

THE PARMA CITY SCHOOLS MONITOR



Charles Smialek, Ph.D.
PCSD Superintendent

Issue 3 - Not a New Tax

This May, the Parma City School District will have on the ballot a request to renew an operating levy of 4.2 mills. **This renewal is NOT a new tax and will NOT cost taxpayers ANY additional money.** The levy that we have placed on the ballot for renewal generates approximately \$9.2 million per year for our district, and costs the owner of a \$100,000 home \$10.72 per month.

Passage of Issue 3 will keep these amounts the same, yielding no increase in revenue nor costing homeowners any further expense.

Operating funds are used to support our general fund, which pays for the day-to-day operations of our school district. Specifically, expenditures from our general fund breakdown this way:

Classroom Instruction	66%
Support Services (Speech Therapists, Psychologists, Counselors, Administrators, Curriculum Materials, Transportation, Maintenance, Utilities, etc.)	31%
Other (Extra-curriculars, Architecture/Engineering Services, etc.)	3%
Total	100%

We have made much progress this year toward implementing our three goals to improve our school district. These are the highlights of our efforts:

Practice Fiscal Responsibility

We are reducing spending on administrative personnel costs at Central Office by approximately \$920,000 from this current school year to next. This reduction will allow us to dedicate these funds to school-based resources, including Family Liaisons, Deans of Students, and the Parma Alternative Secondary School, a program that helps non-traditional students graduate.

Increase Student Achievement

On the 2018 Ohio State Report Card, we improved our “Gap Closing” grade, which shows how well our schools are meeting performance expectations for vulnerable populations of students. This “Gap Closing” grade improved from an “F” last year to a “B” this year. Our performance index increased from 81.2 in 2016 to 83.9 in 2018, indicating that our students are performing better on state tests.

Our four-year graduation rate also increased from 85.5% in 2016 to 88.1% in 2018, indicating that more of our students are graduating on time. Four of our schools earned overall grades of “B”: Dentzler Elementary, Green Valley Elementary, Ridge-Brook Elementary and Hillside Middle School.

We also provide outstanding opportunities for students to gain credit toward college. 14.6% of our students, up from 6.6% last year, secured a score of “3” or higher on an Advanced Placement Exam, translating into course credit at most colleges and universities. 15.8% of our students, up from 5.4% last year, earned college credit during their high school careers through our College Credit Plus offerings, saving their families thousands of dollars in tuition.

Finally, our Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs continue to be a true asset for our students. Our state report card indicates that 1,656 students participated in some form of career education. Of these, 65% earned a credential that will help them begin a career after graduation. Our CTE pathways earned a “B” in post-program outcomes as 97.4% of recent graduates began a job, enrolled in college courses, or enlisted with the military after leaving our district.

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Community Meetings



Master Planning For Strategic Consolidation:

Saturday, March 30, 10:00 AM
at Parma Heights Branch Library

Monday, April 8, 6:30 PM
at Normandy High School

Monday, April 29, 6:30 PM
at Parma Senior High School

Monday, May 13, 6:30 PM
at Valley Forge High School

Saturday, May 18, 1:30 PM
at Parma-Snow Branch Library

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ALICE® Training Institute Keeps Buildings and Staff Prepared

Keeping students safe in classrooms and school buildings has always been a top priority for the district. This school year, the district has taken a different approach to school safety than in years past, with the adoption of the highly successful ALICE Training Institute program.

ALICE, an acronym for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter and Evacuate, is a proactive response initiative to handle violent threats in public places, like school buildings. According to their website at www.alicetraining.com, ALICE is a nationwide program that has been introduced in all 50 states, with over one million individuals trained.

ALICE training is not necessarily centered around educational institutions. 4,200 K-12 school districts nationwide have completed the training, along with 950 higher education institutions. Police departments, businesses, government agencies, houses of worship, healthcare facilities and even individuals and families have all received this safety training.

"Our adoption of ALICE represents our emphasis on keeping students as safe as possible through the use of research based strategies," Superintendent Charles Smialek, Ph.D., explained. "It's a horrible reality that we even have to consider such concepts of 'active shooters' in schools. But, adopting ALICE will help us to be as prepared as possible in the event of an incident."

"Our number one job is actually keeping our students and our staff safe in our schools," Bill Greene, Parma City School District Chief Operating Officer said. "ALICE is on the forefront there. It's been very well received by the staff and very well received by the local law enforcement that we have been working with. It's the way to go now."

One of the previous models for school districts to respond to a threat was with a building lockdown, as endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education in 2007. However, in the wake of tragedies like Sandy Hook and Virginia Tech, the Department of Education spent considerable resources to research alternatives. In 2013, the US Department of Education updated their guidance on safety protocols.

One of the most important aspects of ALICE is the ability to provide options for individuals who may be faced with an aggressive intruder or act of violence. While no single response method will fit an active shooter situation or a threat of violence, ALICE provides key information and resources to those who may find themselves in harms way.

"Don't get us wrong, lockdown is still a vital component of ALICE," Greene continued. "But it's lockdown in an extra way. If you have belts, or filing cabinets or desks, you want to do everything you can so you can buy some time until the local police get there."

Parma City School District's ALICE training is funded through a \$57,000 grant provided by the Ohio Attorney General's Office. On November 6, 2018, PCSD staff members from throughout the district received

initial training on ALICE during an in-service day.

In mid-January, 50 staff members from each building received in-depth training on the program. The goal

is to have these 50 individuals become trainers, to then train all staff members throughout the district. On March 15, staff members engaged in a 45 minute online training session and participated in drills.

"They (staff) liked the real-life scenarios," Tiffany Stropko, assistant director of Human Resources said. "I think they liked that they are going to be empowered to do something. I also think they liked to talk through the different scenarios...ALICE provides answers to some questions as opposed to just hiding in a room."

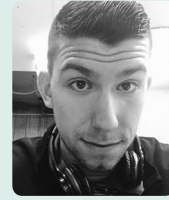
An obvious component of ALICE is training students. With money left over from the initial grant, which is estimated to be approximately \$12,000, the district will purchase educational materials for students to learn more. One example given on the ALICE website is an age-appropriate book entitled "I'm Not Scared, I'm Prepared", a book highlighting how students can protect themselves.

On the path to

ALICE®

Organization Certification

Alumni Spotlight:



Kyle Cornell '12
Parma Senior High School

Current career/position:

News Anchor/Reporter at WTAM 1100

How did your experiences at Parma City School District help you to achieve success in your career today?

My experiences in the Radio and Television program really catapulted me into the media industry. Having learned many of the basics and given a platform to present them, the program had a major impact on me.

What is your favorite school memory growing up?

I would say making district semifinals on the varsity tennis team my senior year. It was the first time Parma had a boys tennis team in a while, and to represent the school and get as far as we did in that tournament was something really special. It was the only time I played a varsity sport at school.

Who was your favorite teacher and how did they inspire you?

Easy choice, David Drees. If you are looking for someone who has done a lot in this field, to be able to get your feet on the ground and teach you how to crawl, walk, and one day run, he's the guy. He is definitely someone who can teach and mold younger people to take this industry seriously, but also have fun in the process.

Looking back to your school years, what is one thing you learned that has stayed with you throughout the years?

That good work and hard work can put you in spots you never would have thought you'd be in. When I was 16, I never thought I'd be interviewing LeBron James for Metro Networks after a Christmas Day game against Golden State, or that I'd be working with Hall of Famers at WTAM.

What does PCSD mean to you?

It was where I went to school from first grade all throughout high school. Good times and bad, it's where I went and will always feel like home.

Why are you Parma Proud?

Parma is my hometown. It's where I'm from. Most of my family still lives here. I feel one day soon my fiancée and I will end up buying a house in Parma. Very simply, it's home.

“ISSUE 3” FROM PAGE 1

Improve Transparency in our Communities

We have worked to consistently engage our communities and ensure that we have open dialogue with our residents. We hold Town Hall Meetings at local libraries and “Facebook Live” events at least once per month, to reach higher numbers of our families and neighbors. We are in the midst of 12 “Master Planning for Strategic Consolidation” sessions that will result in the development of a plan to reduce the number of schools we operate.

We continue to increase our social media presence resulting in an 11% gain in our Facebook followers since last year, a forum that over 2,900 parents and residents visit per day.

We will continue to improve in all three of our goal areas, but we depend on the support of our communities. We have already reduced operating expenses by \$23 million over the last three years. Failure to renew this operating levy would result in devastating cuts to our personnel, creating even larger class sizes and further reducing the amount of opportunities that we are able to offer.

Strong schools create strong communities. Issue 3 is **NOT a new tax and will cost taxpayers NO additional money.**



Want More?

Get Parma City School District's newsletter every week and every month!

Sign up to receive the district's weekly e-newsletter, right to your email box at

www.parmacityschools.org/monitor

Pick up a printed Monthly Monitor today at one of the following locations:

- Parma City Hall
- Parma Heights City Hall
- Seven Hills City Hall
- Parma Branch Library
- Parma-Snow Library
- Parma Heights Library
- Seven Hills Recreation Center
- Parma Area Chamber of Commerce
- Donna Smallwood Activity Center
- PCSD Administration Building

WHAT'S UP

APR 19: Good Friday - No School

APR 22: Easter Monday - No School

MAY 4:..... Normandy Prom
6:30 PM – 11:00 PM

MAY 7:..... Election Day - No School

MAY 10:..... Parma High Prom
6:30 PM – 11:30 PM

MAY 17:..... Valley Forge Prom
6:30 PM – 11:00 PM

MAY 26:..... Commencements at Cleveland State University Wolstein Center
Normandy: 12:30 PM
Valley Forge: 3:30 PM
Parma: 7:00 PM

MAY 27:..... Memorial Day - No School

MAY 30:..... Last Day of School for Students



The Valley Forge Patriot Marching Band played their hearts out at the 2018 PCSD Opening Kick-Off. The 2019 PCSD Opening Kick-Off, free and open to the public, will be held on Saturday, August 17 at Byers Field and will highlight PCSD programs, students and staff.

AUG 17:..... 3rd Annual PCSD Opening Kick-Off at Byers Field

AUG 21:..... First Day of School for Students

Parma Council of PTAs Annual Geranium Sale Begins March 25

Spring is just around the corner and that means the annual Parma Council of PTAs (PCPTA) Geranium Sale is almost here!

This Parma institution has been going strong for 67 years and continues to support high school seniors in the Parma City School District.

PCPTAs Geranium Scholarships are for \$1,200 and will be given to one student in each high school as well as one Career Tech student and one Special Education student. Winners will be notified at the annual Winner's Circle event on April 18, 2019.

The PCSD community's support throughout the years of the sale has been very generous, typically raising over \$5,000 each year.

The sale will run from March 25 through April 12 this year. Order forms will be available at every school building, the district Administration Center and online. All are welcome to place an order.

“Something new this year is instead of just the small selection of flowers that we have had in the past, we are going

to do all the offerings Dean's Greenhouse has, vegetables and plants,” Angela Revay, president of PCPTA, shared. “Also, by using Dean's, we will be fortunate enough to have the orders come in before Mother's Day.”

Gift cards are also available for purchase, and a percentage of the gift card sales will go back to the PCPTA Scholarship Fund.

“This is really an important sale to our community,” Revay said. “They look for it every year and they know they are helping to raise scholarship money for the high school seniors. They are getting beautiful flowers and giving back at the same time.”

More information about the Geranium Sale can be found at **www.parmacityschools.org/geraniums**.



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The Parma City School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities.

POSTAL CUSTOMER

ISSUE 3 - NOT A NEW TAX
May 7, 2019



DISTRICT GOALS

DISTRICT PROGRESS

<p>Practice Fiscal Responsibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reorganization plan reduces \$920,000 in administrative personnel costs at Central Office, shifting funds to school-based resources • PCSD has cut \$23 million from the operating budget over the last three years • Continuous oversight of finances from Ohio Department of Education and assistance from Public Finance Resources, an independent outside organization
<p>Increase Student Achievement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in Gap Closing grade on recent state report card from "F" to "B" • More students earning college credit through Advanced Placement and College Credit Plus courses • Four-year graduation rates increased for second consecutive year • Career and Technical students continue to excel, with 97% of recent graduates employed, enrolled in college or enlisted with the military
<p>Improve Transparency In Our Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular Town Hall meetings and Facebook Live events at least once per month, better connecting residents with the schools • Master Planning for Strategic Consolidation meetings provide information and public input opportunities as district develops future facilities plan

Parma City School District is committed to providing the best education for every student in our three communities.

Funds generated from Issue 3 will support important, high-quality educational opportunities and programs for students, helping them to succeed.