

JournalNews

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Fairfield schools, county at odds over RID

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HAMILTON — The Fairfield City School District and the Butler County administration are in dispute over which party should get the windfall created by a state funding loophole.

Several 30-year Residential Incentive Districts in Fairfield Township were approved by the county commissioners in June 2005 to capture tax money

generated from increased property value for the Bypass Ohio 4 widening project. The school district understood that it would receive 100 percent of the tax payments it would have if the RID was not in place, John Clemmons, the school district's attorney, told the commission Monday.

However, in other typical agreements — like one with Lakota Local School District — the county subtracts from the

payment the amount the district gets in additional funding from the state when a property value increase in the RID is exempted from the state's school funding formula. Since the district looks poorer to the state, the state sends more money. To compensate, the county keeps a greater share of the RID revenue for the project.

Yet, the clause for the subtraction is not included in the agreement with Fairfield schools.

"It does what it says and they would like it to say something else," Fairfield Superintendent Robert Farrell said. "It's going to be a significant impact over 30 years and if the school fund formula stays the same. Over 30 years it could mean millions of dollars."

The county commissioners have asked staff to project the impact in dollars and then the commission will decide how to negotiate.