



SCHOOL REPORT

Olmsted Falls School District

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Winter 2008/2009

OFHS GIRLS VOLLEYBALL TEAM BRINGS HOME STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE



Photo courtesy of West Life

CONGRATULATIONS to the Olmsted Falls High School Girls Varsity Volleyball Team on winning the Division I State Championship after defeating Cincinnati Ursuline Academy in four games played at Wright State University's Nutter Center in Dayton on November 8th. The Bulldogs - posing above with their state championship trophy - were undefeated this season with a record of 29-0. Olmsted Falls was the first Cuyahoga County high school to win a Division I volleyball championship since the inception of the tournament 34 years ago. A community celebration in honor of the team was held in the Olmsted Fall High School auditorium Sunday, November 16th. The event included

commentary from team players and coaches, as well as special recognition and acknowledgments from local elected officials including state Senator Tom Patton, Olmsted Township Trustees Jim Carr and Jim Carroll, Olmsted Falls Mayor Robert Blomquist, and the entire Olmsted Falls Board of Education including Joseph Bertrand, Rhonda McCrone, Frank Pedicini, Michelle Theriot and Jim Weisbarth.

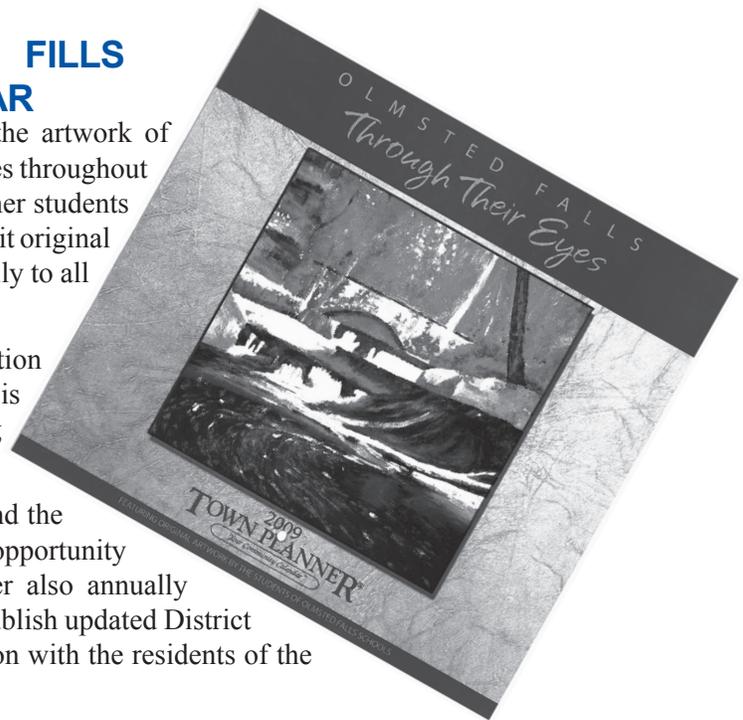
"I am extraordinarily proud of this team," said Head Coach Dawn Moses. "Four years ago these young ladies realized their potential and then worked harder every day to fulfill this dream."

HIGH SCHOOL ART STUDENTS' WORK FILLS PAGES OF ANNUAL COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Residents throughout the Olmsted communities will display the artwork of Olmsted Falls High School students in their homes and businesses throughout the year. Mrs. Mariel Krakowiak, high school art teacher, and her students worked with Town Planner publisher Mr. David Coffman to submit original artwork for the 2009 community calendar, which is mailed annually to all residents in the community.

“We were pleased to be invited to participate in this collaboration with the local Town Planner,” said Mrs. Krakowiak. “The result is a beautiful, full-color calendar which showcases the outstanding artistic talent of our high school students.”

Olmsted Falls High School would like to thank Mr. Coffman and the Town Planner organization for providing its students with the opportunity to participate in this creative partnership. The Town Planner also annually provides Olmsted Falls School District with an opportunity to publish updated District information and facts, creating another avenue of communication with the residents of the Olmsted communities.



FITCH STUDENT WINS FOX 8 CONTEST TO INTERVIEW GLOBETROTTER



Fitch student Jay Shiltz was a natural at sports reporting as he interviewed famed Harlem Globetrotter “Hot Shot” Branch in the Fitch gymnasium on December 3rd. “Hot Shot” made a special visit to Fitch Intermediate, along with Fox 8 feature reporter Kenny Crumpton, in connection with a station contest. The 5th grader submitted a photo and brief essay in the Fox 8 Harlem Globetrotters Jr. Reporter contest which took place in conjunction with the team’s visit to the Cleveland area in December. Jay’s winning entry earned him the visit and the opportunity to personally ask “Hot Shot” a series of questions on camera. Following the interview, Jay also got to play a little basketball with the 6’4” guard, currently in his sixth season with the Harlem Globetrotters.

“Jay did an outstanding job in his junior reporting duties,” said Mr. Donald Svec, principal at Fitch. “It was an exciting visit for Jay and his fellow students in Mrs. Rodgers’ class, who were also on hand for the special event.”

DISTRICT SHARES EFFORTS TO SOLVE SCHOOL FUNDING PUZZLE

As 2008 drew to a close, Olmsted Falls School District Superintendent Dr. Todd Hoadley hosted two community meetings to share with parents and residents recent efforts made by the District to explore funding opportunities at the federal, state and local levels. More than 150 people attended these sessions to learn more about recent actions by the District, as well as what actions they could personally take to help in the effort.

An application submitted by the Olmsted Falls School District in early December for federal funding through the U.S. Department of Treasury’s Emergency Stabilization Act brought local, state and national media attention shedding light on the funding challenges faced by public school districts throughout the State of Ohio. District officials continue to work with legislators at the federal level to secure new federal funding for infrastructure projects, which in turn would help stimulate the northeast Ohio economy. (See Op-Ed on opposite page.)

District actions also helped renew discussions regarding the need for change in the unconstitutional school funding system in Ohio. The community meetings included dialogue about the status of the state funding system and the impact of additional projected cuts in state funding on the Olmsted Falls Schools.

“We owe it to our taxpayers to work diligently at all of these levels to try to find alternative funding streams,” said Superintendent Dr. Todd Hoadley. “In the short term, however, we are left to rely on our local community in order to maintain the educational program that people have come to expect.”

A combination of two tax issues - one income tax, one property tax on the ballot for the District in November failed. A single 9.9 mill property tax issue will be put before voters on the February 3, 2009 election ballot.

OLMSTED FALLS SCHOOL DISTRICT'S DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AFFAIRS EARNS STATEWIDE SCHOOL BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AWARD

The Ohio Association of School Business Officials (OASBO) selected Mr. Tim Atkinson, Director of Business Affairs for the Olmsted Falls School District, as the 2008 recipient of the Foundation For School Business Management Outstanding Business Operations Manager of the Year award.

The Foundation Awards were created by OASBO's Foundation for School Business Management trustees to recognize the accomplishments of Ohio's public school business officials. Recipients were honored in mid-November at the closing general session of the Ohio School Boards Association's Capital Conference at The Greater Columbus Convention Center. Each award winner received a plaque and a cash award in the amount of \$500 (to be presented as a scholarship to a graduating senior from their district of employment).

Mr. Atkinson has served as Director of Business Affairs for the Olmsted Falls Schools since July 1999, and has been with the District for 30 years. Prior to serving as Director of Business Affairs, Mr. Atkinson oversaw the District's Transportation Department. Today, Mr. Atkinson oversees a staff of 72 employees, including 32 bus drivers, one transportation aide, two mechanics, a transportation manager, a transportation secretary, 33 custodians and two groundskeepers – which he knows all by name. Under his leadership, Olmsted Falls' school bus drivers transport more than 4,000 public and private school students each school day, covering more than 300,000 miles during an average school year. His custodial staff works five days a week in two shifts in the District's primary buildings, and operates around the clock, in three shifts, five days a week at both the Middle and High schools. In addition to day-to-day tasks and the continuous stream of school-related assemblies and special events, Mr. Atkinson's custodial staff also assists with preparation and clean-up of more than 1,650 events hosted by outside groups from the community who utilize school facilities for meetings and events.

Currently, in addition to his regular duties, Mr. Atkinson is also an integral part of the construction of our new Intermediate



Director of Business Affairs Mr. Tim Atkinson poses backstage with Board of Education Member Mrs. Rhonda McCrone at the Ohio School Boards Association Capital Conference in November, where Mr. Atkinson was honored with the Outstanding Business Manager of the Year award.

School. As our District faces pressing space issues, he has also been incredibly instrumental in securing and leveraging State dollars for much needed building renovations and expansions. This fall, his dedicated efforts resulted in the successful completion of a series of HB 264 projects, which have greatly improved the energy efficiency of the older buildings in our District.

OASBO's Executive Director David Varda states, "The personal successes and accomplishments of our members are often a well-kept secret, so we're excited to be able to formally recognize their successes. We're very proud of Tim's accomplishments."

"We are so pleased to see Tim receive this well deserved recognition," said Olmsted Falls Superintendent Dr. Todd F. Hoadley. "The Olmsted Falls School District is very fortunate to have the knowledge, skill and work ethic of Tim Atkinson working on behalf of our students, staff and community."

OFHS MATH TEACHER NAMED 2009 TECHNOLOGY TEACHER OF THE YEAR



Congratulations to Olmsted Falls High School mathematics teacher Mr. Jeff VanArnhem on being selected as the 2009 eTech Ohio Technology Teacher of the Year. This prestigious award honors the exceptional efforts of a public or private classroom teacher who is a dynamic contributor to a technology-related community of practice. Mr. VanArnhem uses SMARTBoard technology to enhance his classroom instruction. He also serves in a leadership role providing colleagues, here in Olmsted Falls as well as in neighboring districts throughout Cuyahoga County, with training in new technology applications.

Mr. VanArnhem will be formally honored at the annual eTech Conference in Columbus in early February.

OFHS GOLDEN EXPRESSIONS GROUP TOURS DISTRICT WITH HOLIDAY SONGS



The Golden Expressions shared their talents and spread holiday cheer with their traditional tour of District buildings, just prior to winter break. Stops included the central office (left) and Falls-Lenox Primary School (below), where students enjoyed the special performance during their lunchtime in the cafeteria.



REVOLUTIONARY WAR RE-ENACTOR VISITS OLMSTED FALLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Former school teacher Mr. David Zeih, known by students as Private Zeih, visited Olmsted Falls Middle School in full military uniform, bringing a social studies lesson on the American Revolution to life. His presentation was complete with an outdoor rifle demonstration.



COACH RYAN AND OFHS FOOTBALL PLAYERS PAY VISIT TO FALLS-LENOX



OFHS football coach Jim Ryan and members of the 2008 OFHS varsity football team visited 3rd grade students at Falls-Lenox to thank them for their support during the fall football season. The 3rd graders had been making placemats for the football team pre-game dinners, which they often personalized for individual players!

THIRD GRADERS PERFORM FOR RETIRED STAFF HOLIDAY LUNCH



Retired staff of the Olmsted Falls School system were treated to a special musical performance by third graders at Falls-Lenox. The students sang a selection of holiday songs, under the direction of music teacher Mrs. Eileen Wallace, for guests attending this annual District event hosted by the Alumni Association.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

An Op-Ed by Dr. Todd F. Hoadley, Superintendent, Olmsted Falls City Schools

Northeast Ohio is losing industries and losing jobs. Its infrastructure is crumbling before our eyes. These troubles, and the troubles of our U.S. economy, are a complex problem that will not, and cannot be fixed overnight with a simple solution. We cannot simply spend our way out of this economic hole.

Rather, if the Federal Government is going to allocate nearly a trillion tax-payer dollars, attempting to stimulate our national economy, we need to strategically invest this money into sectors of our economy that will actually “produce and grow” our economy over both the short and long term. I would advocate that a substantial investment into public education should be a significant part of the overall solution.

From a short term standpoint, NE Ohio must have immediate job creation. I believe allocating some amount of these Federal economic stimulus dollars toward improving the infrastructure of our public schools would be a great place to start.

Our region has numerous school facilities that need to be replaced, updated, or expanded. Additionally, our region has a large number of skilled construction workers who are simply struggling to find work in this weak economy. Can we not utilize a small portion of this gigantic Federal economic stimulus package in an attempt to get our region’s skilled tradesmen back to work and at the same time, provide our children with school facilities which are appropriate for their learning needs?

Would an investment of this type not immediately create numerous construction jobs as well as provide economic stimulus for the numerous related business-sectors which support the construction industry? I would have to believe that thousands of NE Ohioans would benefit from this type of strategic investment.

Recently, the Olmsted Falls school system made a \$100 million dollar request for funding under our Federal Government’s Emergency Economic Stabilization act. We do not seek a bailout; we seek a portion of this Federal economic stimulus package as a way to improve our educational facilities and to jumpstart the economy of NE Ohio through job creation.

Economist Robert Reich, former US Secretary of Labor, recently noted that “our nation’s preoccupation with the immediate financial crisis is causing us to overlook the bigger crisis in America’s human capital. While we commit hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars to Wall Street, we’re slashing our outlays for public education.”

Today, we cannot even get a discussion started on the topic of school funding in the Ohio Statehouse. Public schools are being forced to operate under a system of

funding that was declared unconstitutional nearly fifteen years ago. Yet, what has seriously been done by our state level elected officials to even attempt to “fix” the funding system for our public schools?

Today, the excuse we hear for not fixing Ohio’s system of school funding is the economy. What was the reason for not fixing the school funding issue 5 years ago? What was the reason for not fixing the school funding issue 10 years ago? What was the reason for not fixing the school funding nearly 15 years ago when it was originally declared unconstitutional? Now is the time to act!

Today, communities all over Ohio are shouldering the financial burden of this broken system of school funding, as well as numerous unfunded mandates placed upon school districts by the Federal Government. While I am a strong advocate for the accountability components of “No Child Left Behind,” this Federal legislation should have been supported financially, from day one, by our Federal Government. Instead, cost has been shifted to local taxpayers. These unfunded mandates must be supplemented by our Federal Government.

Over the past month, hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars have been spent shoring up weakness within the financial sector of our economy. Yet, across our region, in public education, jobs, services, and opportunities for children and communities are being reduced or lost altogether. These actions hurt local economies and the people who live on “Main Street, USA.”

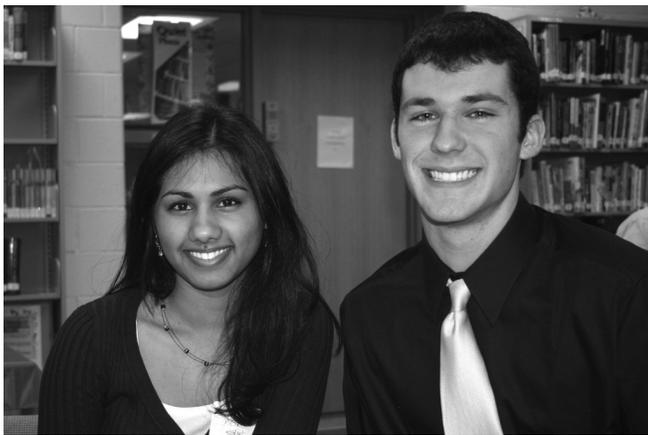
Public education is where futures begin. Future Presidents, future business leaders, future innovators of technology and medicine – all things our country desperately needs for a strong long-term economy today, are sitting in K – 12 classrooms throughout our great country. By investing in Public Education, we are ensuring that our students today receive a quality K-12 education, and we make a solid investment into a stable economic future.

Short-changing our students today, by not providing our school systems with adequate financial resources necessary to prepare our children for the 21st century global economy, will largely ensure that we never recover from our current economic downturn.

Please help me continue this dialogue by contacting our elected officials, both in Columbus and Washington DC. Our children are our future. Education and job creation, from a long term standpoint, must be a part of the ultimate solution for improving our national and state economy.

This Op-Ed article was published in The Plain Dealer and The News Sun papers. For a list of contact information for elected officials, please visit the District website: www.ofcs.k12.oh.us.

BULLDOG ALUMNI RETURN TO OFHS FOR ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP BRUNCH



2008 OFHS graduates Anisa Aesram and Matthew Jurcak attend Scholarship Brunch to recognize donors to the District's local scholarship program.

Olmsted Falls High School class of 2008 alumni Anisa Aesram and Matthew Jurcak returned to their alma mater in December to attend the Scholarship Brunch in the High School media center. The event is hosted annually by Olmsted Falls High School to recognize contributors to the District's Local Scholarship Program.

Ms. Aesram, now attending the University of Akron, addressed guests and shared the positive impact of the scholarship she received last year - The Aurora and Norman Spiro Scholarship. Mr. Jurcak, now attending Case Western Reserve University, was also the recipient of scholarships through the Local Scholarship Program including Key Club, Kiwanis and John Sanders scholarships.

The Local Scholarship Program is coordinated through the Olmsted Falls High School's guidance department. Community members interested in contributing scholarship funds for students of the OFHS Class of 2009 can call 427-6116 for information. The deadline for 2009 scholarship sponsors is February 27, 2009.

DISTRICT RECEIVES STELLAR AWARD FOR BEST NUTRITION PRACTICES

Olmsted Falls School District is one of only 16 districts in the State - and one of only two districts in Cuyahoga County - to be awarded with the Stellar Award for Best Nutrition Practice by the Ohio Department of Education. The award recognizes the District for its accomplishments in promoting a healthy school nutrition environment.



Mrs. Denise Tabar (center), Director of Food Services for the Olmsted Falls School District, was recognized by Board of Education President Jim Weisbarth (left) and Vice President (2008) Frank Pedicini (right) for her department's commitment to providing nutritious food options for students throughout the Olmsted Falls School District.

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.



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

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