

# Worthington School Levy FAQ

For more information, go to: [www.educateworthington.org](http://www.educateworthington.org)

## Is the Levy Needed Now?

No, not exactly. Despite rapidly rising salary and benefit costs (see graph), the Worthington School District projects a surplus through fiscal year 2011.

## How Much Will the Levy Cost?

The average home in Worthington is approximately \$234,000. It will cost that homeowner approximately \$530 per year, on top of current (\$4537) property taxes (for a total of \$5067 per year).

## How Long Will the Levy Last?

This is a permanent operating levy, so the increase is...permanent. However, *the district says it will need an additional levy just 3 years from now.*

## Hasn't Declining Enrollment Reduced Costs?

Yes, enrollment has declined by over 1,000 students since 1995, and the district has reduced some staff and costs to try to control expenses. Despite these reductions, the annual salary and benefit costs that account for nearly 88% of the budget are still rising dramatically (see graph).

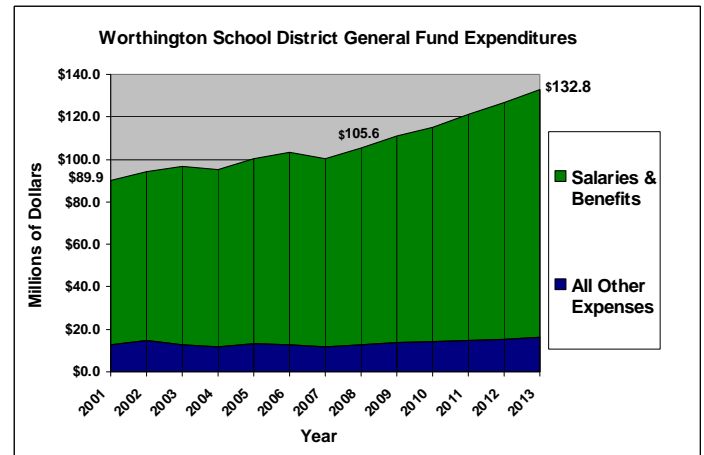
## So Why Do We Need a Levy Now, and Another One in 3 Years?

Annual salary and benefit costs are projected to rise by nearly \$24 million from 2008 to 2013. The proposed levy will generate \$13 million new tax dollars annually. Unfortunately, this \$13 million can only cover 3 years worth of salary and benefit growth.

## Can't the district better control these rising costs?

No, not unless the union and its members agree to reconsider the new 3-year contract that the district just signed in October.

The more important question may be: *"Will the district have any reason to better control these costs if you vote "yes" for the levy?"*



## Isn't our new contract very "frugal"?

While it is more frugal than previous contracts, it still guarantees a 2.85% "base" raise, PLUS an automatic "step" raise of 1% to 5% for most teachers. Thus, the total average raise is over 5% per year.

## Aren't Teacher's Salaries Low?

While the answer is subjective, here are some facts to consider. The average salary for Worthington's 750 teachers is \$70,229, for a 185 day contract year (37 weeks). A typical teacher with 13 years of experience now exceeds this pay level. For comparison; if our teachers were paid at the same rate as Olentangy's, our district would save \$3 Million/yr.

## Didn't the district save millions on health insurance?

Yes, but much of the "savings" was used to fund larger raises in the last 3 year contract. It also paid for the first 70% of an employee's health insurance deductible.

## *Is a sizable school levy every 3 years good for Worthington, its families, or its students?*

We respect and appreciate our teachers and district staff. We question whether the generous union contracts of the past can go on indefinitely. (See graph)