, among other issues on their ballot, a levy and bond issue for a new middle school.

The bond issue and permanent improvement levy would provide the local share to construct a new middle school with the State of Ohio Exceptional Needs Program. The project is estimated to cost \$27.5 million. The ENP award, valued at \$8.8 million, is earmarked to replace the existing middle school which was built in 1909. The city's middle school was ranked first on a list of buildings most in need. At a June school board meeting, McCaudy said the district has one year to raise local funds, which is estimated to be about \$18.7 million. That breaks down to 32 percent provided by the state toward the total cost and a 68 percent contribution from the community.

The district is renewing, yet reducing the current permanent improvement levy which was passed in March 2004 from 2 mills to 1.35 mills. The permanent improvement levy money will continue to be used for technology upgrades and repairs for the district's current buildings. However, by adding the bond issue, there will be a net increase of 1.45 mills. The bond will be paid with a 5 percent interest rate per year over the next 28 years.

School superintendent Traci McCaudy said the levy would cost the owner of the \$90,000 home an additional \$56 per year for a brand new school, 15 cents per day.

If the new school is constructed, classes would likely begin there in 2011.



This is a picture of the old boy's locker room near the pool at the Fremont Middle School. The pool is no longer in use and the locker rooms have been closed. The pool had been losing a lot of water for decades. (Leslie Bixler/News-Messenger file photo)