



## A NOTE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Chris Piper, Superintendent, Troy City Schools

Trojan Families:

We are a little more than a month into 2024, and already I am extremely proud of the hard work being put forth by our students and staff members. This year is shaping up to be another outstanding year for this district.

Of course, we are building off of one of the most productive years in this district's recent history.

We are so incredibly proud of the achievements of our students, staff members and district as a whole in 2023, and would like to thank the entire Troy community for being a part of our continued success.

First and foremost, we are so grateful to the voters and the Troy community who voted in November to approve funding for four new school buildings: three pre-k through fourth grade buildings, and one middle school building for grades 5-6. The passage of this bond levy will also allow us to make significant HVAC improvements at Troy High School.

We have begun preliminary work with the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission to plan out the future of the project. That will lead into the design phase, which we expect to run through the spring of 2025. Following the design phase, we will begin the construction phase in the summer of 2025 and hope to open our new buildings in the fall of 2027.

Again, thank you to all of the Troy voters who made this possible for us. These new buildings will allow us to become more efficient as a district, and we will be better positioned to serve our students and their families moving forward.

Academically, we are incredibly proud of the growth we made as a district in 2023. On the Ohio Department of Education's state report cards, which were released last fall, we received 4.5 out of 5 stars, which puts us in the top 12 percent of all 607 school districts in Ohio. Additionally, our performance index score jumped from 87.8 in 2022 to 90.7 in 2023, which was the largest increase in our area.

In the Growth category of the state report cards, Troy High School recorded the highest growth score out of 3,088 school buildings in the state! Congratulations to all of our students, staff members and administrators on all of the hard work they put in to make this happen! As a district, we are also proud of the fact Troy City Schools were ranked third out of 607 districts statewide in total growth.

As proud as we are of all we accomplished in 2023, we are very much looking forward to what our students and staff will accomplish in 2024. We will continue to encourage our students to "Dream Big, Work Hard and Succeed."

Go Trojans!

# WHAT ARE YOUR TAXES PAYING FOR?

Many of you have started (or even finished) the process of filling out your yearly taxes.

And many of you have noticed the amount of taxes you pay to support the Troy City Schools have gone up over the previous year or years. This is because the district has begun collecting on the bond issue that was passed this past November to build four new schools and renovate Troy High School.

We thought this might be a good time to go over what you are currently paying in taxes for the Troy City Schools, with a breakdown of where your money goes.

We have it all broken down in the accompanying pie chart. Please note that all dollar amounts are monthly payments per \$100,000 appraised value of your property.

Let's first look at the red section of the graph, which includes the recent levy to build new schools. All of these are "flat cost" levies, which means homeowners are not going to pay more for these over time as their property values increase.

There are four of these "flat cost" levies:

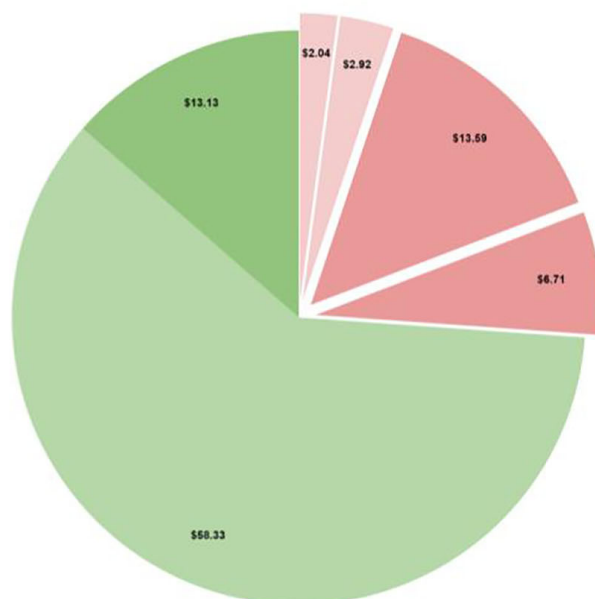
- Elementary bond issue: Property owners will pay \$13.59 a month per \$100,000 of appraised property value. This money will go toward the building of four new elementary schools. This will expire in 2061.
- High school improvements: Property owners will pay \$6.71 a month per \$100,000 of appraised property value. Improvements and upgrades will include new HVAC systems for the school, as well as asbestos abatement and improved lighting. This expires in 2053.
- 2004 bond issue: This bond was originally passed in 2004 to build the Trojan Activities Center, add a new science wing to Troy High School and make other improvements at schools around the district, most notably Forest Elementary School. This costs property owners \$2.92 a month per \$100,000 of appraised property value. This bond will expire in 2028 and 2032.
- Permanent Improvement levy: This levy is used to pay for permanent improvements to our buildings, such as paying for new roofing, paving, concrete work, etc. Property owners are paying \$2.04 a month per \$100,000 of appraised property value. This is set to expire in 2024.

Let's now look at the two green sections of the chart. These two sections are used to pay for the "daily operations" of the district. This includes everything from payroll to the electric bills to the cost of fuel to run our buses. These will generate additional revenue for the district as property values increase.

- The larger of the two totals will cost you \$58.33 a month per \$100,000 of appraised property value. This includes several levies, most of which are continuing. The 5.8 mills levy expires in 2025, while the 5.9 mills levy expires in 2026. This also includes a 0.85 mills levy for the Troy-Hanyer Cultural Center.
- The second of the two totals costs you \$13.13 a month per \$100,000 of appraised property value. This pays for "inside mills," which are codified by state law for all districts in Ohio, and are not voted upon.

We understand this can be confusing, but also want to be completely transparent with all of our school funding. If you have any questions regarding how your school district tax money is being spent, you can always call or email us. We will be happy to answer your questions.

## A Breakdown of Troy City Schools Taxes



The four red sections here are "flat cost" levies where the millage rate falls as property values increase. Home owners will not pay more for these over time as the value of their homes increase. They include:

- \$2.04 for Permanent Improvements
  - 1.1 mill (voted), 0.7 mills (collected)
  - Renewable, expires 2024
- \$2.92 for 2004 bond issue
  - 1.99 mills (voted), 1.0 mills (collected)
  - Expires 2028 & 2032

Voters approved two additional levies in November, 2023:

- \$13.59 for elementary bond issue
  - 4.66 mills (voted), 4.66 mills (collected)
  - Expires 2061
- \$6.71 for high school improvements
  - 2.3 mills (voted), 2.3 mills (collected)
  - Expires 2053

The green sections are for daily operations of the district. These will generate additional revenue for the district as property values increase.

- \$58.33 from 44.7 mills (voted), 20.0 mills (collected)
  - Includes several levies, most are continuing
  - 5.8 mills expires 2025, 5.9 mills expires 2026
  - Includes 0.85 for Hayner, expires 2026
- \$13.13 from 4.5 "inside" mills, which are codified in state law for all school districts and are not voted upon.

# AN UPDATE ON OUR NEW BUILDINGS

We know many of you are wondering what has happened since the passage of the Nov. 7, 2023 levy to build four new elementary school buildings.

Most of the work being done right now is being done in partnership with the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission. We have reviewed architect qualifications, and currently are working alongside the OFCC to select an architect for the project.

Once that process has been completed, we will then be selecting a construction management firm.

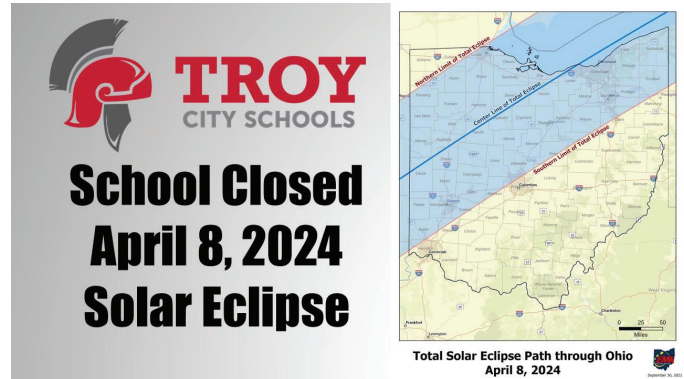
As always, you can see the more long term plans for the new schools by clicking [HERE](#).

## TROY SCHOOLS CLOSED APRIL 8 FOR SOLAR ECLIPSE

The Troy City Schools will be closed Monday, April 8. All of the district's buildings, including the Troy Board of Education, will be closed that day.

As you are probably aware, Troy and the surrounding areas will be experiencing a once-in-a-lifetime event, as a total eclipse will be coming to North America, with the path of totality running through the region. The time of totality will be approximately 3:11 p.m. and will last approximately 4 minutes.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime event we hope our students and their families will want to witness for themselves," Troy City Schools Superintendent Chris Piper said. "This is not only a potential learning experience for our students, but a memory they can make and tell their children and grandchildren about some day."



The reasons for closing school this day are twofold:

- The biggest reason is this is expected to be a massive tourism event for Troy and the surrounding area that could bring hundreds of thousands to the area. It is almost certain traffic in the area will be affected. It only makes sense to keep our students and buses off the roads during this event.
- Again, this is a once-in-a-lifetime event that we want students to be able to experience in whatever way they and their families choose. In addition to the safety concerns, we don't want students to miss the eclipse because they are on a bus on their way home from school.

"From everything we've been told by experts and what history has told us about cities located near the path of totality in previous solar eclipses, Troy can expect a massive influx of tourists and others interested in the eclipse to the area," Piper said. "We already know how traffic can be in Troy when school lets out, but this will only compound all of those problems. And it won't just be during the eclipse. We fully expect thousands of people to arrive before the eclipse starts and stay after it ends. Out of an abundance of safety, we think it is best to close the schools for the day.

"Closing schools also allows students to watch the eclipse on their own or with their families. We hope all of our students take advantage of this opportunity, as it likely will never again happen in their lifetimes."

All Troy athletic practices and games scheduled for April 8 will be canceled, as well. Any games, meets or matches scheduled for April 8 will be moved to April 9.

This will count as a calamity day for the district.

# TROY STUDENTS, STAFF GIVE BACK AT THE HOLIDAYS

Part of our goal as a district is not only to teach our students what they will need to help them chase their individual dreams, but also to help them understand they play a vital role they play in building a strong community.

Our students and staff perform a number of charitable acts throughout the school year, but never more than during the holidays. Here are just some of the projects they completed in November and December:

## **Troy High School**

- Members of the high school orchestra performed for the residents at Brookdale Senior living Center.
- Key Club made tie blankets and donated to the Red Cross.
- Key Club members also supported Kiwanis's Toy Drive and Holiday Light fundraiser.
- National Honor Society held a food drive to collect nonperishable food to stock the community blessing boxes.
- The Troy High School swim team held a toy drive competition with the swim teams from Piqua HS & Sidney HS.



## **Troy Junior High School**

- Student council led a food drive that saw students bring in roughly 1,500 food items for Thanksgiving. The school also received a generous donation from the Troy Fish & Game to buy turkeys and anything else needed to purchase to complete the meals, as well as items such as bread, rolls, butter, pies and much more.
- Members of the 8th grade orchestra performed for the residents at Brookdale Senior living Center.
- Students drew pictures on placemats that were added to Thanksgiving turkey donations from F.I.S.H. of Troy.

## **Van Cleve Sixth Grade Building**

- Through the Miami County Recycles Pull Tab Contest, Van Cleve staff and families were able to donate \$147 to The Ronald McDonald House of Dayton.
- With support from Ms. Costello, Mrs. Osborne and Mrs. Richardson, students created cards for the patients of Dayton Children's Hospital and Spring Meade Health Center.

## **Concord Elementary School**

- Concord 5th grade GATE students created Christmas poems that were delivered to a local nursing home.
- Staff helping with Christmas for a struggling family.

## **Cookson Elementary School**

- Staff raised \$380 for the Troy Soup Kitchen.
- Staff helped with Christmas gifts for our struggling families.
- Ten Cookson families received \$100 gift cards to Kroger donated by the Troy American Legion.

## **Forest Elementary School**

- Several Forest families received a \$100 Kroger gift card from the American Legion.
- Student Council Food Drive - Collected food items for the food boxes located around the community.



# TROY STUDENTS, STAFF GIVE BACK AT THE HOLIDAYS

## Heywood Elementary School

- Second Grade Christmas Caroling at Healthcare Rehab Center.
- Food Drive by Student Council (Thanksgiving) donated to the First Place Food Pantry.
- Handmade Christmas Cards being delivered to various nursing homes in the area.
- Staff helping with Christmas for a struggling family.
- Several Heywood Families received \$100 gift cards to Kroger donated by local American Legion.
- Christmas Gift help for a family at Heywood from ASL club at the high school.
- BLT members and a small student group wrote out Thanksgiving cards and Christmas cards to all of our subs to show our appreciation to them for the support they give our schools.
- We connected with Haren's Market and received a full Thanksgiving meal for up to 8 people donated to one of our Heywood struggling families.

## Hook Elementary School

- Hook Student Council held a food drive and donated hundreds of pounds of food and toiletries to Hook families.
- The Hook Student Council donated the remaining 476 pounds of food to the First Place Center.
- The Hook staff, family, and friends sponsored 42 children for Christmas and purchased toys, clothes, and shoes for them.
- Ten families received \$100 Kroger gift cards donated by the American Legion.
- Ten families received \$50 Walmart gift cards donated by the Sons of the American Legion.
- The Hook and Heywood Select Singers, a group of seventy-one 2nd - 5th graders performed for four nursing homes in the Troy and Piqua area: Brookdale Troy, Troy Rehabilitation Center, Koester Pavilion, and Garby Ridge Assisted Living Facility

## Kyle Elementary School

- Several Kyle families received a \$100 Kroger gift card from the American Legion.
- Kyle's second-grade students colored Christmas-themed pictures to be placed in food bags at the First Place Food Pantry.
- Kyle collected 350 pounds of food for the First Place Food Pantry.
- Students in Mrs. Myers' 1st grade classroom became members of the "Kind Kids Club" in which they focused on daily random acts of kindness for those in need locally as well as other students and staff.
- Mrs. Nelson's 2nd grade class made "Friendship mix" and gifted it to the other two second grade classes at Kyle (Miss Rutledge and Mrs. Schilling's classrooms).
- With the help of our business partners (Lightner and Stickel, Miami Valley Steel, and Kerber Sheet Metal) the Kyle Student Council hosted a holiday popcorn party for all students. A special thanks goes to Concord Elementary for lending us their popcorn machine.
- Christmas Gift help for families at Kyle from the ASTRA club at the high school.
- Our business partner, The First United Methodist Church, adopted 10 Kyle families for Christmas.
- PBIS Holiday Assembly to honor all of our students who've earned Trojan Tickets for following the Trojan Way
- Kyle Elementary held a holiday music performance for family and friends.
- Kyle Elementary, along with other Troy Elementary buildings, received a donation of coats and shoes from two local churches: First Baptist Church and Koinos Church.



## OUR PROGRAM FOR ELL STUDENTS

When things get difficult for her students, Wendy Grimm wants to ensure they have a safe haven and a place that will make them feel comfortable in a new country.

“When students first start, we’ll give them cards they can give to the teacher, in case they may not be able to communicate with them using words,” said Grimm, the Troy City Schools English Language Learner District Coordinator. “They can give the teacher a card if they have to go to the bathroom. They also have a card that just says ‘ELL’ on it, which they can use to come to the ELL classroom if they need it. A lot of times when they come to the ELL classroom, you can see the relief wash over them. They definitely feel more comfortable there.”

Troy’s ELL program, which helps non-English speaking students learn the language and find their way within the district’s schools, is expansive in both the sheer number of students who receive services and the breadth of languages they speak.

There are currently 182 students in the ELL program who are either actively participating in the program or have been exited from the program for less than 2 years and still receive some support. There are more than 30 languages spoken by Troy’s ELL students, the most prominent of which are Japanese, Spanish, Somali and Gujarati, one of the 22 official languages and 14 regional languages of India.

“There are nearly 100 more students in the district who have been exited from the program for more than 2 years, but who may still occasionally receive services,” Grimm said. “Once a student is part of the ELL family, they will always be a part of the ELL family!”

The Troy City Schools accept students with a broad spectrum of English language abilities, including some with almost no knowledge of the language.

"About half of the ELL students who enroll at Troy Schools have some background in conversational English," Grimm said. "The other half of the students who enroll with us are students who have very limited English both conversationally and academically.

"All students in our program have services that are catered to their individual needs. We have some students who always stay in their general education classroom, receiving support from a member of the ELL team at some point during the school day. We have other students who work with our teachers in the ELL classroom in small groups, providing whatever they may need, from English lessons to help with homework and assignments."

Working with so many students with so many different ability levels in the English language provides a challenge, Grimm said, but it's one she and her team have tackled head on over the years.

Our numbers are growing constantly," Grimm said. "We have had an average of about two new students a week this school year. As new students enroll in our program, we adjust our schedules to ensure that they receive the help that they need. Our support changes based on the needs of each individual student, and those needs may change from month to month."

Our students work in groups based on their English ability levels, rather than native language. We have word-to-word dictionaries available in many languages, and our department uses translation programs to help ensure that our students understand their assignments, and we have a translation service that provides live translation in over 200 languages for communication with our families. Many people may not know this, but Class Dojo and

Remind also translate messages between teachers and parents. Finally, we also have interpreters for our two most prominent languages, Japanese and Spanish. Naoko Sakumoto is the Japanese Translator for our district, and I provide Spanish translation. Amanda Ross also helps with Spanish translation at Van Cleve."

Approximately 135 of Troy's ELL students are in grades K-6. All of the K-5 students attend Concord Elementary School regardless of where they live in the district. This allows the district to consolidate ELL teachers, aides and other resources in one building. There are about 11 ELL students at Van Cleve, 20 ELL students at Troy Junior High School and 25 at Troy High School.

With so many students and so many needs, it takes an entire ELL team to help Troy's students. Grimm is the program coordinator, a Spanish translator and ELL teacher at Concord. Julie Forman is an ELL teacher at Concord. Amanda Ross is an ELL teacher at Concord and the Van Cleve Sixth Grade Building. Jess Nelsen is an ELL teacher at Troy Junior High School and Troy High School. Sakumoto is the district's Japanese translator. Krystal Lawson offers ELL support at Concord and Christy Malone offers ELL support at Van Cleve, the junior high and high school.

Grimm said she and her team have a great understanding of how important the program is not only to the students, but to their families.

"This program is important because we help transition new students and their families both to the school system and to the United States," she said. "Schools in many other countries are structured much differently than in the United States. We sometimes need to research school structure and expectations in other countries to help new families understand the differences. We also try to work with staff members to bring cultural awareness and to ensure that our students feel that their cultures and beliefs are respected and represented in our schools."



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