



Report on The Strongsville Schools Levy – Issue 53

As members of Better Ohio PAC, a group of Strongsville parents and citizens advocating for responsible school funding, we wish to inform you about an important issue on the ballot this November: Issue 53, which proposes a **permanent property tax increase** for Strongsville City Schools. This proposal comes after Strongsville taxpayers have already expressed their concerns by rejecting a similar levy twice—in November 2023 and again in March 2024.

Issue 53 proposes a new permanent property tax increase that results in \$2 million in additional taxes

As you know, Cuyahoga County sexennial reappraisal that we were all notified of this summer has already increased our property taxes without allowing taxpayers a say in the matter. The Schools have announced that this increase will generate an additional \$2.4 million in revenue every year. Now, the Strongsville School Board is requesting an additional tax increase on top of these already heightened property taxes. They are proposing a permanent levy that will generate \$2 million more per year than they will receive from us this year. It doesn't need to be said that voting for a levy that results in a \$2 million annual increase and removes voters' ability to reduce or eliminate this tax can only be viewed as a **permanent property tax increase**.

Strongsville Voters spoke clearly when they decisively defeated the levy two times in November 2023 & March 2024

Financial Background

The Strongsville School District has \$77 million in the bank, a significant increase even over the \$71 million reported last year. More importantly, the district has not spent any funds from the levy passed by voters in May 2019. Instead, all proceeds from 4½ years of tax collections from the 2019 levy have been put directly in the bank, providing no benefit to students. During the same period, the schools increased spending dramatically. This demonstrates that **the school district does not require additional funding**.

Not One Dollar of The \$42.1 Million Collected from The 2019 Levy Has Been Spent on Our Children

The Facts:

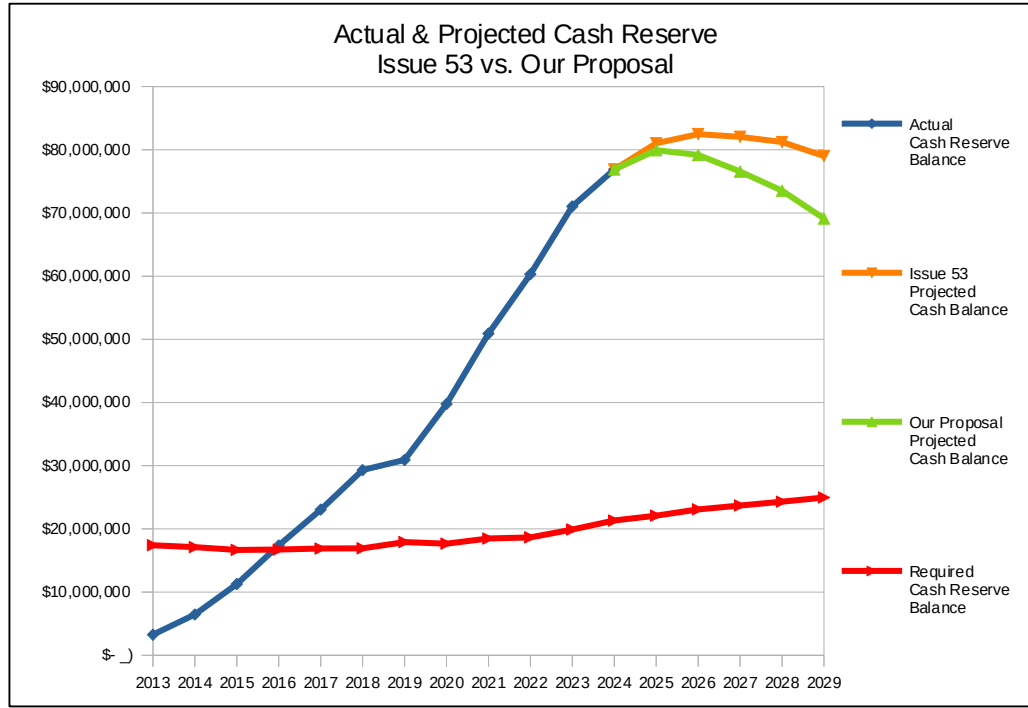
- Strongsville Voters have already rejected the school levy twice since last November. The school board is disregarding the community's clear will by proposing the levy again, this time as a **permanent** increase, even though Strongsville schools are already well-funded.
- Strongsville Schools possess substantial financial reserves. Last year, the district reported a \$9 million surplus and \$71 million in the bank. Now, the district has nearly a \$6 million surplus and \$77 million in the bank. Despite this, our school board members continue to seek more taxpayer dollars without justifying the need for these large reserves.
- No funds from this past levy have been allocated for student programs. Public records show that in the first four and a half years of the current levy passed in 2019, **not a single dollar of the \$42.1 million collected went toward student programs**. Instead, these funds were stockpiled to bolster the district's cash reserves.

Strongsville Schools had \$15 million surplus over the last two years and have \$77 million in the bank

Our Proposal

Better Ohio PAC proposed a revenue-neutral solution to maintain funding levels for the next 5 years at the current levels while providing much-needed tax relief for Strongsville taxpayers. **Unfortunately, the School Board rejected this reasonable offer and chose to pursue the permanent property tax increase in its place.** This decision not only dismisses the concerns of our community but also **removes your right to vote on such matters in the future.**

The school board rejected our proposal to reduce the size of this levy and maintain the current taxes so taxpayers would get relief



What's at Stake:

If passed, **Issue 53 would permanently raise property taxes in Strongsville**, locking in a substantial increase for years to come. While we all support our schools and want the best for our children, it is crucial that we hold our school board accountable and ensure responsible management of taxpayer dollars.

We believe in supporting our schools, but not at the expense of responsible financial management. **Strongsville voters have already made their voices heard twice.** This third attempt to pass the levy, especially following the recent county-wide tax increase, poses an unnecessary financial burden on our community.

What You Can Do

We urge all Strongsville voters to carefully consider the implications of Issue 53 and vote NO. A vote in favor of this permanent property tax increase will place a financial burden on our community while diminishing the ability to hold our school board accountable in the future.

Together, let's send a clear message to the Strongsville School Board: **We do not support a permanent property tax increase when our schools already have sufficient funds. Please join us in voting NO on Issue 53 on November 5, 2024.**

We have established a website at www.StrongsvilleLevyFacts.org that includes our research and supporting documentation on the school finances

