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**Issue 7  
Parma Schools 4.5 Mill Levy**

**PRIORITY RESTORING PROGRAMS AND PRIDE  
BACK TO PARMA CITY SCHOOLS**

<b>Strong Fiscal Responsibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finances independently verified by outside experts including Ohio Department of Education and Public Finance Resources</li> <li>Save \$3.6 million/year in cash reserves</li> </ul>
<b>Promote Academic Achievement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cap elementary class sizes at 25</li> <li>Return "wheel" courses at the middle schools, providing more classes – not study halls</li> <li>Add instructional coaches and reading specialists to provide higher quality education for students</li> <li>Expansion and additions to STEM Education, Career Tech and First Step Preschool programs</li> </ul>
<b>Protect Social/Emotional Health of Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add a school counselor at middle schools to provide more one-on-one guidance</li> <li>Add home liaisons to better assist students and families at home</li> <li>Reduce pay-to-play fees for extracurricular programs, more positive opportunities after school</li> </ul>
<b>Increase Graduation Rate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restore learning labs at high schools, helping students get back on track</li> <li>Return of the PASS program to provide additional opportunities for students to earn their diploma</li> </ul>



*Issue 7 will ensure our schools provide the kind of education our residents expect, and give our students opportunities for a bright future. Our district heard voters, cut back the levy request to the bare minimum, and made sure our taxpayers see value from their investment.*

**To get the information you need about Issue 7 and how the district will prioritize money to restore key programs, visit [www.parmacityschools.org/levy](http://www.parmacityschools.org/levy).**

FALL 2018

**THE PARMA CITY SCHOOLS  
MONITOR**



Charles Smialek, Ph.D.  
PCSD Superintendent

**Issue 7 Builds Stronger Schools, Stronger Communities**

Hello Parma! I have truly enjoyed my first few months as your Superintendent. I am extremely impressed by the social fabric of our school district.

I am constantly meeting people whose ties to our schools span generations. The deep, lasting commitment that so many of you have made to our communities affirms my belief that we can work together to strengthen the education and opportunities we provide to our students. I am thrilled to be here!

We have set three district goals as pillars upon which to focus our efforts:

1. We will practice fiscal responsibility.
2. We will improve student achievement.
3. We will increase our transparency throughout our communities.

Our instructional and operational departments lead every meeting with these goals and we will continually chart our progress toward achieving them.

You will note that we have included as our first goal the importance of practicing fiscal responsibility. As I met with families and residents at Town Hall Meetings this summer, financial considerations emerged as their largest concerns.

Last spring, one of the first steps I took upon securing this job was to ensure the accuracy of our five-year forecast. We worked with the Ohio Department of

*"Issue 7 is a 4.5 mill, ten-year emergency operating levy that will help us to restore our district to the level of excellence that you, rightfully, expect."*

Education (ODE), Ohio Auditor of State and an independent firm, Public Finance Resources (PFR), to verify that our accounting systems are sound and that the five-year forecast we released last spring is accurate. We have taken aggressive steps to continue to operate

in a fiscally responsible manner, including reducing spending and continuing to work with ODE and PFR to provide independent verification of our numbers.

We have also developed an important proposal for our communities to consider as Election Day approaches. Issue 7 is a 4.5 mill, ten-year emergency operating levy that will help us to restore our district to the level of excellence that you, rightfully, expect. We have very clearly outlined our projected plans for spending the increased revenue that passage of the levy would bring. These plans align with our district goals. Our entire proposal is available on our website at: [parmacityschools.org/levy](http://parmacityschools.org/levy).

- Highlights include:**
- Elementary Schools:**
- Increase preschool offerings
  - Increase resources to help students learn to read
  - Reduce class size to 25 students per classroom instead of the current 28

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**ISSUE 7  
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**How do I know that the Schools are spending money wisely?**  
When Superintendent Charles Smialek, Ph.D. was chosen to lead Parma City Schools, he immediately directed the administration to analyze and verify the district's finances. The new treasurer worked with Public Finance Resources to independently verify the five-year forecast and to ensure that the district has strong oversight and understanding of its finances. Smialek is committed to ensuring that district finances are discussed and shared in an open and transparent way.

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**Superintendent  
Town Hall Meetings  
Scheduled for 2018-2019**

To increase communication among families, staff and the community, PCSD Superintendent Charles Smialek, Ph. D. is hosting five Town Hall Meetings throughout the year in Parma, Parma Heights and Seven Hills.

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# PCSD Celebrates Second Opening Kick-Off in 2018



For the second straight year, the Parma City School District invited the three communities to celebrate the beginning of the school year at the 2018-2019 PCSD Opening Kick-Off. The event, held on Saturday, August 18, was a celebration of the students, staff and programs that make up the second largest school district in Cuyahoga County.

"We have so many opportunities and there is so much pride in this school district," Superintendent Dr. Charles Smialek explained. "It's important for people to come out and see that. It's important for people to come out and see what is available to their kids, what our schools actually do and what they provide."

The event began with PCSD athletic teams from both the high school and middle school levels practicing on the turf at Byers Field. Various teams would continue to practice throughout the day.

The community resource fair featured numerous tables with activities, information and giveaways for all attendees. All 15 PCSD school buildings were represented along with PCSD Board of Education members and administration.

At the north end of the facility, Career and Technical Education students and faculty were on hand to highlight their excellent programs and services. Children could get their faces painted with Visual Communications students, learn more about dental health with the Tooth Fairy at Dental Technology or check out a restored vehicle at the Auto Collision table.

At the south end of the facility, the Drive For Your Students fundraiser took place. Thanks to the generosity of Barry Axelrod Buick GMC, anyone over the age of 21 could test drive a new Buick or GMC. For each completed test drive, a donation was made to the Parma City Schools.

"This was a great event and we're thrilled to help the community out," Barry Axelrod explained. "We've been in this community now for 39 years and it's important to us to give back to the community."

"We have a great community partner in Barry Axelrod," Smialek added. "It's very generous that they have been able to donate as much as they have."

The strength of our school district is largely responsible for our communities' reputations. Once again, we need to be the system that has created such a strong sense of pride in so many generations of students and residents. This levy helps to, again, meet this challenge!

Thank you for welcoming me and my family into these proud communities. If I have not yet met you, I look forward to doing so!

Please remember to vote this November. Early voting begins October 10. Election Day is Tuesday, November 6, 2018.

## Stronger Schools, Stronger Communities

*continued from page 1*

- Provide additional mental health resources by increasing the number of home liaisons
- Increase Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programming

### Middle Schools:

- Reinstitute courses at the middle school level to eliminate the need for 84 minutes of study hall in students' schedules
- Increase STEM programming

### High Schools:

- Increase Career and Technical Education offerings
- Reinstitute alternative pathways to graduation for at-risk students
- Reduce pay-to-play

## Alumni Spotlight:



**Zahraa Alribeawi '18**  
Parma Senior High School

### College and Major:

John Carroll University, Pre-Law Political Science major with a concentration in Global Studies and Law & Society. Also a minor in French.

### Career Goal:

To become a lawyer as I work toward becoming an international ambassador.

### Favorite PCSD Teachers:

Dr. Bruce Saban and Jared Plasterer, Parma Senior High School

### Favorite School Memory:

I will always cherish every moment I spent playing piano at the school, whether it was for choir warmups or for jazz band or just to mess around before marching band started in the morning. The music that I played and listened to in Parma High will always have a distinguished sound to my ears and a different buzz in my heart.

### How PCSD Prepared You For The Future:

By providing the opportunity and flexibility to work closely with advisors that assisted greatly in choosing the colleges and pushed hard to look into scholarships and opportunities that would benefit me. I was also very fortunate to have wonderful teachers. They knew exactly what buttons to push in me to challenge me and get me out of my comfort zone to find what is best for me and my future.

### What PCSD Means To You:

My time at PSH was a blast. Always. Whether it was to be involved in our wonderful music programs, or to work with our GearUp advisor, Cathy Graham, trying to save money for college, or even to just have deep talks after school with some of the teachers I had. I'm very fortunate for the education I received and I will always be grateful for it.

### Favorite TV Show: "Scandal"

### Favorite Book: Currently, "The Alchemist"

### Favorite Foods:

Pickles and Watermelon, separately, not eaten together.

### Hobbies:

Currently balancing 2 part-time jobs and going to school, my free time is most likely spent either with friends, playing with my birds, or grabbing an instrument to let off steam and relax.

## Issue 7 Frequently Asked Questions *continued from page 1*

### How did the district get to this point financially?

Parma City Schools has not passed a new money levy since 2011. Since 2011, we have lost \$71 million in state funding to charter schools. Starting in 2014, district expenses outweighed revenues and since 2016, that deficit meant the Ohio Department of Education placed our district in "fiscal caution".

After several levy failures over the last few years, the Board of Education was mandated to create two fiscal recovery plans. These plans made swift and deep cuts to the district despite the detrimental effect on the quality of education. Cuts made included increasing class size ratio to 28:1 (one of the highest in our region), reducing teachers and classified staff, reducing technology available to students, and cutting insurance benefits. These cuts mean the district is operating in the black, but the slashed educational offerings hurt our kids. Simply put, the district had to eliminate educational programs to balance the budget.

Issue 7 will define the future of our district. The district wants to restore class sizes to appropriate levels and needs to provide student supports and educationally-sound resources for our children to succeed. Cuts have taken a deep toll on

the quality of programs we offer. Due to these reductions in programming, we are in danger of becoming a less-than-desirable district – something that hurts our communities and our home values.

### Was there "missing money" or "found money" in the last several years?

There was no "missing money" discovered in 2016. There was a clerical error that was found by community members and a thorough investigation ensued. It was found that since the 2016-2017 budget had already been approved by the Board, the variance had no effect on the overall budget. Corrections were made to the forecast and the Treasurer who served during this time is no longer employed by the district.

There was no additional money "found" in May 2018. The district updated its five-year forecast, as required by law, and replaced assumptions with actual costs. The update included significant reduction in expenditures from the cuts, and revenue supplemented by one-time enhancements like Medicaid reimbursements, tuition payments and property tax settlements.

The result is a \$5.4 million carryover projected for 2018 – less than 4% of our overall budget. This carryover would operate the district for 14 days and does not bring the district out of fiscal caution.

### My property value just changed. Why do you need an additional levy?

Ohio House Bill 920 largely prevents schools from collecting more money from voted levies as property values rise. An increase in property values does not proportionally equate to additional tax revenue for the district.

### When was the last new money levy passed?

We have not passed a "new money" levy since 2011.

### Why don't you consolidate schools if you want to save money?

Our district is committed to analyzing our facilities in a meaningful way. We are in the process of analyzing our overall footprint with local and state experts. We are committed to getting this right and as such, the Master Planning process will not conclude for at least 12 to 18 months. What we know is that our children cannot wait another two years to have opportunities and to be prepared for their futures.

### What will the levy cost?

The levy will cost the owner of a \$100,000 home \$13.12 per month in property taxes.

## Welcome New Principals



**Rachel Urban**  
Normandy High School



**Andy Suttell**  
Shiloh Middle School

## TOWN HALL MEETINGS *continued from page 1*

For residents who cannot attend the Town Hall Meetings in person, the district will hold five Facebook Live Town Hall events online. Residents can log on and ask Dr. Smialek questions and watch the event on their computer or mobile device.

For more information about the Town Hall meetings, visit [www.parmacityschools.org/superintendent](http://www.parmacityschools.org/superintendent)

### TOWN HALL MEETING DATES:

All Town Hall Meetings are scheduled from 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM

**OCTOBER 3, 2018**  
at Parma-Snow Branch Library

**OCTOBER 23, 2018**  
at Seven Hills Recreation Center

**DECEMBER 5, 2018**  
at Parma Branch Library

**MARCH 6, 2019**  
at Parma Hts. Branch Library

**MAY 1, 2019**  
at Parma-Snow Branch Library

### FACEBOOK LIVE TOWN HALL MEETINGS:

All Facebook Live Town Hall Meetings are scheduled from 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM

**OCTOBER 4, 2018**

**OCTOBER 24, 2018**

**DECEMBER 6, 2018**

**MARCH 7, 2019**

**MAY 2, 2019**



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