

Clermont Chamber of Commerce
Government Affairs Council
2018 Levy questionnaire

1. Name of levy sponsor and primary contact

Great Oaks Career Campuses

110 Great Oaks Drive

Cincinnati, OH 45241

513.771.8840

Harry Snyder, President/CEO

snyderh@greatoaks.com

Great Oaks serves 36 Ohio school districts reaching over 2,200 square miles in 12 southwestern Ohio counties.

With four public campuses in southwest Ohio and workforce development programs in 28 regional high schools, Great Oaks offers nationally-recognized career and professional training and education for nearly 3,000 high school students on campus and more than 16,000 middle and high school students in their schools each year. In addition, thousands of adults take short-term classes or full-time career training, or use Great Oaks services in other ways.

More than thirty career programs provide certification or licensure for students in career fields from aviation mechanics to veterinary assisting, from robotics to nursing to computer technology. Students can also graduate with college credit, offering them a variety of options for the future.

2. Type of levy and general description of need

Great Oaks is requesting a continuing renewal of its expiring 2.7-mill operating levy. The current levy expires in 2019.

These are the ONLY local funds provided to Great Oaks. The remainder of the budget comes from state and federal funds.

The current 2.7-mill levy was approved in 2008 and expires in 2019. Great Oaks is asking voters to renew the levy at the same amount for a continuing time.

2.7 mills was originally approved in 1988 and renewed at the same rate in 1998 and 2008. Great Oaks has not asked for an increase in local funding in 30 years, and **is not asking for an increase now**—simply a renewal at the current level.

Great Oaks is fiscally responsible, and has been able to complete building renovations and update sophisticated equipment without additional funding.

Area homeowners pay \$5.04/month per \$100,000 in assessed value.

Without this levy, Great Oaks would lose over 66% of its funding—and would be unable to continue to operate.

3. Number of residents served.

Each year, about 2,800 high school juniors and seniors attend one of four Great Oaks campuses. The district also provides satellite classes for more than 16,000 middle and high school students at their own school.

About 18,000 adults take classes, attend programs, or take advantage of Great Oaks services annually. This includes training for current law enforcement personnel and firefighters, as well as full- and part-time career certification programs, high school equivalency classes, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and other courses and training.

Number of businesses served.

Great Oaks' primary service to area businesses is to provide a well-trained, skilled workforce. We depend on area businesses to provide advice and expertise to ensure that our programs are valuable for the community; in turn, they provide internships for students and recruit and hire graduates.

In addition, about 1,400 local business owners, managers, and staff make up advisory committees for the career programs.

4. Total number of full-time employees.

2014	439
2015	437
2016	445
2017	445
2018	454
2019	457
2020 (proj.)	457
2021 (proj.)	459
2022 (proj.)	460
2023 (proj.)	460

The number of employees has grown as additional satellite and other programs have increased in area schools. In addition, Great Oaks typically uses 1000 to 1030 part-time or temporary employees during the year. Most of these are hired to teach specific part-time or short-term classes; the number fluctuates based on the number of classes offered.

5. Total expenses for the past five years and projected for the next five years.

2014	\$	60,441,525
2015	\$	61,696,952
2016	\$	61,032,021
2017	\$	63,202,865
2018	\$	65,453,946
2019	\$	64,462,372
2020 (proj.)	\$	64,440,716
2021 (proj.)	\$	64,867,652
2022 (proj.)	\$	65,392,376
2023 (proj.)	\$	66,700,223

6. When was your last levy request? How much was requested, and did it pass?

Great Oaks' last levy request was in November 2008; it was a request to renew the 2.7-mill levy scheduled to expire in 2009. The levy renewal was approved by a 58% yes vote. (In Hamilton County, the approval rate was over 60%.)

7. Please list specific belt-tightening measures instituted since your last levy request.

Fiscal responsibility and effectiveness are handled in several ways:

- **Through disinvesting programs** that don't fit changing job markets or technologies and launching programs in high-growth, emerging fields.
- **Through energy efficiency.** New HVAC system software, staff training, and local monitoring of HVAC systems have reduced energy costs. Also, buildings have been converted to LED lighting, and peak energy agreements with Duke Energy allow us to received discounted utility rates.
- **Through management of student enrollment and increasing class sizes.** We work to maximize the number of students in existing programs, which allows us to serve more students without increasing the number of labs or career-technical instructors needed. In the past two years, we have increased average class size by more than two students.
- **Through shared facilities and services.** For instance, by offering satellite programs—career programs based in area high schools—we save area school districts money by providing instructors, curriculum, materials and equipment to teach their students. At the same time, the school districts provide space and support, so we are able to serve more students cost-effectively. We also partner with a variety of agencies to provide space as we serve the same or similar audiences including the Southwest Ohio Regional Investment Board (SWORWIB), iSPACE, Ashland University, local police and fire departments, Warren County Career Center, and local masonry union training centers.

8. Current millage and dollars per \$100,000 of home

2.70 mills, or \$60.49 annually per \$100,000 assessed value

9. Proposed millage and dollars per \$100,000 of home

2.70 mills, or \$60.49 annually per \$100,000 assessed value

Great Oaks levy request: Renewal of expiring 2.7-mill operating levy for a continuing period

About Great Oaks:

Great Oaks serves 36 Ohio school districts reaching over 2,200 square miles in 12 southwestern Ohio counties.



With four public campuses in southwest Ohio and workforce development programs in 28 regional high schools, Great Oaks offers nationally-recognized career and professional training and education for nearly 3,000 high school students on campus and more than 15,000 middle and high school students in their schools each year. In addition, thousands of adults take short-term classes or full-time career training.

Over 30 programs provide certification or licensure for students in career fields from aviation mechanics to veterinary assisting, for robotics to nursing to computer technology. Students can also graduate with college credit, offering them a variety of options for the future. Partnerships with hundreds of employers, workforce investment boards, and other organizations ensures that Great Oaks programs are on the cutting edge of industry and are designed to serve the immediate and future needs of the region.

Great Oaks' value to the community:

- A fall 2017 study by the UC Economics Center showed that for every \$1 provided in local funding, Great Oaks provided \$3 to the local economy—for a total economic impact of 115 million dollars annually.
- The UC study also showed that adults who completed career training received a 250% return on their investment in the first five years after finishing. NOTE: The return on investment for high schoolers wasn't calculated, as they receive a free public education at Great Oaks.
- A July 2017 community survey showed that 88% of the community is familiar with Great Oaks. Of those who know Great Oaks, 96.8% had a favorable (or neutral) opinion.
- Twice as many survey respondents said it was more important for schools to provide job-ready skills (56.1%) as to prepare them for college (28.5%).

The levy request:

- Great Oaks currently has an annual operating budget of about \$64 million. Of that amount, about 66%, or \$42 million, comes from a 2.7-mill operating levy. These are the ONLY local funds provided to Great Oaks. The remainder of the budget comes from state (30%) and federal (4%) funds.
- The current 2.7-mill levy was approved in 2008 and expires in 2019. Great Oaks is asking voters to renew the levy at the same amount for a continuing time.
- Great Oaks has not asked for an increase in local funding in 30 years, and is not asking for an increase now—simply a continuing renewal at the current level. 2.7 mills was originally approved in 1988 and renewed at the same rate in 1998 and 2008. Great Oaks is fiscally responsible, and has been able to complete building renovations, hire and retain staff, and update sophisticated equipment without additional funding.
- Area homeowners pay \$5/month per \$100,000 in assessed value.
- Without this levy, Great Oaks would lose over 60% of its funding—and would be unable to continue to operate. Affiliate school districts would be required to provide career-technical education programs individually, a much more expensive way to offer the service.

(over)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

How much does the Great Oaks levy cost me?

Residents pay about \$60 per year for a \$100,000 home. In most areas, the average home is about \$200,000, so the cost of the levy would be \$120/year.

What is Great Oaks' budget?

The current budget is \$64 million; this is an increase of about ½ of 1% per year over the past 10 years, despite an increase in students.

How do we know that you won't come back to voters and ask for more millage?

Great Oaks has lived within its means for 50 years. The current millage (2.7 mills) has been in place since 1988, and we're only asking to renew the current levy, which is set to expire in 2019. We have been able to stay up-to-date with technology, building maintenance and renovations, student growth, and rising costs throughout that time—and our projections show that we will be able to continue to do so.

How do joint vocational school district (JVSD) expenses compare to traditional school district expenses?

JVSD, or career-technical, school districts like Great Oaks spend the majority of their budgets on such educational expenses as technology, materials, teachers, and classrooms. We also have busing and cafeteria costs, just like other school districts.

However, hands-on career programs often require investments in additional equipment. For instance, students who are learning to program and operate robotic equipment must have access to up-to-date technology. The same is true with aviation maintenance students who must have aircraft engines to learn on, culinary students who study in a commercial kitchen, firefighting students who need to learn to handle the firefighting equipment they'll use on the job, and so on. That's why Ohio created joint vocational school districts—so traditional school districts don't have to make these investments. Instead, communities share the cost so that their students have a range of opportunities.

What about building renovations? How will you pay for those?

Unlike traditional school districts, career-technical school districts must pay for construction and renovations through the general fund. Since 2008, Great Oaks has renovated and updated two campuses—Scarlet Oaks and Diamond Oaks—and the remaining two campuses (Laurel Oaks and Live Oaks) will be updated through the levy renewal. In addition, Great Oaks was able to secure \$1.5 million in state funding for Laurel Oaks building projects.

The ballot language:

PROPOSED TAX LEVY (RENEWAL)
GREAT OAKS CAREER CAMPUSES

A majority of affirmative vote is necessary for passage.

A renewal of a tax for the benefit of the Great Oaks Career Campuses (including Diamond Oaks, laurel Oaks, Live Oaks and Scarlet Oaks), a joint vocational school district, Counties of Brown, Clermont, Clinton, Fayette, Greene, Hamilton, Highland, Madison, Pickaway, Ross and Warren, Ohio, for the purpose of CURRENT OPERATING EXPENSES at a rate not exceeding two and seven-tenths (2.7) mills for each one dollar of valuation, which amounts to twenty-seven cents (\$.27) for each one hundred dollars of valuation, for a continuing period of time, commencing in 2019 first due in calendar year 2020.

Great Oaks
CHARTER CAMPUSES
Midland • Laurel • Live • Scarlet
Learning works!

Serving 36 school districts

Batavia, Blanchester, Clermont Northeastern, Clinton-Massie, Deer Park, East Clinton, Fairfield Local, Finneytown, Forest Hills, Goshen, Greenfield, Hillsboro, Indian Hill, Lockland, Loveland, Lynchburg-Clay, Madeira, Mariemont, Mason, Miami Trace, Milford Mt., Healthy, North College Hill, Norwood, Oak Hills, Princeton, Reading, Southwest St. Bernard-Elmwood Place, Sycamore, Three Rivers, Washington Court House, West Clermont, Wilmington, Winton Woods, Wyoming

Four campuses

SCARLET OAKS
4200 W. MARKET STREET
MARIEMONT, OHIO 45156

LAUREL OAKS

LIVE OAKS

DIAMOND OAKS

Preparing youth and adults

Annually serve 19,000+ high school and middle school students and 18,000 adults

High school students can choose from 31 different career paths at our campuses.

Career programs range from healthcare to firefighting to robotics to law enforcement to aviation maintenance and more.





High school students can earn college credit AND professional credentials.



Satellite programs serve students in their own school.

More than 16,000 students study marketing, teaching professions, engineering, IT, business, biomedical science and more each year through Great Oaks at their own school.

Partnering with employers

1,442 advisory committee members drive what and how students learn





The Result

93% of our students continue their educations, are employed or both

95% of our employers would employ students again

174 students in 2018 went to national career skills competitions



Economic Impact

\$115+ million

Yearly economic impact in Southwest Ohio

UC Economic Center Study revised June 2018


To view this report visit:
<http://www.greatoaks.edu/uc-economic-center-study>



Financed through taxes

Category	Percentage
Local property	66%
State	30%
Other	4%

Adult programs are operated on a cost recovery basis



This funding has financed renovations at Diamond Oaks and Scarlet Oaks.



November 2018: Renew 2.7-mill levy



Future plans include needed renovations at Live Oaks and Laurel Oaks as well as increasing capacity at all campuses.



November 2018: Renew 2.7-mill levy




**The challenge:
Our 2.7-mill levy,
the only source of
local funding,
expires in 2019.**

This millage has not
changed since 1988.



**We are asking our
community to
RENEW the 2.7-mill
levy for a continuing
period.**

As a renewal, this will not
increase taxes.




Executive Summary

Five Year Forecast - Simplified Statement

	Fiscal Year 2018	Fiscal Year 2019	Fiscal Year 2020	Fiscal Year 2021	Fiscal Year 2022
Operating Costs	20,704,475	21,744,000	22,833,000	23,972,000	25,161,000
Revenue	14,521,135	15,014,000	15,507,000	16,000,000	16,493,000
+ Capital Budget, non-recurring costs			3,124,000	1,250,000	43,000,000
+ Proposed Developer					
+ Donations					
+ Intergovernmental					
+ Miscellaneous Revenue					
Operating Surplus	2,182,340	3,730,000	5,226,000	6,772,000	8,668,000
Debt Service	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
Capital Expenditures	5,500,000	5,500,000	5,500,000	5,500,000	5,500,000
Capital Expenditures	5,500,000	5,500,000	5,500,000	5,500,000	5,500,000

November 2018: Renew 2.7-mill levy




Advantage:

Great Oaks is well-known

88% awareness

77% in 2007


November 2018: Renew 2.7-mill levy



Advantage:
Great Oaks is well-liked
72% favorable impression

64% in 2007


November 2018: Renew 2.7-mill levy



But...only
22% understand

We are funded through a local property levy

Increasing awareness of this fact is critical for the levy renewal.



Questions?
Thank you!

November 2018: Renew 2.7-mill levy

