

Chagrin Falls Alternative Finance Committee Results - December 2008

What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

You don't say in No. 6 what the "new school funding option" is or would be.

Would definitely need to know the income tax rate before I would consider voting for one. Would like to know what an income tax would cost me in comparison to what a property tax increase would be for my property to raise a specific amount of money for the school district.

With 85% going to teachers salary can we lower that?

Will we ever have a pool for our swim team?

Why is the current system not working?

Which of the options in #5 move us closest to my suggestion in #7 and postpone future tax increase requests.

Whether the board and administration want to admit it or not, they are now in the business of implementing and maintaining social / lifestyle opportunities for the students. How about sticking to education. They continue to go to the well, aka our pockets to fund unneeded infrastructure, which results in a lifetime of maintenance issues and increased staffing, that the community then gets guilted into voting for levies to keep those staff in place. I have lived in this community for 43 years and until there is a significant change in mindset of the school district financially and responsibility wise, I will continue to vote no on anything they put on the ballot. However, If you promise to name the new visitor bathrooms in honor of David Axner, I may consider voting in favor of some option.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

Where the money comes from, and if our schools will get more money or less.

Where have alternative funding options been used and how effective have they been in other areas?

When are we going to get a pool?

What other options there are. How much funding each option is expected to raise. The funding needs of the school, present and projected. Examples of the costs of each option for various property value levels and earned income.

What is Gov. Strickland's plan?

What do other school districts similar to ours do?

what do other jurisdictions inside & outside of Ohio do?

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

What are the alternative options, and how will they affect residents?

We would not support additional funding in the next levy cycle-try instead to look more closely at how the money we just voted for the district is being spent.

We will not be supporting any future funding requests

We have a city income tax. A 4th income tax is not accepted. No new taxes. We have highest property taxes in Geauga.

We could use info on budget overruns and waste. The district should be financially cleaned up and the schools should be forced to live within budget!

We cannot continue to increase teacher salaries/benefits at a rate greater than similar increases (decreases!) are happening in the broader community - taxes cannot continue to be increased to fund this cost -

We can't keep asking for more money.

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We, as retired property owners would welcome some alternative solution for school funding-some tax on income combined with a permanent improvement levy could be helpful.

Viewing a line item budget of school expenses

Unfortunately, I am very unhappy with my experience at Gurney and will not support additional funding unless certain administrative changes are made. Our taxes are already too high for the quality of education our elementary students receive. It's interesting to note that many children who move here from other districts are ahead of our Chagrin elementary school students. I've always supported levies, etc., in the past, but will not do so until I can see the value of paying a premium for our local school district.

Transparent cost analyses of options. Ex. \$100K wage earner in \$400K appraised home. Earned income tax revenue versus traditional prop tax appraisal or some combo. Bottom line: Whether district tinkers with funding options or not, residents are still going to wind up financing the schools.

Transparency of expense management within the district. Understanding of best practice sharing across the district - how are other communities addressing it?

To see the outline of such options

To accurately see where the money is being spent

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This community is so wealthy, I can't believe this is an issue. The Intermediate school is creepy and the rec center is pathetic. when our school makes improvements, they already have the cash.

The Town-Hall type forum at the PAC was very helpful the last time around, and I'd hope they'd do it again for something this significant

The specific tax amounts to an individual with comparisons of the current taxes to school to what is being proposed and the overall dollar amount to be raised.

The salesmanship of the schools needs are always helpful in guiding my and the community's decision making.

The relevant calculations in any scenario

The reasons funding is being sought at time.

The facts along with cost savings to district.

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The direct cost to each individual in the district.

The bottomline is that the cost of educating a child is not dependent upon the size/value of the home they live in. All citizens are required to support the local schools - this is our state constitution. Who pays what portion is purely politics. Why is there not a fixed cost per household/apartment that is the school tax?

the amount of time that the school could actually postpone future tax increase requests if they got different funding

the amount of money that a person would typically pay with the funding choice.

Thank you for working so hard to research this and provide us with alternatives. We will support taxes for the schools no matter what type they are.

Tax tables for income tax levy would be helpful. More information is needed!

Suggestion: ELIMINATE unnecessary busing!

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

Statement of revenue & expenses over past 5 years

Specifics on how the tax is calculated so I could see how it would affect our household.

Specifics and how it would affect me personally.

specifically used for what? more sports facilities instead of academic or special needs?

Specific info on earned income tax--what percentage? How would the "roll back" be determined?

specific examples. Dollar amounts and/or tax rates

Simple + concise explanation and actual costs as compared to present system. Perhaps the best longterm solution would require state legislation revamping how public schools are funded. NO to ANY federalization proposals.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

Show it is necessary for the BASICS -- teachers and books. Forget luxury items, forget fancy classes, get and keep the basics. The economy is hard enough without paying 3/4 of my taxes to one school, the rest supporting everything else (village, roads, police, library, mental health, senior services).

Sensitivity analysis based on varying scenarios.

Review outline of CF Schools budget, review needs and proposed plans in order to make determination i.e. what money is coming in, where is it going, where is it allocated to, what areas could be streamlined, what areas need to be expanded

Responded "very unlikely" to several stmts. because we believe in accountability. Permanent means minimal public re-visiting of policies & needs. We support maintaining, enhancement & improvement of facilities . . . but not with a permanent blank check.

rates, longevity, specific district needs, how other districts will be funded in order to compete with what you call "successful" school districts

rated to obtain these bonds

Questions all assume that the funding need is a given - much more likely to be supportive of different funding alternatives once comfortable that thorough evaluation of all spending has been accomplished. Whatever funding option chosen needs to be shared fairly by all entities likely to benefit from a strong school district.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

Pros and cons; examples of where it's been used and how successful or unsuccessful

projections on cost

Projection for future needs.

Precisely what NECESSARY expenditures would be needed. Precisely what results are obtained, e.g., how many graduates are accepted into top tier universities?

Plenty

Planned building improvements and new construction.

PI levy - used for facility maintenance exclusively or also artificial turf, auditoriums, etc

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

Percentage amount for given income brackets

People who own property and are over 80 years old should be exempt from new levies.

Outline spending on students by gender.

options for rates of tax and mils, building maintenance needs and options

Open-Ended Response

Ongoing information, education

One nice aspect of the current levy system with multi-year approval cycles is that it keeps schools accountable since they know support is not automatically baked in. As painful as this process is, the executives of the Chagrin schools must demonstrate frugality and balance.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

None. I am sick to death of watching my taxes increase year after year. I will not support future tax increases.

None, even though it was inadequately explained

none - can see the waste

None

None!

None

none

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

Need to understand tradeoffs of each option. How much revenue is projected to provide the schools versus how much tax does it cost me as a resident.

Need information & proof that all operating expenses are as efficate as possible. Example: busing in all grades, utilities, maintance of buildings etc Why can't our families contribute for sports programs, etc.? Have fundraisers?

My property taxes have more than doubled since I moved here. I need better information on where that money goes - how much to schools and how much elsewhere. It seems that no matter what else happens, my property taxes go up.

Most important is - "What is the money for?" Currently on dads club, boosters and CF ed foundation and the biggest problem with trying to raise large dollar amounts is - what is the money for?

More specific details on exactly how they would work.

More specific details. More research on other states besides Ohio. We need a revolution in school funding. fix the system or the kids stay home out of school. Desperate times call for desperate measures!

More open communication, transparency state of Ohio funding to the CF schools for all the programs the state has mandated.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

More kids, more tax. Voucher program giving resident kids an option to attend private schools.

More information on what the alternative funding options are under OH state law

More information on permanent improvement levy. Would bond issues still be needed?

More frequent communication . . . with "Town Meeting" format

More detailed info on line item spending

More detail than the information provided on explaining how these different funding options work. The text provided is too general. Also, information from the board on how it is managing its finances, controlling costs where needed and funding value added activities. Understanding what the process is for funding approval for projects and expense within the district.

Long range plans. We cannot depend on tax for school funding. House values are decreasing, business are leaving and people are losing jobs.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

line by line audit to let taxpayers know that the funds are being used appropriately & not wasted

Likelihood of success analysis.

It would be helpful to be well-informed in order to spread the word clearly and let people know the importance of school funding, whatever form it may take. I think people without kids in school are the ones who obviously are less likely to support it. Those are the individuals who need clear explanation of the alternatives and methods of taxation.

Is CF different than other schools in that it is "exempted?" What does that mean? What is the difference between CF and, say, Kenston in how the state finances schools?

Information to know how it would affect MY tax obligation. That includes how much a new tax would cost me and what reduction to property tax there would be. I would want to know the difference between what I pay now and what I would pay if different funding is used.

Information that approaches and processes are being overhauled and this "protectionism" behavior of "doing this because we've always done it that way and have had great success with it" gets thrown out the window. In business you make your greatest changes and improvements during your best and most profitable times. This ensures continual process improvements and always being ahead of competition. Heaven knows this next generation is already behind the curve as evidenced by the US ranking versus the world on education.

If you make any additional cuts in busing for private schools I will definitely vote against ALL future levys. (*I might also decide to run for school board on an antitax platform.) This is the only service I get for my tax money. The Chagrin Schools failed to provide a good education for my children so we had no option but private schools.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

If two or more alternatives raise the same total revenue for the school system, I would like to see an analysis of who pays more and who pays less. This evaluation of fairness is the key.

If the district makes an attempt to decrease the number of administrators and/or salaries, along with a decrease or no increase in teacher salaries, this would be a good faith effort on the board's part to stretch the community's dollar. The fact of the matter is, take this teaching staff and place it in almost any other district, one would have mediocre student results. It is not the "top-notch" staff we have been led to believe.

If teachers healthcare benefits are paid at 100% (not sure), & the majority of other professionals pay a significant contribution to their healthcare...this needs looked at. Although this is not the pocket you're speaking of..it's the same pair of pants.

If, for instance, the earned income tax were in place, would the four year levy cycle still be in place? Also, what is the timetable and \$ involved with property tax rollback?

I would want to know what all the benefits and disadvantages are to each option

I would want to know how the tax affects different groups of taxpayers. What communities have successfully done this? Are we ensured that we are paying as we go? Will we stay out of debt?

I would want to know how it would affect senior citizens. I would also want to know how sustainable the funding source would be over time.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

I would want specific information as to where the money would exactly be going and who would benefit.

I would want more information about how the money CFS has now is used. I think there should be OPEN ACCESS to the funding decisions made by the school board/schools. I would like to know what the specific priorities of the district are. The more information-the better! I think CFS needs to be involved in area-wide statewide efforts to reform school funding. The people of Chagrin Falls need to become invested in school funding reform.

I would want examples of how the taxes would be computed. Example: tax per \$100,000 of property value or tax per \$25,000 income.

I would not support any option except a property tax levy where I can vote either yes or no -

I would need to see district general budget info by category: Bldg./Grounds Staff: Teaching & Admin. Extra curriculars: Sports & Educational

I would need to know exactly how it impacts my tax burden (an ability to calculate the difference). I think the statement about taxes not increasing with the cost of living is very misleading. In cuyahoga county, they reassess our property values on a regular basis and it always is a significant increase. I am sure that with the property values decreasing in this struggling economy, we will not see a decrease in our property taxes. In fact, they will probably not reassess us on the current cycle because they do not want to decrease our property values even though home equity lines of credit are being slashed at an alarming rate. Coming from the private school sector, I believe there are many ways to cut costs. In this economy, we are all having to tighten our belts. One way, is to stop all busing for students that live within a mile radius of the intermediate and the high school. Also, tack on an additional

I would need a lot more information regarding alternate funding options, for I am not very knowledgeable about the alternatives and their impact on the schools and my personal taxes.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

I would like to see the net expenses it would cost a home owner versus income tax before I would support a levy. For example median home value versus median income and how each type of levy would cost now and projected over 5 to 10 years

I would like to see how the above effect various income levels versus what we have now -- including those on fixed incomes. I also think the board needs to make a concerted effort to talk with the public in plain language -- try to boil down what you mean as simply as possible and be as specific as possible without resorting to the language of education administrators and school boards -- even though you talk it all the time, the general public is not familiar with many of the terms you use.

I would like to see a break down of our taxes and the different operating and building levies, etc that are in effect. what do we receive from the state, how that impacts our funding. I need to see examples what the different tax programs would look like compared to what is in place now. I did not find the explanations clear enough. For example: Your income is \$xxxx, your house value is this \$yyyy. This is how these different funding packages increase your taxes.

I would like to know whether or not it is possible to entirely fund schools based upon an income tax or a sales tax. If it is not possible, it should be. Everyone is responsible for funding our schools - not just property owners.

i would like to know what we can do at the state level to get better funding.

I would like more info, than generalized expenses; i.e. how many pupils per teacher in elementary, middle, high schools - how many "councelers", psychologists, per school. - other support staff. p.s. I believe 100% in education. I want it to be the best for every child.

I would like information about the instructors and the experience of the organization that would develop the curriculum.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

I would appreciate a written summary of all options being explored with opportunities to view side-by-side pros and cons of each option. Financial planning information and costs should be included in this summation.

I will support the school funding until my son graduates from Chagrin. From that point on I will be more critical on the funding options.

I want to see what Ted Strickland proposes to do on school funding in Ohio-so far-nothing.

I want to see a plan where everyone in the district participates, not just the property owners.

I think you should go thru the buget & cut back.

I think Chagrin Falls needs to be more fiscally responsible. We need to put the students first, by staffing the schools with teachers who are good role models. I think we have too many administrators. We do not need an Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent with a district our size. Maybe you could combine some jobs, Assistant Superintendent and Pupil Services could be the one and the same. I think we could reduce our Principal staff as well and have a traveling principal for K-6.

I realize you're caught with bad funding options, but unfortunately we're also in a bad economy. It's going to be tuff to get something passed. In a business, we make cuts before we run out of money. I would think the school may have to do the same. Since I have students in the school, I would love to think another levy could get passed, but I have my doubts. One option is that students pay for A/P classes, art, band, etc. I would not cut curriculum for any reason, but offer it with payment by the users. Teachers I think are also going to have to give something up, just like every other worker in this country right now.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

I own my condo in Chagrin Falls and have been retired for over 20 years. My wife and I have consistently supported all requests for funding as requested by the School Board. Why? Because the schools are top rated. Their ratings have in large measure have promoted increasing market values of local real estate. I do not need any additional information to make a decision. If necessary I would seek the advice of the Mayor.

I need to see more cost cutting measures from the schools. To me an additional operating levy seems inevitable - we built a performance center, now we need funds to operate it. I think the square footage per student needs to be significantly addressed.

I just ask that the information regarding the costs to taxpayers be clearly and simply stated so that everyone can understand how it will affect their bottom line.

I have lived here for 14 years and have supported many school levies. At this point, however, I would like to see the schools make meaningful reductions in costs rather than using scare tactics & high-profile job reductions as they did the last time a levy failed. In these economic difficulties, I have to reduce spending. So should the schools.

I do not trust you that paying any tax now to put off further tax increases. I also feel that we are constantly being asked for additional fees at school- class fees, book fees, class trip fees, retreat fees, instrument costs...The list goes on!!! There is no responsibility in what we are asked to pay for!

I do not think Senior Citizens should pay for schools.

I am unable to answer question 5 without a fuller explanation of each option and examples of each. I find question 5 extremely vague.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

I am very concerned that Cuyahoga County residents pay an unfair portion of the schools operating fund because of the disparity in the method that is used to assess property values between the two counties. I would like to see some data that shows the differences between how Geauga County Auditor assesses property value versus the Cuyahoga County Auditor.

I am fairly informed about the schools and their operation.

I am a strong supporter of the schools and would support any funding option as long as responsible spending continues.

How would you determine the Income Tax rate?

how this impacts my total taxes

How the revenue to the school district would change with a shift to an income tax levy rather than the current property tax levy.

How the actual numbers will affect us personally? What specific needs (esp. maintenance) do we have.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

How other states/communities fund schools. Sample calculations of one type of funding vs. another. Pros and cons of various funding options.

How much of a tax (or rather dollar amount of funding) does the school system need?

How much budget cutting has been accomplished.

How it is assessed to residents and whether it is tax deductible and how likely it is to continue with the rate of inflation

How can you increase taxes when Geauga County is losing hundreds of jobs, property values are falling and my wages have been at a standstill for the last 5 years.

Historical spending levels compared to projected needs; Historical revenue stream sources & rates compared to projected revenues; Justification for increased spending; Accountability structure Chagrin Valley residents value education & could be more supportive with more information.

Greater reduction allowance for seniors

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

Generally, I think people want to know how it will affect them, financially, and when will be the next time they will be asked for money.

- Full Accounting or Revenue of Expenditures - 3-5 Year Budget/Program Plan

For PI levy: what is levy for? For EI tax: what check would we have on school spending? (Automatic increases can cause unnecessary spending.) Before approving any funding, I would want some basis to believe that the money will be spent wisely.

Financial comparison to current method of funding.

Figure out ways to cut your expenses instead of raising taxes every year

- Factual Pros & Cons of various alternatives, including sources of data and policy positions. - How the school system competes with Private alternatives

Examples with numbers based on home values and earned income levels.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

Exactly how much it would cost me.

Every single detail, in writing.

Enough detailed data that supports current cost structures in place. This data would be used to show the taxpayers that monies are effectively being used today... or not. Many businesses are trimming back spend or minimally ensuring that there is no "fat" in their budget. This needs to be done at a detailed level and with open minds for change.

During these economic hard times, with no one sure of having a job tomorrow, the school needs to cut cost just like every organization. With taxes increasing, a less expensive suburb and sending my child to private school is becoming the preferred option.

don't understand question 7

Dollar amounts for each of the options.

Details on how it would work without raising our taxes. Cut out frills - how many schools have a state fo the arts performing arts center? Note: HB920 - always criticized. Property values have plummeted yet the school amount does not go down!

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

Detailed budgets on all funds received and distributed by CF schools.

Detail on where budget spends money then let taxpayers decide where and how much to cut!

cost/bottom line for our household

Cost/benefit analysis of each/all options

Cost Benefit Analysis

Copy of income statement detailing monies received and spent -comparable budgets of other districts.

concrete "real world" examples of the impact of the alternative funding on household budgets

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

Comprehensive details on the option and its impact to my family budget.

Complete budget reviews quarterly with annual cost projection & savings analysis.

Comparative study for per capita funding/per household funding/private school credits.

Charitable contributions to support music, drama and sports.

"case study" examples for each potential scenario

Better cost control of teacher salaries, benefits and pension costs.

Basically...bottom line. How much it will cost us!

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

Balance sheet & Income statement. Show the voters the money is being spent & managed wisely.

An understanding of the financial impact on our income and the financial benefit to the school district.

amounts of increase

Although we do not have children enrolled in the district, we have 3 small children who will enter Gurney beginning in 2009. The future of the school district is important to us as well. We look forward to the district's creativity and organization to assess the other options to assist in the funding of a wonderful district.

All possible information available

all information available and it's impact on the operation of the district

After listening to the Superintendent and others speak during the campaign for the last levy, I believe the increase requested was excessive. Any requests for alternative funding should not be padded.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

- additional detail on the use of funds - additional detail on how the school has spent these type of funds historically

Adding or expanding funding options would not simply provide a means to create new authorities and additional taxes. Serious transparency in public reporting of school expenditures would add to credibility and accountability and permit taxpayers to evaluate the merits of requested increases.

Actual financial projections for each alternative specific to my age (74) and income.

actual cost to me

Accountability for common sense changes to the school buildings, etc. such as new thermostats in buildings, to reduce waste. Did not agree with the retroactive raises given to staff once levy passed after first failure. Also, did not agree with not accepting levy failure for once in our history-not respectful of our decision. Address these issues please.

A spreadsheet type of bulletin that described what other states have done and the virtues and defects of these alternative funding options in other states.

A sizable senior citizen discount especially for those with no kids in school.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

A report on how and where your income is spent.

A LOT of information

A lot.

A full, well explained disclosure of what the option was, what revenue it would generate, what relief it would provide to property taxes, and what non-financial impact it would have on the community.

A fiscal plan showing cost reduction or maintenance of costs of operations. Really tired of hearing about top 100 schools, etc. Money does not make that happen-students make it happen, There are many students from "poor" school districts better than the ones in Chagrin!

A financial analysis projecting future expenditures and the projected revenue from the alternative options.

A description of the plan.

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What additional information would you need in order to make a decision on alternative funding options?

A description of the funding method. I DO NOT want to pay anymore in taxes than I am already paying and that includes Local income taxes, property taxes, State income tax and sales tax. If my income rises you get more from me. Spend wisely the open checkbook is now closed.

A complete plan as to how the endowment gets started, who is responsible to manage the funds, oversight etc.... This should be done in conjunction with an independent financial study as to how the district can eliminate financial waste.

3 party analysis of current financial situation including facilities.

(1) Admin. Salaries (2) Teacher Salaries (3) Extracurricular/expenses which can be reduced