

**All of the written questions FROM TABLE DISCUSSIONS at the meeting February 1, 2007**

**Question: What are your views on an operating levy for the Conneaut School District?**

Table 1

1. How do we collect tax dollars from people who are in default of paying taxes?
2. How does tax abatement affect our schools?
3. How do we draw people here, to Conneaut?
4. Show the community where their money is going and help them understand why we need a strong educated workforce to create a strong educated workforce.

Table 2

1. We will fall behind without a levy
2. Maintain quality programming for competitive world.
3. Communication problems between school district and community
4. People are not convinced money is being spent appropriately
5. Community members perceive that teachers make too much money; administrators also
6. Retirees cannot afford additional taxes
7. Communicate - communicate – plan the work then work the plan

Table 3

1. Engage Monroe and senior citizens

Table 4

1. Without the levy students will be the ones to suffer – financing will not be there for support services students need.
2. Lack of knowledge by the public as to how much is needed to maintain and support district services and that the public has many misconceptions about how graph and spread sheet are good tools for grabbing attention to projected deficit.
3. No levy passage will adversely affect economic development to the community

Table 5

1. We need the levy.
2. How much is it going to cost “me” personally?
3. Has the operating levy been defined so general public understands the language

Table 6

1. Community doesn't realize impact of cuts and how they affect those who can least afford it.
2. Cut high school transportation
3. Fiscal information – graph and spreadsheet – put in paper and also the consequences of new cuts put in paper

Table 7

1. Investigate times the levy (good time) can be placed on the ballot
2. More voter information/contact the voters better
3. Cuts are not the way to go – we are striving for an “Excellent” district and doing so will take away the resources that would allow for us to meet this academic achievement.
4. Technology is very important to the teachers and students – what will happen if the levy doesn't pass?

Table 8

1. I don't think the community understands the needs to operate our schools.
2. We feel the levy should have not put on when it was because too many issues were on the ballot at that time. It hurt us.

Table 9

1. Need to pass the levy!
2. Need to appeal to those against it especially older citizens
3. Concerned about loss of extras, pay to play
4. People will remove children to other districts
5. Need to educate citizens about the needs and concerns.
6. Voters should only be told true facts – not maybes of threats
7. Administrators and school employees need to work at improving trust and be more visible in the community.
8. District should be compared with other districts and information shared with the community.
9. Inform and educate the generations who are not directly affected by building rust, stating facts, and being more visible in the community.

Table 10

1. We will always vote yes but the problem is lack of communication with the community
2. Do more meetings like this
3. More communication methods should be exhausted

Table 11

1. Need a passionate and articulate spokesperson to engage the community.
2. Communication: Have the school personnel been able to effectively express needs and concerns to the public?
3. Does the community realize how much has already been cut and how deeply?
4. People feel we build new schools and now we don't have the money to operate them. That is not the case and that is not why we are here. We need to inform the public of the true reason for why the levy is needed.
5. The future of our community rests with the strength of our schools. Strong schools attract people to a community.

Table 12

1. Communication? Have school personnel been able to express needs and concerns from the public? Has the district been able to discern from the public what their feelings and issues are?
2. Committee didn't project such a good turn-out tonight. This shows people are listening and care.
3. Other communities have not had the support for open discussion that we have here tonight.
4. People seem to think that we built the new schools and now we cannot afford to operate them. That is not why we are here. We need to clarify why this levy needs to pass and where the dollars will be spent.
5. Does community realize how much the district has cut already and what services are lost?
6. Not every building and class can survive all of the cuts evenly. Needs vary.

Table 13

1. If 4 mill levy would allow us the maintain the status quo – we will be going back to square one in 5 years ----- 4 mill is not enough.
2. What is CACS doing to effect change in state funding?

3. Is the issue “do we need a levy” or “when do we need the levy?”
4. What does the research show is the best kind of campaign – looking ahead positively or looking at negative impacts?
5. Our only hope is to mobilize parents in all voting districts.
6. What is the cost of putting the levy on at a regular election?

Table 14

1. Misled as to what was going to be done tonight. This was not a conversation.
2. We need to discuss the true problem ---- this community is poor

Table 15

1. It's a “no brainer” maintaining property value – when levy fails
2. Cuts may be needed in addition to levy to plan for 5 years
3. What can we do to get “Equitable funding”
4. Continue community conversation
5. Communicate that everyone feel ownership of their schools

Table 16

1. To have a levy soon and pass it
2. How to pass is question that should be asked
  - Get all registered voters to vote
  - Get all eligible students to vote
  - Get the lower pay/welfare eligible voters to vote
  - Pound the legislative state/Govt to fix the problem they created

Table 17

1. It's crucial if we want our students to maintain and improve their education and not fall backward in their achievement.
2. Big fear is that staff and community moral will decline and we will lose quality staff members to other districts.
3. If programs are cut we will lose students to other districts and thus lose additional revenue.

Table 18

1. Concerned about senior citizens can't afford a levy
2. Crucial to success for student achievement.
3. Economy/house value-helps our community
4. Educate community to the importance of education!
5. Invite community members in to the schools – Christmas programs

Table 19

1. Specific information on where money is going?
2. What are unfunded mandates? Other actual cost?
3. How will the levy be used - reference litigation on new buildings?
4. This wasn't conversation with community – people are not allowed to speak

Table 20

1. Is it possible to levy an income tax rather than a property tax to support the school?

Table 21

2. Should we be writing more grants as a resource for revenue?
3. Community is not a profitable one, cannot afford higher taxes.
4. Expenses are increasing in all areas, taxes will also
5. Key issue: We need to educate the public that the levy is an investment, not a bill
6. Energy efficiency in new schools as compared with old schools
7. Conneaut School District is the largest employer – pass the levy to keep employment

Table 22

1. Need to ask the community why the levy failed
2. Reasons a levy is needed is known
3. Address the fact there will raises from this levy with the public

Table 23

1. Think it is imperative for the levy to be on the ballot again for students and it helps our home values. People, communities are known by their schools.
2. Is there a smaller levy that could benefit the district for 2 years while a long term plan is being developed and what is the contingency plan if it does not go on the ballot? How will the day to day operation be affected?
3. Special needs students – what % today, 3 years ago, forecast 3 years from now.
4. Levy vs. cuts needs to be balanced – some form of levy is needed
5. Look for grants to purchase equipment

Table 24

1. The public needs a better understanding of where levy money is going. Many of the technologies we have now are funded by grants.
2. Many misconceptions regarding operating levy, building improvement levy, etc.
3. We have failed to keep the public informed regarding grant money vs. levies
4. Every time a grant goes though – inform public – more PR is needed. People feel alienated or disengaged from this whole levy process.
5. Public feels school administration taking it out on kids by making them pay for sports and then they may not get to play.

Table 25

1. Difficult to encourage businesses to re-locate to area if schools are struggling.
2. Want children to want to return after graduation from college
3. Poor job informing public on State of Schools – costs, projected 5 year plan, teachers salaries vs. state average, fixed cost
4. Need more public education – tell it like it is – people can handle the truth

Table 26

1. How can we increase the value the community places on education?
2. Manage the perceptions
3. Not necessary to educate 55%
4. No votes, necessary to listen to their concerns and address them. Problem is they are not here tonight.
5. I feel board is open – things not being hidden
6. Need a passionate spokesperson

Table 27

1. Voter registration drive – get more people to vote
2. Get more elderly people to vote
3. Educate students in schools to understand the importance of voting

Table 28

1. How do you educate the community on what the levy means – the difference between operating and emergency?
2. How do we get the community to know and realize how and where the money is spent and what's been already cut. A lot of people think because we've built the new schools we should have money lying around.
3. In essence, the people do not realize all of the things that teachers do on their own. With the freeze on wages how can the teachers continue to do this?