



# “Snapshots” of activities & headlines from around the district.

# SNIPPETS



Vol. 1, Issue 3

Dear Westerville School District Residents:

Our Westerville City Schools welcome students back for another year of learning and achievement. We are thrilled with their return and with the energy and pride they bring to the schools and this community.

However, planning and work in the school district is ongoing throughout the summer. We continue to update the five-year financial forecast, work on the current budget and meet with the school board regarding the significant operational and fiscal needs ahead for our school district.

The school board has spent a considerable amount of time deliberating the details regarding a **November 2009 operating issue**. Recognizing that the needs of our district are very real and critical, this edition of *Snippets* deviates from its traditional format. Instead of providing a summary of school and district headlines from the past three months, it is designed to help you understand our Westerville City Schools' financial status.

Enclosed you will find information on the **\$10.9 million in cuts and financial adjustments already made in order to keep our promise to voters and provide a balanced budget through June 30, 2010**. In addition, you will find information on what a November 2009 operating levy means to students, families and our community.

Please take some time to learn about this important issue and contact school personnel at [LevyNov09@wcsoh.org](mailto:LevyNov09@wcsoh.org) with any questions that you may have. You also can visit our web site at [www.wcsoh.org](http://www.wcsoh.org) to obtain additional information. Special thanks to OhioHealth for its continued partnership with our schools and for underwriting this publication for our community.

Sincerely,

*Dr. Dan Good*  
Dr. Dan Good, Superintendent

## TIGHTENING OUR BELTS



**DISTRICT MAKES  
\$10.9 MILLION IN CUTS,  
FISCAL ADJUSTMENTS  
TO KEEP PROMISE**

The Westerville City Schools are accustomed to operating efficiently and effectively. Each year, the district seeks and finds better ways of doing business.

“We’re extremely lean,” stated Dr. Dan Good, superintendent. “We challenge ourselves to seek and enact cost savings while offering our communities and students a high quality education. It’s how we do business.”

The current economy has made this work more difficult. Declining local revenues and the state budget have caused the district to reduce planned programmatic and personnel expenditures. Westerville City Schools have proactively made financial adjustments of \$10.9 million over the past 15 months. This has allowed the district to maintain a balanced budget through June 30, 2010, which keeps the commitment it made to the community when the last operating levy passed in May 2006.

“With the passage of the last operating levy, we promised voters that those revenues would fund district operations for three years,” stated Treasurer Scott Gooding. “We have kept that promise and made the tough budgetary decisions in order to do so.”

Good noted that any further reductions will have a significant impact on programs and services available to students and the community.

“The district’s current five-year financial forecast shows that unless an operating levy is passed in November 2009, approximately \$14 million in budget cuts will need to be enacted in order to offset the deficit,” Good explained.

## WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED OF VOTERS?

The Westerville City School District Board of Education is asking voters to take an operating levy from 1972 and one from 1979 and restore them back to their original voted millage. The amount of revenue that the district receives from those issues has essentially been frozen because of an Ohio law passed in 1976 called House Bill 920 (HB920). Every three years the county auditor determines the value of taxable property for each school district. If inflation has caused the value of the property to increase, the auditor reduces the millage approved by voters so schools do not receive additional money. HB920 makes it difficult for school districts to meet inflationary cost increases and is one of the primary reasons why they must return to voters on average every two to three years to request additional revenue.

The 1972 levy was approved for 1.6 mills and the 1979 levy was approved for 9.8 mills. When added together, the total voted millage for these two issues was 11.4 mills. Because of HB920, these issues have been reduced to 3.43 mills. The district is asking residents to restore those two issues back to their originally-approved voted millage totaling 11.4 mills. This will provide enough new revenue to fund district operations for two years through Fiscal Year 2012. Though the required ballot language will state that the district is asking voters to approve 11.4 mills of tax, what voters must remember is that they already are paying 3.43 effective mills on the issues to be restored to their original value. As a result, the net increase is only 7.97 mills, not 11.4 mills. The cost works out to \$244 a year per \$100,000 of property value, or about \$1 per day for a home valued at \$150,000.

# KEEPING THE PROMISE: *Enacting Cost Savings*

Strong and steady fiscal stewardship of public funds is critical to an effectively run school district. It allows the Westerville City School District (WCSD) to focus its resources on the students in the classroom while providing a tremendous value to our community. Our schools do this everyday.

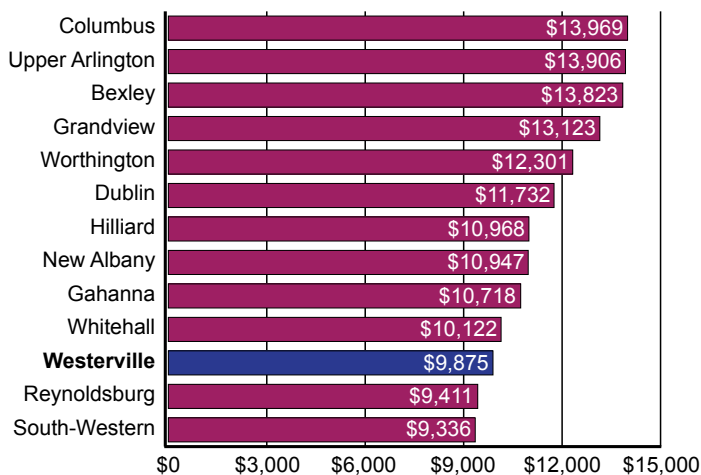
The WCSD has worked hard to keep its promise of making the May 2006 operating levy fund district operations for three years and have a balanced budget through June 30, 2010. This meant making difficult decisions in how we provide a high quality education to students and a great value to residents during challenging economic times.

Already, our Westerville Schools have enacted more than \$10.9 million in financial adjustments over the last 15 months. These adjustments to date (listed in the chart at right) helped offset the loss of revenue that resulted from current economic conditions at the local, state and national levels.

Our staff continue to align their work and budgets with the district's goals and initiatives. Effectively allocating resources ensures that we are preparing students to contribute to the competitive and changing world in which we live...our mission

## JUST HOW LEAN?

Our schools operate in a lean and fiscally responsible manner. In fact, our FY08 cost per pupil of \$9,875 is below the state average and \$1,821 below the average of the other Franklin County city school districts.



In addition, consider the fact that:

- Of our total operating budget, we spend less toward salaries and benefits (81.80%) than the average of our state similar school districts (84.33%). (FY08)
- Westerville's student-to-teacher ratio ranks 14th out of 16 Franklin County school districts.
- In addition, our student-to-administrator ratio ranks 15th out of 16 Franklin County school districts and is 598th out of 609 Ohio school districts for which this ratio is calculated.

General Fund Budget Adjustments	\$ Impact
<b>Revenue</b>	
Use of one-time funds (construction settlement and self-funded insurance dollars)	\$3,508,000
Use of additional federal stimulus dollars for special education expenses	\$1,306,000
<b>Expenditures (Position reductions expressed in Full Time Equivalents)</b>	
Teachers for projected enrollment growth (-8.2)*	\$548,139
Teachers for additional academic intervention at the elementary level (-3)*	\$190,627
Teachers for additional high school course requests (-3)*	\$190,627
Speech therapist (-1)*	\$72,008
Teacher for adaptive physical education (-1)*	\$72,009
Teachers for class size reductions (-2)*	\$127,085
Elementary guidance counselors (-2)*	\$144,017
Support personnel for Enrollment and Family Resource Center (-2.2)*	\$93,509
Information Technology employee (-1)*	\$67,622
Teacher reductions via attrition for 2009-10 (-4)	\$421,043
District-level curriculum coordinator (-1)	\$75,482
Reduce administrative services expenses	\$73,171
Reduce certificated internal substitute cost	\$11,267
Reduce projected department budgets	\$971,000
Transfer copier leases to capital improvement fund	\$1,223,000
Charge FY09 equipment to capital improvement fund	\$573,000
Transfer FY10 equipment to capital improvement fund	\$217,000
Hold district level administrative positions as vacant (-2)	\$111,000
Renegotiate Educational Service Center agreement	\$1,000,000
* Indicates reduction of planned position(s), not a decrease of current staffing levels within these particular academic or operational areas.	
<b>Total financial adjustments since May 2008 = \$10,995,606</b>	

## WHAT DOES AN OPERATING ISSUE PAY FOR?



Operating issues pay for a school district's day-to-day expenses such as supplies, utilities, employee compensation, vehicle fuel and curricular programs. The Westerville City School District spends less toward salaries and benefits (81.80%) than the average of similar school districts in the state (84.33%). When examining 2008 salary comparison data for teachers in Franklin County's 16 school districts, Westerville ranks no higher than sixth and as low as twelfth across

all of the different education and experience levels reflected by the salary schedule. In fact, over the past eight years, the district's base salary for teachers has dropped from being fifth to being tenth out of 16 Franklin County school districts. The no-new-taxes issue passed in May 2009 will pay for Capital Improvement expenses such as facility repairs/renovations, technology, textbooks, etc. and cannot be used to pay for day-to-day operational costs.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** It is the policy of the Westerville City School District not to discriminate, in violation of federal or state law, on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, or disability in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in any service, program, or activity sponsored by the Westerville City Schools.

## MAINTAINING EXCELLENCE: *Keeping Value in Our Schools*

In the wake of declining revenues caused by the nation's economy, the district has enacted more than \$10.9 million in financial adjustments and effectively minimized the effect on students and the classroom. The need for a November 2009 operating levy is critical and very real. With passage of an operating levy in November, collection would not begin until January 2010.

At stake in November is more than 10 percent of the district's operating budget. This revenue is needed in order to maintain current academic offerings for students and the excellent education the district is able to offer.

"In Ohio's system of school funding, the local voters determine the type of schools that they want," said Dr. Dan Good, superintendent. "We've worked tirelessly to address the challenges caused by a weakened economy and have worked to keep our expenses low, enact deep cost savings and cause minimal impact to our academic program. We're now to the point where any further reductions will impact students and the classroom. Additional revenue is critical if we are to continue providing an excellent education to our students, services to our community and value to our residents."

### State Requirements: New Revenue or Cuts

School districts are required to operate with a balanced budget. In order to maintain a balanced budget, districts either need to increase revenue or reduce expenses. When a school district passes a tax levy, it cannot begin collecting those new revenues until January of the following calendar year. If the operating levy passes in November 2009, the district will be able to begin collecting new revenues in January 2010. However, if the levy does not pass in November, the earliest the district would be able to collect any new revenues would be January 2011, and that, too, would require passage of an operating levy sometime during calendar year 2010. In other words, **without passage of the November 3, 2009, operating levy, the district will lose an entire year of potential collections.** In order to offset that loss and to keep the budget balanced in accordance with state law, the district is required to enact a list of reductions beginning as early as the second semester of the upcoming 2009-10 school year.

*With passage  
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January 2010.*

"The state requires schools to either show new revenue or produce a list of budget adjustments that demonstrate how it will maintain a balanced budget," Good explained. "While these adjustments are often perceived as threats, the reality is that this is how districts must operate fiscally. Voters should be provided a very honest and true picture of what's at stake should their district have to begin reducing its program toward state minimum requirements.

Having a complete picture is necessary for residents to be able to make an informed decision on whether or not to support a school district's request for additional revenue."

The Westerville City Schools Board of Education is currently considering a list of budget reductions totaling approximately \$14 million and is discussing those reductions at public board meetings. In some cases, potential reductions include going to state minimums in several areas and will greatly affect services and opportunities for students. Once finalized, this list will be available to district residents via the district's Web site and published through a variety of other sources.

## WESTERVILLE CITY SCHOOLS RECOGNIZED FOR FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

The Westerville City School District seeks and implements best practices both academically and operationally. Regarding its fiscal operations, the district is recognized by independent, third-party sources as offering sound fiscal management.

### Third-Party Validation

#### Fiscal Reporting


- WCSD consistently earns "clean" audits on its fiscal operations. This means that the district follows all accounting rules appropriately and that its financial reports are an accurate representation of the district's financial condition.
- WCSD regularly earns awards and recognition for excellence in financial reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) and the Association of School Business Officials (ASBO).

#### Fiscal Efficiency

- One way to view efficiency is through third party review. Moody's and Standard & Poor's (S&P) awarded the district with two of their highest possible ratings, Aa3 and AA-, respectively.
- Moody's and S&P are considered standard benchmarks for rating the financial soundness of a private and governmental entity. These high ratings, in turn, save taxpayers money.

### Resident FACT Committee

- WCSD uses a resident-based, third-party committee called the Financial Accountability Community Taskforce (FACT) to review the district's expenditure of revenues from the May 2006 operating levy. Reports from FACT have been very positive with the district earning 30 "green lights," which is the committee's highest rating, and two "yellow lights." The yellow light "cautions" were issued as the effects of the nation's slumping economy were becoming clear for the district. In its September 2008 report, FACT recommended that the district should delay the hiring of positions scheduled to be added in 2009 and 2010, and that doing so "will help ensure the WCSD board's pledge to the community that a new operating levy will not go on the ballot until late 2009 to take effect 2010." After much consideration and listening to the community, the district did just that.



Board of Education  
Kevin Hoffman, President; Kristi Robbins, Vice President;  
Cindy Crowe; Jeff Gale; Denise Pope

District Leadership  
Dr. J. Daniel Good, Superintendent/CEO;  
Scott Gooding, Treasurer/CFO;  
Dr. Chris Wanner, Asst. Supt./Chief of Administrative Services;  
Diane Conley, Chief of Academic Affairs;  
Mark Hershiser, Chief of Community Relations

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Lynne Maslowski, Community Engagement Coordinator

# FIRMLY ON-TRACK WITH PROMISE: *November Operating Issue Critical to District*

During the May 2006 operating levy campaign, district leaders committed to voters that they would make revenue from that issue fund district operations for three years and maintain a balanced budget through June 30, 2010. School district voters, in conjunction with community and business leaders, reviewed the district's finances and determined that the district was operating efficiently and doing the most with the dollars that it had. The need was real and worthy of support.

In Ohio, local voter support of school levies is critical, especially in districts like Westerville where the district receives less in state funds than the average Ohio district.

Throughout these years and especially in recent months, the district has continued to keep a proactive and watchful eye over the factors affecting the district's budget.

After much deliberation and consideration, school board members determined earlier this calendar year that out of respect for its residents and taxpayers they would delay the request for additional operating revenue as long as possible. That time is now.

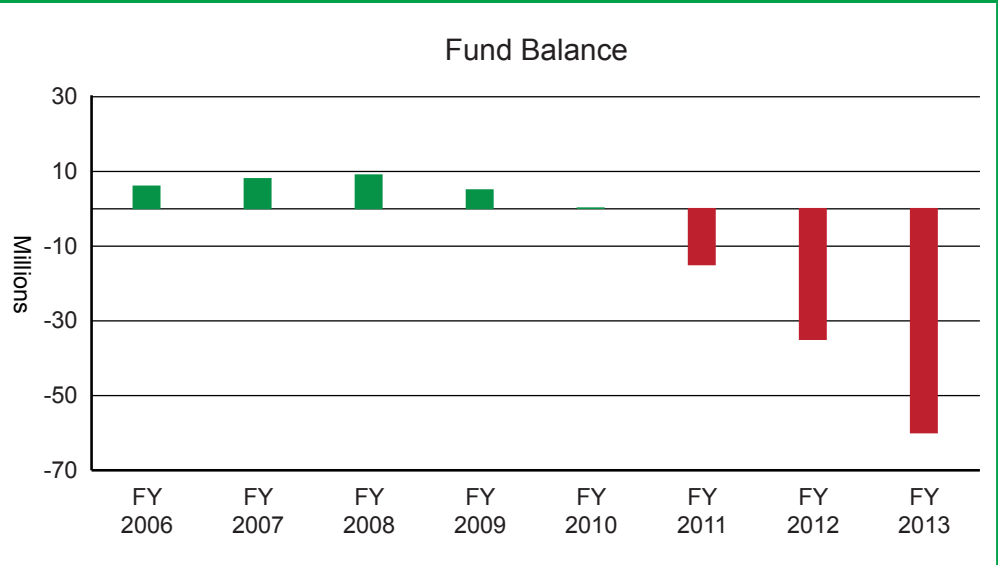
The issue to appear on the November 3, 2009, ballot requests the replacement of two existing operating levies (one from 1972 and one from 1979) and asks voters to return them back to their originally-voted, combined millage of 11.4 mills.

"We currently are collecting only 3.43 mills on those two issues due to millage roll-back provisions found in state law," said Treasurer/CFO Scott Gooding. "Approval of the issue would result in a net increase of 7.97 mills, or approximately \$244 per \$100,000 of home value. For the owner of a \$150,000 home it amounts to around \$1 per day to maintain educational excellence."

Superintendent Dr. Dan Good said this levy request is actually two mills less than projected this past January.

"We would have needed to ask for more had we not subsequently received federal stimulus dollars and less-than-expected reductions in state aid," Good explained. "Also, the nearly \$11 million in financial adjustments to our operations since May 2009 have helped us offset the loss of revenue that resulted from current economic conditions and will help us keep the promise of a balanced budget through June 30, 2010."

## Financial Forecast



Ohio requires school districts to maintain a balanced budget. District officials pledged during the May 2006 operating levy that those dollars would fund operations through Fiscal Year (FY) 2010. In this weakened economy, officials have enacted \$10.9 million in financial adjustments and reductions in order to keep that promise. The district projects a General Fund balance of only \$6,150 at the end of FY10. Without passage of a November 2009 operating levy, district officials will be required to make an additional \$14 million in reductions to balance the projected deficit for FY11. Even deeper cuts would be required to balance the budget in future years should new revenues not be secured.

## Declining Revenues Due to Economy

On the local level, Westerville Schools are seeing a sharp increase in property tax delinquencies and an overall decrease in property tax revenue. These factors have greatly affected the district's budget. Additionally, the district receives 35.84 percent of its revenue from the state. In the latest state budget approved in July, state funding for the district actually decreased because it is considered by the state to be a "wealthy" district in terms of its property valuation.

## Direct Allocation of Resources to Students

Focusing funds on the classroom is critical to offering an excellent education and efficient operations. Among the district's many initiatives are those that challenge all staff to align their work and spending with the district's academic achievement goals. Building and department budgets are aligned to the district's Strategic Plan goals and

initiatives, which district leaders developed last year in conjunction with students, staff and the community. Employees are held accountable and must provide data and other evidence that demonstrate the results of their efforts.

## High Student Achievement Trends

Our schools are demonstrating improved trends of student achievement. This is readily seen by the district's overall performance on the State Report Card. After years of being rated "Effective," WCSD has now earned an "Excellent" designation two of the past three years and is among the top third of Ohio's school districts in terms of its rating. Also, the district's Performance Index score has increased to 99.9. This means that more students are scoring at the advanced and accelerated levels on state tests, while fewer are scoring at the basic and limited levels.

*School board members determined earlier this calendar year that out of respect for residents and taxpayers they would delay the request for additional operating revenue as long as possible. That time is now.*

# WCSD: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE, VALUE AND SERVICE

The Westerville City School District (WCSD) spends less per pupil than the state average and is rated “Excellent” by the state. Our schools provide a tremendous value to residents and offer excellent academics and opportunities to students. For example:

- WCSD received the “What Parents Want” Award from SchoolMatch for the 16th consecutive year for providing the curriculum and academic rigor parents desire most for their children.
- Eight Westerville high school students were identified as Semifinalists in the 54th annual National Merit Scholarship Program and seven of them went on to be named National Merit Scholarship Finalists.
- Twenty Westerville high school students were named National Merit Commended Students; two are semifinalists in the 2009 National Achievement Scholarship Program for black American high school seniors; and two have been named Outstanding Participants in the National Achievement Scholarship Program.
- Ninety-five students earned Advanced Placement (AP) Scholar Awards in recognition of their exceptional achievement on AP exams.
- With attainment rates higher than the global average, 39 district students over the past two years have earned the prestigious International Baccalaureate Diploma at Westerville South High School. The high school has been recognized by both Newsweek and U.S. News & World Report as one of the best high schools in America.
- After being challenged by their coach to find a way to give back to the community, the Westerville North High School girls lacrosse team raised more than \$40,000 last year to purchase a new wheelchair lift van for Kelly Hanlin. Kelly is an Otterbein College student and WNHS alumnus who has Spinal Muscular Atrophy. She has been confined to a wheelchair for most of her life; her old van had more than 120,000 miles on it, required constant repair, and when it was not working, she was confined to her home.
- In conjunction with Friends of Alum Creek & Tributaries, Westerville Central High School students this past spring cleaned four major areas around the school: the deciduous woods, the basin, the intermittent stream and storm water drainage ditches along the school’s property line. From these areas students removed 30 tires, more than 20 bags of trash, several hundred pounds of rusted fence wire, sheet metal, wood planks, and miscellaneous debris. The work is part of a vision to improve environmental education at the school by creating a Westerville Central Nature Preserve for the benefit of thousands of current and future students.
- Two-hundred-seventy students representing every district elementary school participated in the 2009 WCSD Elementary Leadership Summit. The summit develops students’ skills in problem solving, decision making, communication, and team building. Participants put these newly-honed skills to work as they develop service projects to be implemented at their home school and/or community. Students then report on the outcomes of their project during the spring leadership summit session.



- The Turbulent Typhoons, a Blendon Middle School robotics engineering team, returned home with the second place Teamwork Award trophy from the 2009 FIRST LEGO League “Climate Connections” World Festival in Atlanta, Georgia, held April 15-18, 2009. The award signifies the team’s exceptional accomplishments in the areas of problem solving and team dynamics, clear roles and responsibilities, gracious professionalism, confidence and enthusiasm, and FLL core values. Judges said the Teamwork Award is one of the most difficult to receive, ranking second only to the overall Championship Award.
- A team consisting of two Heritage Middle School students won First Place in the sixth grade division of the national *What If* writing competition. Their submission answered the question, “What if you, as a middle school student, were part of the first space generation living in an orbiting space habitat?” *What If* is a series of annual national competitions designed to spark interest in science, technology, engineering and math with the goal of encouraging students to use their imagination for innovative ideas. In winning their division, the Heritage students earned a cash scholarship prize, certificates, *What If* T-shirts, and recognition on the *What If* competition web site.
- Thirty-nine pupils earned a Superior rating during the annual Walnut Springs Middle School Science Fair, which qualified them to participate in the Central District Science Fair. This was the largest number of qualifiers Walnut Springs has ever sent to the Central District competition. In addition, the Ohio Academy of Science selected six science teachers from Walnut Springs Middle School to receive Governor’s Awards for Excellence in Youth Science Opportunities for their accomplishments during the prior academic year.
- Two Genoa Middle School students last summer received Best Project for the State of Ohio Junior Division at the National History Day competition. Their project was “WASP Women Air Force Service Pilots of World War II.” Genoa also fielded a second team that earned its place in the national competition for a project entitled “Bloody Harlan.” The contest encourages students to understand the historical importance of their chosen topics and asks them to explore time and place, cause and effect, change over time, and impact and significance. Participants could develop papers, performances, exhibits, web sites, and documentary presentations and projects for entry into the competition.

As evidenced by this sampling of recent accomplishments, WCSD provides students with an opportunity to excel in the basics and beyond. In addition to providing a solid foundation in academic fundamentals, we help students become leaders. Our professional educators teach students about the importance of “paying it forward” through service learning and community service projects. We challenge students through unique opportunities that develop their critical thinking skills and creative approaches to problem solving. We provide the things that prepare our students for the future and to contribute to the competitive world in which we live. We have built and want to continue the momentum that is taking our district closer to achieving our shared vision: **to be the benchmark of educational excellence.**

*The production and distribution of SNIPPETS is underwritten by a partnership with OhioHealth and other alternative revenue sources.*

## Primary Care for all Your Family Needs



OhioHealth Westerville Medical Campus is home to three primary care physician practices, providing you and your family with a wide-range of preventative and healthcare services, close to home.

### Max Sports Medicine

- Anthony Ewald, MD
- Board-certified in internal medicine, pediatrics and sports medicine
- Provides comprehensive healthcare for primary care and sports medicine for all ages
- Call (614) 588-0020 to schedule an appointment

### Mid Ohio Internal Medicine

- David McClure, MD, and Genevieve Bates, MD
- Board certified in internal medicine
- Offers comprehensive healthcare for ages 12 and up – from everyday healthcare and prevention needs to management of chronic conditions
- Call (614) 533-3475 to schedule an appointment

### Westerville Primary Care

- Marvin Im, DO
- Board certified in family medicine
- Provides holistic healthcare for all ages, including everyday healthcare and prevention needs as well as alternative and complimentary medicine
- Call (614) 533-3354 to schedule an appointment

## Comprehensive Cardiac Care

OhioHealth Westerville Medical Campus brings the expertise of McConnell Heart and Health Services to your neighborhood. You can schedule an appointment for the following services without a physician referral:

### Preventive Cardiology Program

A multi-specialty team with experience in cardiovascular medicine, hypertension, lipid management, exercise physiology and behavioral health provides you with:

- Specialized blood testing to measure biomarkers of cardiovascular disease
- Comprehensive evaluation by a cardiologist, nurse and nutritionist
- Diagnostic testing (e.g. stress testing, coronary artery calcium scan) if warranted
- Determination of the quantitative risk of developing cardiovascular disease by integrating algorithms, blood test results and additional cardiac diagnostic tests
- Resources and programming to assist with lifestyle modifications, including educational classes, smoking cessation, exercise and nutrition counseling

Call (614) 566-3150 to schedule an appointment.

### Nutrition Services

We can help you create a nutritional plan to fit your goals. Our registered dietitians provide nutrition consultations for the following:

- General nutrition
- Weight management
- Diabetes, lipid and blood pressure management
- Sports nutrition
- Pregnancy nutrition

Call (614) 566-2700 to schedule an appointment.

We're proud to welcome the Westerville City Schools Enrollment and Family Resource Center to our campus! Now Westerville families have a convenient and easy-to-access location for all their enrollment needs.

Together we are  **OhioHealth**

*Together we are a faith-based, not-for-profit family of leading healthcare providers:*

RIVERSIDE METHODIST HOSPITAL ■ GRANT MEDICAL CENTER ■ DOCTORS HOSPITAL ■ GRADY MEMORIAL HOSPITAL ■ DUBLIN METHODIST HOSPITAL  
DOCTORS HOSPITAL – NELSONVILLE ■ HARDIN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL ■ MARION GENERAL HOSPITAL ■ HOMEREACH ■ OHIOHEALTH NEIGHBORHOOD CARE