

Preserving Essential Community Services: A Response to the Cabell County Board of Education's Excess Levy Proposal

Dear Cabell County Residents,

We write to you today on behalf of the Cabell County Public Library (CCPL) and the Greater Huntington Park and Recreation District (GHPRD) to offer our perspective on the recently proposed Cabell County Schools Excess Levy. Several points raised by the Board of Education (BOE) in their statement explaining the excess levy need to be addressed:

- **Impact on Budgets:** The proposed funding, while presented as a solution, represents a significant cut to our budgets. The proposal on the ballot would be significantly less than we have received for many years. During our negotiations with the School Board, we focused on securing the funding necessary to avoid compromising the services we provide. As community entities, we must ensure that we have the resources to maintain and enhance the vital services we provide to Cabell County residents. Cabell County voters have supported the use of excess levy funds in this way for decades. The BOE proposal abandons that commitment.
- **Fixed Funding Over Five Years:** The proposed levy allocates a fixed dollar amount to our entities from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2030 instead of an amount that grows with tax collections. This funding structure sets us on a path where we receive diminishing funding each year in real terms, jeopardizing the quality and scope of our services.
- **Direct Services and Budget Cuts:** The final offer from the BOE, which our entities rejected, not only represented a deep budget cut but also included a demand for direct services to be provided by GHPRD and CCPL to the Board of Education. Direct services have never been part of the levy before, but they are part of why the negotiations failed. As entities serving the whole community, we cannot be contractually bound to provide services to the school district in this manner. If direct services are needed, they should be appropriately contracted and compensated.
- **Our Commitment:** Our entities will do everything within our means to maintain the high-quality services you have come to expect, and we will actively work towards restoring our funding through all available avenues.

This is an unprecedented situation, but with your support, we move forward with optimism, committed to serving our community to the best of our abilities.

Sincerely,

Breana Bowen
Executive Director
Cabell County Public Library

Kathy McKenna
Executive Director
Greater Huntington Park & Recreation District

