

OUR



SCHOOL REPORT

Olmsted Falls School District

www.ofcs.net

Spring 2010

DISTRICT CONTINUES TO FACE CHALLENGES AS NEW FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS FROM THE STATE REVEAL FURTHER FUNDING CUTS

Board Members Assess Impact on Planned Restoration of Programs and Services

Since the February 2010 passage of the District's first operating levy in eleven years, District officials have been proceeding with extreme caution as they begin the process of restoring District programs and services. The Olmsted Falls School District will not begin receiving new funds from the 8.7 mill operating levy until January 2011. The timing of this new funding stream, coupled with new, negative financial projections provided by the State in April, have presented challenges relating to the planned restoration of programs and services.

"Knowing that our District's finances would still be considered 'weak or fragile' and that additional State revenue cuts could be possible, the District must seek to maximize efficiencies at every turn," said Superintendent Dr. Todd Hoadley. "For example, finding a way to reintroduce high school busing, in a manner that would not be as costly as the delivery of high school busing services in the past, has been a priority."

In recent weeks, the Olmsted Falls Board of Education has spent a great deal of time evaluating the issue of high school

busing. In light of new financial projections from the State level, the Olmsted Falls School District found itself in the difficult situation of potentially choosing between competing campaign promises. On one hand, the campaign pledged to restore high school busing services; on the other hand, the campaign also pledged that this levy would last for three school years (2010-2011, 2011-2012, and 2012-2013).

Just prior to the regular monthly Board meeting held April 15th, the District received written correspondence from Columbus indicating that further State-level financial cuts to education funding (estimated between 22.7% to 30.1%) are on the horizon for fiscal year 2012 (just 15 months away), which could mean a major decrease in our District's overall State revenue projections. This would mean a reduction in State funding ranging from an estimated \$2,800,000 up to \$3,700,000 annually for Olmsted Falls City Schools. *This memorandum detailing the status of State education funding is available for review on the District's website at www.ofcs.net.*

"While the District had not planned on receiving any new

Continues on next page...

ALTERNATE TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS FOR 2010-2011 DUE JUNE 15TH

For those parents needing to designate a single, alternate pick-up/drop-off address for their student(s) for the 2010-2011 school year, the **deadline for submitting Alternate Transportation Forms is TUESDAY, JUNE 15, 2010**. Additional information and forms are available on the District website (www.ofcs.net); click the "Bus Routes" tab at the top of the page.

Students must be picked up and dropped off by an Olmsted Falls School bus at a single location, morning and afternoon, for the entire school year. This location may be the student's residence OR another single, designated alternate location within District boundaries. No day-to-day or week-to-week changes will be permitted.

OLMSTED FALLS TEAM BRINGS HOME SCIENCE OLYMPIAD CHAMPIONSHIP



On March 20th, the **Olmsted Falls Science Olympiad Team** (made up of 4th, 5th and 6th grade students) competed in the Elementary Science Olympiad held at Cleveland State University. The team from Olmsted Falls competed against 21 other teams from schools throughout Northeast Ohio in 24 different events. The team won medals in 15 out of the 24 events, and took **1st place overall!** Congratulations to this outstanding team of students, as well as to their parents and coaches.

money from the State in our five-year forecast, no one could have anticipated cuts of up to 30 percent,” said Board President Frank Pedicini.

“This new information from the State definitely caused us to take pause and seriously reflect on the future condition of our District’s finances - even with the new funding from the operating levy which will come in January 2011,” said Mr. Pedicini.

The Board of Education had just approved a revised five-year forecast at its March meeting, which took into account the infusion of new levy funds beginning in January 2011 as well as the lack of any increases in State funding. Additionally, the updated forecast reflects deteriorating local funding amounts due to decreases in property values, and increases in foreclosures and the number of homeowners who have not paid their taxes.

Based on a review of the various busing options, at the April 15th Board of Education meeting, a recommendation was made by the Superintendent to restore high school busing, effective at the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year. This recommendation would have re-implemented high school busing, but reduced the total number of bus routes.

“This is an economical and efficient way to make high school busing available to those families in need of transportation services,” said Dr. Hoadley. “It is estimated that approximately 400 high school students, out of approximately 1,150 enrolled, utilize high school busing services.”

The Board reviewed the new transportation proposal along with the broader funding issues percolating at the State level at the April 15th meeting. A detailed discussion and debate took place on these issues. The Board voted 3-2 against the recommendation. After this vote, the Board of Education then voted to institute bus services for only grades Pre-K to 8 for the start of the 2010-2011 school year.

“As a Board, we struggled greatly with the April 15th decision to hold off on the return of high school busing,” said Board of Education Vice President Joseph Bertrand. “It is very difficult to be faced with a choice between two campaign pledges - especially when so many worked so hard to pass the levy this past February.”

Much of the School Board’s discussion at the April 15th meeting centered around the publicized plan to re-institute high school busing services and the efforts made by campaign workers to communicate this plan to residents. The Board did not close the door completely on the issue as they did commit to re-examine the decision once the funding picture became clearer.

“Students, parents, local taxpayers and employees are all stakeholders in our school system,” said Mr. Pedicini. “While varying interests and priorities among constituent groups can make decisions like whether to continue high school busing extremely challenging, we strive to provide the services our students need as long as it can be done at a cost that fits within the confines of our budget.”

“We have always prided ourselves on being a Board with integrity,” added Mr. Pedicini. “I personally have not felt good about this decision since it was made on April 15th, and felt compelled to take a second look at the restoration of high school busing – at least for the coming 2010-2011 school year, as pledged during the campaign.”

Since the April meeting, Board members continued to evaluate the situation with further analysis. On Tuesday, May 11th, another Work Session was held where Board members again spent considerable time reviewing the District’s five-year financial forecast and discussing in-depth the multiple variables that will likely impact the District’s finances. A discussion also occurred again on the topic of high school busing, and a second vote on the issue was called for by Board President Frank Pedicini.

In the end, when the vote was taken on the motion to reinstate high school busing for 2010-2011, the Board voted 3-2 in favor of bringing back high school busing services for the coming school year. The Board did indicate that, while high school busing service will be back for the 2010-2011 school year, it will be assessed annually in relation to the District’s overall financial situation. Olmsted Falls School District is one of only a few local districts that still provide high school busing services.

“I support the Board’s decision to restore high school busing for the 2010-2011 school year and know many of our high school parents will be appreciative,” said Dr. Hoadley. “As a District, we do remain tremendously concerned about what the future holds for us in terms of State funding cuts, and I respect the Board’s decision to evaluate annually our ability to continue with high school busing service.”

District officials remain committed to doing everything within their power to stretch the operating levy for a period of three years as pledged during the campaign.

“We will be continually monitoring all aspects of District finances to meet the goal of stretching the new operating dollars for the next three years,” added Dr. Hoadley. “While we cannot control the level of future financial damage possible from decisions made in Columbus, we will continue to keep our local stakeholders informed as the financial picture becomes clearer.”

“Maintaining the trust of our community is of the utmost priority to the Olmsted Falls Board of Education,” concluded Mr. Pedicini. “In the end, I feel very good about fulfilling all the pledges made during the campaign.”

Additional pledges made during the campaign included the reduction of class sizes through the hiring of two additional teachers for the 2010-2011 school year. This plan is moving forward and will help reduce class sizes at the elementary grade levels.

“I believe to say what you do, and do what you say,” added Mr. Bertrand. “The Board is very cognizant of the efforts put forth by the levy committee. These individuals took on the role of being the voice of the Board throughout the campaign, and I am relieved that our actions are supporting their words.”

STUDENTS RECOGNIZED FOR HIGH ACHIEVEMENT ON NATIONAL LATIN EXAM

Front row: **Emilie Macek** (Latin II, Cum Laude Certificate); **Jessica Albright** (Latin III, Cum Laude Certificate); **Hayleigh Sanders** (Latin II, Silver Medal); **Pam Keller** (Latin II, Magna Cum Laude Certificate); **Ashley Michel** (Latin II, Cum Laude Certificate); **Emily Nageotte** (Latin III, Silver Medal); and Magistra Czupik.

Back row: **Madison Woods** (Latin I, Magna Cum Laude Certificate); **Sohan Vartak** (Latin II, Gold Medal), **Karissa Dodge** (Latin II, Cum Laude Certificate); **Trevor Munkachy** (Latin I, Cum Laude Certificate); and **Zachary Zuruba** (Latin II, Silver Medal).

Not pictured: **Lucas Alstadt** (Latin I, Gold Medal) and **Nathan Seese** (Latin I, Silver Medal).



BALLROOM BLITZ EVENT A SUCCESS



More than 200 guests attended the Ballroom Blitz held March 20th featuring the OFHS Jazz Band and Vocal Ensemble (Golden Expressions). Attendees were treated to an evening of dinner, live music (compliments of our talented students) and swing dancing, too. The event took place at the Columbia Ballroom with great success. Congratulations to the Olmsted Falls Music Boosters and OFHS Music Department for this innovative collaboration! Plans to make the “Ballroom Blitz” into an annual community event are already underway. Watch for details next spring.

LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS MEETING



Elected officials from the Olmsted Falls Board of Education, City of Olmsted Falls, and Olmsted Township came together on April 14th for a joint meeting to share information about a variety of community happenings. Local officials make it a priority to come together for such meetings generally once or twice a year. Items discussed included local construction projects impacting the community, upcoming tax levies, and other areas of common interest.

Pictured Above: Olmsted Falls School District Treasurer Mark Hullman reviews District finances with the group.

OLMSTED FALLS GARDEN CLUB BRINGS “VEGGIE U” TO FOURTH GRADERS



Fourth grade students at Olmsted Falls Intermediate School proudly show off the vegetables growing under their special “grow lights” purchased by the Olmsted Falls Garden Club as part of the “Veggie U” program.

Thanks to the generous support of the Olmsted Falls Garden Club, fourth graders had the opportunity to participate in a unique program called “Veggie U” as part of their science unit on plants. Created by the Culinary Vegetable Institute in Huron, OH, the “Veggie U” program focuses on sustainable agriculture and how food is grown (i.e. importance of soil, composting, worm farms). Hands-on elements, such as creating their very own worm farm and growing their own lettuce and squash under special “grow lights,” were popular with students.

Proceeds from the Olmsted Falls Garden Club’s annual plant sale in May were used to purchase all of the educational materials, related supplies and equipment for the implementation of the “Veggie U” program at Olmsted Falls Intermediate School.

Many thanks to the Olmsted Falls Garden Club for its support of this innovative learning opportunity, which will be back again for next year’s fourth grade classes to experience.

OFHS ACADEMIC TEAM SUCCESS



OFHS Academic Team members, along with advisor Rhonna Smith, were honored by the Olmsted Falls Board of Education in March for their impressive string of successes this season. In addition to winning the Southwest Conference and NEOAL (North East Ohio Academic League), the team stacked up a number of award-winning performances. Most recently, the team brought home the State Runner-Up Trophy from the National Academic Quiz Tournament held at The Ohio State University in April.

"POWER UP" PARENT ACADEMIES



More than 100 students and parents attended the recent series of free "Power Up Parent Academy" events, made possible by three mini-grants awarded to the District by the Ohio Department of Education. Attendees enjoyed a nutritious and delicious family-style dinner together, followed by an opportunity to learn from experts about balanced nutrition, labels, and exercise.

Pictured Above: Dr. Sumana Narasimhan, a Pediatric Endocrinologist from University Hospital, speaks with families.

KIWANIS TOURS OFIS



Members of the Olmsted Falls Kiwanis Club received a guided tour of the new Intermediate School building from Principal Don Svec. The tour followed the organization's regular monthly meeting which was held in the OFIS cafeteria on March 9th and featured a "State of the Schools" address by Superintendent Dr. Todd Hoadley.

SHARING HISTORY

Middle School students provided 5th graders with a personal preview of the U.S. Constitution in March as they shared their Constitution Book projects. The two grade levels came together in the cafeteria at the Intermediate School for this unique collaboration – just a short walk for 8th graders through the new enclosed breezeway connecting the two buildings.



RIGHT TO READ WEEK



The week of March 15th was national Right-To-Read Week. A wide variety of activities took place throughout the District to inspire and nurture a love of reading in our students! At the Early Childhood Center (see above) Superintendent Dr. Hoadley served as a guest reader for kindergarten story hour.

STUDENTS AND STAFF FIND UNIQUE PATHS TO PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

At Falls-Lenox: As part of their economics unit (studying consumers, producers, factors of production, competition, supply and demand), students in Mrs. Stanczak's and Mrs. Blake's 3rd grade social studies classes decided to start a business called "The Doggone Good Chocolate Covered Pretzel Company." Students produced a variety of chocolate covered pretzel products and sold them for a week. Students learned about assembly line production, and implemented a number of promotional strategies. Over the course of the week, the company used 135 pounds of chocolate and more than 3,000 pretzel rods! In the end, the company's profit of \$1,600 is being donated to the American Red Cross to benefit Haiti relief efforts.

At OFIS: The **K-Kids** raised \$2,198.72 for the Leukemia Lymphoma Society through their participation in the "Pasta for Pennies" program.

At OFHS: The **OFHS Student Council** raised \$1,508 for COCINA's Earthquake Relief Fund with creative "Stall Week" activities just prior to spring break.

Across the District: **Students, staff and community members** are coming together to participate in the **2010 Relay for Life of Olmsted Falls** event on June 12th-13th. This overnight fundraising event will take place on the OFHS Track with all proceeds benefitting the American Cancer Society. To date, 35 teams have been formed and more than

\$28,000 has already been raised! For more information on the June 12th-13th 2010 Relay of Life of Olmsted Falls, please visit www.relayforlife.org/OlmstedFalls.



Third grade students in Mrs. Stanczak's and Mrs. Blake's social studies classes raised \$1,600 for Haiti earthquake relief efforts with their creation of "The Doggone Good Chocolate Covered Pretzel Company."

DONAHUE ERA COMES TO A CLOSE AT OLMSTED FALLS HIGH SCHOOL

High School Head Coach Pat Donahue has resigned from his head basketball coaching position after twenty-one years.

“This is an outstanding community and school district that has supported the basketball program for many years, and for that, I am truly grateful,” said Coach Donahue. “I have been very fortunate to have the support needed to run a strong program.”

“The knowledgeable, loyal and dedicated assistant coaching staff has also contributed greatly to the success of our program,” Donahue added. “I have truly enjoyed my years as the head coach here.”

Coach Donahue career notables include:

- Head Basketball Coach at Olmsted Falls High School for past 21 years
- Overall record: 341-144
- Also served as Head Track Coach for a period of 5 years
- More than 800 high school players have come through Coach Donahue’s program at Olmsted Falls High School over the past 21 years
- Many have gone on to play college basketball, including Mike Gansey who currently plays in the NBA developmental league
- Donahue has led the OFHS Varsity Basketball Team to an impressive 11 consecutive SWC Championships. In fact, his team has won SWC Championships 13 out of the last 15 years
- In addition, his team has won nine District Championships, and competed in the Regional Finals three times (1997, 2004, 2007)
- Donahue has been named Greater Cleveland Coach of the Year three times, and was named State Coach of the Year in 1996.

“Coach Donahue has epitomized the Bulldog tradition



The 21-year history of Coach Donahue’s basketball program is chronicled on the back wall of his classroom at Olmsted Falls High School. Mr. Donahue will continue to teach science courses at OFHS for four more years.

of excellence during his outstanding career here in Olmsted Falls,” said Superintendent Dr. Todd Hoadley. “He has long been held in high regard by players, parents, colleagues, and members of the greater Olmsted community.”

Athletic Director Rob Coxon added, “Pat has had a tremendously successful coaching career here at Olmsted Falls High School. His knowledge and passion for the game has contributed to his success. He has had quality, hard working players over the years, but his work ethic and the surrounding of himself by quality coaches, have made those teams extremely successful. Winning 13 conference titles over the course of 15 years pretty much defines the success that he has instilled into this program. We will miss Pat and we certainly wish him well.”

Pat Donahue currently teaches Chemistry, and serves as Science Department Chair, at Olmsted Falls High School. Donahue plans to continue teaching at OFHS four more years.

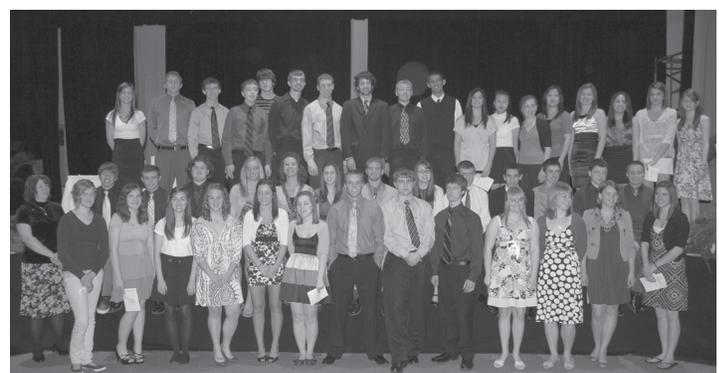
OHIO PTA NURSE OF THE YEAR



Ohio PTA Nurse of the Year Darla Haviland with Mercedez Hathcock, Olmsted Falls PTA Council President and Ohio PTA Assistant Director of Advocacy, in Columbus April 17th.

Congratulations to Olmsted Falls School Nurse **Darla Haviland, RN**, on being named Ohio PTA Nurse of the Year. Nurse Haviland does an outstanding job as head nurse for Olmsted Falls Schools and is based at the District’s Early Childhood Center. Earlier this year, her expertise helped save the life of a young student exhibiting headaches and erratic eye movements that concerned Nurse Haviland, who suspected a possible tumor. The girl was taken to the ER that day and, ultimately, underwent surgery to remove a life-threatening brain tumor. Thanks to the actions of Nurse Haviland, the student has recovered and is back in school!

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY MEMBERS



New inductees joined current members at the annual National Honor Society Induction Ceremony held on April 23rd at OFHS. Students, staff and parents were in attendance as 24 new members were inducted into the prestigious National Honor Society (NHS). A total of 45 OFHS students are now NHS members. Congratulations to each of them on this outstanding accomplishment.

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IMPORTANT END OF YEAR DATES

- June 2 OFHS Senior Honors Assembly (8:30 am)
OFHS Baccalaureate (7:30 pm)
- June 3 OFHS Commencement (8:00 pm)
- June 4 Falls-Lenox Field Day
- June 7 4th Grade Honors Day (8:30 am)
7th Grade Honors Program (9:30 am)
8th Grade Honors Program (12:30 pm)
6th Grade Honors Program (1:45 pm)
- June 8 Last Day for Students
5th Grade Honors Day (8:30 am)
8th Grade Promotion Ceremony (10:15 am)
- June 15 DEADLINE for 2010-2011 Alternate
Transportation Forms**

DISTRICT NEWS UPDATES

All residents are invited to visit
Superintendent Dr. Todd Hoadley's
Blog for Latest District News & Discussions
<http://ofalls.wordpress.com>

SUMMER 2010 READING FUN!

"Books Ahoy!"

Be sure to make the Cuyahoga County Public Library's Summer Reading Game part of your summer schedule. The "Books Ahoy!" game runs from **June 5th through August 7th.**

*** ATTN: BULLDOG PARENTS ***
Watch the District Blog for additional information on special pre-registration for Olmsted Falls' students.

SAVE THE DATE!

July 9th, 10th and 11th

Olmsted Falls Kiwanis presents
CARSON & BARNES CIRCUS
at Olmsted Falls Middle School

All are welcome!

Watch for additional information
on show times and tickets.

Proceeds benefit Olmsted Falls Kiwanis
scholarship fund for OFHS graduating seniors.

The Olmsted Falls City School District hereby gives notice that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability in the educational programs and activities operated by the district.