



Dear Faculty, Staff, and Lexington Community,

Currently, our state legislators are preparing a state budget that will determine whether to fairly fund Ohio schools by completing implementation of the Fair School Funding Plan.

The Ohio House and Senate took a giant step forward for students and schools by enacting the Fair School Funding Plan in 2021. The Fair School Funding Plan was developed by school district leaders and expert practitioners. It translates real student needs into concrete resources by accounting for essential education components like appropriate class sizes, student support services, and educational technology. The formula treats all taxpayers fairly based on their community’s ability to raise local funds.

The implementation of the Fair School Funding Plan formula represents a move toward the equitable and adequate funding of Ohio’s schools. **However, plan years 5 and 6 of the implementation must be included in the budget and base cost inputs must be updated to provide the funding necessary due to inflation.**

The Governor’s budget, which is now being considered in the House of Representatives, includes the phase-in of years 5 and 6. However, the Governor’s budget does *not* include an update to base costs which means that districts would lose money because the funding formula would not account for inflationary increases in base costs.

Every dollar invested in our local schools impacts our local economy and our future workforce. Once fully implemented, the Fair School Funding Plan will bring predictability and stability for Ohio schools, allowing districts to sustain and develop programming that will prepare all students for success. That means Ohio will continue to be a desirable place to live, work and raise a family.

The Governor’s current budget proposal includes drastic and untenable reductions projected for a majority of schools, including the following for Lexington Local Schools:

Estimated Foundation Aid FY25	Estimated Foundation Aid FY26	Estimated Foundation Aid FY27	\$ Change FY25-FY26	\$ Change FY26-FY27	\$ Change FY25-FY27	Biennial \$ Change FY25-FY27
\$9,583,319	\$8,821,136	\$8,204,259	(\$762,183)	(\$616,876)	(\$1,379,059)	(\$2,141,242)

To put this in perspective, if such a massive and significant decrease in funding for our District were to be implemented from an annual amount of \$9,583,219 in FY25 to an annual amount of \$8,204,259 in FY27, this has a resulting catastrophic impact of \$6,894,800 over a five year forecast period. It goes without saying that this would be devastating for Lexington Local Schools and the students that we serve and unfairly shifts more of the funding burden to local communities and taxpayers.

It is important to understand how we have gotten to such a place of proposing such massive State funding reductions for schools like Lexington. In 2021, the Legislature took a giant step forward for students and schools by enacting the Fair School Funding Plan. Simply put, the Fair School Funding Plan is designed to consider two major components as part of the formula, including ‘Capacity’ and ‘Base Costs.’

'Capacity' measures the perceived wealth of a District based on factors such as community income, and most importantly, property valuations. 'Base Costs' measures the various costs associated with effectively funding and educating our students. The 'Capacity' figures have been updated each year; however, 'Base Costs' have not been properly updated and continue to reflect fiscal year 2022 'Base Cost' figures. The proper update of the 'Base Costs' figures is the single most important factor that needs to be implemented by the Legislature to avoid such catastrophic reductions in State funding and shifts of the burden to local taxpayers

The Fair School Funding Plan only works if it is fully and properly implemented and updated. Anything less is an unfair mathematical manipulation of funding that artificially shifts the burden away from the State and directly onto the local taxpayers.

It is imperative that the 'Base Cost' inputs are updated and included in the budget to provide the funding necessary due to inflation. Lexington Local Schools strives to be a positive and high performing beacon in our community as we continue to serve the growing and various needs of our students while we prepare them for the future. We continue to provide a rigorous and well-rounded education to our students in an effective and efficient manner while being good stewards of the public dollars with which we are entrusted.

It is vital that legislators hear from you regarding the Fair School Funding Plan.

How You Can Help

We need your voice. Contact our legislators and urge them to support **the full implementation of the Fair School Funding Plan with updated base costs:**

1. **Call**
 - **Rep. Marilyn John:** 614-466-5802
 - **Sen. Mark Romanchuk:** 614-466-7505
2. **Email**
 - **Rep. John:** rep76@ohiohouse.gov
 - **Sen. Romanchuk:** romanchuk@ohiosenate.gov
3. **Mail a Letter**
 - **Rep. Marilyn John**
77 S. High St., 14th Floor, Columbus, OH 43215
 - **Sen. Mark Romanchuk**
1 Capitol Square, 1st Floor 132, Columbus, OH 43215

What to Say

- Introduce yourself (parent, teacher, staff, community member).
- Share why Lexington Schools matter to you, and how these cuts could affect students, programs, and opportunities.
- Ask them to **support full funding with updated base cost inputs** to prevent major cuts that will impact local schools and families.

Investing in our schools is an investment in our community and Ohio's future. We urge you to join us in reaching out to House of Representative member Marilyn John and Senator Mark Romanchuk to share your support for the full implementation of the Fair School Funding Plan. **Your voice can make a difference. Please take action today.**

Sincerely,

Jeremy Secrist, Superintendent
Jason Whitesel, Treasurer/CFO
Lexington Board of Education