

OUR SCHOOL REPORT



Olmsted Falls School District

Spring 2024

THE BULLDOG WAY *By Superintendent Jim Lloyd, Ed.D.* PROGRESS, PEOPLE AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY



As we welcome the warmer weather and see the last day of school on the horizon, I am excited to share some recent updates and accomplishments from our district.

First and foremost, we're making great strides in implementing our new Benefits-Based Accountability (BBA) system. This innovative approach, driven by community input, prioritizes essential

educational benefits beyond standardized test scores. It reflects our commitment to providing a holistic and well-rounded education tailored to meet the diverse needs of our students and community.

I am also excited to welcome Mr. Bob Perez as our newest board member. His dedication and expertise will undoubtedly contribute to our ongoing efforts to support student success and enhance our district. Additionally, we recently welcomed

a new School Resource Officer, Ryan Hare. Officer Hare brings a wealth of experience and a commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of our students and staff.

In sports news, I want to congratulate our girls' basketball team, who made history with a Division I state championship win. Their hard work, dedication, and teamwork have truly paid off, and they have made our entire community proud.

Finally, I am delighted to see our community come together to talk with Dr. Knight, whose dedication to fostering kindness, respect, and important cultural knowledge within our Bulldog community cannot be understated. Dr. Knight's insights will continue to enrich our understanding, strengthen our bonds as a community, and help us prepare the leaders of tomorrow's world.

In this newsletter, you will also find some important updates, student accomplishments, and the wonderful ways our teachers and administrators continue to make a difference. As we enter the final stretch of the school year, let us continue to support and uplift one another, celebrate our achievements, and strive for excellence in all that we do.

OLMSTED FALLS BOARD OF EDUCATION WELCOMES BOB PEREZ AS NEWEST MEMBER



Olmsted Falls City Schools Treasurer Brett Robson.

The Olmsted Falls Board of Education is excited to announce the addition of Mr. Bob Perez to the Board. Elected in November 2023, Mr. Perez fills the open seat vacated by longtime Board member Dr. Jodi DeMarco at the end of her term. The official induction of Mr. Perez took place during the Board of Education's annual organizational meeting on Jan. 11, 2024, where he was sworn in by

Board President Phil Eckenrode expressed the Board's enthusiasm for Mr. Perez's arrival, citing his active engagement within the Olmsted community and his dedication to local education issues. Mr. Perez's heart for service and integrity, including his background in the U.S. Air Force and his involvement in various community initiatives, like the Olmsted Falls Kiwanis Club and the Falls-Lenox/ECC and Olmsted Falls Middle School PTA units, underscore his commitment to making a positive impact in our community.

Mr. Perez's professional qualifications are equally impressive, with degrees from the Community College of the Air Force, American Military University, and Webster University. Currently serving as a Facilities Supervisor & Project Manager at Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) in Cleveland, his expertise in human resources and project management will surely benefit the Board.

Having relocated to the Olmsted Falls community in 2021 with his wife, Jenny, also a U.S. Air Force veteran, Mr. Perez's decision to run was influenced by the district's commitment to delivering a high-quality, "Triple A" experience for its students. Mr. Perez expressed his pride and excitement in serving as a Board member, emphasizing his dedication to ensuring success for every student and providing support for staff and administrators alike.

Our district extends a warm welcome to Mr. Perez and looks forward to his contributions to advancing the district's mission of inspiring and empowering students.



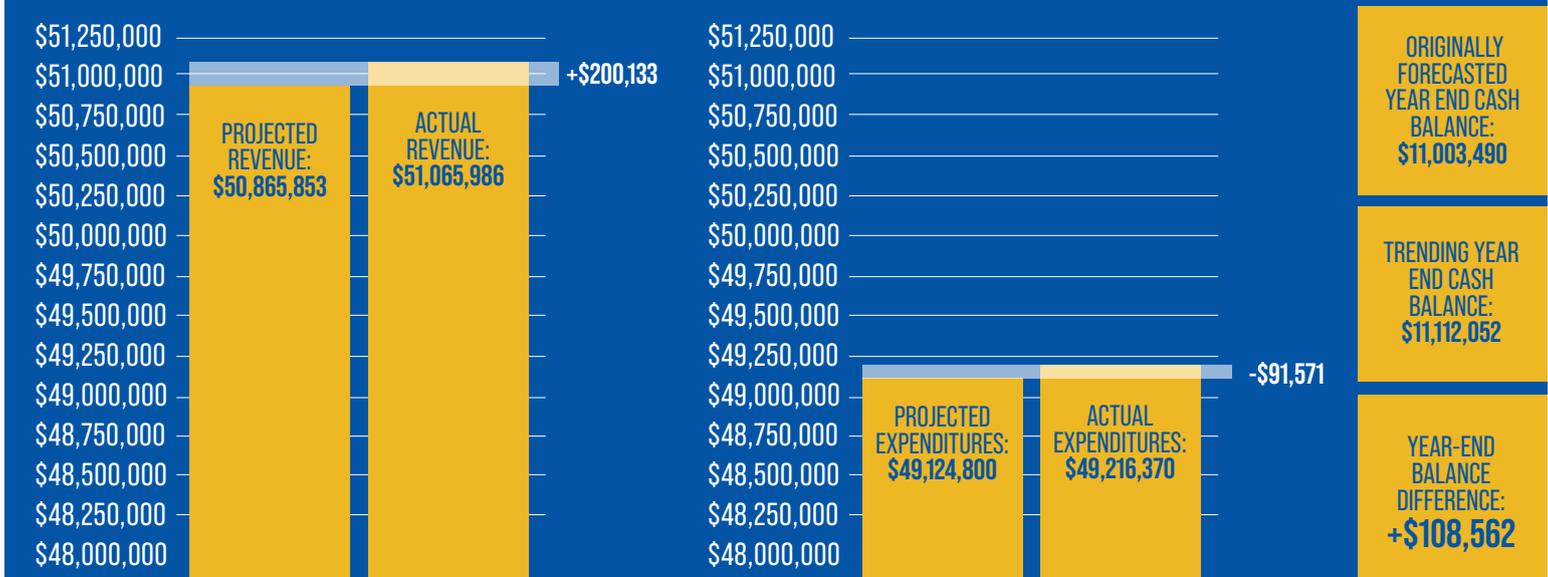
BRETT ROBSON
Treasurer & CFO

TREASURER'S UPDATE: YEAR-END CASH BALANCE TRACKING

Olmsted Falls City Schools prides itself on being fiscally responsible stewards of our taxpayer dollars. Continuous monitoring and attention to detail ensures district operations are running at a high level of efficiency and that budget projections remain on track. The treasurer's office provides the Board of Education with monthly financial reports reflecting our current cash position, the actual performance compared to our plan, and an estimation of the impacts of the remaining periods to our projected ending cash balance.

Olmsted Falls City Schools is in a solid financial position heading into the second half of this fiscal year. As of Jan. 31, 2024, our financial review shows that our revenues are tracking \$200,133 above projections, thanks to diligent fiscal management and effective planning. While our expenses currently exceed our initial forecasts by \$91,571, it's important to understand that there are still five months remaining in our budget cycle and that this variance is relatively minor when viewed against the backdrop of our comprehensive \$50.1 million budget.

Despite these higher expenses as of January 31, we project a year-end cash balance increase of \$108,562. These figures provide a snapshot of our current financial status, but this is positive news for our financial outlook and is reflective of our district's dedication to careful planning and spending.



HONORING VETERANS DAY AT FALLS-LENOX PRIMARY SCHOOL: A CELEBRATION OF SERVICE

Each year, the Olmsted Falls School District joins communities across the nation in honoring Veterans Day with special activities and lessons aimed at recognizing the sacrifices and contributions of our nation's veterans. This year was no exception, as buildings throughout the district came together to pay tribute to those who have served our country.

At Falls-Lenox Primary School, students and staff invited veterans in their lives to take part in a heartfelt celebration on Nov. 10, 2023. The day was filled with activities that allowed students to learn about the significance of Veterans Day while expressing their gratitude to those who have served.

Students gathered to pay tribute through poems, songs, and presentations dedicated to veterans. This served as a fitting tribute to the men and women who have selflessly served our country. Students also made donations, created decorations, and wrote heartfelt thank you letters, demonstrating their appreciation for the sacrifices made by veterans.

A highlight of the day was the heartwarming parade through the school halls, where students proudly marched alongside their special guest veterans. Falls-Lenox Primary School extends a sincere thank you to all veterans who attended the celebration with their students. Your presence and service are deeply appreciated, and it was an honor to recognize and thank you in this special way.



OLMSTED FALLS SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITIES COMMITTEE FORGES PATH FOR FUTURE SUCCESS



The Olmsted Falls School District Facilities Committee has been diligently working to chart a course for the district's facilities moving into the future. Under the guidance of OFCS Director of Business, Heath Krakowiak, who serves as the Committee Chair, meetings have been convened, site visits conducted, and crucial information disseminated to lay the groundwork for strategic decision making.

COMMITTEE PROGRESS

Since its inception last fall, the Committee has convened three times, with each session proving instrumental in building a foundation of knowledge that will help shape the creation of the district's next Master Facilities Plan. Key achievements to date include:

Mastering the Planning Process:

Committee members have gained a comprehensive understanding of the master facilities planning process, a vital step in ensuring the district's infrastructure aligns with its educational objectives.

Assessing Current Infrastructure:

Through thorough reviews and site visits, the Committee has delved into the history and status of Olmsted Falls' existing school buildings and transportation facilities, taking stock of their strengths and areas for improvement.

Exploring Modern Learning Spaces:

Recognizing the evolving needs of education, the Committee has explored educational visioning and modern learning spaces, ensuring that the district remains at the forefront of innovation.

Addressing Maintenance Challenges:

Understanding the impact of deferred maintenance on budgeting and operational efficiency, the Committee has proactively explored the concept in order to understand its impact on future facilities decisions.

LOOKING AHEAD

A Facilities Master Plan serves as a guiding beacon for the district's future endeavors, providing a comprehensive road map for infrastructure development and enhancement. By undertaking this initiative, the Olmsted Falls School District demonstrates its commitment to sustainable growth and academic excellence.

As the Committee progresses, one of its upcoming tasks will be to engage with the broader community. By fostering transparency and communication, the Committee aims to ensure that the community remains informed and invested in the district's future.

Our Facilities Committee's efforts underscore its dedication to providing students with an optimal learning environment. Through meticulous planning, collaborative engagement, and a forward-thinking approach, the Committee paves the way for a future where educational excellence continues to thrive within the district's halls.

MEET SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER RYAN HARE!

Officer Ryan Hare is the newest addition to the school district's team of School Resource Officers! Hailing from the Olmsted Township Police Department (OTPD), Officer Hare officially began his tenure at Olmsted Falls High School back in November, replacing long-time School Resource Officer (SRO) Joe English, who was promoted to Olmsted Township Police Department Sergeant. Before he was appointed full-time SRO for Olmsted Falls City Schools, Officer Hare served as a certified Drone Operator and E-Bike Operator for the police department. He was recognized by local media this past fall for his role in using his expert drone skills to help locate a missing Olmsted Township resident.

Officer Hare joins fellow OTPD Officer Gary Dieckman and Olmsted Falls Police Department Officer Bob Swope in keeping our school hallways and classrooms safe. Officer Hare has already made quite a mark in helping to keep our schools a safe place, and Superintendent Dr. Jim Lloyd is thrilled to have him on board.

Being a School Resource Officer is about more than just patrols and security checks. Beyond their law enforcement duties, SROs actively engage in educational initiatives, delivering programs on personal safety, internet safety, and substance abuse awareness. These initiatives are part of a collaborative effort involving the Board of Education, local elected officials, and police departments, with funding support from the Governor's budget for Student Health and Wellness.

So next time you see Officer Ryan roaming the halls, give him a high five and a warm Bulldog welcome. Together, we're making sure our schools are safe and a place where everyone can thrive.

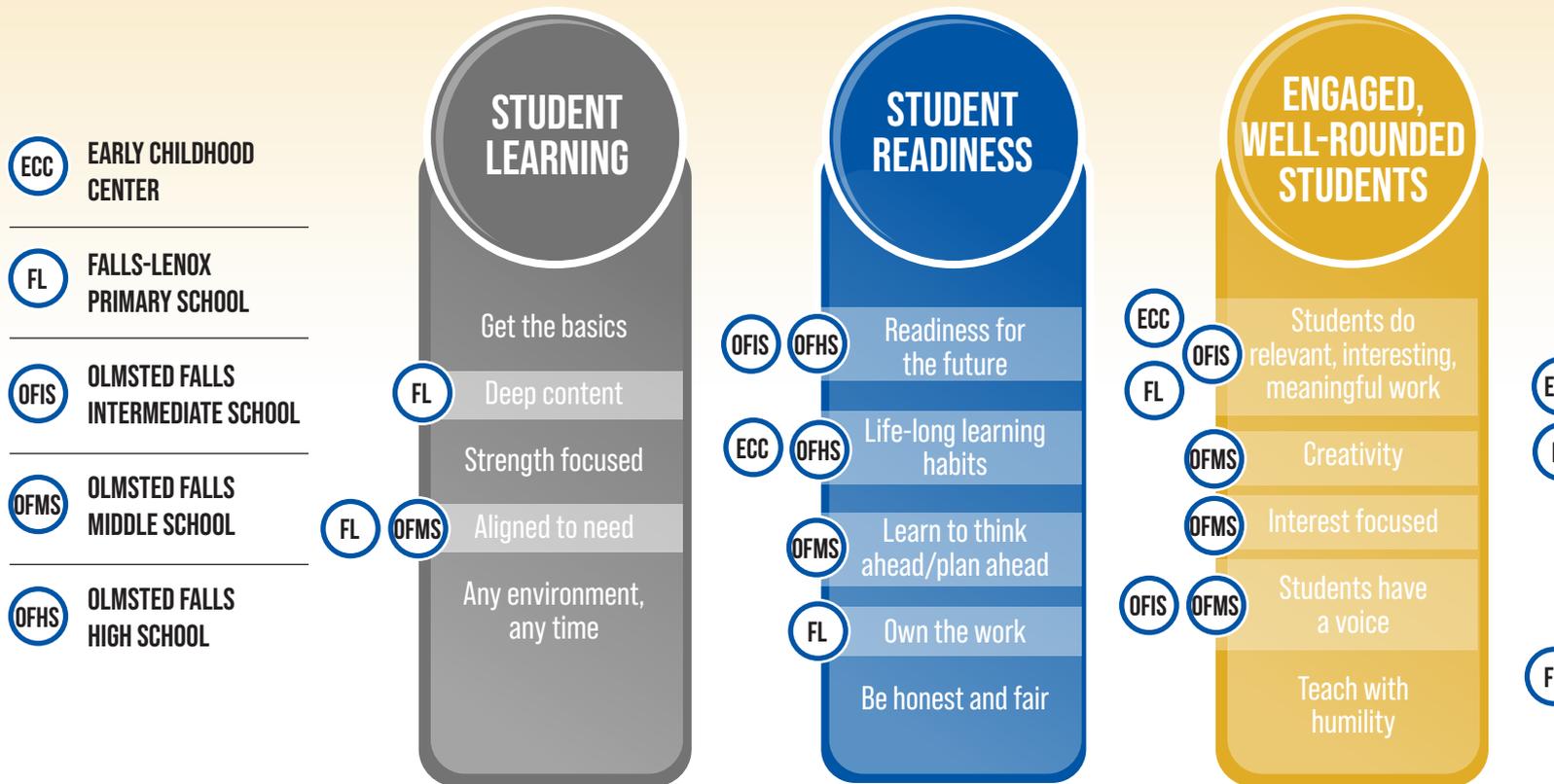


UPDATE ON BENEFITS-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY

BUILDINGS IDENTIFY PRIORITY BENEFITS

As Olmsted Falls City Schools continues the roll-out of its new Benefits-Based Accountability (BBA) system, we're excited to share a summary of the benefits each building has prioritized. Our BBA system requires our schools to engage their primary stakeholders to identify benefits that are most important to them and to develop a system to provide more of those benefits they've identified. Moreover, it requires each school to develop an evidence-gathering system so that the school can report the progress it has made on those benefits identified in a language that our stakeholders can understand.

Each school within our district has identified certain benefits within the seven pillars as priority benefits.



HUMBLE CONVERSATIONS WITH DR. KNIGHT

In partnership with the LINK Family Engagement Program, Olmsted Falls City Schools recently wrapped up a three-part workshop series for Bulldog parents and caregivers. Led by Dr. James Knight, author of "With Heart," these sessions shared practical ways to help children learn to look past the differences of those around them and practice kindness, humility, and curiosity.

Olmsted Falls Schools believes in creating a safe and welcoming environment where everyone treats each other with respect and kindness. These workshops aimed to help parents talk to their children—and teach them how to talk to others—about differences.

In today's world, there are many cultural differences and disagreements. Dr. Knight's workshops promote cultural humility and encourage open conversations. Participants were encouraged to think about their own biases and learn to better understand others.

The workshops explored questions like how to be respectful in different situations, how to recognize our own biases, and how to teach kids to be curious about other cultures. Participants also learned ways to encourage empathy and kindness in their children, preparing our students to be the leaders and change-makers of tomorrow.

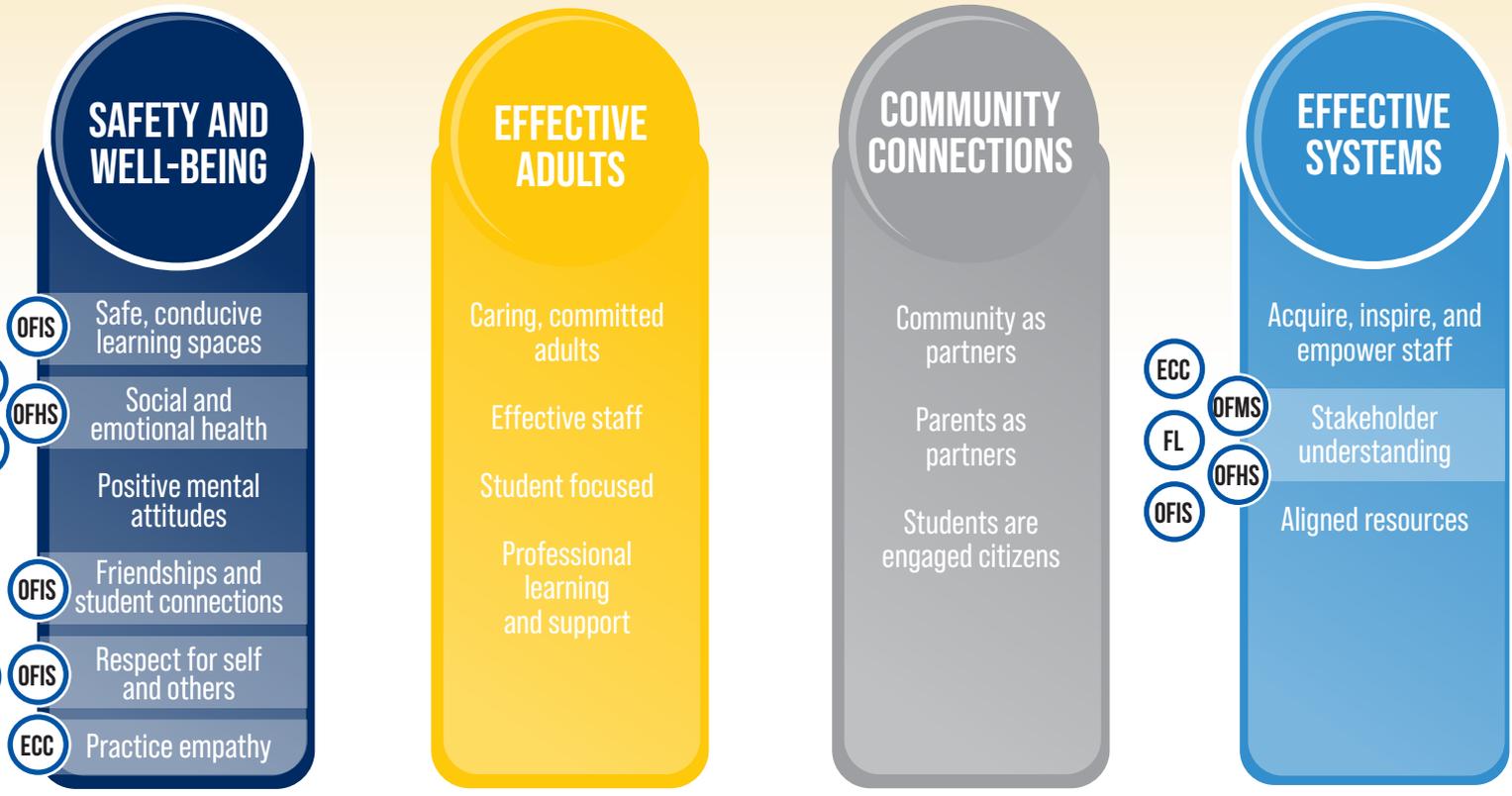
The first workshop, held on Jan. 31, gave parents a chance to talk and share ideas in a relaxed setting while Dr. Knight facilitated meaningful conversations, encouraging attendees to reflect on their own experiences and perspectives. Parents not only got practical tips from the workshops but also received a free copy of Dr. Knight's book, "Heart: A Journey Toward Cultural Humility," thanks to Superintendent Dr. Jim Lloyd.

Each building collaboratively determined their benefits based on feedback from students, parents and caregivers. The benefits selected by buildings reflect those areas that are most important to these primary stakeholders, and they are the ones that school administrators and staff believe can be further enhanced to maximize positive outcomes for students. Each building is currently working on compiling evidence to report out to families actionable items that help support and enrich the benefits their respective parents, caregivers and students want to see.

It is important to note that those benefits not currently identified as “priority” by a school (or schools) are still important and actually represent benefit areas the school is already providing successfully. Moving forward, over time, the collection of

benefits each school chooses to focus on as priority can change and evolve based on continuing input from stakeholders and the level of impact of current programming.

We believe the BBA system uses a broader lens to capture and report on what and how schools are doing, and as a result, it will provide a more comprehensive report when compared to the more traditional (and antiquated) test-based score system that our State government has had in place for decades. BBA is different and better in both process and form, and more fully represents the “Triple A” experience students are receiving in Olmsted Falls Schools.



The workshops emphasized the importance of starting conversations on kindness and respect at the grassroots level. By empowering parents and caregivers to raise empathetic and culturally aware children, the workshops aimed to make a positive impact on the community.

As we work toward a more inclusive and kind world, initiatives like this workshop series serve as vital stepping stones toward building a brighter future. Through open dialogue, introspection, and a commitment to fostering empathy, we can create a world where everyone feels respected and valued.



OFCS Family Engagement & Communication Specialist Julianne Allen with Dr. James Knight



BULLDOG BULLETIN: MORE EXCITING HAPPENINGS AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS ACROSS OUR DISTRICT!



LAST MONTH, OUR EIGHTH-GRADE WHERE EVERYONE BELONGS (WEB) LEADERS

hosted a fun-filled Sixth-Grade WEB Movie Night in the OFMS Cafetorium. Sixth graders enjoyed a movie alongside cookies freshly baked by our eighth graders.

Back in November, our eighth graders welcomed sixth graders for the Sixth-Grade WEB Reunion. This event allowed students to reconnect with their eighth-grade WEB Leaders from the orientation in August. These WEB events ensure every Bulldog feels supported and connected as they transition to OFMS, making their journey a success!

THE FIFTH GRADE CHOIR PRESENTED A SPECIAL PERFORMANCE OF “ELFLANDIA”

to the whole school in December. They also performed an evening concert open to family, friends, and the community!



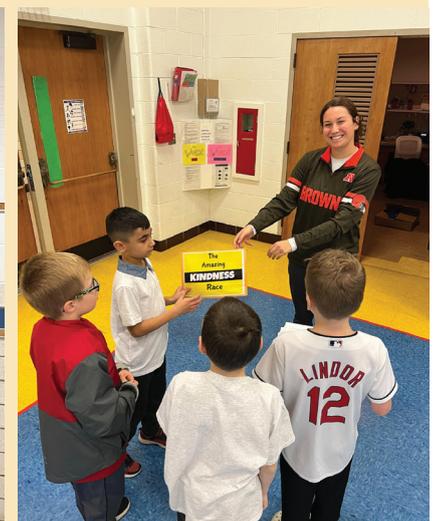
KINDNESS KNOWS NO BOUNDS for our Bulldogs! The Falls-Lenox Helping Hands community recently gathered in December, where more than 70 students arrived at school early to talk about spreading holiday cheer to our family, friends, and community. Helping Hands focuses on encouraging kids to be kind to everyone, and this group of students truly strives to make everyone in our community feel loved and appreciated!



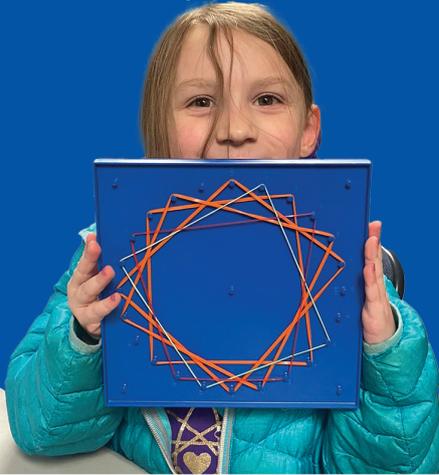
Students gather to make holiday cards!

Speaking of kindness...In the second grade social skills class at Falls-Lenox, students worked on words to practice mindfulness. This winter, one of their words was “kindness,” so these students embarked on “The Amazing Kindness Race” modeled after the television show “The Amazing Race!”

Students demonstrated acts of kindness throughout the building, even one for the Early Childhood Center. As they completed helpful or thoughtful tasks, they earned “kindness tickets” and used the tickets to build their very own Kindness Tree. In total, these second graders completed 81 acts of kindness during the month of December! Way to go, Bulldogs!



STUDENTS AND FAMILIES AT THE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER had a blast at this winter's Family Math Night Event. It was a fun opportunity for families to learn more about preschool and kindergarten math standards by exploring interactive stations on number sense, measurement, geometry, patterning and sorting, and more!



OUR KINDERGARTEN CLASSES TRAVELED DOWNTOWN

for a special field trip to Playhouse Square to see Rainbow Fish in January! It was a great experience and a wonderful opportunity to expose our youngest Bulldogs to the performing arts with a live performance of one of their favorite books. Thank you to the PTA for supporting this year's field trips to Playhouse Square!



CUYAHOGA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION

District visited Olmsted Falls High School to demonstrate forestry, wildlife, aquatic ecology, and soil and land use to Mrs. Jones' and Mr. Crnobrnja's Environmental Science classes. They also introduced Envirothon, an environmental and natural resource conservation competition, and encouraged students to join!



EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS REAGAN AND CORALINE

were selected to have their artwork featured in the 2023 Ohio Middle Level Association Art Show held at the annual state conference in Columbus this winter. As part of the exhibit experience, their incredible art pieces were transformed into poster form where conference attendees could leave positive notes of well-deserved praise. Thank you to our middle school art teachers, Mariel Krakowiak and JoAnna Ventimiglia, for coordinating their submissions.



OUR FRENCH CLASSES

fully embraced the vibrant spirit of Mardi Gras with a delightful celebration! Students flipped, filled, and feasted on delicious crêpes, immersing themselves in the rich culinary heritage of France. It was a flavorful and festive affair, providing a tasty opportunity for students to explore and appreciate the culture and traditions of France.



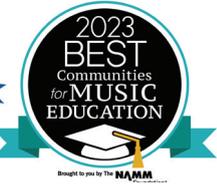
In January, Olmsted Falls City Schools observed **CELEBRATING DIFFERENCES WEEK**. Organized by OFCS Helping Hands, Olmsted Falls Intermediate School students and staff kicked off the week by wearing tie-dye gear, showing their support for everyone's uniqueness!



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17th Consecutive Year!

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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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Members: Justin Funk, Bob Perez, Holly Neumann

GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM MAKES HISTORY WITH DIVISION I STATE CHAMPIONSHIP WIN



In an unprecedented triumph, the Olmsted Falls High School girl's basketball team has secured the Division I State Championship trophy for the first time ever, sending waves of pride and excitement rippling throughout the entire school community.

The victorious Bulldogs embarked on a tour of all five school buildings and the board of education office after their big win. At each stop, the team was met with roaring applause and admiration from fellow students and staff members, who lined the halls to show their support.

The celebrations didn't end there. The team's remarkable accomplishment caught the attention of the local community, earning them a spot on Fox 8 Morning News. In a special appearance, the players and coaches shared their journey to victory, inspiring viewers with their dedication, teamwork, and resilience.

As our team takes in their historic win, they serve as a shining example of determination and excellence for the entire Olmsted Falls community. Congratulations to the team on their remarkable achievement, and may their success continue to inspire future generations of Bulldogs!