

**VOTE NO
on ISSUE 4!**
A vote against
Issue 4 is a vote
**FOR Forest Hills
Schools!**

2014 Bond Levy Quick Facts

\$103 Million

\$15.6 million to rebuild Wilson Elementary
+ \$82.4 million to renovate the remaining eight buildings
+ \$5 million for “the opportunity to consider the gradual implementation of all-day kindergarten” and relocate transportation facility
+ .5 mills to create a permanent improvement fund

9 Building Configuration

Seven of nine buildings will be between 70 and 85 years old when bond expires in 32.5 years

Cost Per Square Foot

Elementary renovation budgets are between \$77 and \$90/sq. ft.*; OFCC’s state minimum standards recommend nearly \$165/sq. ft

Operational Costs

Saves \$0 in operational costs and forgoes efficiencies of consolidation, locking in need for more operating levies

Enrollment Projections

Enrollment is expected to decline nearly 600 students by the 2023/24 school year**

*Based on FH/SSOE Master Planning document, 08.01.14
**2013 OFCC Enrollment report

There Is A Better Way!

WHO ARE WE?

The “Better Way for Forest Hills” initiative is supported by long-time and new residents, young parents, community leaders, senior citizens, empty nesters, school district administrators and teachers as well as parochial and private school families. We have been and are staunch supporters of the Forest Hills School District. Our concerns are not isolated and are supported by facts. We will support a cost-effective, sustainable plan that provides equal access to 21st century learning for ALL Forest Hills students.

WHAT ARE OUR REASONS FOR VOTING “NO?”

No Operational Savings – This plan offers **\$0 in operational savings**, making it unsustainable and ties the district to maintaining and operating nine buildings for 32.5 years. The .5 mill permanent improvement fund that is part of this plan would generate \$600,000 per year, but the district has spent an average of \$800,000 per year the past decade. **And by the time the bond expires, seven of the nine buildings will be between 70 and 85 years old.**

Flawed Planning Process – School district leadership has refused to acknowledge or adhere to widely accepted planning processes used in many other districts in our state for developing facilities plans. The district leadership refused to accept two independent architectural firms’ no cost offer to vet this plan. Instead this plan was based on one architectural firm’s work. The other independent architects who are well-versed in modern school design have reviewed this plan at our request and determined that in their professional opinions **there are insufficient funds to accomplish what is being promised.**

Inequitable - The 2013 Ohio Facilities Construction Commission report revealed all six elementary schools have reached the point where building new – not renovating – is recommended. However, only 1/6 of our district will have the benefits of a new school, benefitting some neighborhoods over others.

Not “Renovate to New” – This plan delivers only fractions of OFCC recommended renovations (minimum standards for the State of Ohio): 10% electrical at Maddux; 26% security at Mercer; 43% handicap access at Summit; 38% security at Anderson; 15% windows at Ayer and Sherwood. It is unreasonable to be asked to believe “Renovate to New” can be accomplished at these levels.

All Day Kindergarten—an empty promise? - The proposed bond levy has promised the “opportunity to consider the gradual implementation of all-day kindergarten”. While we all agree that all-day kindergarten should be a goal for the district, this plan provides no details regarding how this is going to be realized.

HOW CAN WE FIND A BETTER WAY?

Forest Hills leaders say this plan is the best they can do and it’s better to do “something” than nothing. **We don’t want to do just “something” with taxpayer dollars.** Alternatives with significant annual cost-savings and long-term vision with benefits for the entire community were not even considered. Peer districts have planned for their futures by consolidating resources, utilizing OFCC funding and creating true Master Plans. How will Forest Hills remain a “district of choice” if we settle for less?

A “NO” vote is not against the school district or our children; it is a vote that says we have lost confidence in district leadership. This plan is not transformational, but rather protects and continues an antiquated educational system and organizational pattern rooted in decades past. The Board of Education has a responsibility to lead the district to assure we are providing the most cost-effective and equitable education for **ALL STUDENTS**—this has not been done. Let’s get back to our desks and work at this until we get it right. Our community and our kids deserve A Better Way.

For more information, please visit betterwayforforesthills.org.

We urge you to get all the information you can, then go to the polls and let the district leadership know that you want A Better Way for Forest Hills! **Vote NO!**