

November 2026 Operating Levy

Frequently Asked Questions

Canfield Local Schools is providing the following information to help community members understand the 5.9-mill operating levy on the November 3, 2026 ballot. The information below is intended to explain the ballot issue, the district's financial position, how operating revenue is used, and potential financial and operational considerations.

ABOUT THE BALLOT ISSUE

What is on the November 2026 ballot?

Canfield Local Schools is asking voters to consider a **5.9-mill operating tax for five years**.

If approved, the tax would generate approximately **\$5.7 million in annual operating revenue** for the district. The district would collect the revenue from January 2027 through December 2031.

The November election is scheduled for **Tuesday, November 3, 2026**.

Is this a new tax?

Yes. The proposed 5.9-mill operating tax would provide the district with new operating revenue. It is separate from existing operating taxes and from the operating-tax renewal expected to be considered in November 2027.

How long would the proposed tax last?

The proposal is for five years. If approved, the district would collect revenue from January 2027 through December 2031.

Is this a building or construction tax?

No.

This is an **operating tax**, not a bond issue or a tax specifically for construction of a new school building.

Operating revenue can fund recurring district expenses, including personnel, employee benefits, transportation, utilities, supplies, academic programming, student services, and maintenance of existing facilities. The district's Statement of Facts states that the revenue is not for constructing new school buildings, although operating revenue may be used for building maintenance.

Does the proposed tax replace an existing operating tax?

No.

The proposed November 2026 tax would provide new operating revenue. The existing operating tax expected to be considered for renewal in November 2027 is a separate issue and represents revenue the district already receives.

COST TO TAXPAYERS

How much would the proposed tax cost?

The district's current estimate is approximately **\$206.50, or about \$207 annually, for each \$100,000 of County Auditor appraised market value.**

The district's approved Statement of Facts provides the following estimates:

County Auditor Appraised Market Value	Estimated Annual Cost
\$100,000	\$207
\$200,000	\$414
\$300,000	\$621
\$400,000	\$828
\$500,000	\$1,035

These figures are estimates based on the County Auditor valuation information the district uses. Individual tax bills can vary based on a property's circumstances.

What does "5.9 mills" mean?

A mill is a unit used to calculate property taxes. A property owner pays based on the property's taxable value, rather than simply applying 5.9 percent to the home's market value.

For the proposed tax, the district estimates the cost at about \$207 annually for every \$100,000 of County Auditor appraised market value.

Would everyone pay the same amount?

No. The estimated tax depends on the property's County Auditor valuation. A property with a higher valuation would generally have a higher estimated tax cost than a property with a lower valuation.

HOW THE REVENUE WOULD BE USED

What would the money be used for?

The proposed revenue would fund the district's ongoing operating expenses and current educational programming.

Examples include:

- Teachers and other district personnel
- Employee benefits
- Academic courses and electives
- Intervention and student-support services
- Transportation
- Utilities
- Supplies and materials
- Maintenance of existing school buildings
- Technology and other operational expenses
- Extracurricular and student opportunities

District financial materials show that approximately **84% of the district's expenditures are personnel-related**.

Would the money be restricted to a particular program or school?

No. This is an operating tax. The revenue would become part of the district's operating resources and would be budgeted by the Board of Education as part of the district's overall financial planning.

Would the money be used to build a new school?

No. The proposal is not a construction bond or a tax dedicated to building a new school. Operating revenue can, however, fund maintenance and ongoing operational needs for existing district facilities.

Would the revenue be used for salaries?

Operating revenue can fund personnel expenses, including salaries and employee benefits. Personnel-related expenditures currently account for approximately 84% of the district's total expenditures.

Why does Canfield need additional operating revenue?

The district's financial forecasts show projected expenditures exceed projected revenues.

The district's approved Statement of Facts reports that expenditures exceeded revenue by approximately **\$1.2 million during the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2026**. The August 2026 forecast projected expenditures to exceed revenue by approximately **\$2.1 million for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027**.

District financial materials identify several factors affecting the financial outlook, including inflation, changes in property-tax revenue, state funding, and school operating costs.

Why are school expenses increasing?

The district identifies a number of expenses that can increase over time, including:

- Salaries and employee benefits
- Health and property insurance
- Transportation and fuel
- Utilities
- Technology and cybersecurity
- Student services, including services for students with disabilities
- Building operations and maintenance

At the same time, changes in state funding formulas, property-tax laws, enrollment, and other factors can affect the amount of revenue available to school districts.

If property values increase, doesn't the district automatically receive more money?

Not necessarily.

Ohio's property-tax system limits the amount of additional revenue school districts can receive from increases in property values on many existing taxes. Changes in state funding can also affect district revenue.

As a result, an increase in property values does not necessarily mean that district operating revenue increases at the same rate.

The district says it may cut staff if the levy fails. Why cut teachers and support staff, but not administrators? Why do we need both a superintendent and assistant superintendent and an Athletic Director and an Assistant Athletic Director?

CLSD does not have duplicate administrative roles — each role covers different work. Actually, Canfield has about 8 fewer administrators per student and has smaller salaries than similar districts in Ohio (see below).

	Canfield	Similar Districts	Ohio (Average of all Districts)
FTE Number Of Administrators	15.25	23.35	69.43
Administrators' Average Salary	\$90,336.74	\$106,987.96	\$101,274.35

Historically, CLSD Central Office has had three administrators since the early 1970s: treasurer, assistant superintendent/business manager, and superintendent. Below is a summary of each current role and its key duties.

- Superintendent: Runs the district. Works with the Board of Education, oversees finances, personnel, facilities, compliance, and communicates with the community. Coordinates every department and building.
- Assistant Superintendent/Director of Curriculum and Instruction: Focuses on teaching and learning — curriculum, instructional materials, professional development, coaching, academic support, staffing, technology, and grants. Evaluates principals and supervisors. Works closely with teachers, principals, and students across the district.

The Assistant Athletic Director absorbed the roles of the former Athletic Secretary and Ticket Manager. Below is a summary of Athletic Department roles.

- Athletic Director: Sets the direction for Canfield's interscholastic athletics program by hiring and supervising coaches, building schedules, securing facilities and transportation, assigning officials, and communicating with families on program-wide decisions.
- Assistant Athletic Director: Handles day-to-day operations by running ticketing and gate operations, processing student eligibility paperwork, tracking OHSAA compliance requirements, and providing on-site coordination and evening supervision at games across 26 varsity sports plus middle school programs.

How is Canfield funded?

Ohio public schools receive revenue from multiple sources, including:

- Local property taxes
- State funding
- Federal funding

According to the district's Financial State of the Schools presentation, Canfield's funding is approximately **70% local, 26% state, and 4% federal**. The state funding formula considers factors such as enrollment, property values, income levels, and student needs. In general, districts with greater local property wealth receive a smaller share of state funding.

THE DISTRICT'S FINANCIAL FORECAST

What is a financial forecast?

A financial forecast is a required long-term planning document that estimates future district revenues, expenditures, and cash balances.

Forecasts are based on historical trends and current information and can change as financial conditions change. The district uses the forecast as one tool for making budget and financial decisions.

If the district has money in its cash balance, why is additional revenue needed?

The district uses its cash balance to fund ongoing operations, including payroll, bills, and other expenses throughout the year. It also provides a financial reserve for unexpected circumstances.

A cash balance does not represent recurring annual revenue. If expenditures continue to exceed revenues, the cash balance declines over time.

Didn't the district recently transfer \$4 million from the General Fund?

Yes.

The Board of Education recently transferred about **\$4 million from the General Fund to fund major capital expenses**, including buses, roofs, HVAC systems, paving, and other large facility projects.

The district has said it could transfer the funds back to the General Fund if needed. However, the \$4 million is a one-time balance and does not create recurring annual operating revenue. District financial materials note that the district spends nearly \$3 million each month to operate its schools.

Has the district already made spending reductions?

Yes.

From 2020 through 2025, the district eliminated four certified and eight classified positions through attrition and used retire/rehire arrangements involving five teachers, resulting in approximately **\$3.5 million in savings** over that period.

For the current school year, the district reports reducing two teaching positions and one classified position through attrition, not replacing a tutor, and bringing back one teacher through retire/rehire. The district estimates approximately **\$500,000 in savings for the following year** from these actions.

WHAT IF THE TAX PASSES?

If voters approve the tax, what happens?

If approved, the district would receive approximately **\$5.7 million in additional operating revenue annually** beginning in January 2027, with collections scheduled through December 2031.

The district would incorporate the revenue into its operating budget and financial forecasts. The Board of Education would continue to make annual budget decisions based on revenues, expenditures, and financial conditions.

Does approval guarantee that no staffing or program changes will occur?

No.

Approval would provide additional operating revenue, but the district's financial circumstances can change over the five-year period. Staffing, programs, and other expenditures would continue to be evaluated as part of the annual budgeting process.

The district has also stated that approval would not eliminate its responsibility to continue reviewing expenditures and identifying efficiencies.

WHAT IF THE TAX DOES NOT PASS?

What happens if voters do not approve the tax?

If the tax does not pass, the district would not receive the approximately \$5.7 million in new annual operating revenue.

The district's current financial projections indicate that additional reductions would be required beginning with the **2027–28 school year** if additional operating revenue is not available.

What reductions are currently being considered if the tax does not pass?

No final list of reductions has been adopted. Any final decisions would be made by the Board of Education based on the district's financial condition at that time.

Based on current district planning, potential reductions could include:

- Approximately 40–50 staff positions, including teachers, aides, and support staff
- Larger elementary class sizes
- Consolidation of some administrative duties
- Reductions to elementary and middle school STEM programming
- Reductions in high school elective courses, including programs such as Aviation and Forensics
- Changes to Honors, Advanced Placement, and College Credit Plus opportunities
- Reductions to foreign-language programs
- Reductions to art, music, and family and consumer sciences
- Changes to school-sponsored field trips
- Potential pay-to-participate fees for athletics and extracurricular activities
- Changes to transportation beyond state minimum requirements
- Possible reconfiguration of elementary buildings

These are **potential areas of reduction, not final decisions**.

Would the district eliminate 40–50 positions immediately if the tax does not pass?

Not necessarily.

The district has identified approximately 40–50 positions as a potential level of staffing reduction needed as part of its projected financial adjustments. The timing and specific positions affected would depend on the district's financial condition, staffing circumstances, and the Board of Education's decisions.

Would programs definitely be eliminated if the tax does not pass?

No specific program eliminations have been finalized.

The district has identified programs and services it could review or reduce if it does not have additional operating revenue. Final decisions would depend on the financial circumstances at that time and would be made by the Board of Education.

Is the district using threatening rhetoric to help pass the levy?

No, there's a difference between stating potential consequences and making a threat. The district's financial forecasts show expenditures outpacing sustainable revenue. Explaining what cuts would be required to balance the budget without new funding is a factual, necessary part of an honest levy conversation, not a scare tactic.

The district is presenting the levy plainly and transparently: it's needed to close an operating deficit and maintain current programs, services, and staff.

FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE

If this is not a construction tax, how does it relate to the district's buildings?

The proposed tax covers operating expenses, not construction of a new school.

Operating revenue may fund ongoing maintenance and operational needs at existing buildings. Separately, the district is evaluating its long-term facility needs and planning for major capital expenses such as roofs, HVAC systems, paving, and buses. Maintaining our schools and other facilities requires operating dollars. The levy will provide the financial stability needed to continue addressing these expenses. Current priorities include aging roofs, the bus garage, athletic venues, HVAC systems, boilers, lighting, paving, drainage, plumbing, and other annual preventative maintenance needs.

Will the tax pay for a new middle school or other new building?

No. The proposed operating tax is not a construction bond and would not be dedicated to constructing a new school.

OHIO SCHOOL FUNDING AND STATE LAW

How do changes in Ohio law affect school funding?

Recent changes to Ohio property-tax and school-funding laws can affect how school-district revenues grow over time.

The district's financial materials identify House Bills 129, 186, 309, and 335 as laws that could affect school-district revenue. The district has reported that it has not been negatively affected by these changes thus far but is monitoring their potential future effects.

Because state laws and funding formulas can change, the district's future financial position may differ from current projections.

Are other Ohio school districts facing financial challenges?

Yes.

The district's financial materials note that many Ohio school districts are dealing with rising operating costs, changes or uncertainty in state funding, enrollment changes, and the need to reduce budgets. However, individual districts' financial circumstances vary.

UNDERSTANDING THE DISTRICT'S FINANCIAL EFFICIENCY

Has the district looked for ways to reduce expenses?

Yes.

The district has reviewed major expenditures and evaluated staffing, transportation, school fees, extracurricular activities, and athletic costs. The district has also reported savings through attrition and retire/rehire arrangements.

Does the district spend more money on administration than similar districts in Ohio?

The district's September 2026 Board presentation reported that Canfield spent approximately **\$1,458 per student on administration in FY2025**, ranking 24th lowest among 607 Ohio districts, according to the district's analysis of state financial data.

Administrative spending is only one component of the district's overall operating budget.

Does the district spend more money on operating costs than similar districts in Ohio?

Total operating expenditures were \$13,420 per student, approximately 23.8% below the Ohio average and the third-lowest among Mahoning County's 14 public school districts. Canfield also spends less per student than the state average in the other categories, including building operations, pupil support, and staff support. Of Ohio's 607 school districts, only four spend less per pupil than Canfield and post a higher Performance Index.

Will the district continue looking for efficiencies if the tax passes?

Yes.

The district has stated that approval of an operating tax would not end its responsibility to review expenditures, identify efficiencies, evaluate staffing and programming, communicate with the community, and plan for long-term financial sustainability.

HOW THE DECISION IS MADE

Who decides how the district spends its money?

The Canfield Board of Education adopts the district's annual budget and decides on district operations and expenditures based on available revenue, financial forecasts, and educational and operational needs.

Will the Board decide exactly which programs receive the \$5.7 million?

The proposed revenue would become part of the district's operating resources rather than being assigned to one specific program. The Board of Education would make budget decisions as part of the district's normal financial planning and budgeting process.

Could the district's financial situation change after the election?

Yes.

Financial forecasts are projections based on assumptions about future revenues and expenditures. Changes in enrollment, state funding, property-tax collections, inflation, staffing, costs, legislation, and other factors can affect actual financial results.

I don't have children in the school district. Why should I pay for something I'm not using?

Schools are a public service used directly by students and families, but their effects can extend beyond the students.

School districts contribute to a community through:

- Educating the community's children
- Employing local residents
- Providing facilities used by students and community organizations
- Supporting extracurricular, athletic, arts, and civic activities
- Contributing to the community's identity and quality of life
- Preparing students for college, careers, military service and participation in the community
- Affecting how prospective residents and businesses view a community

The district's academic performance is one part of that picture. Canfield currently has a 4.5-star overall State Report Card rating, along with strong results in several state performance measures.

School performance may affect individual property values and economic development.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

The district's **November 2026 Operating Levy** webpage contains the district's Statement of Facts, current Q&A, financial presentations, Financial State of the Schools, facility information, financial forecasts, and other supporting materials. ([Canfield Local School District](#))

Community members may also submit questions through this [form](#) or contact the district through the Superintendent's Office.