

Our SCHOOL REPORT



Olmsted Falls School District

Winter 2020

THE BULLDOG WAY

By Superintendent Jim Lloyd, Ed.D.

Dear Olmsted Falls Community,

We have now reached the midpoint of the 2020-2021 school year and what a year it's been! While the global pandemic continues to bring forth challenges, we remain ready. Together, we continue to learn a great deal as the situation changes nearly daily. Thankfully, we are prepared to adapt when necessary. We are equipped to respond to a multitude of scenarios and will continue to provide our students with our Olmsted Falls Triple A Experience.

Reopening school looked incredibly different than it has in years past, and I want to thank our families, staff and community for supporting our schools all year. When developing a plan for learning, we acknowledged that there is no plan that will make everyone happy. That's because information is ever-changing as we continue to work with the guidelines from the CDC, Ohio Department of Health, Governor of Ohio, and the Cuyahoga County Board of Health. With these challenges, our pledge to you was to communicate in a timely manner so that all stakeholders had the opportunity to plan and prepare as the situation changed.

Developing the learning plan was a collaborative effort. We surveyed Olmsted Falls families regarding reopening plans and concerns surrounding the 2020-2021 school year and we received great feedback from the community. We worked with multiple OFCS Responsible Restart committees to decide on important details such as the bell schedule, entering and exiting the buildings, distancing, cleaning buildings, face coverings and masks, transportation to and from school, etc. All our planning and preparation helped maximize the learning experience during this very unusual year.

As the world continues to address the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, our commitment to the health and safety of our students and staff remains steadfast. Like you, our hope is to have students learning in the classroom as much as possible. But it must be done as safely as possible. We



Dr. Lloyd joins OFHS 2020 Homecoming King and Queen Andrew Parkowski and Brooke VanArnhem on the track as Bulldogs find ways to celebrate traditional milestones in non-traditional ways.

continue to rely on our parents, students and staff to support the safety procedures and personal hygiene practices. It is also imperative that families not only monitor their own health, but keep students home when any symptoms of illness are present. We will get through this together!

While this school year is not like any other school year, we are here to work with you and answer your questions every step of the way. With the continued support and flexibility from our community, brighter days are on the horizon.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jim Lloyd, Superintendent

PHIL ECKENRODE APPOINTED TO VACANT SEAT ON OLMSTED FALLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Olmsted Falls Board of Education voted unanimously in October to appoint Mr. Phil Eckenrode to fill the vacant seat left by the resignation of a board member earlier this month. Mr. Eckenrode was formally sworn into office to officially begin his service at the regular monthly meeting of the Olmsted Falls Board of Education on Thursday, October 22, 2020. He was one of seven applicants interviewed for appointment to the vacant seat.

“The board is excited to welcome Mr. Eckenrode,” said Board of Education President Holly Neumann. “Phil brings many strengths we look for in a board member including critical thinking skills, problem-solving ability, questioning and collaboration.”

“During his interview Mr. Eckenrode spoke about his passion for learning and his desire to embrace new learning opportunities,” added Neumann. “Our district mission statement centers on empowering our students to be life-long learners, and Mr. Eckenrode exemplified that himself during our interview, making him a good fit for this appointment.”

The Board of Education followed a very specific format and timeline dictated by Ohio Revised Code (ORC) as

well as its own board policies to fill the vacant seat, which was created by the resignation of long-time board member Joseph Bertrand in early October. A total of seven community members submitted letters

of interest outlining their qualifications following the publicized deadline of October 13, 2020. Interviews of all seven candidates took place on Monday, October 19th. Deliberation on the candidates immediately followed the interviews, with the board unanimously voting to appoint Mr. Phil Eckenrode to fill the vacant seat.

“I am honored to have the opportunity to serve our students and community,” said Mr. Eckenrode. “Our family has witnessed first-hand the value that an OFCSD education brings, and I am

excited to be a part of continuing to deliver on the promises of our Triple A district.”

Eckenrode holds a degree in political science from Kent State University and a Juris Doctorate degree from Mortiz College of Law at The Ohio State University. He currently serves as the General Counsel of the Prince & Izant Company, a manufacturer of brazing and other metal joining products. Phil and his wife Melissa have resided in Olmsted Township with their two school-age children, Joey and Ben, since 2016, having moved here for our schools.

“Phil appears eager to roll up his sleeves and jump into the work and we look forward to that,” said Neumann.



Mr. Phil Eckenrode



Welcome Mr. Eckenrode! Mr. Phil Eckenrode was joined by his family as he was sworn in during the regular monthly Board of Education meeting on October 22, 2020.



STUDENT CANDIDS

THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY

Coming to the community with an operating levy is never an easy decision. We took great care in making economically sound choices in order to wait as long as possible to place the levy on the ballot. Obviously at that time, a global pandemic was not on anyone's radar. We are overwhelmingly grateful to the community for seeing the big picture amidst this health and economic crisis.

In recent months, our focus has been to make the best of a very challenging situation. With the governor's directive to close schools in the spring, we found ourselves working hard to educate our students in innovative ways in order to keep our staff and students healthy and safe. Providing our Triple A excellence, a great source of pride for our community, remained

a priority throughout emergency remote learning. With the passage of the operating levy, our unique and effective education system will remain in place. Thanks to the support of Olmsted Falls residents, we will continue to provide a high standard of education for our students as we transition back to school this fall.

Despite the obstacles to an election during a statewide "stay-at-home" directive, our community had an overall voter turnout of approximately 40% – double the statewide average for this election. On behalf of our students and staff, thank you for making your voice heard. Our spring operating levy passed by a margin of 10%, capturing 55% of the votes. Olmsted Falls City Schools is incredibly fortunate to have a community that values quality education for our youth.

FIGHTING FOR FAIR SCHOOL FUNDING

School funding is a challenging topic at both the state and local levels. For decades, legislators and governors have attempted to provide a school funding formula that is fair and equitable for all schools at a good value to taxpayers.

In 2019, a bipartisan group of legislators, Speaker of the House Bob Cupp (Lima – R) and Rep. John Patterson (Jefferson – D) introduced legislation, known as House Bill (HB) 305, that would provide a new funding formula for Ohio's public schools.

"It's an improvement because it is built around the classroom and is research-based," states Superintendent

Jim Lloyd. "They spent more than a year studying data, working with local school officials like me, and gathering information on what it actually costs to educate a student in Ohio's schools."

While the proposed legislation is a step in the right direction, the proposal must make its way through the legislative process. Recently, the legislature has once again opened up the debate on HB 305. In addition, the proposed model is a phase-in, so even if it is successful, public schools will not see an immediate benefit.

"We are working directly with our local legislators, Senator Matt Dolan and Rep. Tom Patton, to urge them to support HB 305 because it is a predictable and reliable funding model that shifts the burden of funding schools away from local property tax owners to the State," added Lloyd. "A reliable funding stream from the state means there's less of a need to go back to local taxpayers just to fund the basic operations of the district."

Although it will not eliminate the need for local levies, it will stabilize local property tax rates in Olmsted Falls CSD and slow the frequency with which the district will go to the voters.

"It's definitely a step in the right direction," stated Lloyd. "We will continue to advocate for our community at the state level for a fair school funding model that provides a predictable stream of revenue for our schools."



OLMSTED FALLS BOARD OF EDUCATION WELCOMES NEW TREASURER / CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

The Olmsted Falls Board of Education is pleased to announce the hiring of a new Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for Olmsted Falls City School District. The Board voted unanimously at its regular monthly meeting held November 19, 2020, to approve the hiring of Mr. Brett Robson as the new Treasurer/CFO of Olmsted Falls City School District. Mr. Robson, who will formally assume his new position January 4, 2021, comes to Olmsted Falls City Schools from Western Reserve Local School District in Collins, OH.

“Mr. Robson brings to Olmsted Falls City Schools a wealth of experience in school district finances as well as an extensive background in private sector finance,” said Board of Education President Holly Neumann. “His exceptional financial skill set, proven leadership and ability to collaboratively work with and communicate with various stakeholders will be an excellent and beneficial fit for our district.”

“Our Board of Education and district administrative team very much look forward to welcoming Mr. Robson to Olmsted Falls City Schools,” added Mrs. Neumann.

Mr. Robson has served as the Treasurer and CFO of Western Reserve Local School District for the past 17 years. Prior to his time with Western Reserve Local Schools, he spent more than sixteen years in finance and risk management with National City Corporation in a variety of key management positions, including serving as Vice President of the Credit Administration Division. Additionally, Mr. Robson is the owner/managing member of Robson & Associates, a service provider organization specializing in small business payroll processing and personal tax preparation. He also has prior experience serving as an elected member of his local Board of Education, which provides Mr. Robson with an important perspective on the value of

the relationship between the Board of Education and a school district’s management team.

In addition to his extensive financial background, Mr. Robson possesses strong communication and presentation skills and places high value on keeping the community informed about school district finances. He has experience with a variety of school levies and an understanding of levy cycles. Mr. Robson has worked collaboratively on school building and department budgets, has extensive forecasting experience and utilizes a variety of tools and programs for data gathering, monitoring and analysis. He will bring great added value to Olmsted Falls City Schools.

“There are few school districts in our region that stand out as being leaders academically and that are held in high regard within their local community. Olmsted Falls City Schools is one of those districts,” said new OFCS Treasurer and CFO Brett Robson. “Being a part of something positive and

forward-moving is professionally inviting, and the opportunity to join OFCS as the new Treasurer/CFO was very appealing.”

“Having spent time with the Board and the Superintendent during the interview process, it was evident that they are all extremely passionate about their district, have an open and healthy working relationship, and speak highly of the entire staff,” Mr. Robson added. “I look forward to getting started.”

Mr. Robson holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Education from The Ohio State University, and a Masters degree with distinction in Accounting and Financial Management from Keller Graduate School of Management. Mr. Robson resides in Wakeman, OH with his wife of 32 years, Denise. They have three children, Clay, Mitch and Andrea. **WELCOME TO OLMSTED FALLS, MR. ROBSON!**



Welcome Mr. Brett Robson!

STUDENTS, STAFF & FAMILIES ARE BULLDOG STRONG IN FACE OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC



Learning in 2020

It may look different than years past, but students and staff are maximizing learning through engaging and creative content and activities.



Students at our **Early Childhood Center** can SHRED their worries away, all the while practicing breathing with "Meddy Teddy." Breathe in, breathe out, and get ready to learn!



Students in **Mrs. Barylski's** fourth-grade English Language Arts class are enjoying their time in guided reading groups.



Students in **Mrs. Pilko's** fourth-grade English language arts class are exhibiting *The Bulldog Way* through creativity and collaboration as some students work in the classroom and others learn remotely.



Students in **Mrs. Kostraba's** first-grade class have new reading buddies. They filled out applications to adopt stuffed animals, promising to read to their new friends at least fifteen minutes every day.

ANNUAL NOTICES

CHILD FIND NOTICE

School districts across the State participate in an effort to identify, locate and evaluate all children from birth through 21 years of age who may have disabilities. Disability, in this instance, means such conditions as hearing or visual impairments, speech or language impairments, learning or behavioral disabilities, multiple disabilities, other health impairments, physical impairments, autism and traumatic brain injury as defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). A referral may be initiated by parents or agencies knowledgeable of the child's needs. Upon receipt of a referral, Olmsted Falls City Schools will seek further information about the child using a variety of possible sources such as interviews, screening and testing to determine whether the child qualifies for special education services. All information will be held in strict confidence and released only with parental permission or as required by law. Please contact Shannon Goss, Director of Student Services at (440) 427-6530 or sgoss@ofcs.net for more information or assistance.

EARLY ENTRANCE NOTICE

Children must be five years old by August 1st to enroll for Kindergarten classes in Olmsted Falls School District. The District is frequently contacted with questions regarding early entrance of children into Kindergarten. According to Ohio Administrative Code, if a child does not turn age 5 by the District cut-off date (August 1st) but turns 5 by January 1st, the parent may request that the child be tested for possible placement in Kindergarten. Children who do not meet the mandatory cut-off date (August 1st) cannot be admitted into Kindergarten unless they meet the criteria for early admission pursuant with the District's adopted Acceleration Policy for Advanced Learners. The standards, which have been established by the District for the purpose of early admittance, emphasize skills and characteristics which correlate with success in an academically-oriented program. The evaluation is designed to identify those children who are functioning at a superior level in all developmental areas including intelligence, academic readiness, social/emotional maturity, verbal abilities and physical development. To discuss the appropriateness of early entrance for an individual child, please contact Olmsted Falls Early Childhood Center Principal Dora Bechtel at (440) 427-6360 or dbechtel@ofcs.net, or Assistant Superintendent Kelli Cogan at (440) 427-6000 or kcogan@ofcs.net.

FEDERAL FUNDS NOTICE

Federal Funds are provided to school districts on an annual basis for specific programs. Though these Federal Funds amount to less than 3% of the total general fund, they are used judiciously to supplement District teaching and learning programs in areas such as special education, reading, math, professional development, and early childhood education. If you wish to provide input or have questions, please contact Mrs. Kelli Cogan, Assistant Superintendent, at (440) 427-6000 or kcogan@ofcs.net, or Dr. Shannon Goss, Director of Student Services, at (440) 427-6530 or sgoss@ofcs.net.

GIFTED IDENTIFICATION NOTICE

The Olmsted Falls City Schools gifted identification plan identifies students in the areas of superior cognitive ability, specific academic ability, creative thinking ability, and visual and/or performing arts ability. The identification process consists of three phases: referral, screening and assessment. Specific criteria for identification are used for each area. A teacher or parent may refer children for identification by completing and submitting the application form, available at each building, during the first week in September or the first week in March. Additional information may be obtained by contacting Kelli Cogan, Assistant Superintendent at (440) 427-6000 or kcogan@ofcs.net.

STUDENT DIRECTORY INFORMATION NOTICE

The Olmsted Falls School District designates the following items as "Directory Information:" a student's name; address; telephone number; date and place of birth; major field of study; participation in officially-recognized activities and sports; height and weight, if a member of an athletic team; dates of attendance; date of graduation; awards received; honor rolls; or scholarships. **Parents and/or eligible students have ten (10) days after receipt of this public notice to view the student's "Directory Information" and to provide notice in writing to the school district that they choose not to have this information released.** Unless notified to the contrary in writing within the ten (10) school-day period, the school may disclose any of these items designated as "Directory Information" without prior written consent. Directory information shall not be provided to any organization for profit-making purposes. The Board shall not permit the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or for selling that information (or otherwise providing that information to others for that purpose).

STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Voluntary Student Accident Insurance is available. An information link is accessible on-line. If interested in obtaining a form or additional information, please visit www.ofcs.net and click on OFCS District Forms/Links through navigation at top of page.

ASBESTOS REPORT INFORMATION

Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), the Asbestos Abatement Contractors Licensing Act, and the Ohio Public Employment Risk Reduction Act (PERRA), Olmsted Falls Schools 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 and online at www.ofcs.net.

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14th Consecutive Year!

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

What's Inside?

- Welcome New Board Member
- Welcome New Treasurer
- Fight for Fair School Funding
- Annual Notices
- Student Learning in 2020

*****ECRWSS****

Local
Postal Customer

OLMSTED FALLS BOARD OF EDUCATION

President: Holly Neumann **Vice President:** Linda Parkowski
Members: Joanna DeMarco, Phil Eckenrode, Cynthia Tomasch



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

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.



Like us on Facebook:
facebook.com/olmstedfallsschools



See us on Instagram:
instagram.com/ofcstdistrict



Follow us on Twitter:
[@OFCSDistrict](https://twitter.com/OFCSDistrict)

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.