

New Central Administration Building- Frequently Asked Questions

What is the project?

The district is constructing a 9,000 square foot office building that will serve as the offices for the central administration. There will be about 19 employees working there. To accommodate increased parking, the district is expanding the high school parking lot in front of the high school and adding about 38 additional parking spaces. The hole in front of the high school will house an underground water retention system rather than creating a retention pond in front of the central office building.

It's being called the Central Administration Building in order to clear up any misconceptions that the five school board members work out of the office. The "Board of Education building" has never had offices for school board members. It serves as the offices for central administrators that operate the district.

Has the school district done its due diligence to look at all options for a central office administration building?

Over the past three decades, Boards of Education, Superintendents, and Treasurers have carefully examined all available options for central administration offices — including renovating, renting, or building. Some possibilities were fully explored, while others remained only informal discussions.

One frequently asked question is why the central offices were not relocated to the 3rd floor at Olmsted Falls City Hall. A former elected official once suggested that free rent might be available if the district funded the renovation of the third floor. However, this option was never pursued for several reasons:

1. No formal offer was ever presented to the Board, Superintendent, or Treasurer.
2. Renovation costs were estimated at approximately \$1 million.
3. The available square footage was insufficient to meet the needs of central office staff and district operations.
4. It would not have been fiscally responsible to invest \$1 million in renovating a building the district does not own.

Given these factors, the current Board determined that the option ultimately chosen best meets the needs of the school district.

Why do you need a different office space?

The current central administration building, also known as the "white house," was meant to be a three-year temporary solution and the central administration has been there for 25 years. The work of the central office supports the entire school district. We are simply out of space. We have confidential files stored in filing cabinets that are in one of the bathrooms, the facility is far from ADA compliant, and during important

meetings we have toilet water running through the pipes overhead. We are overcrowded and literally on top of one another and working from desks under stairs and in a sump-pump closet. While the workspace will be new, the plans are not luxurious.

What is the cost?

The average cost for single-story office construction in Ohio is between \$290 - \$440 per square foot. This is a commercial structure, not a residential one. With renting space off the table, we needed to build. The cost for the central office building is in line with commercial construction of an approximately 9,000 square foot facility. The district takes its commitment to using the resources we are provided responsibly. The construction cost is approximately \$3.6 million for the building and an additional \$247,000 for increased parking in front of OFHS. Remaining costs will include fixtures, furniture and equipment.

How will the district pay for this without raising taxes?

The debt from an HVAC equipment upgrade has recently been retired, and the annual cost of the new building will be comparable to the retired debt. This project will not increase taxes or advance the district's projections of when it will need to return to the ballot. The funding source is a Permanent Improvement Levy that was previously approved by the voters.

Where's the money from the sale of the Schady Rd property? Why not use that for this building?

The net proceeds obtained from the \$1,200,000 sale of the Schady Road property on 8/30/2021 were \$1,141,159. These proceeds were used for the following projects:

- Roof repair ECC, FL, MS was \$576,839
- HVAC @HS and ECC was \$435,873
- Hot Water Tank @ HS was \$42,950
- Buildings & Grounds Equipment (truck, plow, MDX utility vehicle) was \$85,497

These projects had a total cost much higher than listed above. The funding gap was satisfied through the use of ESSER dollars and the Permanent Improvement Fund.

Can't you just work in a trailer? It was good enough for students.

Classroom trailers have always represented a temporary solution for student learning and office space. They do not offer a permanent solution for the needs of students and employees. They're expensive and not a viable option for student learning or office space. The district didn't want to put students into these locations, but had to because of an enrollment boom in the 1990s and failed bond issues. The construction of OFIS and the high school renovation project removed the need for these.

Why not have the central office administration building employees work remotely or on a hybrid schedule?

The central office administration is critical to the operation of the district's business. The central office team manages a \$60 million budget, oversees HR operations, the curriculum, instruction and assessment programs, special education, district communications and facilitates accounts payable and receivable. While there could

be some remote work opportunities, we need to be on-site so that the staff members in our school and transportation buildings have access to the support that they need during the school day.

Why not buy the old Dairypak/Evergreen Packaging building on Mapleway?

The building was already purchased. Even if it were available, the square footage is immense and the cost to purchase and its renovation needs would not make financial sense.

Why don't you relocate the central office employees to one of our school buildings?

There will be approximately 19 central office employees needing a work space. There isn't a school building in Olmsted Falls Schools with enough empty space to house the central office. We currently have members of the central administration already taking up space in the buildings. The new building would move them out of the spaces they are using in the school buildings, freeing up that space for our school staff to use.

Why do you need a building the size of 9,000 square feet?

The square footage of the building was determined by the architect and it was based on the needs of the staff working in the building. In addition to office space for these employees, the building will contain a meeting room for professional development and school board meetings. This will free up space frequently used at the high school (room 606) and intermediate school (room 437/439) for these purposes. The facility will also have two additional conference rooms, employee bathrooms, public bathrooms, storage, a mechanical room, and a break room.

Aren't all of the new housing developments planned for Olmsted Falls and Township going to result in an overcrowding of schools? Shouldn't we use the money to help with that rather than a new administration building?

Our enrollment study shows that we will have stable enrollment through 2034. The study took into account the planned housing developments. Our estimates show that we have ample space to handle more students in our schools if those projections somehow change.

The estimated costs to update the Transportation Facility (about \$9 million) and build a new elementary school (anywhere between \$25 - \$40 million) exceed any existing funding source.

Why not wait and build a new central office administration building at the same time that you are building or renovating other school buildings?

The board and administration considered this, but determined that any issue that would require a bond campaign would be best focused on a new learning space for our PreK-3 students and addressing the needs at the transportation facility.