



Louisville  
City Schools

Q&A  
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## Open Letter to the Louisville Community

The Louisville Board of Education knows that, during the last couple of months, our residents have received various communications from the Louisville Education Association (LEA) regarding the labor negotiations that began in April.

The purpose of this letter is to respond to various statements made by the union and to answer some of the questions we have received from the community.

The Board believes our schools are successful, in part, because of the good people who work here, including our teachers and non-teaching staff. While the Board has done everything possible to attract and retain high quality employees, it must do so within the financial parameters this community has given us. Since 1990, the district has had 17 levies on the ballot. After three attempts, an emergency levy passed in 2013. The Board wants to treat its employees fairly, while being responsible to the taxpayers.

How does someone judge whether a contract is fair to both parties? Those who work in the field of labor relations, in the public and private sector, look at two issues. The first is the ability of the employer to pay. The second issue is how our teachers compare with other employees in the same profession. The Board will discuss its financial status; how that affects what it can offer its employees and how Louisville teachers compare with others in the marketplace of Stark County and the state. This letter will address the first issue of ability to pay. A subsequent one will address how the Louisville teachers compare with others in the marketplace of Stark County and the state.

The Board wants this community to know that it has bargained in good faith and desires a contract with our teachers that is fair to them, the students and community.

\*source documents are available for review in the treasurer's office



## The Board's Ability to Pay

**Q: Is the Board doing its best to fairly compensate its employees, within its ability to pay?**

A: The Ohio Department of Education ranks Louisville as the *22nd highest in Ohio, out of 608 districts, in the percentage of its budget it pays its employees for salary and benefits*. The ODE report shows that, in fiscal year 2015, Louisville spent 84.58% of its total budget from all funds for employee salary and benefits. That is 9.45% above the statewide average of 75.13%. For fiscal year 2016, it is now 83% for the district's general fund. These numbers show that the Board has given the employees a larger part of the available dollars than most other districts in the state.

**Q: How does Louisville compare to other Stark County districts in the amount given to employees for salary and benefits?**

A: At 83% in fiscal 2016, Louisville ranks *second highest of the 18 districts in the amount it paid to its employees*. The only district higher is North Canton at 84.10%. The lowest district is Sandy Valley at 70.82%.

**Q: What does the Board have left to pay for all other expenses of the district?**

A: *Only 17% of the district's revenues are left to pay for all other expenses*. That includes utilities, internet, textbooks, supplies, fuel, liability insurance, technology, materials, etc.

**Q: How much does Louisville receive, including property taxes and state aid, to spend on its students' education?**

A: ODE ranks Louisville *23rd lowest in the state, out of 608 districts, with \$9,722 per pupil revenue it has to spend*. The highest in the state is \$25,199 per pupil.

**Q: How does Louisville compare with other districts in the amount they spend, per pupil?**

A: Louisville ranks the *43rd lowest* out of 608 districts in the State of Ohio in terms of the amount it spends per pupil.

**Q: What has the Board done to secure adequate revenue to operate the district?**

A: In 2013, after three attempts, the residents approved a new operating levy. The Board promised that it would not ask for new revenue for five years.

**Q: What has the Board done to cut expenditures?**

A: The Board has not replaced some positions vacated by retirements and resignations. In addition, by participating in a large insurance consortium, it has been able to give a quality insurance plan at reasonable rates to its employees.

**Q: Based on the Board's proposal, what is the impact on the district's five year forecast?**

A.: Without additional revenue or cuts, beginning in 2018, the district will be *spending \$526,000 more than it receives* in revenue. That is with the current raises offered to the employees. By 2020, that number increases.