

OUR SCHOOL REPORT



Olmsted Falls School District

Fall 2024

A STRONG START TO THE SCHOOL YEAR AND EXCITING PROGRESS AHEAD

By Superintendent Jim Lloyd, Ed.D.



Welcome back to another school year! We are off to a strong start, and I am excited to share some of the great strides we are making to further enhance the educational experience for our students.

This year, we are continuing to implement our new Benefits-Based Accountability (BBA) system. Shaped by valuable input from our community, this innovative approach focuses on essential educational benefits beyond standardized test scores. It reflects our commitment to providing a well-rounded and holistic education that meets the diverse needs of our students and the community.

In addition to our work with BBA, we are making progress on our Master Facilities Planning. Our focus is on addressing deferred maintenance challenges and ensuring our facilities can support the modern learning environments our students and staff deserve. By updating and maintaining our infrastructure, we are committed to providing safe, innovative spaces that foster creativity, collaboration, and success. I also want to congratulate our Treasurer/CFO, Brett Robson, and his team for receiving the prestigious Auditor of State Award. Their hard work and dedication reflect the district's ongoing commitment to financial responsibility and transparency.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we are building a bright future for Olmsted Falls City Schools.

HONORING OUR LOCAL HEROES

Second-grade students at Falls-Lenox recently reflected on the events of September 11, 2001, focusing on the courage and selflessness of first responders who risked their lives to save others.

To honor these local heroes, students wrote thank-you letters to express their gratitude for the ongoing dedication of first responders in our community.

In a special visit, Township officers came to personally thank Mrs. Hoy's class, bringing cups, flashlights, bracelets, and badges as a token of appreciation, further strengthening the connection between our students and those who serve.



DISTRICT DEBUTS NEW WEBSITE

Our new website has launched! Debuted over the summer, the newly redesigned site features a more intuitive and streamlined experience for users including new icon panels, upcoming events calendar, news, announcements, and more. A livestream of content from the district's social media platforms is also featured on the main homepage providing visitors with a continually fresh stream of the very latest news and positive stories from across all school buildings.

Other new elements on the site include a section dedicated to the district's new Benefits-Based Accountability (BBA) System, including links to the latest graphics outlining individual building BBA focus areas. A robust Staff Intranet area houses resources for Bulldog staff members ranging from Human Resource tools to training resources and platform links.

Families seeking functional information relating to their current student(s), community residents wanting to stay up-to-date with their local schools, guests from outside of the school district interested in learning more about Olmsted Falls Schools, and staff members in need of resources can check out the new streamlined website at www.ofcs.net.

A COMMITMENT TO BENEFITS-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY

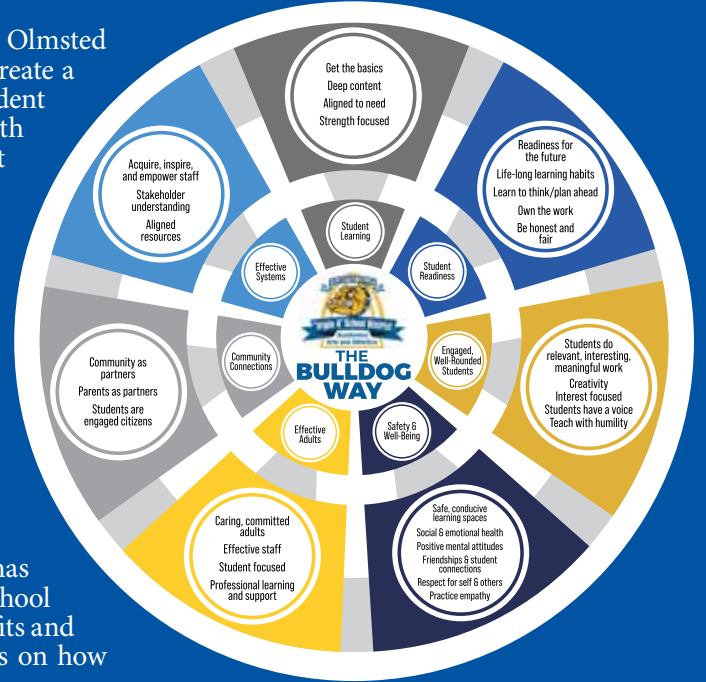
If you've been following the important work happening within Olmsted Falls City School District, you know we've been on a journey to create a system of accountability to our community and families. While student learning and achievement remain central, our conversations with families revealed their hopes extend beyond academics. Student Safety and Well-Being, Student Readiness, and Engaged, Well-Rounded Students are just as critical.

Olmsted Falls Schools has always embraced a comprehensive approach to education, reflected in our "Triple A" focus on Academics, Arts, and Athletics. While the classroom plays a significant role, clubs, arts, and athletics help students develop essential life skills that will serve them well in the future. The graphic at right highlights the benefits our students experience across seven key areas: Student Learning, Student Readiness, Engaged, Well-Rounded Students, Safety & Well-Being, Effective Adults, Community Connections, and Effective Systems.

This year, through collaborative efforts, each of our five schools has identified a set of benefits to focus on. Throughout the 2024-2025 school year, they will engage students intentionally to enhance these benefits and gather evidence of progress. Families will receive regular updates on how these efforts are shaping students' experiences.

We believe that an accountability system focused on the benefits our district provides is more meaningful than one based solely on standardized test scores. Test-based systems predict future test performance but do little to show how students will impact the world. Our Benefits-Based Accountability System focuses on skills like lifelong learning, future readiness, and social-emotional health, which are essential for shaping the future of our youth. We are committed to sharing evidence and progress with our families and community.

To learn more about the Benefits-Based Accountability System and each school's specific focus, scan this QR code.



OLMSTED FALLS MIDDLE SCHOOL: POSITIVE PHONE CALLS FROM THE PRINCIPAL

At Olmsted Falls Middle School, students on the sixth grade Earth team have the opportunity to earn a positive phone call home from Mr. Kurz and Mr. Sislowski. These calls are made to recognize students for being safe, respectful, responsible, and kind.

When we call a parent, we share exactly what their child did to earn this special recognition. The best part is seeing the smile on the student's face when they hear how proud their parents are of them. It's a simple but powerful way to reinforce positive behavior and celebrate the great things happening at school.



OLMSTED FALLS MIDDLE SCHOOLERS DIVE INTO STEM CHALLENGES

The sixth-grade students at Olmsted Falls Middle School kicked off the school year with an exciting series of STEM challenges designed to promote problem-solving, teamwork, and creativity. These hands-on activities provided a fun and engaging way to review the scientific method while encouraging students to collaborate on tackling real-world challenges.

OLMSTED FALLS CITY SCHOOLS EARNS AUDITOR OF STATE AWARD FOR CLEAN AUDIT



BRETT ROBSON
Treasurer & CFO

I am proud to share that Olmsted Falls City Schools has received the prestigious Auditor of State Award. This recognition reflects our team's dedication to maintaining the highest standards of financial accountability, transparency, and integrity.

To qualify for this award, we ensured that our financial reports were filed on time with the Auditor of State's Office, adhered to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and received a "clean" audit report. This means that our audit had no findings for recovery, material citations, or significant deficiencies, and no concerns were raised in the management letter.

This award is a testament to the hard work and commitment of our district's financial team and demonstrates our ongoing dedication to responsible stewardship of the resources entrusted to us by the community.

Looking ahead, I'm pleased to share that we will be releasing an updated Financial Prospectus later this fall, providing an even clearer picture of the district's financial standing and future outlook.

If you have any questions about our finances or would like more information, please feel free to contact me at brobson@ofcs.net or 440-427-6000.



Back row: Kelly Mendeluk, Fiscal & HR Specialist; Charlene Conte, Payroll Coordinator
Front row: Holly McFadden, Assistant Treasurer; Brett Robson, Treasurer/CFO; Allison Wulfhoop, Accounts Payable

OLMSTED FALLS HIGH SCHOOL AWARDED \$39,988 GROW OHIO GRANT



Olmsted Falls High School is the recipient of a \$39,988 Grow Ohio Grant from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. The grant will support the school's new urban agricultural and sustainability class debuting this year.

Led by teacher Jessica Jones, who teaches honors biology, AP seminar, and environmental science, the class is designed to connect students with food service programs through hands-on learning in gardening and agriculture. "The grant will help us establish a strong foundation for this program, which will benefit our students for years to come," said Jones.

Plans for the grant funds include purchasing hydroponic systems, outdoor gardening beds, and other supplies. The food grown by students will be incorporated into the school's cafeteria, enhancing the salad bar with fresh, locally grown produce. The class is student-led, with a focus on career pathways in food, nutrition, and agriculture.

With strong interest from students, 42 have already signed up for two sections of the class for the 2024-2025 school year. Principal Leo Spagnola is thrilled with the grant, noting it will help expedite the school's plans to grow the program into one of the best urban agriculture courses in Northeast Ohio.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT ASSEMBLIES KICK OFF THE YEAR AT FALLS-LENOX

During the first week of school, Falls-Lenox Primary School students participated in our annual Student Engagement Assemblies. These assemblies are an important tradition where students learn about our building-wide expectations as part of our PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) program: Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful, and Be Kind.

In addition to learning about these important values, students were introduced to the various student clubs and extracurricular activities available at Falls-Lenox. Each student group leader presented their club or activity, giving students the opportunity to ask questions and get excited about the fun opportunities awaiting them throughout the year.

To top it all off, the beloved Bulldog mascot made an appearance, pumping up the students and creating an atmosphere of excitement and school spirit!



FACILITIES MASTER



Our Facilities Master Planning Committee is continuing to gather information with the goal of presenting a comprehensive facilities plan for the Board of Education’s review and approval in early 2025.

MASTERING THE PLANNING PROCESS

Committee members have gained a comprehensive understanding of the facilities master planning process, a critical step in ensuring that the district’s infrastructure aligns with our educational objectives. This knowledge will guide future decisions to ensure that our facilities continue to support student learning and growth.

OFCS FACILITIES MASTER PLANNING TIMELINE

SEPT. 2023 PRE-PLANNING	OCT. 2023 MEETING #1	DEC. 2023 MEETING #2	FEB. 2024 FACILITY VISITS
Identify potential committee members Announce launch of facilities master planning process	Facilities Master Planning Process Overview of current OFCS facilities Review of OFCS facilities assessments	Educational Visioning: Modern Learning Spaces Ancillary Facilities: Atkinson Transportation Facility	In-District - What we have? Out-of-District - What is out there to consider?

WHAT'S COOKING AT OLMSTED FALLS?



NEW MENU ITEM: PIZZA BAGELS!

This year, we’re excited to introduce a new entrée at all five schools: locally-made pizza bagels from Cleveland! These are the same pizza bagels served at the West Side Market but reformulated to meet school nutrition standards by reducing sodium and using whole-grain dough. This is a great opportunity to support a local business while offering students a minimally processed, delicious entrée made with fresh ingredients.



NEW OVEN TECHNOLOGY AT FALLS-LENOX AND HIGH SCHOOL

This summer, the district upgraded the kitchens at Falls-Lenox and the high school with four new Rational iCombi Pro ovens, replacing the older models. These combi ovens can cook using convection, steam, or a combination of both simultaneously. The advanced technology allows for more efficient cooking and consistent results, while the built-in washing system makes cleaning easier and more thorough.



FOOD TASTING WITH PRINCIPAL'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

On Sept. 17, CORE Foodservice came to the high school to run a food sampling for the Principal’s Advisory Council. They featured some new items on the market such as crispy whole-grain onion rings, chicken tikka masala, and whole-wheat naan bread. These three items were a huge hit and could be making an appearance on the menus across the district next semester! Our department values the input of our students and believes they should have a voice in what is served in the cafeteria. These items will also expand our menu to make it global and more representative of the diverse cultures that we are surrounded by.

PLANNING UPDATE

ASSESSING CURRENT INFRASTRUCTURE

By conducting thorough reviews and site visits, the committee has examined the history and current status of Olmsted Falls' school buildings and transportation facilities, assessing their strengths and identifying areas for improvement. This process has been essential in determining the best path forward.

EXPLORING MODERN LEARNING SPACES

Recognizing the evolving needs of education, the committee has also explored educational visioning and modern learning environments. We are committed to ensuring that our district stays at the forefront of innovation, providing spaces that foster creativity, collaboration, and academic success.

ADDRESSING MAINTENANCE CHALLENGES

Deferred maintenance and its impact on budgeting and operational efficiency have been key considerations. The committee has proactively explored this challenge to understand its long-term effects and how best to address maintenance as part of our facilities planning.

Our next step is to engage the community in shaping the final recommendation. This will begin with presentations to the Key Communicators group and PTA Council this fall. Their feedback will help refine our approach, ensuring we present a facilities master plan to the Board of Education that reflects our community's shared vision and serves the district for many years to come. For more information on the vision for our facilities, please scan this QR code.



MAR. 2024 MEETING #3	MAY 2024 MEETING #4	FALL 2024	WINTER 2024	SPRING 2025
Review of February Site Visits Deferred Maintenance Breakout Discussions	Consensus building exercises Prioritizing the Projects	Community Engagement Begins w/ Key Communicators and PTA Council Presentations	Focus Groups in Our Community & Data Collection	Present Master Facilities Plan Recommendations to Olmsted Falls Board of Education

THE WHITE HOUSE ON BAGLEY: WHY BUILD A NEW CENTRAL OFFICE?

If you've driven by Olmsted Falls High School on Bagley Road, you may have noticed the small white ranch house that serves as the Board of Education office. While easy to overlook, this building houses 17 staff members who manage essential district operations such as payroll, student services, and community engagement. Originally intended as a temporary solution 25 years ago, the building is now outdated, cramped, and not ADA-compliant. Staff are working in closets, shared spaces, and even under stairways.

Renovating the current office would cost more than \$1 million but still wouldn't solve the space or accessibility issues. Instead, the district is moving forward with plans to build a new, efficient central office at the same location, using funds from retired debt, meaning no tax increase for the community.

The new building will provide enough square footage to consolidate staff currently spread across multiple locations, provide proper meeting spaces, and serve as a hub for Board of Education meetings and professional development. Construction is expected to begin in early 2025, with completion projected by early 2026.

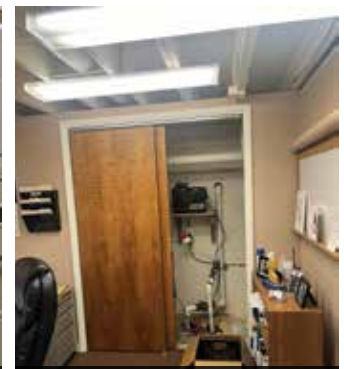
Those who wish to tour the current Board of Education office are welcome to contact Superintendent Jim Lloyd at jlloyd@ofcs.net to schedule a visit.



Scan the QR code for answers to "Frequently Asked Questions" about this project.



Some student files are stored in the restroom due to lack of space



Director of Business shares his basement office with the sump pump

SUPERINTENDENT JIM LLOYD HONORED WITH NATIONAL AWARD



Olmsted Falls City Schools Superintendent Jim Lloyd has been recognized with the prestigious Dr. Roland Chevalier Moral and Intellectual Leader Award from the Schlechty Leadership Network. The award acknowledges his dedication to fostering a culture of student engagement and learning within the district.

Reflecting on the honor, Lloyd said, “While the superintendent certainly is involved with district transformation, it doesn’t happen without the leadership of central office staff, building administrators, and teachers. This award really belongs to the entire school district.”

The Schlechty Leadership Network is a nonprofit organization committed to partnering with educational leaders to create collaborative, learning-centered environments. Over the past nine years, the Olmsted Falls district has worked closely with the organization to enhance student engagement and promote deeper learning experiences.

Lloyd emphasized the district’s ongoing efforts to shift from a traditional bureaucracy to a more collaborative learning organization. “It’s about sharing power and creating opportunities for student learning that are both engaging and motivating,” he explained.

This national recognition reflects the district’s commitment to innovative education and the collective efforts of its staff to support student success.

STUDENTS GET “LOST IN THEIR BOOKS”

At Olmsted Falls Intermediate School, Mrs. Barylski’s students have found a special way to enjoy their reading time—by getting “lost in their books” in cozy, personalized reading nooks. These dedicated spaces allow students to dive into their favorite stories in comfort, and it has been exciting to see the enthusiasm and engagement grow. We love seeing students immersed in their reading and taking full advantage of these special spots.



FALLS-LENOX KICKS OFF SCHOOL YEAR WITH “ONE SCHOOL, ONE BOOK”

At Falls-Lenox Primary School, we started the school year by sparking curiosity and encouraging a love for learning through our “One School, One Book” initiative. This year, all classes are reading “The Girl With BIG, BIG Questions” by Britney Winn Lee. The story is a perfect fit for our goal of giving students opportunities to explore areas of interest and inspire them to ask questions.



After reading the book, each student shared something they “wonder” about, creating their own BIG, BIG questions. These wonderings are now proudly displayed throughout the school, showcasing the curiosity and creativity of our students. Parents are encouraged to continue this conversation at home by asking their child, “What is something you wonder about and want to learn more about?”

We believe that learning begins with questions, and by empowering students to explore their interests, we help them take charge of their own learning journey.

OLMSTED FALLS INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL CELEBRATES START WITH HELLO WEEK



From Sept. 16-20, Olmsted Falls Intermediate School joined together to celebrate Start With Hello Week, a Sandy Hook Promise program focused on fostering inclusion, empathy, and connectedness within schools and the wider community. The program encourages students to build a sense of belonging and empathy through three simple steps: “See someone alone, reach out and help, start with hello.”

Throughout the week, students and staff participated in daily themed activities that emphasized the importance of these values. The Bulldog Broadcast featured special announcements and videos highlighting the message, while the themed days brought the spirit of the week to life. It was a week full of positive energy and important lessons, reminding everyone of the power a simple “hello” can have in making others feel welcome.



OLMSTED FALLS MIDDLE SCHOOL PAC GIVES STUDENTS A VOICE

The Principal’s Aspirations Council (PAC) at Olmsted Falls Middle School was formed to ensure that students’ voices are heard, their opinions are valued, and their ideas are implemented. By creating PAC, the school has opened direct lines of communication between staff and students, allowing for a meaningful exchange of thoughts and ideas.

PAC engages students by asking for their perspectives on various aspects of school life, including concerns, insights, and ideas. The council then takes action based on the feedback provided, making sure that students feel empowered and involved in shaping their school experience.

As Robert Sharp, a sixth-grade student, explains: “Student voice is important because students get a chance to discuss with trusted adults what they think could result in a better school. It makes students more comfortable sharing different things and gives them a chance to comment on what THEY, the students, think would be a better fit for them in an environment that won’t judge them and will listen to what they have to say.”

PAC ensures that student voices are not only heard but also acted upon, making Olmsted Falls Middle School a place where students truly have a say.



POPSICLES ON THE PLAYGROUND: A SWEET START TO THE YEAR

On Wednesday, Aug. 14, the Falls Lenox-ECC (FLECC) PTA and ECC staff welcomed students and families to the annual Popsicles on the Playground event. Held on the ECC playground, this laid-back gathering gave students a chance to meet their teachers, classmates, and staff before the school year began. Families enjoyed a relaxed atmosphere while the FLECC PTA provided popsicles for everyone who attended.



To help students connect with their classmates, children were color-coded by class, making it easy for them to find their peers and teachers. The FLECC PTA took the lead in organizing the event, allowing ECC staff to spend more time interacting with families and answering questions.

The collaboration between the FLECC PTA and ECC is a great example of a strong partnership that benefits both the school and the community. This year’s event had the highest attendance ever, and the staff looks forward to Popsicles on the Playground each year as a way to warmly welcome both new and returning students to the ECC.

REQUIRED ANNUAL NOTICES

Looking for information about our OFCS required annual notices? This information can be accessed year-round on the Annual Notices page of the district website. The following annual notices are on the website: Asbestos Report, Child Find Notice, Federal Funds Notice, Early Entrance Notice, Gifted Identification Notice, Payment In Lieu of Transportation, Title IX, and Semi-Annual Bullying/Harassment Report. To learn more scan the QR code.



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OUR SCHOOL REPORT



18th Consecutive Year

IS PUBLISHED TO MAINTAIN A REGULAR LINE OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE RESIDENTS OF THE OLMSTED FALLS SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNITY

NEWS AS IT HAPPENS: OLMSTED FALLS SCHOOLS ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM & X

There are great things happening **every day** across the Olmsted Falls City School District! Keep up with the news and information via the district's social media channels.

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*****ECRWSS*****

Local
Postal Customer

OLMSTED FALLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

President: Phil Eckenrode **Vice President:** Kelly Walker
Members: Justin Funk, Bob Perez, Holly Neumann

ANNOUNCING THE OLMSTED FALLS BOARD OF EDUCATION CHALLENGE COIN



The Olmsted Falls City Schools Board of Education (BoE) is proud to announce the introduction of the Challenge Coin as a way to recognize and reward exceptional performance, achievement, or service. The OFCS BoE Challenge Coin is a symbol of excellence and commitment to “The Bulldog Way.”

The history of the Challenge Coin dates to World War I. It symbolized the unbreakable bond and shared service among members of a unit. Today, it is our way of honoring those who go above and beyond in their dedication to education and our community.

Any BoE Member can present the Challenge Coin at their discretion. For example, on-the-spot during a school visit, during an awards assembly, or at a Board of Education meeting. Those eligible to receive a BoE Challenge Coin are students, teachers, support staff, principals, administrators, central office staff, and community members.

The BoE Challenge Coin is the brainchild of BoE member Mr. Bob Perez who became aware of the Challenge Coin during his time in the military. Look for more information about the Challenge Coin throughout the school year as BoE members begin to award them. Receiving a Challenge Coin is a great honor, as it signifies that the recipient has truly exemplified The Bulldog Way.

DORIN JACKSON JOINS OLMSTED FALLS HIGH SCHOOL AS ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL



Olmsted Falls High School is excited to welcome Dorin Jackson as the new Assistant Principal. Jackson, who brings a wealth of experience in education and leadership, shared, “The opportunity to join Olmsted Falls City Schools is truly a gift. Specifically, coming into the district as a High School Assistant Principal provides a tremendous opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the established student-centered culture. Through the work of the Design and True Accountability teams, I look forward to working with all stakeholders as a contributing member to the ‘Bulldog Way.’”

We look forward to the positive impact Dorin Jackson will bring to our school community!