

NEWS RELEASE

December 16, 2009
Mariemont City Schools

Mariemont Board of Education Addresses Financing Operating and Facilities Needs

At the December 15 Mariemont Board of Education meeting, Mariemont School Superintendent Paul Imhoff and Treasurer Natalie Lucas presented a formal recommendation (attached) detailing a plan to fund the operating and facility needs of the district. This was followed by a report from the residents' Financial Advisory Board providing feedback and recommendations based upon the Treasurer and Superintendent developed plan.

The Superintendent and Treasurer's report recommended placing a combined operating/facilities financing request on the May 4, 2010 ballot. The first part of the request would consist of a 3.6 mill bond issue. The second portion would be for a continuing operating levy of 5.15 mills.

This bond issuance would finance the entire Sept 15th Board-adopted Facilities Master Plan, allowing the district to take advantage of historically low interest rates and construction costs and to attract lower bids with a multiple-site project.

The operating levy would finance continued operating expenses of the district.

The combination bond issue and operating levy will appear on the May ballot as a 5.29 mill bond issue and a 5.15 operating levy. The bond issue will be collected at 3.6 mills but must be placed on the ballot as a 5.29 mill bond issue due to state requirements concerning bond issue request language. However, actual collection affecting property owners would be based on a total increase of 8.75 mills. These additional monies would be collected beginning in 2011, with an estimated annual cost of \$268 per \$100,000 of tax valuation.

The Superintendent and Treasurer's recommendation was followed by a report from the Financial Advisory Board – a committee of district residents with finance backgrounds formed by the district to review, consider and report their assessment of the recommendation. The report was presented by co-chairs Scott Hamlin and Kim Baird.

While acknowledging the impossibility of predicting future economic factors with certainty, the advisory board felt the process and conclusions to be sound and responsible. They were able to draw on historical market trends to encourage the board to take advantage of current favorable financing rates and construction costs. Current rates could mean significant savings in implementing the plan as a whole instead of in separate phases. Specifically, the board recommended (should present market conditions hold) utilizing financing options provided through federal stimulus legislation to the fullest extent possible.

"Our first priority is to offer the best possible education for our students while being financially responsible to our communities," said Marie Huenefeld, Mariemont Board of Education president. "The thoroughness of the process and the invaluable input from our residents has been critical to developing our Master plan. We must take advantage of the unique opportunities currently available and provide the best education for our students now and in the future."

At their January 12 meeting, the Board of Education will take the first of two votes necessary to place this request on the May 4, 2010 ballot.