



WINTER 2026

NEWSLETTER

A TRANSFORMATIVE YEAR AND A STRONG PATH FORWARD

As we begin a new calendar year, I am filled with profound gratitude and pride in what we have accomplished together. This past year has been one of the most transformative in the history of the Cuyahoga Falls City School District. Together, we have navigated complex challenges, celebrated historic milestones, and laid a firm foundation for the future of our "Black Tigers."

Reflecting on a Year of Milestone Achievements

Over the last six months, our district has reached several critical turning points:

- **Early Childhood Education:** We successfully opened our new preschool program, recognizing that a strong start is the most vital predictor of long-term student success.
- **A Historic Ribbon-Cutting:** We officially celebrated the ribbon-cutting for our magnificent new 6-12 campus. This facility is a testament to this community's commitment to providing a world-class learning environment.
- **Fiscal Responsibility & Strategic Consolidation:** We have continued to aggressively analyze cost-saving measures across the district. This included the difficult but necessary Board decision to repurpose Preston Elementary as we consolidate our footprint to maximize resources for student instruction.
- **Community Support through the Renewal Levy:** The successful passage of our renewal levy was a humbling moment for our district. We thank you for your continued trust; this support allows us to maintain the high-quality programs our students deserve while we continue to manage state-level funding challenges.
- **Launching our Strategic Plan:** We formally began the implementation of our new Strategic Plan, centering our work on a Culture of Caring, Facilitating our Financial Future, and Steering to Student Achievement.

Looking Ahead in 2026: The Future in Focus

While we celebrate these successes, we are not slowing down. We have several landmark events on the immediate horizon:

- **Portrait of a Black Tiger:** Starting in the new year, we will begin the collaborative work of creating our "Portrait of a Black Tiger." This initiative will engage stakeholders from across the community to define the specific skills and attributes we want every Cuyahoga Falls student to possess.
- **Selling the Schnee school building and moving the preschool program and Black Tiger Family Center to Preston.**
- **Creating a Black Tiger Museum space at Preston to display District memorabilia.**
- **Smooth Transitions:** Having finalized the new boundary lines for elementary schools, our focus shifts to ensuring a smooth, supportive transition for our elementary students and their families for the 2026-27 school year.

A Sincere Thank You

None of these achievements would be possible without the support of our community members, families, staff, and students. You have repeatedly shown that Cuyahoga Falls and Silver Lake are communities that value their children and believe in the power of public education.

Thank you for being our partners in this journey.



Andrea Celico, Ph.D.
Superintendent

X: @CFSupt

UPCOMING EVENTS

February

- 11 Board of Education Meeting
- 16 No School
- 25 Board of Education Meeting

March

- 04 Board of Education Meeting
- 08 Daylight Savings Time Starts
- 11 Board of Education Meeting
- 13 Early Release
- 23-27 No School-Spring Break

April

- 03 No School-Holiday
- 06 No School-District Comp Day
- 10-12 CFHS Musical
The Wizard of Oz
- 23 All City Art Walk

A COMMUNITY VISION REALIZED: CELEBRATING THE CUYAHOGA FALLS 6-12 CAMPUS

For the past three years, we have shared quarterly updates to keep our community informed about the progress of the 6-12 campus construction, from early planning and construction milestones to the vision that guided every decision along the way. Today, that vision is fully realized. Our new campus is open, filled with life, learning, and possibility. We are proud to reflect on the key moments that led to the opening of our 6-12 campus and celebrate the journey that brought us here.

Preparing Our Students for the Move

To ensure a smooth and confident transition, students participated in grade-level tours of the new 6-12 campus throughout November and December. These tours were intentionally designed to meet students where they are developmentally by allowing them to explore classrooms, common spaces, the student dining area, and key areas they will use daily. By walking the halls, asking questions, and seeing the building come to life, students were able to envision themselves in the space and feel prepared for this exciting next chapter. The experience helped ease nerves, build familiarity, and generate genuine excitement for learning in a brand-new environment.

A Milestone Moment: Building Dedication & Community Tours

On December 6, our district proudly celebrated the official building dedication ceremony for the new 6-12 campus. Joined by students, staff, alumni, community members, and local leaders, we honored the vision, collaboration, and commitment that made this project possible. Following the ceremony, community tours welcomed visitors inside to experience the learning spaces, performance areas, athletic facilities, and career-focused environments firsthand. The day was a meaningful reminder of what can be accomplished when a community invests in its schools and in its future.

A New Beginning and Honoring the Past

The first days of school at the new campus were filled with energy, excitement, and a strong sense of pride. Students and staff quickly began making the building their own, establishing routines, forming connections, and creating new memories within its walls. At the same time, we paused to honor the legacy of our former buildings. Final walkthroughs at the old campuses provided staff and alumni an opportunity to reflect, reminisce, and say goodbye to spaces that served generations of learners. It was a powerful moment of closure paired with an even stronger sense of forward momentum.

What Happens Next and Frequently Asked Questions

What is going to happen to CFHS, Bolich, and Roberts?

Bolich Middle School will be demolished this spring and a new parking lot will be installed on its footprint for the new campus. The former high school and Roberts Middle School buildings will be sold.

Where are the CFHS class murals, and what will happen to them?

Class murals that were framed or painted on canvas have been carefully removed and placed in secure storage. Murals that were painted directly on the walls have been professionally photographed for archival purposes. A committee is currently reviewing all memorabilia removed from the three buildings and will determine their future locations. These murals will be installed over time in our new 6-12 campus. At this point, we are not hanging items on the walls to allow the paint in the building to properly cure.

When is Lambert Stadium track open to the public?

The new gate is currently being constructed on the 13th St. entrance. Community members may notice that access to the track is unofficially open while this project is being built. We have ordered signage to be installed at the entrances at Lambert Stadium that outlines the guidelines for track usage. If the entrance is open to the track during this time, the public is welcome to use the track, however; we request that the public adhere to the following guidelines:

The track will be open from dawn to dusk and is available when athletic events or practices are not scheduled. Visitors should use designated gates for entry and exit, remain on the track surface, and respect the facility. To help protect the track surface and ensure everyone's safety, items or objects with wheels are not allowed on the track. Security cameras are in use at all times, and access to the school building is not permitted.



THE SHIFT TO LOCAL TAXPAYERS: UNDERSTANDING OHIO'S SCHOOL FUNDING CHANGES

Throughout this year, our quarterly ROAR newsletter will feature a series of articles focused on public school funding in Ohio. As state funding models continue to evolve, school districts across the state, including ours, are navigating new financial challenges and uncertainties. These articles are intended to provide transparency, context, and a clearer understanding of how these changes impact our district and the decisions we make to remain fiscally responsible.

As Treasurer, I want to acknowledge what many in our community are feeling: frustration and concern over rising property taxes. School leaders share those concerns. The issue before us is not irresponsible local spending, but a long-term shift in how public education is funded in Ohio, one that increasingly places the burden on local property taxpayers.

The Numbers Don't Lie: Ohio Has Shifted the Burden to You

Over the past 20 years, Ohio's share of K-12 education funding has dropped dramatically, falling from nearly 45% to about 33.5%, placing Ohio among the lowest states in the nation. While Ohio ranks around 20th nationally in per-pupil spending, a growing portion of that funding now comes from local property taxes rather than state support.

This trend is especially evident locally. In 2002, state funding accounted for just over 40% of Cuyahoga Falls City School District's operating revenue. By the 2027-28 school year, the state's contribution is projected to fall to approximately 10%, about \$822 per student, the minimum required by law, even though roughly 58% of our students are identified as economically disadvantaged. As state support declines, local communities are forced to make up the difference.

Property taxes do not fund schools alone. They also support essential services that affect daily life, including fire and emergency response, roads and infrastructure, and community programs. Proposals to significantly reduce or eliminate property taxes may sound appealing, but they risk destabilizing the services that help keep our community safe and functioning.

To put this in perspective, an estimated \$24 billion reduction in local revenue statewide would impact:

- Classroom resources and school safety
- Fire and emergency services
- Roads, bridges, and infrastructure
- Parks, senior services, and other community programs

As Ohio has fallen from 24th to 41st nationally in state revenue per pupil, and now funds education at \$2,672 per student below the national average, the financial responsibility has inevitably shifted to local taxpayers. Recent changes in state law further complicate this issue. New limits on levy revenue growth, adjustments to rollback credits, and expanded authority for county budget commissions restrict local revenue without corresponding changes to the state funding formula. This creates a "double loss" for school districts, reduced local revenue paired with reduced state aid, and in some cases allows voter-approved levies to be reduced by entities outside the community.

The bottom line is this: Ohio's schools are not the problem. Long-term erosion of state funding, combined with policy changes that limit local funding without replacing it, is placing increasing pressure on communities like ours.

There are better solutions. Meaningful property tax relief should include targeted assistance; reasonable growth limits tied to inflation and income; and accountability at all levels of government. Other states have achieved this balance, and Ohio can as well.

Moving forward will require residents, educators, and elected officials working together to ensure the state fulfills its responsibility to adequately fund public education while protecting essential local services. We encourage our community to stay informed, ask questions, and hold all levels of government accountable.

Thank you for your continued support of public education and for prioritizing our children.



Kristy Stoicoiu,
Treasurer





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Proud BCME District



Supporting Military Families

PBIS STATE RECOGNITION

We are proud to share that six district schools have been recognized by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce for their strong implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). In addition, the District itself received a Bronze Award for PBIS, marking the first time the Cuyahoga Falls City School District has earned this distinction. Together, these recognitions highlight the District's continued commitment to supporting the whole child and fostering positive, safe, and inclusive learning environments.

The following schools received honors for the 2024–25 school year:

- Lincoln Elementary – Gold Award
- DeWitt Elementary – Silver Award
- Preston Elementary – Silver Award
- Richardson Elementary – Silver Award
- Silver Lake Elementary – Bronze Award
- Bolich Middle School – Bronze Award

Ohio's PBIS Recognition System celebrates schools and districts that demonstrate consistent, high-quality implementation of PBIS practices. Each year, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, in partnership with the Ohio PBIS Network, reviews applications and recognizes schools at the bronze, silver, gold, or district level based on fidelity of implementation and positive impact on school culture.

These honors reflect the dedication of our staff and students to creating supportive environments where all learners can succeed.



SECOND SRO ADDED TO SAFETY TEAM

As part of the District's commitment to student and staff safety, we partnered with the Cuyahoga Falls Police Department to add a second Student Resource Officer (SRO) to our safety team. Officer Sam Condon has joined SRO Ted Davis to strengthen school safety and student support.

Officer Condon brings experience in both law enforcement and education, having served with the Cuyahoga Falls and Canton Police Departments and previously worked as a substitute teacher. He has completed specialized SRO training, is a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) officer, and has participated in multiple emergency response trainings.

"I believe this position is about building trust, fostering a safe environment, and serving as a positive role model for students," Officer Condon shared. "I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve the Cuyahoga Falls community."

The addition of Officer Condon enhances the District's focus on creating safe, supportive learning environments while fostering positive relationships between students and law enforcement. The District values its ongoing partnership with the Cuyahoga Falls Police Department in supporting student safety and well-being.



Officer Condon, Officer Davis, CFHS student Landon Luke, Director of Technology and Security Ryan Huch

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