

Spring  
2017



Lexington Local Schools

www.lexington.k12.oh.us

# MINUTEMAN Report

## Lexington Analyzes School Buildings

Everyone invited to take part in shaping the future of our schools and community

As the 2016-2017 school year comes to an end, we have had a great year! Our entire staff has worked diligently to provide each student every opportunity to be as well prepared as possible for what comes next.

The Lexington Schools are a great source of pride in our community and we are thankful for the continued support of our parents and community members.

We are planning to take advantage of Ohio Facilities Construction Commission experts to analyze the efficiency of our school buildings – both financially and educationally. Our newest building is the one time factory which was renovated as Eastern Elementary in the early 1970's. Our most recent construction project was the renovation and additions to the High School in 1978. Our oldest buildings are the Junior High and Central Elementary. The original "red brick" portion of the Junior High was built in 1894. Central Elementary was built in the 1950's, while Western Elementary and the High School were built in the early 1960's. The average age of our buildings not including the 1894 structure is approximately 56 years. Over those years our custodial and maintenance staffs have done an excellent job with the upkeep and maintenance of the buildings. Our facilities concerns include the cost to repair and replace the infrastructure (i.e. plumbing, electrical, heating and cooling) and the type of learning environment our 21st Century students need and deserve.

In the coming months we will be meeting and working with all interested community members, our parents, staff and students to determine what we need to do regarding our facilities to serve the best interests of our students for generations to come, in the most financially responsible way possible.



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There are no preconceived ideas or decisions made about what the future will hold regarding this process. We are encouraging all residents and stake holders in our schools to be a part of this important conversation that will shape the future of our schools and community for generations to come.

If you have any questions, please contact Supt. Mike Ziegelhofer at 419-884-2132 or at [ziegelhofer.mike@lexington.k12.oh.us](mailto:ziegelhofer.mike@lexington.k12.oh.us)

# Increased Building Repairs = Less Funds for Classroom

By: Jason E. Whitesel, Treasurer/CFO

The Lexington community has made it very clear that it wants a solid educational product at a great value. We agree, and we are working hard to achieve this and to communicate with our residents about the financial status of our school district.

For each dollar spent on building repairs, less funds are available for use in the classroom...

Here in Lexington, residents will be pleased to know that the financial future is stable. This can be attributed to conservative budgeting and focus on financial efficiency.

Most of all, Lexington has always been blessed with an incredibly supportive community, which has

a direct impact on the success of our students. Included in this support is the District's Permanent Improvement Levy, which was approved by the voters in 1995 and generates approximately \$675k annually. These funds are used to purchase equipment and to make other improvements with a useful life of 5 years or more, including technology (like computers, smart boards, and other student instructional equipment), textbooks, school buses, student activity equipment, classroom equipment, and other building and grounds repairs, replacements, and improvements throughout the District.

In recent years especially, a significant portion of these funds have been used for some major building repairs and replacements, including roof repairs, boiler and chiller replacements, and other building repairs, replacements, and updates for a total of \$750,000 since 2014. For each dollar spent on these types of building repairs and replacements, less funds are available for use in the classroom and other important educational areas that directly impact our students.

Our school district is currently working with the community to share information about the state of our facilities, as well as what can be done as a community to address the need for modern and efficient schools. I hope you will be part of this important conversation. We look forward to the conversation and, as always, thank you for your support of Lexington Schools.

## Average Age of Lexington School Buildings: 69 years

### Timeline:

#### Junior High School:

- *Original Construction: 1894*
- *Additions: 1930, 1958, 1975, 1977*
- *President: Grover Cleveland*
- *Milton Hershey establishes the Hershey Chocolate Company*

#### Central Elementary School:

- *Original Construction: 1952*
- *Additions: 1957, 1972*
- *President: Harry Truman*
- *The "Today Show" Premiers*

#### Lexington High School:

- *Original Construction: 1961*
- *Additions: 1964, 1972, 1978, 2004*
- *President John F. Kennedy*
- *Pampers the first disposable diaper introduced*

#### Western Elementary School:

- *Original Construction: 1962*
- *Additions: 1967, 1993*
- *President: John F. Kennedy*
- *John H. Glenn, Jr., becomes first American to orbit the earth*

#### Eastern Elementary School:

- *Original Construction: 1972*
- *President: Richard Nixon*
- *Atari kicks off the first generation of video games with the release of PONG*

## Next Steps: Process to Engage Community

- **Creation of Timeline**
- **Creation of Task Force and Financial Advisory Board**
  - Community-led group to research and develop options for consideration by the community
  - Community group to review school finances, including all opportunities and challenges
- **Building Tours**
  - District guided tours offering residents a chance to see first-hand the condition of our schools
- **Community Meetings**
  - Multiple opportunities for residents to provide vital feedback to this important process

# District Details Facilities Planning Process

## Community group seeks solution to current facilities challenge

In an effort to address challenges with the district's aging school buildings, Lexington Schools hosted a meeting in February kicking off a facilities planning process. The purpose is to work with the community to come up with a plan to offer a modern learning environment for students at a good value for taxpayers.

"We are convening this group to bring the community together to find a solution to our current facilities challenges," stated Superintendent Mike Ziegelhofer. "We want to work with all residents to come up with a plan that will be fair to taxpayers and ensure that students have access to safe, modern classrooms and technology to get them ready for life after school."

In 2008, the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission issued a report that assessed the current state of all Lexington school buildings. Our school building ages range from the newest being built in the early 1970's to the oldest portions of the junior high school building built in the late 19th century.

The report analyzed the efficiency of our school buildings – from a financial, educational, and a safety standpoint (such as building access for those with disabilities). The results show that, despite the hard work of our maintenance staff, our school district faces real challenges with maintaining our aging school buildings.

Some may observe that the exterior of buildings seem to look OK, but what is going on behind the walls is what is costing the district, and the taxpayers, more money every year. In some instances, the mechanicals have been deemed "inadequate" by the OFCC.

**Lex families, staff and community = a winning combination that will impact lives that change the world.**

**We want to work with all residents to come up with a plan that will be fair to taxpayers and ensure that students have access to safe, modern classrooms and technology to get them ready for life after school.**

"Financially, there is no "zero cost" option," added Ziegelhofer. "The cost to maintain our schools, most of which are well over the half century mark, is only growing. The board of education and I plan to do additional research and be as transparent as possible with the community in sharing information about the state of our schools and what's at stake financially for our taxpayers."

In addition, Lexington is eligible to receive significant state funding support from the OFCC to help with a building plan.

"It's a real possibility that Lexington could obtain updated buildings through the State program at a deeply discounted price," stated Ziegelhofer. "We are eager to work with our community to come up with options where we can provide a modern

learning environment for students while being as efficient as possible with tax dollars."

## OFCC Buildings Assessment Report Key Findings

Despite the efforts of our maintenance staff to repair and maintain our schools, within the walls of our buildings you will find aging infrastructures and building systems that are nearing or are well beyond their lifespan. In a 2008 report, the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission identified the following as part of a Building Assessment for each of our schools:

- **Classrooms are undersized in terms of the current standards established by the State of Ohio.**
- **Security system issues.**
- **Ventilation systems of the buildings are borderline adequate to meet the needs of the users.**
- **Inadequate electrical systems.**



**Above left:** Western Third Grade students attended the Lexington Earth Day Ceremony at Community Park.



**Above right and middle right:** Eastern Elementary Academic Challenge Teams make clean sweep of 1st, 2nd and 3rd places out of 28 team tri-county competition.



**Below left:** Central fourth grade students visit The Ohio Statehouse.

**Below right:** "Opera in the Schools" performance at Eastern Elementary.



## Preschool Earns 5 Star Rating From State

The Lexington Preschool Program has earned a 5 Star rating from the Ohio Department of Education. Step Up to Quality is Ohio's rating system for childcare and preschool facilities. Participating programs can earn from one to five stars. All Early Learning Childhood Education and Preschool Special Education Programs funded by the Ohio Department of Education participate in Step Up to Quality and are required to achieve a rating of 3, 4, or 5 to maintain state funding, as well as administer and report on the Early Learning Assessment for all early childhood education and preschool special education funded children.

The five star rating is based on five different domains:

- learning and development
- administrative and leadership practices
- staff qualifications and professional development
- family and community partnerships
- ratio and accreditation

Last school year, the preschool team submitted a comprehensive written report detailing the operations and practices of the Lexington Preschool Program. In March, the Ohio Department of Education conducted an on-site visit, which included interviews, classroom observations, reviews of lesson plans and the comprehensive application.

We are honored that we received this 5 Star rating in our third year of programming because creating the social, emotional and learning environment that is of the highest quality has always been our goal for our children. It is an expression of the continued excellence that Lexington provides to the children in our community and a true example of what we love to do – serve children.

## Lexington High School Students Get College Credit

Lexington High School students are taking advantage of the new program introduced by the Ohio Department of Education in 2014, and implemented during the 2015-2016 school year called College Credit Plus (CCP). This program replaced the previous Post Secondary Enrollment Options Program and seeks to give more students access to college curriculum and credits while still in high school.



Lexington High School has offered Advanced Placement (AP) courses for many years, which give students opportunities to earn college credit and has expanded its offerings to a total of nine AP courses for the 2016-17 school year. In addition, to take advantage of the CCP program, Lexington now offers 12 Dual Enrollment course options, allowing students to receive college credit through North Central State College (NCSC), transferable to any state college in Ohio, without having to leave our high school. Several students also travel to NCSC, Ashland University and The Ohio State University at Mansfield campuses to take college courses.

Currently, 25% of our juniors and seniors are enrolled in CCP or Dual Enrollment courses at Lexington. This year 102 students are taking 143 college classes, which translates to 461 credit hours and a savings of \$176,102 towards college. Lexington High School currently has the largest enrollment of CCP students at the OSU Mansfield campus.

Lexington is pleased to continue to offer rigorous courses and opportunities for students to best prepare for, and to save money towards, their college experience.

## Lexington Earns Prestigious "All A" Award



*Lexington High School was recently awarded the Ohio State Board of Education's first annual All A Award. This award recognizes schools that have received all A's on every aspect of school performance measured on Ohio's School Report Cards. Lexington joins an elite group of winners, as only 31 of Ohio's approximately 820 high schools received*

*this distinction. Lexington High School is thankful for the hard-working students, supported by dedicated families and compassionate staff, that helped make this honor possible. Congratulations to students, staff, and families of Lexington High School for receiving this first annual All A Award.*

# Lexington Local Schools

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## National Medal Winner



We are pleased to announce that one of our Lexington Art students has earned a National Silver Medal in the 2017 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. Lexington hasn't had a national medal winner since 2008. This year, more than 330,000 works of art and writing were submitted. Only the top 1% were recognized at the national level. Congratulations to Abigail Vincent, for receiving a National Silver Medal in the 2017 Scholastic Art Awards.



## 8th Grade Student Competes in National Spelling Bee

Maggie Sheridan, to be 8th grade student, competing in the finals of the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington D.C.

## Lex Senior Named Franklin B. Walter Outstanding Scholar



Lexington Senior Leah Lewis was recognized as a 2017 Franklin B. Walter Outstanding Scholar. Leah is pictured with her most influential teacher, Jen Berry and High School Principal Jeremy Secrist.