



Madeira Board of Education, 7465 Loannes Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45243

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Proposed Ohio Budget Legislation Threatens Madeira City Schools' Financial Stability and Local Control

Proposed changes in the Ohio state budget are raising serious concerns for the future of public education across the state, including right here in Madeira. Recent versions of the House and Governor's budget proposals dramatically shift funding priorities toward private and charter schools—while limiting how public school districts like Madeira can responsibly manage taxpayer-approved local funds.

Under the current House budget proposal that they literally spent 7 days developing, a never-before-seen cap would limit public school districts to holding no more than 30% of their annual budget in cash reserves. For Madeira, which follows a conservative, long-term financial strategy, this would mean being forced to return over \$6 million in voter-approved funds—jeopardizing financial planning, increasing the frequency of school levies, and reducing the district's ability to respond to emergencies or plan for facility improvements.

"There's no cap on private or charter schools who receive public dollars," said Superintendent Kenji Matsudo. "This unfairly targets public districts and penalizes communities that plan ahead."

What This Means for Madeira Taxpayers and Students:

- **Loss of Financial Stability:** Madeira would be forced to spend down savings and lose the ability to weather economic uncertainty.
- **More Frequent Levies:** Without reserves, the district would need to ask voters for new funding every 1–2 years.
- **Undermining Voter Voice:** Voter-approved levies from the past would effectively be reversed.
- **Staff & Program Risks:** Rising costs without flexibility could impact staffing, student services, and facilities.

At the same time, Governor DeWine's proposal redirects nearly \$500 million in state funds to private and charter school vouchers—despite public schools educating 80% of Ohio's children. Madeira would lose nearly \$800,000 in state funding over four years, continuing a long-standing trend of shifting the financial burden to local taxpayers. "They are expecting us to tax ourselves even more while simultaneously telling us how to manage the resources we voted for," said Matsudo.

The district's financial model, based on transparent planning and community trust, has helped Madeira maintain excellence without frequent tax increases. This proposal would unravel that model—putting students, staff, and taxpayers at risk.

How You Can Help:

Madeira City Schools encourages families and residents to speak out. Contact your legislators and express your support for fair, equitable school funding and for preserving local control of public education finances.

- Senator Louis Blessing III: lblessing@ohiosenate.gov | (614) 466-8068

- Representative Rachel Baker: rachel.baker@ohiohouse.gov | (614) 644-6886

- Governor Mike DeWine: <https://governor.ohio.gov/contact>

Bottom Line:

This proposed legislation doesn't reduce taxes—it shifts costs to local communities and threatens the stability of the public schools that Ohio families rely on. Madeira City Schools will continue to advocate for responsible, student-centered funding policies and protect the long-term investments our residents have made in their schools.