



SCHOOL REPORT

Olmsted Falls School District

www.ofcs.net

January / February 2010

PASSAGE OF FIRST NEW OPERATING LEVY IN ELEVEN YEARS HELPS DISTRICT TO PRESERVE AND RESTORE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Thanks to the support of the Olmsted Community, the 8.7 mill operating levy on the February 2, 2010 election ballot for the Olmsted Falls School District met with success, passing by a margin of 54.5% for the levy and 45.5% against. While the District will not actually begin to receive any new money from this operating levy until January 2011, budget projections can begin to be adjusted accordingly and allow the District to slowly bring back some of the programs and services lost over the past 18 months.

In addition to ongoing cost-saving measures and efficiencies, District officials had already implemented a series of cuts that included the elimination of 10.5 teaching positions, the elimination of high school busing, the reduction of K-8 busing to State Minimum Requirements (2-mile walk zones), shortened hours of building operations, and other cost-cutting measures.

“It is a relief to be able to halt the dismantling of our outstanding school system,” said Board President Mr. Frank Pedicini. “We are grateful to the community for their support and are committed to continuing efforts to ensure that this District is run in the tradition of efficiency that our residents have come to expect.”

Without the infusion of these new operating dollars, the Olmsted Falls School District would have run out of money during the middle of the coming 2010-2011 school year. The new levy will generate \$4,742,114 in additional revenue annually for the District, which has experienced an enrollment increase of more than 28 percent since the passage of the last operating levy in February 1999.

At its regularly scheduled meeting held February 18, 2010, the Board of Education approved a revised 5-year forecast

prepared by the District Treasurer’s Office. The Board of Education also approved contract extensions with both the Olmsted Falls Education Association (certified staff) and the Ohio Association of Public School Employees (classified staff) to continue the base salary freezes and significant insurance concessions, previously negotiated last spring, for an additional six month period. Contracts with both associations originally set to expire at the end of the current school year, on June 30, 2010, have been extended through

December 31, 2010.

Revenue generated from the new operating levy is anticipated to keep the District financially solvent for a minimum of three years. The District’s revised 5-year financial forecast is available for review on the District website (www.ofcs.net).

What Comes Next?

“We look forward to slowly and thoughtfully rebuilding our District based on need,” said Board Vice-President Mr. Joseph Bertrand. “While the 8.7 mill levy will allow us to restore many of the items lost in recent months, we have, as a District, tightened our belts in a number of areas and intend to maintain those cost-savings wherever possible.”

Instructional Support

Of the 10.5 teaching positions eliminated, financial forecast assumptions allow for only four of those positions to be brought back - two positions will return for the coming 2010-2011 school year, one position will be added back for 2011-2012, and one position for 2012-2013. District administrators will determine what grade levels these teaching positions will return to as they assess each building’s needs at the end of the school year.

Continues on next page....



Levy Passage continued....

Transportation Services

As promised during the levy campaign, K-8 busing services were restored within three weeks of the levy's passage. On February 22, 2010, K-8 busing services were restored to the previous routing levels which were in place at the start of the school year. Because the District began this school year without high school busing, there were no routes in existence to revert back to in a quick and efficient manner. Therefore, high school busing services are not scheduled to return until the start of the 2010-2011 school year.

Transportation services is an area where District officials believe ongoing cost efficiencies can be achieved.

“The need to scale back our transportation services so drastically this school year has revealed areas where we can continue to achieve improved efficiency and cost-savings, even as services are restored,” said Director of Business Affairs Mr. Tim Atkinson.

For example, the District plans to maintain restrictions on Alternate Transportation Requests, requiring parents to select a single, designated alternate pick-up / drop-off location for their child. The implementation of half-mile walk zones to bus stops, put in place as part of the State

Minimum Requirements, is another area that will be closely examined.

“We will re-visit the concept of group bus stops for the 2010-2011 school year,” added Mr. Atkinson. “While we do not anticipate continuing the extended half-mile walk zones that were in place in January, there is certainly a happy medium that can be achieved in terms of group bus stops, which would have a significant impact on keeping costs down.”

Building Access

Buildings will resume prior hours of operation beginning March 1, 2010. Hours and access to buildings - for both school and community groups - had been significantly reduced in recent months. While hours will return to normal, the \$40/hour usage fee for weekend building use will stay in effect to ensure that use of District facilities by community groups continues to be cost-neutral for the District.

“As we begin to tend to the logistical matters that will put our District back together, we must not lose sight of the fact that our community has, in these difficult economic times, entrusted us with their financial support,” said Superintendent Dr. Todd F. Hoadley. “Our community expects us to continue to operate in our tradition of both excellence and efficiency, and we will continue to make cost-savings a top priority.”

DISTRICT FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM SELECTED AS STELLAR AWARD WINNER

The Olmsted Falls School District's Food Service Department has been selected as a Stellar Award Winner by the Ohio Department of Education for providing students with healthy choices in a pleasant eating environment. The ODE made their selection by evaluating the District's efforts and achievements in six areas including: type of meal service (breakfast and/or lunch); nutritional quality of meals served; availability of healthy a la carte and vending items; staff access to continuing education and training opportunities; success in providing a pleasant environment for students; and nutritional education aimed at students,

staff, parents and the community.

Olmsted Falls Schools is a leader among school food service programs for its priority on nutrition and its profitability. Director of Food Services, Mrs. Denise Tabar, was named Food Services Manager of the Year in 2007 by the Ohio Association of School Business Administrators. Mrs. Tabar recently collaborated with local PTA units to successfully apply for three mini-grants (of \$2,000 each) from the Ohio Department of Education to support parent education programs on the topic of childhood nutrition.

OFHS FORENSIC STUDENTS EARN COVETED SPOTS AT NATIONAL FINALS; MR. MERCER NAMED COACH OF THE YEAR FOR SPEECH AND DEBATE



OFHS Forensic Team members Max Miller and John Oravec competed in the National Forensics League's National District Tournament on February 20th - and both qualified to move on to the National Finals held in Kansas City, MO this June. Max Miller will compete in the Humorous Interpretation category; and John Oravec will compete in the Dramatic Interpretation category. This outstanding accomplishment by Max Miller and John Oravec is among many achievements by this year's Forensic Team. In addition to the accomplishments of team members, Forensics Advisor Mr. John Mercer was just named Speech & Debate Coach of the Year by the Cleveland District of the Ohio Speech League. Congratulations to Mr. Mercer, and best of luck to Max and John in Kansas City!

Pictured at left: High School Social Studies Teacher and Forensics Advisor Mr. John Mercer (center) stands proudly with National Forensics Tournament Qualifiers Max Miller (left) and John Oravec (right).

STATE-FUNDED MIDDLE SCHOOL EXPANSION PROJECT PROVIDES HANDS-ON LEARNING FOR STUDENTS THROUGH “JUNIOR CORE” PROGRAM



Regency Construction Services President **Turi Rivera** (2nd from left) stands next to Senior Project Manager **Jeffrey Fullerman** surrounded by one of the five student teams participating in the Regency's innovative Junior Core Program.

Lakewood-based Regency Construction Services is currently serving as the Construction Management firm on the Olmsted Falls School District's **completely State-funded \$7.7 million expansion project** at Olmsted Falls Middle School. As the project broke ground this past fall, Regency Construction Services approached Principal Mark Kurz with a unique opportunity for students to get engaged in the construction project. **Regency Construction Services' Junior Core Program** provides students an opportunity to learn about the construction project taking place in their own district and the jobs performed by the people who are working together to expand their school building. Interested students wrote essays as part of the application process to be selected to participate.

Twenty students were selected and placed on teams mirroring those involved in an actual school construction project:

Construction Manager, Architect, School District Administrators and Board members, the Ohio School Facilities Commission, and the Contractors. Since October, the Junior Core participants have had an opportunity to come together for several hours each month for hands-on activities and events, including tours of the working construction site, and the creation of their own micro-construction project (with Legos!) where teams worked to design, budget, purchase materials - on time and on budget! This innovative project will continue through the completion of the Middle School expansion project this fall.



Regency Construction Services President (back, right) and Senior Project Manager look on as a student team presents their final project in the Lego construction competition.

BROWNS WIDE RECEIVER MIKE FURREY VISITS DISTRICT TO HELP PROMOTE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ACTIVE, EATING HEALTHY AND SETTING GOALS



Cleveland Browns wide receiver **Mike Furrey** helped serve up breakfast to Olmsted Falls Middle School students in February as part of an initiative to help tackle childhood obesity.

During his appearance, Furrey joined students for breakfast in the Middle School cafetorium – even pitching in at the milk station, where he served up both milk and autographs to excited students. Following breakfast in the cafetorium, Furrey spoke to a packed gymnasium as all 6th, 7th and 8th graders got the opportunity to hear his motivational words.

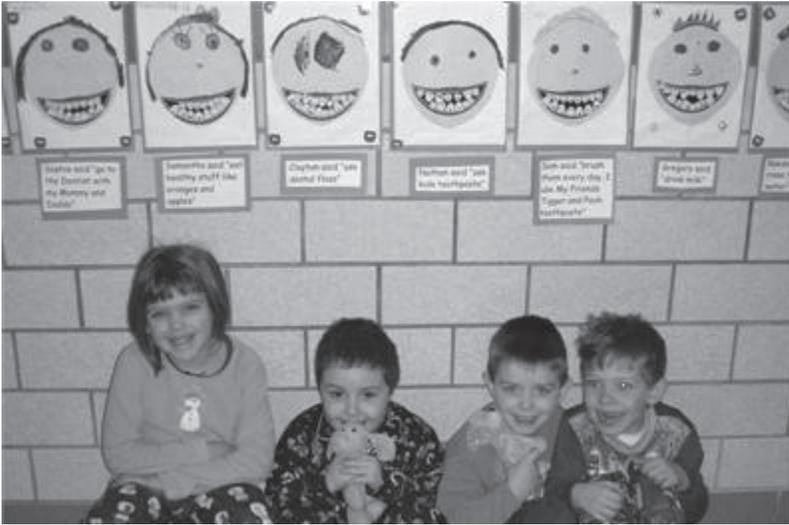
“Our students were excited by the opportunity to hear Mr. Furrey speak,” said Middle School Principal Mark Kurz. “He delivered an important message to our students about the importance of setting goals, and how nutrition and exercise play an important role, which is a perfect compliment to our ongoing student wellness activities.”



Furrey's stop at Olmsted Falls Middle School was one of several in a series of special appearances in connection with “Fuel Up to Play 60,” a new initiative aimed at tackling childhood obesity through healthy food choices and daily physical activity. The schools Furrey is visiting are just several of more than 3,000 Ohio elementary, middle and high schools across Ohio participating in the program, which equips youth ambassadors with information about healthy eating and physical activity strategies to teach their classmates. Each school enrolled in the program participates in numerous activities tailored to their school that revolve around tracking daily healthy behaviors to win prizes and rewards throughout the program.

Furrey's appearances are made possible by the Children's Hunger Alliance, the Mike Furrey Foundation and the American Dairy Association.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER STUDENTS CELEBRATE DENTAL HEALTH WEEK



Young Bulldogs at ECC pose for a picture in their PJs underneath self-portraits during Dental Health Week.

Students at the ECC celebrated super dental hygiene in February with a series of fun and clever activities coordinated by the Early Childhood PTA in collaboration with our kindergarten teachers.

Some of the activities the students enjoyed were:

- Writing about what the Tooth Fairy does with the teeth she takes
- Decorating a self-portrait with fun teeth/mouth stickers and writing about good dental hygiene
- A visit from a local dentist to share about proper brushing and dental care
- Toothbrush Exchange - students brought in their old toothbrush and received a dental goodie bag with a new toothbrush
- Coloring Contest
- Pajama Day to be reminded of brushing in the morning and at night

MIDDLE SCHOOL AWARDED \$1,000 GRANT TO HOST "ACTIVITY DAY"

The Physical Education Department at Olmsted Falls Middle School was awarded a \$1,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) for their innovative proposal to promote walking and bicycling to get around the community, instead of riding by car, by hosting a special "Activity Day" event for students. More than 800 students participated in the event, which included a variety of activities designed to improve their cardiovascular fitness and endurance levels, as well as to demonstrate that exercise can be enjoyable and should be participated in more often around their community. Students were also encouraged to pledge to walk and/or ride their bike to their after school and weekend activities, instead of getting a ride. Approximately 120 students were awarded prizes for their participation in a selected activity. Prizes awarded were ones that could be used while being physically active in the community (t-shirts, water bottles, I-pod shuffles, I-tunes gift cards). ***Special thanks to ODOT for making this motivational event possible!***



Congratulations to the winners of the "Activity Day" Essay Contest (pictured from left to right): Madison Morin (6th), Joe Fudale (8th) and Riley Burton (7th). Each student was awarded an I-pod Shuffle for their winning entry.

OFHS SENIOR ALEX NEW NAMED NATIONAL MERIT FINALIST



OFHS senior Alex New has been named a 2010 National Merit Finalist. Approximately 1.5 million U.S. high school students vie for National Merit recognition each year. Only 15,000 achieve the prestigious status of Finalist each year. *Outstanding accomplishment Alex!*

SIXTY PARENTS SHARE CAREERS WITH FALLS-LENOX THIRD GRADERS

Third graders had some special visitors on January 29th - sixty special visitors to be exact! Falls-Lenox welcomed sixty parents to the building for its annual Career Day. This year more than 50 different careers were represented. This year's Career Day was also linked with the third grade economics unit which involved the students asking specific questions regarding the services provided, competitors, and goods. The goal for Career Day is not only to help bring real life meaning to what they are learning in economics, but also to motivate students to do well in school by seeing the connection between their learning today and their careers in the future.

A LETTER TO OUR COMMUNITY

Dear Residents of the Olmsted Community:

It is with great appreciation that we write to express our sincere thanks to you for your continuing support of our educational system. Historically, members of this community have made the education of their youth a major priority. In 1916, the residents of our community were the first in Cuyahoga County to consolidate all of their one-room schools into a single, comprehensive building, thereby enhancing the quality and efficiency of the educational program.

With the passage of the February 2010 operating levy, you have continued this legacy of commitment to educational excellence for our children by generating the funds needed to keep pace with our growing student population and increasing levels of unfunded mandates. Since the passage of the last operating levy more than eleven years ago, the student population in Olmsted Falls Schools has increased by more than 28 percent.

The Board and Administration of the Olmsted Falls School system have the utmost respect for our fellow residents of the Olmsted community. **Efficiency** and **Excellence** will continue to be the hallmarks of our District. We will continue to find ways to tighten our belt and operate as efficiently as possible, while always striving to provide the highest quality education for our children.

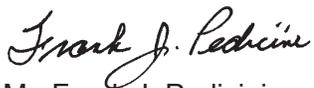
The new monies generated by passage of the February 2010 levy will be received by our District beginning in January 2011. We look forward to the restoration of our District and to putting these new operating dollars to use for what you voted "yes" for - and that's making life better for kids.

Your financial gift allows us to keep our educational programs and services in tact, including extra-curricular activities that will be available to all students. Beyond the high quality instruction students receive in our classrooms, the availability of these athletic and extracurricular activities is a critical component in shaping well-balanced students and future citizens. So, again, we thank you and your community's students thank you.

In closing, we also commit to you continued transparency. We look forward to continuing to share District news with both parents and the greater community, and to answering questions that any residents may have about the operation of this outstanding District. Our Board Office is open Monday – Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and we always welcome your questions. You can reach the Board Office at 440-427-6000.

On behalf of the students, families, staff, administration and Board of Education, thank you once more for your support.

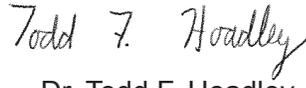
Yours in education and gratitude,



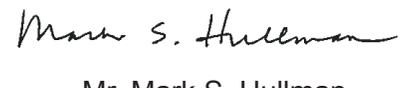
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President
Board of Education



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Vice-President
Board of Education



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Superintendent
Olmsted Falls Schools



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Board of Education



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Board of Education



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Board of Education

Olmsted Falls Board of Education
26937 Bagley Rd.
P.O. Box 38010
Olmsted Falls, OH 44138

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SAVE THE DATE!

April 9th & 10th

OFHS Masquers Presents
"Bye Bye Birdie"

Both Performances
Begin at 7:30 p.m.

Olmsted Falls High School Auditorium

*Tickets available at the door or can be
reserved in advance by calling 427-6070.*

All are welcome!

HIGH SCHOOL SEEKING ARTWORK FOR ANNUAL MAY SHOW

This year, the High School Art Department would like to invite alumni, district staff, and community members to participate in the Annual May Show on **Friday, May 7, 2010**. We have plenty of space to accommodate 2-D work as well as some 3-D work. Please limit your entries to three pieces max (a series counts as one piece). Please keep in mind this show is viewed by students, district staff, and community members. We reserve the right to reject any entries that are deemed inappropriate. **Interested participants should e-mail Mariel Krakowiak (mkrakowiak@ofcs.net) with entry information by Friday, April 30th, 2010.** Additional information regarding drop-off/pick-up can be found on the High School web link at www.ofcs.net.

District News Updates

**All residents are invited to visit
Superintendent Dr. Todd Hoadley's
Blog for Latest District News & Discussions**

<http://ofalls.wordpress.com>