



# Concerning Kids

An update on child advocacy issues critical to you

October  
2002

3 Districts  
Approved  
5 Districts on  
November  
Ballot



✓ **Akron** - 1/2 cent county-wide sales tax raising \$11.2 million annually for Akron schools per year for 30 years. (November, 2002)

✓ **Cincinnati** - 4.89 mill combination bond and maintenance levy (November, 2002)

✓ **Cleveland** - 3.7 mill combination bond and maintenance levy passed May, 2001

✓ **Columbus** - 3.459 mill combination bond and maintenance levy (November, 2002)

✓ **Dayton** - 8.97 mill combination bond and maintenance levy (November, 2002)

✓ **Toledo** - 4.99 mill combination bond and maintenance levy (November, 2002)

✓ **Canton** - 4.5 mill combination bond and maintenance levy passed in November, 1999

✓ **Youngstown** - 3.9 mill combination bond and maintenance levy passed in November, 2000

## Ohio's 8 Largest Urban School Districts to Upgrade School Buildings

An opportunity to bring Ohio's schools into the 21st century.

**Ohio's eight largest districts enroll approximately 16% of Ohio's students and operate nearly 500 school buildings.** These districts are eligible to receive state funds to renovate, replace, and close school buildings once they raise a local funding match. A combination of local and state funds will pay for \$6.5 billion in proposed school building projects.†

Many of the old buildings in these districts have faulty heating systems, outdated science labs, undersized classrooms, and inadequate space for special education.

The new and renovated schools will have:

- more classroom space for each student,
- updated science labs in the middle and high school buildings,
- separate art and music rooms,
- modern electrical systems to accommodate computer use and other technologies, and
- flexible space for community use both during and after school.

**How is state funding determined?** The state formula for facility funds ranks districts by property wealth and student population and prioritizes the order they will receive state funds. Despite high poverty, some urban districts have high property values due to a higher concentration of business and industry. As a result, some large urban districts would have waited for years for state help.

**Accelerated help for Ohio's urban districts (S.B. 272).** A new state law, Senate Bill 272, permits all large urban districts to begin the process of upgrading school buildings. Funding became available this year. The legislation also allows districts to phase in their funding plans. This fall, **Columbus** and **Cincinnati** are taking advantage of this new rule and are pursuing the first portion of the total funds needed to complete their district-wide building plans.

**Urban school districts seek voter approval this November.** On November 5, 2002, **Columbus, Cincinnati, Dayton, and Toledo** will ask voters to increase local property taxes to provide a local funding match and begin

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KidsOhio.org is a new, Ohio-led, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization working to improve the lives and education of Ohio's nearly three million children, especially disadvantaged youngsters. With a statewide reach and a special focus on Columbus and Central Ohio, KidsOhio.org works to improve early childhood care and education, health care, and public education. To learn more, visit the KidsOhio.org web site (<http://www.KidsOhio.org>). You can also phone (614-228-6400) or e-mail your questions ([KidsOhio@KidsOhio.org](mailto:KidsOhio@KidsOhio.org)).

leveraging state dollars for their school building initiatives. Summit County government is placing a 1/2 cent county-wide sales tax on the November ballot, the proceeds of which will be shared with all districts in Summit County, including **Akron**, to raise their local share.

**Canton** and **Youngstown** passed their local bond issues in 1999 and 2000, respectively, and are leveraging state funding. Both districts have begun their building projects. Canton opened its first new school in January, 2002. Canton is currently renovating three schools and broke ground for four new schools this year. Youngstown is breaking ground on two new schools this fall.

**Cleveland** passed a \$335 million ballot issue in May, 2001, leveraging over \$715 million in state funds, and is already in the first year of their school building program. The district has begun the planning and design phase on five schools. Both Cleveland and Columbus have established local bond accountability committees to oversee progress and to ensure that projects are completed on time and on budget!

### Ohio's Urban School District Building Plans at a Glance

	Student Population*	Number of School Buildings	Total Construction Costs†	State Share‡	Local Share‡
Akron	29,978	36 new replacement schools 21 renovations 1 to close	\$693 million	59%	41%
Cincinnati	40,167	35 new replacement schools 31 renovations 14 to close	\$620 million in the first phase (Total Amount Needed: \$916 million)	23%	77%
Cleveland	72,227	52 new replacement schools 59 renovations 14 to close	\$1.5 billion	68%	32%
Columbus	63,629	63 new replacement schools 67 renovations 20 to close	\$521 million in the first phase (Total Amount Needed: \$1.6 billion)	30%	70%
Dayton	20,584	30 new replacement schools 4 renovations 3 to close	\$577 million	61%	39%
Toledo	36,795	57 new replacement schools 7 renovations 12 to close	\$821 million	77%	23%
Canton	11,929	10 new replacement schools 12 renovations 3 to close	\$176 million	73%	27%
Youngstown	10,589	4 new replacement schools 11 renovations 6 to close	\$193 million	80%	20%
<b>Big 8 Total</b>	<b>285,898</b>	<b>273 new replacement schools 189 renovations 73 to close</b>	<b>\$6.5 billion</b>	<b>53% average state share</b>	<b>47% average local share</b>
<b>State Total</b>	<b>1.8 million</b>	<b>3,684 school buildings in use statewide (1990 survey)</b>	<b>47% average local share</b>	<b>\$10.2 billion</b>	<b>\$12.8 billion</b>

\*Enrollment during the 2000-01 Academic Year

† Total Construction Cost: Total Construction Costs include Locally Funded Initiatives (LFI), which are projects not eligible for state matching funds. These costs include contingency funds, inflation, land acquisitions, additional space for special needs classrooms, etc.

‡ State Share and Local Share: Percentages shared by the state and local school districts are for costs related to projects eligible for state funds and do not include expenses for Locally Funded Initiatives (LFI).