

# Kenston Takes First Step Putting PI Levy on November Ballot

May 18, 2023 by [Brian Doering](#) 

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The move to pass a resolution of necessity came after the board decided not to put the levy on the May ballot, believing an additional six-month wait would be beneficial.

“When we were having this discussion in the fall, we were looking at a permanent improvement levy for a continuing period of time,” Superintendent Steve Sayers said. “After we’ve had some further discussion with our administrative team over the last several weeks, we feel administratively that the more prudent way to move forward would be to propose a five-year, limited-term levy as compared to a continuing levy, which obviously continues for an indefinite period of time.”

Approximately 90% of the districts in Ohio have a permanent improvement levy and funds can be utilized for items such as school buses, repairs to roofs and parking lots, boilers, safety upgrades, classroom furniture, technology upgrades and improvements and wireless upgrades, which have a life span of five years or more, according to the district’s website.

“We very much want to be accountable to our taxpayers. We recognize that the district belongs to the community and belongs to our taxpayers. We want to be good stewards of the tax dollars that are entrusted to us,” Sayers said. “Should the community choose to support this permanent improvement levy, this would then give us five years where we could demonstrate and follow through on what it is that we want to do with these funds before seeking renewal of that levy five years down the road.”

Revenue from a permanent improvement levy cannot be used for salaries, benefits or the school district’s day-to-day operations.

Sayers said he has been asked by various people on why the district would ask for a permanent improvement levy, which would generate \$1.3 million, when the district is making things work by transferring \$575,500 from the general fund to the PI fund.

“The answer to that question is, frankly, we’re not really making it work with the \$575,000 that we’re transferring on an annual basis. Transportation alone — in order to stay on a current replacement cycle for school buses and vans — requires \$400,000 a year,” Sayers said. “That’s before we get into any kind of maintenance items, boiler work, roofs, parking lots, doors, windows, resurfacing of tennis courts, tracks or fencing repairs. All of those are PI type items.”

Sayers said the district currently does not have a cycle to replace items such as classroom desks, tables, chairs and cafeteria tables.

“Being able to build some type of a replacement cycle is one of the key reasons why we’re looking at a PI levy that would generate this \$1.3 million because that is truly what we need to maintain our buildings, take care of our maintenance and also make sure our bus fleet stays current and up-to-date, as well,” Sayers said.

Kenston is one of only 13% of school districts in Ohio that does not have a permanent improvement levy to protect the community's investment in school facilities.

“This is the resolution of necessity so we are declaring a need. Following the declaration, we will certify and seek the county auditor's certification on this. That certification will then help us prepare resolution number two,” Interim Treasurer Ryan Pendleton said. “We have some time to do that to make sure we dot our I's and cross our T's.”