



**Primary Election (May 2, 2023) Levy Renewals
Informational Fact Sheet**

- As of December 2022, the Johnstown-Monroe Local School District (JMLSD) served more than 1,700 students (an increase of approximately 150 students since 2017).
- JMLSD’s administration, board members, and financing team have kept a watchful eye on funding levels and enrollment trends, carefully considered options, and is planning for the future in a manner that both meets student needs and is as fair and equitable as possible for current and future taxpayers.
- Consequently, the Board of Education unanimously voted in January 2023 to place two renewal issues on the May 2, 2023 ballot: JMLSD’s 1% income tax levy and \$2,200,000 emergency levy.
 - These two levies are not new taxes. Both are existing levies, previously approved by JMLSD voters, that are set to expire within in the next two years.
 - If the renewals are approved by voters this May, they will fund needed JMLSD day-to-day operations without increasing current tax levels.

Answers to FAQs

Q: Are these levies necessary because of Intel?

A: No. Funds raised through the renewals are necessary to meet current operational costs and to maintain current programming. Although we know our community faces growth in the future, we are already experiencing growth pre-Intel, and these renewals are necessary to meet current expenses for the day-to-day education of our more than 1,700 students.

Q: Why are you only asking for five-year renewals for both levies?

A: We are asking for Ohio’s shortest allowable interval, five years, to help us bridge ongoing growth and expenses until we have a better sense of Intel’s likely long-term impact.

Q: What are the two levies to be considered by voters for renewal currently generating in revenue?

A: The two levies currently generate a combined \$7,111,644 annually – which represents approximately 30% of the district’s annual operating expenses. The current 1% income tax is levied on all JMLSD residents and is set to expire December 31, 2023. It generated \$4,911,644 during the 2021-22 school year. The current emergency levy is set to expire December 31, 2024 (for tax year 2023), and it generates \$2,200,000 annually. Note: an “emergency levy” is a term specified by the state for a fixed-sum levy that generates the same amount of revenue every year – regardless of changes in property values or future developments.

Q. How do Johnstown-Monroe property taxes compare with other Licking County School Districts?

A: Johnstown-Monroe Schools has the fourth-lowest property tax rate in Licking County.

Q: What about the county’s reappraisal process on property values? Won’t that mean we would pay more if our property values went up – or increase with the next reappraisal?

A: No. An emergency levy generates a specified (fixed) amount of annual funding, regardless of changes in property values. When property values increase/decrease as the result of a reappraisal, the school district does not receive additional/less revenue for an emergency levy. For example, the voted millage rate for this \$2.2 million emergency levy was 6.9 mills in 2018; however, since property values increased in our community that caused the effective millage to be reduced to 4.8 mills now. So, with voter approval of the renewal, the district will continue to receive \$2.2 million each year – no more and no less.

Q: The current levies don’t expire until December 2023 & 2024. Why are they both on the ballot now rather than later?

A: The school district cannot responsibly and effectively plan for the future of our community’s young learners by allowing expiration deadlines to near before placing the issues before local taxpayers to ensure there is no gap in local school funding.

District Treasurer Kim Pulley and Superintendent Dr. Philip H. Wagner recently presented the Board of Education with a state-required 5-year forecast. It shows that, without the revenues resulting from voter approval of the two renewal levies, the District would need to spend savings to operate in the near future, and the deficit would continue to grow.

“By the 2025-26 school year, we’re negative almost a million dollars. Then, if you go out the following year, we’re negative 14.7 million dollars,” Wagner said.

Q: With inflation and enrollment growth, why isn’t the district asking for an increase? Haven’t your expenses gone up?

A: The district has actively worked to manage expenses, and the Board of Education was clear in its decision not to ask voters for more than is needed to cover current expenses. The Board of Education is determined that funding received resulting from anticipated growth will pay for the resulting operational needs from that growth.

Q: What has the district done to save costs?

A: JMLSD’s cost-saving measures in recent years have included the utilization of grants to help meet many operational needs. We continue to pursue community partnerships with area businesses whenever and wherever possible.

JMLSD has also actively worked to contain costs. The most recent example of this effort can be seen in the prudent structuring of revised district health coverage plans to best meet district employee health needs while endeavoring to enhance health plan funding efficiencies.

District leadership is also working closely with city, township, and other local stakeholders to ensure that any new commercial and residential development tax incentives extended by area governmental agencies do not come at the expense of owed JMLSD school revenue collection.

Also, we’ve twice-refinanced district bond debts from the high, middle and elementary schools’ construction and renovation projects to save taxpayer dollars.