



DISTRICT NEWS

Connecting Our Community

What Changed, and Why

Answers to the two questions we hear most about the issue on the November 3 ballot.

Recently, we shared some basic information about the issue that will be on the November 3 ballot.

Since then, we have continued to hear questions about what has changed from the proposal that was on the May ballot and why those changes were made.

The simplest answer is that our financial picture has changed, and not in a positive way. Mount Vernon is receiving less state support than we did just a few years ago. Since 2022, the state's share of the base cost to educate a Mount Vernon student has fallen from 51% to 29%, and it is projected to continue declining. More recently, legislative efforts intended to provide property tax relief have also reduced the amount of revenue the district is able to collect locally. While the intent may have been to provide relief to taxpayers, the cumulative impact has created a significant financial challenge for our district.

Our updated five-year forecast showed a much larger financial gap than we had previously anticipated. In response, the Board reduced the building plan by approximately \$30 million and determined that revenue from this issue would first be used to meet the district's building and debt obligations, with the remaining funds helping support the day-to-day operations of our schools.

We also heard clearly from the community after the May election that a permanent tax was a concern. As a result, the earned income tax on the November ballot is now for 30 years. It is not permanent. If it were to continue beyond that time, voters would have to approve it again.

I understand that this is a difficult time to ask the community for new money. We do not take that lightly. We know how much this community values an education defined by excellence, and we work each day to meet that expectation for our students, families, and community.

In addition to news from our schools, this newsletter explains why we have an issue on the ballot, what has changed, and how the funds would be used.

Warm regards,

William Seder, Jr.
Superintendent
Mount Vernon City Schools

ON THE BALLOT NOVEMBER 3

Proposed tax: A 1% earned income tax.

Length of the tax: 30 years, ending in 2057. The tax is temporary and will not renew automatically.

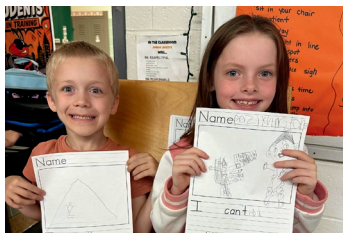
Income that would be taxed: Wages, salaries, and self-employment income.

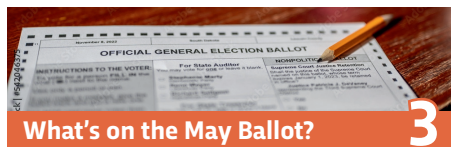
Income that would not be taxed: Social Security, pensions, retirement income, and investment earnings.

Cost to taxpayers: Someone with \$50,000 a year in earned income would pay \$500 a year, or about \$41.67 a month.

How the money would be used: Tax revenue would first pay for school construction costs. Remaining revenue would help pay for day-to-day school operations.

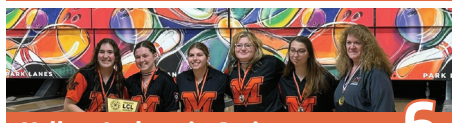
State funding: The district has a limited time to secure roughly \$26 million in state funding to cover about 36% of eligible project costs. Voter approval is needed to receive these funds.





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Why We're Asking

Five facts about our current facilities and financial situation.

Why is the district asking for money?

The November ballot addresses two critical needs. First, five of our elementary schools are approximately 70 to 122 years old. Among the concerns are secure entrances, accessibility, aging roofs and HVAC systems, and limited space for intervention, special education, art, music, and other student services. Operating six separate elementary buildings is also not an efficient long-term use of district resources because each building must be staffed, maintained, heated, cooled, cleaned, and repaired.

Second, the August five-year forecast showed district spending outpacing revenue. This change is largely due to recent state funding and local tax policy changes outside the district's control. The levy is intended to address both our aging facilities and our growing operating needs.

Is the condition of the buildings actually getting worse?

Yes. These aren't one-time repairs. Roofs, plumbing, and HVAC systems continue to age past their expected lifespan, and the cost of stop-gap repairs rises the longer they're deferred. Waiting doesn't freeze the problem in place; it adds to it.

State match: Ohio's Facilities Construction Commission has offered to cover about 36% (~\$26M) of eligible costs for this plan, if approved.

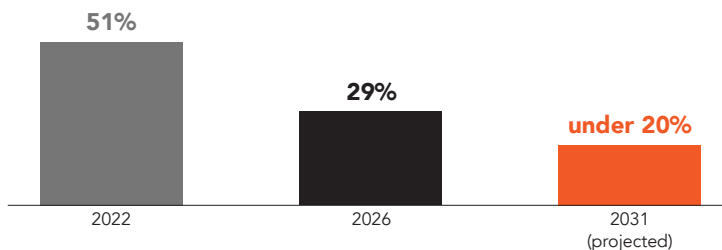
If property values are up, why is the district short on money?

Ohio's funding formula treats rising property values and incomes as a sign a community can pay more locally, so the state's share goes down. Mount Vernon's state share has dropped from 51% to 29% in four years, and new state limits cap what the district collects from property taxes, even when property values rise.

Is this a spending problem or a revenue problem?

A revenue problem. Costs have not spiked. The money coming in has dropped, and none of these changes are one-time. They repeat every year.

The state's share of what it costs to educate a Mount Vernon student

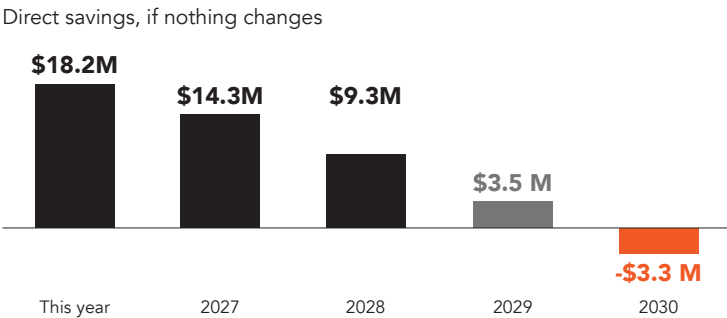


What changed	What it does to Mount Vernon
State funding formula freeze	Key funding inputs held at 2022 levels, even as costs rise.
Property tax collection limits	Caps what the district can collect as values go up.
Knox Co. homestead exemption	About \$500,000 less for the district, every year.

How big is the gap, and why not just use savings?

The district started this year with about \$18.2 million in savings. On current projections, that cushion is gone in four years.

Savings can absorb a gap for a few years, but not permanently, and cuts alone would mean deeper, faster reductions to staff and programs than the district wants to make right now.



Learn more about **November 3 Ballot Issue** [here](#)

What Changed Since May

The rate is the same. The plan is not.

What actually changed since May?

The tax rate is unchanged at 1%. What’s different: a smaller plan (the Board postponed the larger high school renovation, saving about \$30 million), revenue that now has two jobs instead of one, and an expiration date for the earned income tax.

	May 2026	November 2026
High school	Full state-funded renovation	Auditorium, music room, entrances, cafeteria. Larger renovation postponed.
Revenue funds	Buildings and construction	Buildings and construction, then day-to-day operations

What does the money actually pay for?

Two things, in order: buildings and construction are funded first, then whatever remains supports day-to-day operations.

FIRST: FACILITIES

New elementary schools, high school improvements, and facility management. Funded first, every year.

THEN: OPERATIONS

Staff, utilities, transportation, classroom supplies. The ordinary cost of keeping schools running.

What would this cost me?

One percent of earned income only.

Earned income	Per year	Per month
\$25,000	\$250	\$20.83
\$50,000	\$500	\$41.67
\$100,000	\$1,000	\$83.33

Who actually pays the earned income tax?

Those earning wages, salaries, and self-employment income only. The earned income tax does not apply to Social Security, pensions, retirement, or investment income. And it’s based on where you live, not where you work.

What steps is the district taking to address the budget?

In addition to the proposed levy, the district expects to use savings and reduce spending, including staffing reductions through retirement and attrition where possible. If passed, revenue from the earned income tax would slow the decline; it would not erase the gap.

What happens next?

IF APPROVED

If approved, the three new elementary schools and high school improvements would move forward. The district’s goal is to continue operating the current six elementary schools during construction, allowing students and staff to make ONLY ONE transition when the new schools are ready. Some revenue would support operations, though budget reductions would still be needed.

IF NOT APPROVED

Facilities and financial challenges would remain. The district would still need to address its aging elementary buildings and close the projected budget gap. Without additional local funding, significant expense reductions would be necessary. This would include staff and program reductions as well as strong consideration of closing elementary building(s) for the 2027-2028 school year. These would be difficult decisions, but they would become necessary to keep the district in good financial shape.

Questions We're Hearing

The questions we hear most, answered honestly.

Where will the new schools be built?

Final sites have not yet been selected. However, the district has made significant progress in narrowing the list.

In May, nine potential site areas were reviewed. After further evaluation and feedback from key stakeholders, the list has been narrowed to a few possible sites, and the review process will continue before any final decisions are made.

There are four general areas in the district: north, south, east, and west. Twin Oak serves the southern portion of the district and is not part of the replacement plan.

The eastern corridor has been narrowed down to two potential sites. In the northern corridor, the district is seriously reviewing two current district sites: Pleasant Street and Dan Emmett. The western site is still being reviewed.

Why don't you know yet?

Several important factors must be worked through before final site decisions can be made. Cost and land availability are two of the biggest considerations. Mount Vernon City Schools does not own enough open land in every area of the district to simply build wherever it would like.

Each potential site must be evaluated to confirm that the parcel is available, located within district boundaries, large enough for an elementary school, and appropriate for traffic, utilities, safety, access, and future growth.

What happens to the current school buildings?

No final decisions have been made about the future use of the current elementary buildings. If the levy passes and new buildings move forward, the district would follow the required legal process for any building that is closed.

Under Ohio law, school districts are required to first offer closed school buildings to eligible community schools or other qualifying public entities before selling or repurposing them. After that process is completed, the district would evaluate the best next steps, which could include sale, reuse, or returning the property to green space.

We also expect to work with partners such as the Area Development Foundation and the Knox County Land Bank to help with any future property sale or reuse. It is important that these properties are handled responsibly and do not become a source of blight for the community.

WHAT WE DO KNOW

While the locations of the new schools have not been finalized, we do know why our aging schools need to be replaced.

- Aging Schools: Five elementary buildings are 70–122 years old.
- Accessibility: New schools will meet today's ADA accessibility standards.
- Kitchens/Cafeterias: Each new school will have dedicated spaces for both.
- Learning Spaces: Modern classrooms, intervention and special education spaces.
- State Funding: \$26 million (36% of eligible costs) is available for a limited time and requires voter approval.

For more FAQs about
November 3 Ballot Issue,
scan here



Mount Vernon City Schools Earns 4.5 Stars! ★★★★★

Mount Vernon placed in the top 25% of all Ohio school districts. When compared to the districts similar in size, income, and student needs, Mount Vernon ranks in the top 5%.

★★★★★ Achievement

★★★★★ Progress

★★★★★ Gap Closing

★★★★★ Early Literacy

★★★★★ Graduation

★★★★★ College, Career, Workforce & Military Readiness

Learn more
about the district
report card



YELLOW JACKETS IN ACTION

- 1. Coach Gordin Shares Wisdom With MV Golf**
Hall of Fame Coach Doug Gordin visited Vernon View Golf Course to share advice and wisdom with our young golfers. His career includes 40 years of coaching, six National Championships at Florida Southern, and more than 90 All-Americans.
- 2. A Team Trip Worth Celebrating**
Girls tennis capped off a fantastic team trip to Cincinnati this August, crediting longtime coach Steve Tier for making the experience one to remember.
- 3. Volleyball Lights Up the Hive**
The Mount Vernon girls volleyball team brought the energy and made some noise in the Hive.
- 4. Friday Night Lights**
From the game on the field, to the cheerleaders on the sidelines, the band in the stands, and the energy of The Hive — there's nothing quite like a Friday night in Yellow Jacket Nation!
- 5. Homecoming**
Mount Vernon High School celebrated Homecoming on September 18 and 19. Pictured here is this year's Homecoming Court.



JACKET JOURNAL

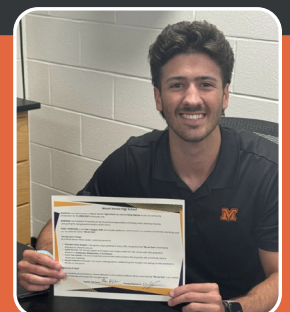
*A Feature from The Jacket Journal,
MVHS's Student-Run Publication*

Scan the QR Code to
explore more in the
Jacket Journal.



MVHS Alum Returns to Teach and Coach

Class of 2022 graduate Nolan Belcher is back at MVHS! After earning his degree in integrated mathematics from Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Nolan now teaches Project Lead the Way courses on the practical, responsible use of AI. He also coaches basketball at the middle and high schools and serves as a JV baseball assistant. Welcome home, Coach Belcher!



LEARNING IN ACTION

Showcasing moments of curiosity, discovery, and growth from classrooms districtwide.



HIGH SCHOOL

Students Explore at Career Quest

Over 1,000 Knox County tenth and eighth grade students experienced OhioMeansJobs Knox County's annual Career Quest on October 7, 2026, at the

Energy Field House. With close to 50 community partners, students experienced career opportunities through hands-on activities as well as six soft skills stations manned by OhioMeansJobs employees. Students experienced vocations across a variety of career fields. Plans for Career Quest 2027 are already underway!



MIDDLE SCHOOL

Solid or Liquid? Students Find Out

Students in Mrs. Strong's class at Mount Vernon Middle School rolled up their sleeves to make Oobleck. As they mixed and squeezed, they saw how it can act like both a solid and a liquid. A little

messy, a lot of fun, and plenty of science!



PLEASANT STREET

Storytelling Comes to Life on Stage

Mr. Bartal's class from Pleasant Street Elementary enjoyed a special trip to see The Wizard of Oz as part of the YES Concert Series. Students experienced the magic of live theater and watched storytelling come to life.



TWIN OAK

Twin Oak Fit-A-Thon is a Fun Success

The Twin Oak Fit-A-Thon was a fun day of physical activities with this year's theme, the Wizard of Oz, and a kickball game featuring staff wearing inflatable costumes! Through pledges to students,

the Fit-A-Thon supports activities and learning at Twin Oaks Elementary.



DAN EMMETT

Reading is Sweet at Dan Emmett Elementary

Ms. Ghiloni's students turned reading time into a yummy lesson using Alphabet Cookies to practice words. The students worked hard to see how many words they

could create with their given letters.

WIGGIN STREET

Peer Mediators Demonstrate Communication Skills

The Wiggin Street Elementary fourth grade Peer Mediators are ready to help classmates work through tough conflicts at recess. Trained by Mrs. Carlson, these student leaders listen and guide their peers towards fair solutions, building communication skills and spreading kindness.



EAST

Photosynthesis in Action at East Elementary

Fifth graders in Mrs. White's class at East Elementary planted alfalfa sprouts and watched them grow! They learned how plants use energy from the sun to make their own food and saw photosynthesis in action.



Columbia Students Celebrate America's 250th Birthday

Students from Columbia Elementary participated in the America 250 Tree Dedication Ceremony at American Heritage Park in Mount Vernon as part of Ohio's statewide celebration of our nation's 250th birthday.

Fifth-grade students helped lead the ceremony by welcoming guests, serving as emcees, leading the Pledge of Allegiance, reciting the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution from memory, and sharing readings about the Liberty Tree.



Mount Vernon City Schools
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RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

Senior Citizens FALL LUNCHEON

Join us for this special Mount Vernon tradition!

October 29
12:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Mount Vernon High School Gymnasium

**Complimentary Luncheon for Area
Senior Citizens**

Please RSVP to Gloria Lasater
740-397-7422, ext. 6025

*We look forward to celebrating
the season with you!*

Learn More and Ask Questions

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Walk through the plan and ask
questions in person. No presentation,
just answers.

Thu, Oct. 29, 6-7:30 p.m.
Meeting at Mount Vernon High
School Auditorium

QUESTIONS?

Fact sheet and FAQ: www.mvcsd.us

Contact: Bill Seder, Superintendent,
or the district office at 740-397-7422

Election Day:
Tuesday,
November 3, 2026



Learn more about November 3 Ballot Issue

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Upcoming School Events

October 29 - Senior Citizen Luncheon,
12:00-2:00 p.m. (MVHS Gymnasium and
Theater)

October 29 - Community Meeting
6-7:30 MVHS Auditorium

November 4-5 - Parent-Teacher
Conferences

November 18 - 6th Grade Band &
Orchestra Concert, 6:30 p.m. (MVMS
Gymnasium)

November 20-21 - Fall Theater
Performance, Friday 7:00 p.m.; Saturday
2:00 & 7:00 p.m. MVHS Theater

November 25-27 - Thanksgiving Break

November 29 - Mount Vernon Holiday
Parade

December 7 - Pleasant Street 3-5 Winter
Concert, 6:00 p.m. (MVHS Theater)

December 8 - Columbia 3-5 Winter Concert,
6:30 p.m. (Knox Memorial Theater)

December 9 - MVMS Winter Orchestra
Concert, 7:00 p.m. (MVHS Theater)

December 10 - MVHS Winter Orchestra
Concert, 7:00 p.m. (MVHS Theater)

December 14 - MS & HS Winter Choir
Concert, 7:00 p.m. (MVNU Hodges Chapel)

December 15 - Wiggan Street 3-5 Winter
Concert, 6:00 p.m. (Kenyon Rosse Hall)

December 16 - MVMS Winter Band
Concert, 6:30 p.m. (MVHS Theater)

December 16 - MVHS Winter Band Concert,
7:30 p.m. (MVHS Theater)

December 17 - Twin Oak 3-5 Winter
Concert, 6:30 p.m. (MVNU Hodges Chapel)

December 22-January 1, 2027 - Winter
Break