



# Investing In Our Future



Financial Prospectus

# 2018

**Indian Hill Exempted Village School District**

**#IH Promise**

# #IHPromise

## Our Enduring Excellence Journey

A message from Superintendent Dr. Mark Miles



Dear Neighbor,

I have a big ask to make of you with this introduction: I need the gift of your time and attention. Quite specifically, there are 2,033 young scholars looking to me with the expectation that I will help deliver what they need to develop intellectually, grow personally, and be the socially responsible people we expect them to be – and it sincerely does take a village to get this job done. As such, I’m boldly requesting you take a journey with me in this publication that’s designed to provide you with a transparent look at the way we do business at the Indian Hill Exempted Village School District. It captures what we like to call the #IHPromise.

Top performing and nationally recognized – our schools are a reflection of our community. We have a vision of *Enduring Excellence in Learning, Leadership, Innovation, and Service* while maintaining operations that are fiscally conservative; our goal is to provide substantial value to the students we serve and for the community it is our privilege to call home.

Each of these factors is central to how we operate and to what we – our schools and our community – collectively value as partners in education.

“As a partner, you are a respected stakeholder. This report is our investment in your understanding of both the successes and challenges facing our schools.”

- Mark T. Miles  
Superintendent of  
Schools

As a partner, you are a respected stakeholder. This report is our investment in your understanding of both the successes and challenges facing our schools.

As you are aware, excellence is a result of very deliberate planning; our team works diligently to uphold your high expectations. It is with excitement we share the story of both achievement and opportunity contained in this publication with you. This is a story of our present and our future. Decisions that we make today and at critical decision points in our organization’s future determine if the excellence we expect will indeed endure.

Inside these pages, you will read about our work to define the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that future Indian Hill graduates should possess to compete with the best students around the globe. Our work has included the creation of a new District strategic plan as well as beginning to define remaining facility needs and updates that exist within each of our schools. Key to that, of course, is ensuring the financial health of our school system. All of these components must be considered simultaneously as resources are always finite.

Thank you – for the gift of your time and your attention. Our schools are excellent because of the continued support you generously provide. With that continued support, I can confidently engage with our young scholars this fall knowing that they

will get what they need to be Brave as they leave our classrooms to transition from today’s learners into tomorrow’s leaders. Let the journey continue...

In service to our children,

Mark T. Miles, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
Indian Hill Exempted Village School District



See the #IHPromise in action –  
follow Dr. Miles on Twitter:

@ihevsvd

# BRAVES

## Enduring Excellence in Fiscal Operations

A message from Treasurer Mick Davis

Dear Valued Stakeholder,

In the few short years since Dr. Miles and I joined Indian Hill Schools, we have worked to prioritize the District's needs and to align those with our community's expectations. That includes being conservative with our finances and maximizing the resources we have. Our financial journey is a story of limited state support, and conservative fiscal management the past 24 years to not overburden our strongest supporter - you. Let me explain.

Over the last number of years, we have seen very little growth from the District's revenue sources. The Indian Hill Exempted Village School District receives very little revenue from the state school funding system so we must rely on local property taxes to fund our District. It is important to note that the Indian Hill Exempted Village School District has the lowest tax rate in Hamilton County. The Ohio Revised Code contains language that keeps property taxes from growing over time with inflation. That means that our schools continue to operate from levies passed in the 1980s and earlier with a near-zero inflationary increase.

The second part has to do with the Board of Education being responsive to the community and deciding not to seek a community renewal of an emergency operating levy in 1998. In fact, it is worth noting that voters first approved this last operating issue 24 years ago. That means that our schools have now gone more than 24 years without asking taxpayers for additional operating funds.

A third factor is that we have funded much-needed improvements to our buildings and programs by utilizing our existing operating fund instead of asking voters for additional dollars. These updates were needed, and they will help maximize and protect our investment in the school buildings.

Our Indian Hill Schools demonstrate the excellence in fiscal operations that match our educational excellence. We regularly earn the recognition from the state auditor's office for excellence in fiscal reporting, and my #IHPromise to you is to continue to deliver award-winning financial leadership.

Achievement and excellence are earned each day and through the culture of conservative fiscal management that we establish, live, and value as an organization. Thank you for continuing to support the excellence of our Indian Hill Schools each day. Should you have any questions about our District's finances, please contact me directly. My calendar is always open to discuss our shared financial investment.

Sincerely,



Mick Davis  
Treasurer  
Indian Hill  
Exempted Village  
School District



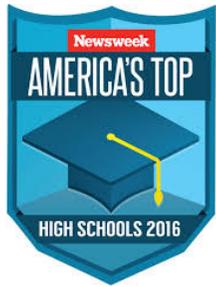
“Achievement and excellence are earned each day and through the culture of conservative fiscal management that we establish, live, and value as an organization.”

- Mick Davis  
Treasurer, IHEVSD



# #IHPromise

Being excellent is a choice and one that this community values in its schools. Consistently on state and national measures, the schools in the Indian Hill Exempted Village School District are ranked among the best:



Newsweek

**#1**  
in  
**Ohio**



U.S. News &  
World Report

**Gold Medal**  
Ranking in  
**2018**



The Washington  
Post

**#3**  
"Most  
Challenging  
High  
Schools"



Niche

**IHEVSD**

**#2**  
in Ohio  
and

**#6**  
in the  
country



The District is pleased to appear on these lists and is told time and again by colleges and universities that a diploma from Indian Hill High School means something special and that it sets a student apart from the rest.

This is important because Indian Hill students go on to compete globally in colleges and careers of their choice, including prestigious visual arts, performing arts, and music programs. Moreover, many receive academic and athletic scholarships to support their college endeavors.



Here's a snapshot of how Indian Hill High School students perform on national measures.

**26.8** Indian Hill High School

**22** State Average

**21** National Average

\*2017 scores

# Excellence Now

An up-close look at Learning, Leadership, Innovation, and Service



# #IH Promise



**Indian Hill students have the opportunity to explore and develop their own, rigorous school experience.**

## The district offers:

Science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) coursework as early as kindergarten with students learning basic programming skills;

Courses such as applied technology, engineering, television production, technical theatre, and other career pathway programs;

27 Advanced Placement (AP) courses, including AP Capstone which is currently offered at only a few high schools in Ohio;

Research- and evidence-based, differentiated learning approaches that lead to greater teacher effectiveness and quality instruction, higher academic performance, and improved school climate;

Students participate in Unified Arts (visual art, music, physical education) classes and Spanish starting in first grade;

Genius Hour, the Global Cardboard Challenge, and a national stock investing program are all offered to pre-school and Elementary School students; and,

Middle School students can earn high school credits.



“AP Capstone Seminar has been one of the most rewarding classes I’ve taken at Indian Hill High School. The research, analysis, writing, and speaking skills developed in the course will be essential to success far beyond high school, and I love the real-world applicability of these skill sets.”

- Marjona Ashurova,  
IHHS student

# Excellence Now

An up-close look at Learning, Leadership, Innovation, and Service



80  
ACTIVITIES

From the Primary School on, the Indian Hill School District offers over 80 activities and clubs to meet our students' diverse interests. Some options include chess, short-court tennis, archery, a variety of choirs, drama, writing, and student government, among many others.



The intellectual development of students is only one component of our #IHPromise. The district is growing tomorrow's leaders, and leadership is a result of nurturing the whole child. So, in addition to a laser-focus on academic development, Indian Hill Schools also provide exceptional educational services to ensure each student's personal growth and social responsibility. Within Indian Hill Schools, students have a wide range of options to explore in athletics, extracurricular activities, and the arts.



A cornerstone of Indian Hill School District's curriculum is service learning, and it is something else that makes an Indian Hill education unique and special. Primary School students in the Kids Who Care service organization support those in need through several projects throughout the school year.

**From there, student commitment to service grows - in the first semester of the 2017-18 school year Indian Hill High School students donated more than 31,700 hours of service to more than 250 organizations!**

# # Promise



"Great organizations have strategic plans that serve as a blueprint for the future and ensure alignment of financial and human resources. This plan has now been articulated, and I am pleased with the very intentional and deliberate focus that it will provide our organization," said Superintendent Dr. Mark Miles on the work that was done to ensure excellence endures.

With full support from the Indian Hill Board of Education, students, parents, staff, and community members joined forces in defining a GOLD Standard. It outlines the District's three-year strategic plan:

- **Global Competence**
- **Operational Efficiency and Effectiveness**
- **Learning-Centered Culture**
- **Dynamic Stakeholder Engagement**

"While the development of the strategic plan required a significant investment of time and focus, the real work in implementing it now begins," stated Dr. Miles. "We have a framework in place to ensure that we stay on-track and are moving forward with the plan constantly. The values of continuous improvement, commitment to excellence, collaborative relationships, and community engagement are apparent throughout this plan that will guide our work during the next few years."

The work within the plan is on a three-year timeline and includes areas such as expanding community, university, and business partnerships; preparing students for a diverse global community; ensuring state-of-the-art facilities to match the excellent teaching and learning in each school; cultivating a learning-centered environment for students; closing any achievement gaps; and increasing opportunities for the community to be involved in the schools.



Learn more on the district's website at <http://indianhillschools.ss10.sharpschool.com/cms/One.aspx?portalId=375134&pageId=11504658>



“Great organizations have strategic plans that serve as a blueprint for the future and ensure alignment of financial and human resources. This plan has now been articulated, and I am pleased with the very intentional and deliberate focus that it will provide our organization.”



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- Superintendent Dr. Mark Miles

# Excellence in the Future

Indian Hill sets the GOLD Standard in Education



## Global Competence

3-Year Objective	3-Year Growth Indicators
Develop meaningful student experiences throughout grade levels and beyond the Indian Hill Exempted Village School District	Build community, business, and university partnerships for the expansion of external accelerated leadership, mentoring, and entrepreneurial programs

## Operational Efficiency and Effectiveness

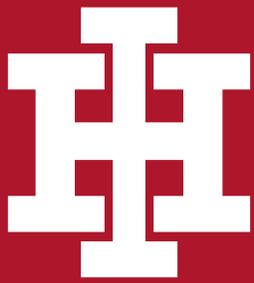
3-Year Objective	3-Year Growth Indicators		
Cultivate plan for best-in-class facilities with approved funding and prioritize operational strategies to promote short- and long-range district goals	Advance best-in-class reputation with new state of the art facilities plan	Explore Baldrige Framework with Quality Committee to set priorities for quality improvement	Establish District performance methods to empower leaders to achieve goals at an accelerated rate

## Learning-Centered Culture

3-Year Objective	3-Year Growth Indicators			
Optimize learning-centered culture to create an inclusive Indian Hill School District community, nurture the best in every student, and close performance gaps by department, grade level, teacher, and student	Cultivate a strengths, character, and ethics education program with vertical alignment for a rigorous and relevant learning culture	Record a guaranteed and viable curriculum with vertical alignment and technology integration for a rigorous and relevant learning culture	Establish a systematic approach to identify learning and mental health needs of students to maximize students' potential and address achievement gaps	Implement cultural intelligence and inclusion programs based on best practice research

## Dynamic Stakeholder Engagement

3-Year Objective	3-Year Growth Indicators		
Stakeholder engagement and communication measured by group as highly engaged	Define business, university, and community engagement/partnership goals, priorities, and program	Redefine Indian Hill School District parent engagement/partnership goals, priorities, and programs	Enhance key stakeholder communication to increase overall engagement



# Assessing School Facilities

The Indian Hill School District is fortunate to have a community that has supported it at the ballot box with initiatives such as the passage of the 2000 bond issue that constructed the new Indian Hill High School and Indian Hill Elementary School. These facilities match the extraordinary teaching that occurs in the schools each day.

The District is fortunate that classroom environments support today's teaching and learning needs such as extensive use of technology in the schools today.

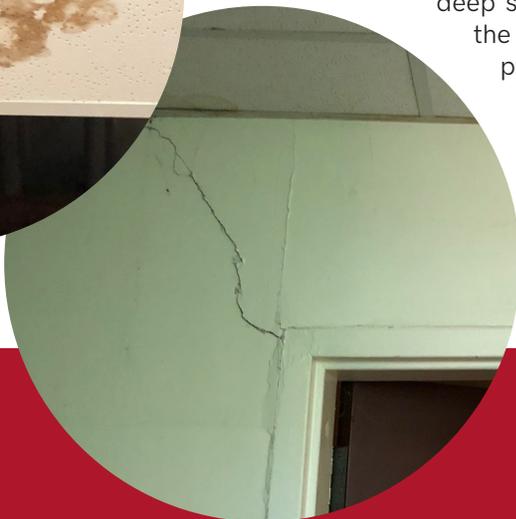
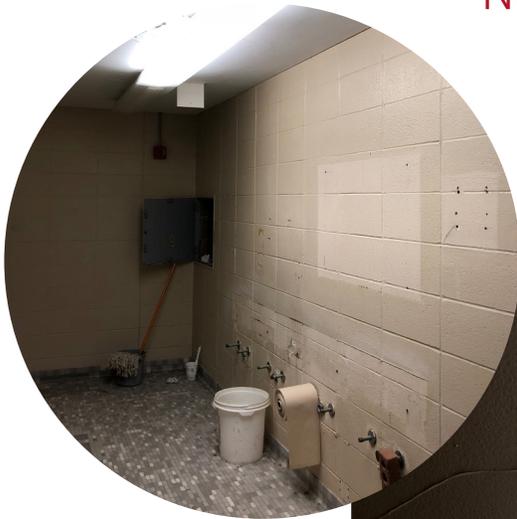
## Needs exist within all Indian Hill School District buildings

In order to provide upkeep and to protect the community's investment in the remaining school buildings, the District has diverted funds from the daily operating budget in order to make facility improvements. While that places a strain on the District's budget, these facility improvements are necessary.

"In a recent Community Satisfaction Survey, we heard from the community that they wanted us to use the funds that we have and make the building updates that we need," stated Dr. Mark Miles, superintendent. "We are certainly doing that, but those funds cannot provide the most significant needs that remain."

For example, Indian Hill Middle School, which now occupies the former Indian Hill High School building, has serious structural issues. The District was able to offer some updates to it in recent years so that it would transition to middle school use. However structural issues are typically very expensive and the District does not have enough operating dollars to cover this kind of expense.

Two items, in particular, are very concerning. The back wing of the Middle School building is continuing to settle, and deep stress fractures in the building are evident. Currently, the wing is closed to students and is used as storage. The problem remains and will only continue to worsen over time. This serious concern needs to be addressed in the near future. The building is single story and the district struggles to fix leaks during the school year and uses significant funds to repair sections of the roof during the summer.





## District to Form Facilities Assessment Committee

This fall, the District will form a community-based Facilities Assessment Committee for the purpose of assessing the remaining needs both in the Middle School and in other school buildings. The committee will then make recommendations on how the District should proceed in addressing those needs.

“Many people are not aware that we have some pretty significant needs at the Middle School,” stated Miles. “Buildings age and in the case of the Middle School, it is a 50-year-old building. When it comes to our individual homes, that is not a long time, and that is often the analogy people want to make. We have been able to take care of many needs within the district, but solving this requires further research and the assistance of a community-based committee.”

In moving forward with a committee, Dr. Miles stressed, “No decisions have been made, and we have no preconceived notions about what the committee may ultimately recommend. Any solution must consider the desires and expectations of our community. These are the community’s schools so we want a very comprehensive examination of what the needs and options are going forward.”

There is also a cost to “doing nothing” with the building. Dr. Miles noted that this is also an option that the committee will need to consider.

The district is expected to form the committee in August/September 2018.

# # Promise

The Indian Hill School District does a great job managing the District's finances and demonstrating sound fiscal stewardship. The District is proud of this work and is pleased with the excellent value to taxpayers.

When considering public school budgets, it is important to know that Indian Hill Schools have two separate budgets. Consider these as separate "buckets."



**Operating**  
(day-to-day expenses such as utilities, supplies, and faculty and staff)



**Bond**  
(for building construction such as Indian Hill High School)

Operating dollars may be used for any purpose related to the District, but bond dollars can only be used for their intended purpose as dictated by the ballot language. For the Indian Hill School District, this means the current outstanding bond issues are for the construction of the High and Elementary Schools only.

Many districts also have a separate budget for Permanent Improvement (PI) projects such as building updates and repairs that have a life of five years or more. Indian Hill does not have this budget. As a result, and because the district is able to, funds were diverted from the daily operating budget to make repairs.

"It definitely makes planning with the operating budget a bit more difficult because if something big happens, like a boiler bursts, then we have to make the repair and we have to divert the funds immediately," stated Mick Davis, Treasurer for the District.

## How the Schools are Funded

A significant share of the District's funding - specific to the operating budget - comes from local taxpayers. The state provides a much smaller share.

The District's operating budget is of most concern right now as expenditures outpace revenue.

**This is due to several factors:**

1. Revenue sources, in general, do not increase with inflation over time. This is part of the normal operating cycle of schools as they can only collect what was approved and with zero increase in inflation (an effect that is known as HB 920).
2. Around 2011, the District was negatively impacted by Ohio legislative changes and the effects of the real estate market collapse. While the District has recovered some of the loss from the Great Recession, the District has never recovered the funding lost because of the legislative changes.
3. The expiration of the 1993 emergency operating levy caused a drop-off in funding. The Board of Education, in being respectful to the community, determined that they would not seek a renewal of the issue, and they would instead allow the funding to expire.
4. The District is diverting funds from the operating budget to pay for needed building improvements and emergency repairs. When a district does not have a dedicated PI budget, doing so is necessary, although it strains the district's operating budget. A budget that is otherwise intended for the day-to-day operations of the school such as utilities, teachers, and the classroom.

**FY 2017 State Funding as a Total Percent of District Revenue - 4.2%**

**Revenue growth 2008-2017: 0.29%**

# Schools Operate in Conservative Fiscal Manner

A Primer on IH's Budget(s)



## Indian Hill Has a Very Low Tax Rate

It has been 24 years since the District's last operating levy.

With no increase in the tax rate, Indian Hill Schools continue to live off levies passed from decades prior. In fact, the last operating levy passed 24 years ago in 1993 (collection began in 1994). Since that time, technology and the way the District educates students has changed tremendously.

All the while, residents of Indian Hill Schools have the lowest tax rate in Hamilton County. That means that you pay a lower tax rate to your schools than residents in other area school systems.

### What is the House Bill 920 factor?

HB 920 refers to a 1976 bill in the Ohio House of Representatives that "reduces the taxes charged by a voted levy to offset increases in the value of real property." This is called the property tax reduction factor, or HB 920 factor. This means the amount of outside millage taxes collected on the property will not exceed the amount collected at the property's value in the first year the taxes were collected.

Although property values may increase while the levy is in effect, the amount of taxes collected on those properties do not increase. The reduced rate at which taxes are collected is termed the "effective millage."

In other words, HB 920 prevents property taxes from increasing along with inflation. So, your property value can continue to increase but your tax rate will not.

## Tax Year 2017 Collection 2018

Rank	District	Rate
1	St. Bernard	62.78
2	Finneytown	62.65
3	Winton Woods	60.54
4	Mariemont	54.47
5	Cincinnati	53.55
6	Wyoming	53.21 (1-1/4% Income Tax)
7	Madeira	52.22
8	Deer Park	51.35
9	Mount Healthy	49.5
10	Reading	47.28
11	Norwood	46.96
12	Loveland	45.27
Average		45.04
13	North College Hill	41.6
14	Milford	41.21
15	Lockland	39.35
16	Forest Hills	38.67
17	Princeton	38.31
18	Sycamore	36.18
19	Oak Hills	35.86
20	Northwest	35.8
21	Three Rivers	35.73
22	Southwest	27.58 (.75% Earned Income Tax)
23	Indian Hill	25.77

# # Promise



## Being the Best, Not Average

Indian Hill Schools are among the very top in the state and in the nation. The District has worked hard to get there and that means that there is nothing average about this community or of their expectations for their schools. The District is proud that the community provides the resources students need so that teachers can provide learners with what they need so that they can be tomorrow's leaders.

## Continued Conservative Fiscal Stewardship

Indian Hill Schools operates in an excellent and conservative manner. Ensuring the best for students means that the district continues to find better ways of doing business and of diverting more dollars to the classroom for students.

Already the District has refunded bonds to decrease interest payments over time; restructured transportation, legal, and other expenses to save money; and offered a voluntary transition for some staff members to a high-deductible health plan saving both those staff members and the District money on premium expenditures.

Looking ahead, we will continue to seek efficiencies in operations and facility maintenance.



Indian Hill  
Classroom  
in 1993



Present Day Indian Hill Classroom

A Message from

# The Board of Education

Dear Indian Hill School District Residents,

We, your elected members of the Indian Hill School District Board of Education, are writing to begin a dialogue about the financial well being of our consistently outstanding district.

As IHEVSD community members, we value excellence and fully understand that "you get what you pay for." We all see this play out in every area of our lives - at work, at home, and in our communities.

As school board members, we have a responsibility to both our students and our community. We must ensure that our schools provide the excellence we, as residents, expect. That means both educationally and financially.

We have an obligation to make sure our students have the ability and opportunity to compete with the top students in the state, the nation, and the world. As evidenced by the myriad opportunities and course offerings made available to all students, by the colleges and universities that seek our students for their own institutions, and by the scholarships offered to our graduating seniors, we are fulfilling our promise of enduring excellence. You can find our graduates throughout the globe, in boardrooms, staterooms, and as leaders in their fields. They are high-functioning contributors to their communities and make us all proud!

We also have an obligation to ensure our schools demonstrate conservative fiscal stewardship. For example, in 1998, we made the decision not to pursue a renewal of our operating levy that was approved by voters in 1993. The Board felt this was in the best interest of taxpayers and that our schools could reduce costs in some areas, for at least a limited amount of time, without sacrificing the quality of education provided. When this decision was made, it was clear these cost reductions would not be sustainable long-term but were prudent in the short-term.

There are some very real needs ahead for our schools. The Indian Hill Exempted Village School District belongs to the community, and we feel it is important that we are transparent and open with you about all the things our schools are facing. That way, we can arrive together at what we want the future to hold for an Indian Hill School District student and for our community.

As the next steps in this ongoing process, we invite you to get involved and to participate as the District moves forward with research and planning for a new middle school, as well as other facilities improvements. We welcome the involvement of every resident and taxpayer who wishes to provide input and keep abreast of this process. We know that the more people we have involved, the stronger our ultimate decisions will become.

Thank you for your trust and support of our Indian Hill Schools and students. Thank you, also, for being our partner in helping to manage this challenging balance of fiscal responsibility and educational, social, and environmental excellence our stakeholders expect.

Sincerely,

Indian Hill Exempted Village School District Board of Education  
Mrs. Nancy Aichholz, President  
Mrs. Kim Martin Lewis, Vice President  
Mr. Lyle Fiore, Member  
Dr. Eddie Hooker, Member  
Mrs. Elizabeth Johnston, Member



# #IH Promise

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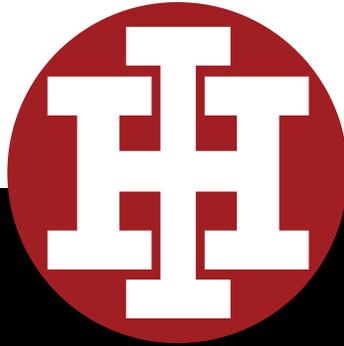
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 [@ihschools](https://twitter.com/ihschools)

 [Indianhillschools](https://www.instagram.com/Indianhillschools)

## indianhillschools.org

The Indian Hill Exempted Village School District serves students in the Village of Indian Hill, Kenwood, parts of Sycamore and Symmes Township, Camp Dennison and a small portion of Loveland.



# #IH Promise