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A special section dedicated to Black Tiger headlines and achievements | March 2022

A MESSAGE FROM INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT RUSSELL (HABOUDY)

I would like to thank you for so warmly welcoming me to the Cuyahoga Falls City School District as your interim superintendent.

I have been heartened to see how our students, teachers and parents have joined together to confront the challenges of another unpredictable school year. I admire the optimism, openness, resolve and flexibility I see on full display each day.

As a graduate of Cuyahoga Falls myself, I am incredibly grateful for everything this city and school district did for me growing up, and I am excited to see the next generation taking advantage of the same life-changing opportunities I was lucky enough to have access to throughout my education.

This year, our students have participated in various activities, from sports to music performances to plays and everything in between. They've also invested in learning, approaching their studies with a desire to grow and excel, both academically and personally.

I can see the community's passion for education reflected in the eyes of our students and staff, and I feel privileged to have the opportunity to help the district reach their goals and plan for their bright future. I look forward to finishing the school year on a high note and being witness to the many great things our students are sure to achieve.

(FHS TAKES SECOND IN MINIATURE BRIDGE BUILDING COMPETITION)

On Wednesday, Feb. 16, nine students from Cuyahoga Falls High School participated in the 21st Annual Miniature Bridge Building Competition hosted by the Summit County Engineer's office. Students work in teams of three for this competition to build balsa wood bridges. Prior to the competition, Industrial Technology Teacher, Peter Geiss, works with students as they design their bridges to the specifications outlined by the competition and work on creating a prototype.

On the day of the competition, students bring their designs and construction materials and are given three hours to build their bridges on-site. Testing the bridges consists of hanging a 5-gallon bucket containing a 10-pound weight to the roadbed of the bridge. Then, students fill the bucket with more weights until the bridge collapses or fails. Awards are presented for "Best Construction Plans" and "Most Aesthetic Bridge," but the grand prize is for the "Most Efficient Bridge." Efficiency is calculated by dividing the failure weight (weight of the bucket when the bridge collapsed) by the weight of the bridge itself. Cash prizes are awarded to all members of the first, second and third place teams, and all participating students are eligible for the MBBC Scholarship that can be worth up to \$4,250 over four years.

This year's competition consisted of 28 teams from across Summit County and our Black Tigers had a very good showing, with our top team, Phil Kleismit, Alex Hanselman, and Cameron Frye, finishing in second place overall. In fact, their bridge held more weight than any other bridge this year, with a failure load of 117 pounds!

The other CFHS teams' bridges also performed well, placing 4th and 12th against the competition. The students who placed 4th are James Sovil, Brady Staubs and Landon Johnson; and those in 12th are Jack Frankish, Max Lowe and Dylan Moses.

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TREASURER'S UPDATE

A Reminder to Pay Student Fees and Complete the Free and Reduced Lunch Application

Paying student fees is important to ensure continued eligibility in extracurricular activities. For high school and middle school students, fees to play sports are due by the first contest, and all athlete's fees – both current and past due – will need to be paid and in good standing before a student can receive a team uniform. Additionally, seniors with remaining unpaid fees will not be able to walk at graduation.

Eligible families are potentially able to reduce pay-to-participate fees and waive other student fees such as Technology and Career-Tech, if they fill out the free and reduced lunch application. The free and reduced lunch program provides critical funding to our district that is not limited to just meals. This funding, tied directly to the number of applicants from our district, will be significantly reduced if all eligible families do not apply. Upon completion of the application, families qualifying for free school lunch will receive a 50% discount on pay-to-participate fees.

For high school sports, there is a \$100 fee for the first sport played and a \$75 fee for any additional sports. For middle school sports, the fee is \$50 per sport played.

Any payments made to a student's account will be applied to the oldest fees first and any outstanding fees from previous years will need to be paid prior to payments being applicable to the current year. There are some options for payment plans available when necessary.

Applications for the free and reduced lunch program and payments for school fees can be completed through www.payschoolscentral.com. Instructions on how to access and complete the free and reduced application are available on the Nutrition and Food Service department page. Payments for pay-to-participate may also be accepted at the athletics/activities office at Cuyahoga Falls High School.

If you have questions about athletic fees, please contact the high school Athletic Office at 330-926-3808, ext. 502108. For questions regarding school fees, please contact the main office of your student's school building.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

On Thursday, January 13th, the community, school district and professionals from ThenDesign Architecture and Hammond Construction met to deliver an update on designs for the new 6-12 Campus. This presentation gave an overview of the schedule and provided a glimpse into key spaces for the new building. Inside the Cuyahoga Falls High School Auditorium, over 200 community members attended either in-person or online to hear the update and ask questions about the project.

At this event, conceptual renderings and a site plan were shown and discussed with the community.

Project Timeline

In 2015, the Cuyahoga Falls City School District laid the foundation for future buildings by assembling a master plan. Planners examined the existing conditions of school buildings, student enrollment projections, and the needed square footage to serve future populations. This was then submitted to the OFCC in a report that is used to assess funding options for the District.

Then, in fall of 2019, community members approved a Bond issue that would provide \$80.6 million for the project and the state would commit \$33.6 million. As the COVID-19 pandemic



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Rachel Wixey & Associates is our Substitute Management provider. Please contact them at 419-725-9499 for questions about open positions.



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\$10.50 per hour

Substitute Monitor (bus and playground)
\$10.50 per hour

Substitute Paraprofessional, Secretary
\$10.75 per hour



CONSTRUCTION UPDATE – (CONT.)

swept the country in early 2020, the state froze funding for new projects and the team was forced to delay until early 2021.

A Challenging Construction Environment

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, construction material prices are inflated across the country. It is not unique to Cuyahoga Falls, or the state of Ohio. All school districts currently involved in a building improvement program have been affected. Supply chain shortages, labor scarcity and market conditions haven't existed like this in recent history and challenge school construction projects everywhere.

In August of 2021, as schematic design was completed, TDA acquired two cost estimates for the project. One was from Hammond Construction, the Construction Manager at Risk, and another from an independent provider. While both estimators agreed on costs, due to market conditions, initial designs were 20-25% over budget.

The team spent the next several months refining designs and making the building more efficient. A variety of design strategies were used to alleviate costs. A few examples of cost cutting measures included minimizing site work by incorporating the natural slope of the land in the stadium, reducing the building footprint by grouping some academic spaces into a three-story structure rather than a two-story structure and developing a more efficient building exterior. These modifications have lowered costs significantly from the initial estimate.

While significant progress has been made on initial designs, the current 10% overage resulting from the pandemic is still being addressed.

Moving Through Design Development

Over the last several months, the District and design team have been outlining three pathways to solve the budgetary challenge. All three elements will be pursued simultaneously and evaluated through the next two phases of design.

1. Examine alternate phasing and bid strategies for the locally funded initiatives (LFI's). This means, bidding out locally funded initiatives separately, possibly at different times, to capitalize on construction efficiencies and capture potentially lower material prices when construction begins.
2. Identify additional funding options that may be available to the District to help with overages. This could include grants, additional funding by the state or creative methods of leasing equipment and other items during the construction process.
3. Continue to refine the current scheme in terms of design and construction methods to implement value engineering, making the school design as efficient as possible.

At this time, the building is being designed to its full scope, with all the academic elements of the building, along with the auditorium and stadium. By focusing on these three simultaneous pathways, the District is hopeful to provide a path forward, solving the uniquely challenging budget conditions.

The whole team is committed to developing the best facility to provide greater educational value for Cuyahoga Falls City School students and meet the needs of the community.



KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Don't Wait to Register for Kindergarten!

Online registration is now open for Cuyahoga Falls School District residents with students age 5 before Aug. 1, 2022. Required forms and steps for enrollment are available on our website. Visit the "Get Ready for Kindergarten" quick link for more information.



CFHS SHINES AT SCHOLASTIC ART COMPETITION

Students from CFHS participated in the Northeast Central Ohio Scholastic Art Competition and Exhibition that took place at Kent State University's Stark campus in January. The annual exhibition featured artwork from middle and high school students, representing districts in Stark, Summit, Portage, Wayne, Tuscarawas and Medina counties.

Senior Lucy Hanselman was awarded a gold key for her glass mosaic window and an honorable mention for her clay sculpture, and junior Anna Leon, was awarded three gold keys, two silver keys and three honorable mentions for her painting and color pencil artworks.

Leon was also surprised with an American Vision Award nomination for her 4' by 4' painting, "The Forest of Art."

Only five total artworks were selected for this honor, and all will go on to the national competition in New York later this year. In addition to this recognition, Leon was awarded the Robert L. Spannbauer Memorial Award from the Akron Society of Artists. The society sends a panel of artists to select one student each year, and Leon was honored to be chosen for 2022. Leon's painting was the featured artwork selected for this year's regional catalog cover and remained on display for the duration of the event. Her work was truly the star of the show.

High school principal, Allison Bogdan, expanded on the role of the art teacher, Jennifer Schulman, "Ms. Schulman continues to find opportunities for our students to showcase their talents. She plays a crucial role in students' artistic development and we are grateful that she is a part of our Black Tiger Family."

Congratulations to all of our talented artists on their successes this year!



RENEWAL LEVY

The residents of Cuyahoga Falls School District will have the opportunity to vote on a continuous, existing 4.75 mill levy on May 3. This levy issue will be No New Money! This renewal will be used for current expenses.



STUDENT PODCAST WITH THENDESIGN ARCHITECTURE

Cuyahoga Falls High School students had the unique opportunity to record a podcast with an architect, Scott Alleman, from ThenDesign Architecture as part of their Modern Communication Through Media Production class. The students enjoyed being able to talk with the architects of the new buildings and were excited to learn how things will be even better for the next group of students in the media production class.

The class, which is in its first year, is part of the Six District Education Compact that includes Hudson, Stow, Kent Roosevelt, Woodridge, Tallmadge and Cuyahoga Falls. This year, nine students are participating, including five from Cuyahoga Falls, three from Stow and one from Hudson.

For the first semester of the school year, students worked with teacher Brent Hovey to learn the audio side of production and are now at Hudson High School learning visual aspects.

During their time at CFHS, students established a podcast, "The 330," and each picked a topic or segment they wanted to record for weekly episodes. Topics included sports, both high school and professional; food, where they would reach out to local restaurants and bring people in to talk about their establishments; music, with a local twist; creative storytelling, where they performed a play on the radio; and newscast.

"They were really creative with it and I'm excited to see how they keep it going," said Hovey.

The podcast is available on Spotify and iTunes, or anywhere you listen to podcasts.