



Madeira Board of Education, 7465 Loannes Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45243
Kenji Matsudo, Superintendent
Dave Bergan, Assistant Superintendent,
Diane Nichols, Public Relations

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Madeira Schools Resolve to Help District's Senior Citizens

The Madeira City Schools' Board of Education is again reaching out to the state's elected officials in an attempt to help district's senior citizens with their tax bills. At its January 11 meeting, the board passed a resolution that takes objects to the state's changes in its Homestead Exemption Act.

Ohio's Homestead Exemption Program allows senior citizens to reduce their property tax bills by shielding some of the market value of their homes from taxation. The exemption, which takes the form of a credit, allows qualifying homeowners to exempt up to \$25,000 of the market value of their homes from all local property taxes. Through the Homestead Exemption, a home with a market value of \$100,000 is billed as if it is worth \$75,000. Residents also had to be at least 65 years old.

Changes were made to the Homestead Exemption program which eliminated some senior citizens from taking advantage of the program. New participants are now subject to eligibility based on means testing, while current qualifying residents are allowed to retain the benefit without meeting the new, tighter standards. In 2021 the exemption will only be available to those otherwise eligible taxpayers with household incomes that do not exceed \$34,200, and are 65 years of age.

"Senior citizens we've met with have told us they support the school district and all that we do to educate our students. However, they feel that the recent legislation eliminating the 12.5% rollback on new levies and the modification to the homestead exemption continues to affect their ability to continue to fund the financial needs of Madeira schools," said Emily Hauser, Madeira City Schools Treasurer/CFO. "They need us to help them have a voice at the state level, and this resolution is our way of providing that voice."



Madeira's resolution seeks to change the law to basically "exempt" senior citizens from the HB59 elimination of the 12.5% rollback on new levies, and go back to the prior Homestead Exemption program that did not have a means test that limits eligibility. The resolution will be sent to Ohio's representatives, governor, and other elected political leaders in the state. The five members of Madeira's Board of Education are President Richard Palmer, Vice President Steve Bernicke, and members Paula Andruss, Dave Eberly, and Ryan Lex.

*Madeira Superintendent Kenji Matsudo meeting
with local senior citizens at last year's Community
Coffee*