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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Madeira City Schools Places a Levy on November 2, 2021 Ballot

After careful review of the district's growing enrollment and five year forecast, the Madeira City Schools Board of Education took action at its May 19 meeting to place a combined 6.2 mill bond and operating levy on the November 2, 2021 ballot. The single vote on the 6.2 mill issue includes a 1 mill bond to construct a new wing of classrooms at Madeira Elementary and 5.2 mills of operating dollars. The proposed millage would cost homeowners an additional \$217 per \$100,000 of property value.

Enrollment has been a discussion at Madeira Board of Education meetings for the past several years. The district did a benchmark enrollment study in 2015. At that time, the projections were to grow 2-3% for the next 8-10 years before leveling off. Since that time, the district has twice refreshed the enrollment study, but actual growth continues to outpace predicted growth. In order to meet the growing class sizes, the district has added additional classroom teachers, instructional aides and an assistant principal. The district has also relocated the Madeira Preschool to Madeira Silverwood Presbyterian Church and added modular classrooms at Madeira Elementary to create additional classroom space.

The most recent enrollment trends now indicate that a track record of excellence in the schools combined with low interest rates are attracting even younger families to Madeira. Enrollment is continuing to climb - including an incoming Kindergarten class of over 160 students that represents a sharp increase compared to recent graduating classes of around 100 students.

As a part of the planning process, the district completed a facility feasibility study to evaluate current and future classroom needs. The study confirmed that the district will be out of classroom space in two years at the middle school level. The study also indicated that while there was no available space at the Middle School to add classrooms, the Elementary School footprint had enough available space to add classrooms and parking. Due to these findings, the district will be moving to a grades K-5 Madeira Elementary School and a grades 6-8 Madeira Middle School beginning in the 2023-2024 school year. "We're excited about welcoming new families to Madeira as well as planning for the future," said Superintendent Kenji Matsudo.

The permanent addition at Madeira Elementary would include 12 new classrooms, and a new media center space. Rooms for band and choir would also be created to allow for 5th Grade to seamlessly be integrated into the elementary building. The total construction cost for the addition would be \$7.5 million dollars. The cost equates to 1 mill or \$35 per \$100,000 home value to the homeowner for the next 27 years.

In addition to tracking growing enrollment and facility needs, the district has continued to utilize its financial parameters to keep track of district operating dollars. The district's last operating levy was approved in November 2016 when the promise was to last 3 years and the district stretched its resources to last 5 years. Madeira School Board President Rich Palmer explained that asking taxpayers for additional revenue is not something the board and district administrators take lightly. "Unfortunately, the nature of school funding in Ohio makes it necessary for us to ask our taxpayers for additional funding," Palmer stated. "As the district's residential home market values increase by the county auditor, school districts continue to receive the same amount of revenue

and our cost saving measures are not enough to balance our budget. This operating levy is imperative to the financial health of our district.”

The 6.2 mill combined bond for construction and operating costs is a first for the community. Addressing both facility and operating needs at the same time is a result of both needs presenting themselves simultaneously. The combined 6.2 mills represents the lowest ballot issue for the district in over 40 years. The lower millage rate can be attributed to sound financial planning, the Kenwood Senior Star tax abatement expiring, the new Traditions development, and new residential construction in the area.

Additional information as well as community meetings will be shared in the coming months.