



# SCHOOL REPORT

Olmsted Falls School District

[www.ofcs.net](http://www.ofcs.net)

September/October 2009

## COMMUNITY TO DECIDE FUTURE OF DISTRICT WITH OPERATING LEVY VOTE Further Cuts to Educational and Extracurricular Programs and Services At Stake

With more than a decade since the last operating levy was passed, and a 28% increase in enrollment over that time, the Olmsted Falls School District will again ask voters to pass a new operating levy on **Tuesday, November 3rd** in order to preserve its educational programs and services. The 6.4 Mill Property Tax Levy marks the District's third attempt to generate much-needed additional funds for the operation of the District.

Failed ballot issues in both November 2008 and February 2009 forced the District to begin implementation of an *Educational Reduction Plan* that has already cut jobs and services including 10.5 teaching positions, 3 administrative positions, and high school busing. Additionally, all District employees have taken a wage freeze and increased their personal contributions to the District's health insurance plan resulting in a savings of approximately \$600,000 to the District.

With the fourth lowest cost per pupil in Cuyahoga County, Olmsted Falls School District has built a reputation for achieving outstanding results through the efficient and responsible use of tax-payer dollars. (The District has

received the highest rating on the State Local Report Card for 10 consecutive years.) According to data from the Ohio Department of Education, Olmsted Falls School District also has the leanest administrator per pupil ratio in Cuyahoga County, and 7th leanest administrator per pupil ratio in the entire State - meaning that administrators in this District are responsible for more students per administrative position than administrators in most of the 611 school districts across the State of Ohio.

"With our District already running a lean operation, making cuts is difficult," said Jim Weisbarth, President of the Olmsted Falls Board of Education. "We immediately find ourselves facing cuts to core programs, activities and services that people value because there is not a lot of fat to be trimmed out of our operations."

The District is urging residents to be fully informed about the impact of the November 3rd election results before casting their vote on November 3rd. Following is an overview of the next phase of reductions that will be necessary if the levy is unsuccessful on November 3rd:

*Continued inside....*

## COMMUNITY GATHERS FOR DEDICATION OF NEW INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL



Participants pose for a photo with their pieces of the commemorative ribbon following the official ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Intermediate School.

Students, parents, community members, staff, administrators, Board members and other local elected officials gathered together on Sunday, September 20th to commemorate an exceptional community accomplishment. Thanks to the Olmsted community, the new Olmsted Falls Intermediate School opened its doors to 4th and 5th grade students on the first day of school this school year. The project - which was made possible by the passage of the May 2007 Bond Issue - was completed on time and on budget, and provides the additional space needed to alleviate severe overcrowding issues for students in grades Pre-K to 5 in the Olmsted Falls School District.

*Continued inside....*

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE: SEE MORE NEW BUILDING PHOTOS**

## What's At Stake If The Levy Fails?

### •Additional Busing Cuts for K-8 Students

In addition to continuing with no high school busing services, levy failure will result in a reduction to State minimum busing requirements including **2-mile cut-offs surrounding each building** and the **elimination of ALL Alternate Transportation Request Forms**. A 2-mile cut-off means that any student in grades K-8 who lives less than two miles from the school they currently attend will no longer receive bus transportation. Maps with 2-mile cut-off zones highlighted can be viewed on the District website at [www.ofcs.net](http://www.ofcs.net). Additionally, Alternate Transportation Request service is not included in State minimum busing requirements and therefore will be eliminated across the board - *even for students outside the 2-mile cut-off points*.

In the event of levy failure, State minimum busing would be implemented in January 2010. New bus routes, and likely new transportation hub locations, would be established and communicated in advance of implementation. Additionally, State minimum requirements allow for up to a half-mile distance to bus stops, which would also be a factor in new routes and pick-up / drop-off locations.

### • Elimination of Athletics & Extracurricular Programs

Beginning with the **loss of Middle School sports this spring, ALL athletic and extracurricular programs at both the Middle School and High School are at risk of elimination if a levy is not passed before the end of this school year.** The District will NOT be implementing any pay-to-play or pay-to-participate programs as it would establish a financial barrier for participation by some students. The Olmsted Falls School District believes that all students should have an equal opportunity to participate in all programs and activities offered by the District.

### • Elimination of Building / Grounds Usage

In an effort to maintain availability of District facilities, changes in building usage policies were implemented last spring. Fees were instituted for weekend building usage in order to make usage cost-neutral to the District. Failure of the upcoming levy and the subsequent elimination of athletics and extracurricular activities will eliminate the need for school facilities to remain open outside the regular school day. Therefore, building access would no longer be available for groups.

### • Risk of Increased Millage Rate for Next Request

If the 6.4 Mill Levy is successful on November 3rd, the District will begin collecting revenue on the levy in January 2010. If the levy is unsuccessful on November 3rd, the District will make additional attempts to pass a levy in February and May 2010. A levy passed in calendar year 2010 will not begin generating revenue for the District until January 2011, resulting in the loss of a year of revenue for the District. This lost revenue would be generated through an increase in the millage rate of future levy requests.

### PASSAGE OF THE LEVY ON NOVEMBER 3RD

eliminates the need for any of the above outlined cuts to be made. Passage of the levy on November 3rd would also allow for the restoration of previously lost programs and services including the return of high school busing services and the return of four of the 10.5 teaching positions eliminated with the previous reductions.

The 6.4 Mill Property Tax Levy will raise approximately \$3.5 million in revenue annually for the operation of the Olmsted Falls School District and prevent further cuts to District programs and services. Below please find a chart showing the cost of the 6.4 Mill levy per month and per year for a \$100,000, \$150,000, \$200,000, and \$250,000 home:

Cost of 6.4 Mill Property Tax ISSUE #107		
Home Value	Cost Per Month	Cost Per Year
\$100,000	\$16.33	\$196
\$150,000	\$24.50	\$294
\$200,000	\$32.67	\$392
\$250,000	\$40.83	\$490

If you would like a calculation based on the specific market value of your home, please contact Olmsted Falls School District Treasurer Mr. Mark Hullman at 427-6000 for assistance.

**For additional information on the 6.4 Mill Operating Levy and its impact on the District and community, please visit [www.ofcs.net](http://www.ofcs.net), or contact Superintendent Dr. Todd Hoadley via e-mail at [thoadley@ofcs.net](mailto:thoadley@ofcs.net) or via phone at 427-6000. Residents can also obtain additional information on the official Pride in Olmsted Schools Committee website at [www.yes4ofschools.org](http://www.yes4ofschools.org).**

## **SUPERINTENDENT LAUNCHES BLOG TO KEEP COMMUNITY INFORMED**

Olmsted Falls School District has continually looked for a more efficient manner in which to communicate to our community on a real-time basis. In early September, a blog dedicated to Olmsted Falls School District information was established by Superintendent Dr. Todd Hoadley. Use of this blog will enable the District to reach a wider audience with important District information. Residents are invited and encouraged to visit this new blog regularly at: <http://ofalls.wordpress.com>.

Going forward, this interactive blog will be periodically updated with new and relevant information. Visitors may submit comments and participate in polls, which hopefully will promote additional discussion and understanding of important school issues. Please understand that the blog we have chosen to utilize - "WordPress" - is a free service and did not require any expenditure of District funds. We hope you find this a beneficial manner in which to keep up with important school news and information.

## New Intermediate School Dedication...

The new Olmsted Falls Intermediate School facility is designed to provide the educational tools and opportunities to support teacher instructional needs and student educational growth. Being directly connected to the existing Middle School building, by way of an enclosed walkway, provides further opportunities for educational collaboration, as well as enhanced operational efficiencies.

More than 150 people attended the dedication event which included remarks by special invited guests, a ceremonial presentation of the building key, an official ribbon cutting and tours of the new building.

Coverage of the event can be viewed through the end of October on Cox 45's "Connexions" program which airs Monday thru Friday at 12:30 pm and Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 7:00 pm, or through Cox Cable's OnDemand system by selecting "Local On Demand" and then "Connexions." Also, starting Monday, October 12th, residents can view the "Olmsted Intermediate School Dedication Celebration" through Cox Cable's OnDemand system by selecting "Local On Demand" and then "Local events."



## OPENING DAY EXCITEMENT FOR STUDENTS AT THE NEW INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Staff members and PTA parent volunteers lined the hallways of the brand new Olmsted Falls Intermediate School on the first day of school to welcome and guide 4th and 5th grade students as they became the first class of Bulldogs to come through the new facility. Thank you to all of our PTA volunteers! Please enjoy the following collection of photos from opening day at the new Olmsted Falls Intermediate School.



## DISTRICT OPENS EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER IN FORMER FITCH BUILDING



The opening of the new Olmsted Falls Intermediate School allowed for Pre-K and kindergarten classes - formerly housed at Falls-Lenox Primary School (along with grades 1 to 3) - to relocate to the former Fitch Intermediate School building located on Fitch Road. Students attending the District's preschool and kindergarten programs started their year off in the newly adapted Olmsted Falls Early Childhood Center (ECC) dedicated exclusively to the education of the District's youngest Bulldogs.

Moving the preschool and kindergarten to the ECC freed up desperately needed space for grades 1 to 3 which remain at Falls-Lenox Primary School, and created a unique opportunity to create a facility focused specifically on early childhood education. **The ECC was opened without adding an additional administrator.** Ms. Gina Sanfilippo will serve in a dual role as ECC Principal as well as continue in her role as Assistant Principal at Falls-Lenox.



## OLMSTED FALLS STAFF MEMBERS HONORED FOR YEARS OF SERVICE

Each year, Olmsted Falls School District recognizes employees for their years of service to the District. Congratulations to our veteran Bulldogs recognized for twenty years or more of service!



### 20 BULLDOG YEARS

L to R (Front Row): Falls-Lenox Library Media Assistant **Alice Miller**, Intermediate School Cleaner **Linda Maloney**, Intermediate School Speech Therapist **Maria Tessier**, Central Office Secretary **Joyce Thomas**, Falls-Lenox Technology Assistant **Donna Tindera**, Intermediate School 5th Grade Teacher **Michael Schafer**. L to R (Back Row): Intermediate School 4th Grade Teacher **Elaina Tzolakis**, High School Social Studies Teacher **John Mercer**, High School Science Teacher **Pat Donahue**, High School Science Teacher **Blake Johnson**, Middle School Technology Assistant **Nancy Womack**, Falls-Lenox 3rd Grade Teacher **John Klembarsky**, and Intermediate School 5th Grade Teacher **Michael Moore**. Not Pictured: High School Social Studies Teacher **Tom Gibeaut** and Middle School Custodian **Chuck Smith**.



### 25 BULLDOG YEARS

L to R: High School Custodian **Timothy Tygart** and Intermediate School Art Teacher **Susan Magnone**.



### 30 BULLDOG YEARS

L to R: Falls-Lenox 1st Grade Teacher **Dr. Karen Kolozvary** and High School Cleaner **Rose Cortimilia**.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Olmsted Falls School District is the largest employer in the community.
- More than 42% of Olmsted Falls School District staff members live in the community.

## OLMSTED FALLS HIGH SCHOOL HOME TO SIX NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARS



(L-R): *Brandan Bookman, Adam Sokol, Adam Broski, Alex New, Holly Miller, and Steffany Meredyk.*

Olmsted Falls High School is proud to recognize six students who have achieved status with the National Merit Scholarship Program. The National Merit Scholarship Program is based upon outstanding performance on the PSAT. Approximately 1.5 million students from 21,000 high schools across the country took the PSAT last October.

Senior **Alex New** has been named a National Merit Semi-Finalist (one of only 16,000 students to achieve this status nationwide). Seniors **Brandan Bookman, Adam Broski, Steffany Meredyk, Holly Miller** and **Adam Sokol** were recognized as National Merit Commended Students (only 34,000 nationwide). These academically talented seniors will be recognized by Olmsted Falls High School Principal Dr. Robert Hill and members of the Board of Education at the October 22, 2009 Board of Education meeting.

## OLMSTED FALLS SCHOOL DISTRICT COLLABORATES WITH OLMSTED FALLS LIBRARY FOR RECORD-BREAKING SUMMER READING PROGRAM RESULTS

The long-running partnership between the Olmsted Falls City School District and Cuyahoga County Public Library's Olmsted Falls Branch proved especially beneficial this summer as budget cuts forced the District to eliminate its traditional summer program offerings for students in grades Pre-K to 8. The resulting void in educational programming was quickly filled as library and school district officials worked together to increase visibility of the Library's Summer Reading Program (SRP).

"Keeping students engaged academically over the summer months is critical to their success as each new school year begins," said Dr. Todd Hoadley, Superintendent, Olmsted Falls City School District. "The Library's Summer Reading Program provides an outstanding educational opportunity for our students to keep up their reading skills, and we were pleased to see such high participation rates this year." This summer, 2,862 children in Olmsted Falls participated in the library's Summer Reading Program – a record-high for participation in the Olmsted community.

"Libraries and schools are similar since they both work to educate and help children," said Olmsted Falls Branch Manager Elaine Wilkinson. "Dr. Hoadley has always been extremely supportive of the library, which led us to approach him about collaborating on the Summer Reading Program. It made sense since it benefitted the students, schools and the library. It was a win/win for everyone. We look forward to further collaboration."

Held annually, the library's SRP encourages people of all ages to read during the summer months. Each year, the program adopts a different theme. This summer, in keeping with the library's initiative to reduce its carbon footprint, the theme was Eco Quest, an environmentally-conscious reading adventure that encouraged participants to recycle, reuse, and, of course, READ! Participants read books for chances to win prizes provided by program co-sponsors: the Cleveland Cavaliers and Xeko™ (pronounced ZEE CO); and community partners: The Cleveland Indians High Achievers Kids Club, Great Lakes Science Center and Cleveland Museum of Natural History.



*Olmsted Falls Library Branch Manager Elaine Wilkinson and Olmsted Falls School District Superintendent Dr. Todd Hoadley in the children's department with summer reading program participants from the Olmsted community.*

## ASBESTOS HAZARD EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACT

In an effort to comply with Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), Ohio Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), the Asbestos Abatement Contractors Licensing Act, and the Ohio Public Employment Risk Reduction Act (PERRA), the Olmsted Falls School District recognizes the responsibility to maintain a program of periodic surveillance and inspection of facilities containing asbestos. To that end, Olmsted Falls Board of Education provides a "Notification of Progress of Asbestos Related Activities" report for review in all District buildings.

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

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## OLMSTED FALLS AWARDED TOP RATING FOR 10TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR



For the 10th consecutive year, Olmsted Falls School District has been awarded the top rating on the Local Report Card issued by the Ohio Department of Education. This year, the District again earned the highest rating of *Excellent with Distinction*.

“We have been fortunate in the Olmsted community to be surrounded by residents who value the high quality educational program that has been built here,” said Superintendent Dr. Todd F. Hoadley. “It is our hard working students, dedicated staff, and supportive parents and community residents who have made this consistent excellence possible.”

Olmsted Falls School District is one of only 5 districts in Cuyahoga County and only 16 in the State of Ohio to earn the highest rating on the Local Report Card for ten consecutive years - since the inception of the Local Report Card accountability ratings. To view this year’s Local Report Card for Olmsted Falls Schools, please visit [www.ofcs.net](http://www.ofcs.net).

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.