



# MINUTEMAN Report

## A Message from the Superintendent



Dear Lexington Families and Community,

As we reach the halfway point of the school year, I want to take a moment to reflect on the many positive strides our district has made and share some exciting news about our future.

One of the most significant milestones this year has been the progress of our elementary building project. After years of planning and persistence, the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) has

officially approved the release of state funds, allowing Lexington Local Schools to move forward with building a new elementary school. The Board of Education has taken important steps to keep the project on track, with plans to select an architect and a construction manager this spring. If all goes as planned, we anticipate breaking ground within the next 12 to 18 months and opening the new school as early as the 2028-2029 school year. This progress reflects the incredible support and patience of our community, and we are deeply grateful.

As we move forward, we remain committed to managing our finances responsibly and advocating for fair funding to support our schools. Together, we are building a bright future for Lexington students.

Thank you for being an essential part of our school community. Your support makes all of this possible. If you have any questions or thoughts to share, please feel free to reach out. Here's to a strong second half of the school year!

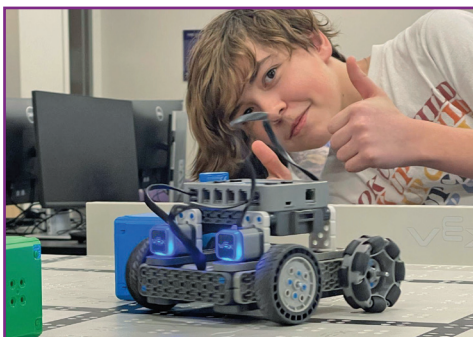
Warmly,  
**Jeremy Secrist**  
Superintendent  
Lexington Local Schools



Congratulations to the string students who performed at Regional Orchestra at Ashland High School. We are proud of you!



A great day of learning at Central, where building strong relationships is always a top priority.



## 8th-grade Students Tackle STEM Challenges

Under Mr. Dewey's guidance, 8th grade students kicked off the new semester by building Vex IQ base bots and successfully navigating their first obstacle course challenge in the STEM Lab.

# Lexington Local Schools Investing in the Future

Lexington Local Schools continues to prioritize academic excellence and student opportunities, with ongoing initiatives to support both current students and alumni. One example is the Lexington Ohio Alumni Association's longstanding commitment to student scholarships, ensuring graduates have the financial support needed to pursue their educational goals.

Established around 1950 as a nonprofit, the Alumni Association initially served as a way to bring together Lexington graduates for an annual banquet. Over time, it evolved into a key supporter of academic success. In 2003, attendees at the Annual Alumni Banquet agreed to use excess funds to establish academic scholarships for graduating seniors. To formalize the process, the association partnered with the Richland County Foundation to screen and select scholarship recipients.

"The Alumni Association has played a crucial role in supporting our students," said Board Member Dave Roberts. "Their commitment to academic scholarships has made a real difference in the lives of our graduates."

Superintendent Jeremy Secrist echoed that sentiment, emphasizing the importance of community support in shaping the district's future. "Lexington has always been a place where people come together to create opportunities for students," Secrist said. "The success of our scholarship program is a testament to that."

To sustain the scholarships, the Alumni Association set a goal to raise \$20,000, allowing them to continue awarding \$1,000 scholarships annually. Thanks to generous contributions from alumni and local businesses, that goal was met. Beginning in 2023, the program expanded beyond traditional college and university scholarships, offering additional opportunities for students pursuing a variety of educational pathways.

Each year, banquet mailings provide information on how to contribute to the scholarship fund, with 100% of donations going directly to student scholarships through the Richland County Foundation.

For those interested in supporting the Lexington Ohio Alumni Association Scholarship Fund, scan the QR code.



Lexington alumni gathered for a special evening to reconnect, share memories, and support future graduates. Thank you to everyone who attended and continues to support our students.

# Lexington Local Schools Building Project Moves Forward!

Exciting news for the Lexington community! After years of hard work and persistence, Lexington Local Schools is moving forward with the construction of a new elementary building. The Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) has officially approved the release of state funds, allowing the district to take the next steps in this important project.

## What's Next for the Project?

The Lexington Board of Education recently approved a resolution that clears the way for the OFCC to present the project to the state board of control in February for final approval.

The district plans to begin the search for an architect and construction manager in spring. Groundbreaking for the new elementary school is anticipated within the next 12 to 18 months.

The new facility will be built on the site of Central Elementary, either behind or in front of the current building.

If everything stays on track, the new elementary school could open as early as the 2028-2029 school year.

## Smart Financial Planning

To cover rising costs, the district will issue a Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) for \$3.2 million. This allows the district to borrow funds against its continuous permanent improvement levy and repay the amount over ten years. The issuance of the TAN allows for the District to finance the additional local share without having to ask for additional funds from our community, which is extremely important. Additionally, the original bonds for the school construction will cost less than expected, thanks to favorable interest rates at the time bonds were issued—saving taxpayers nearly \$28 million in interest.

## A Community Effort

This progress would not be possible without the unwavering support of the Lexington community. Voters first approved the 37-year, 8.6-mill bond levy in 2018, and despite delays in state funding, the district has remained committed to delivering on its promise.

The district's dedication, combined with the community's patience, has finally paid off. Lexington Local Schools is now closer than ever to providing students, staff, and families with a modern, state-of-the-art learning environment.

Thank you for your continued support. We can't wait to share more updates as this exciting project unfolds!



# Spreading Holiday Cheer in Lexington Local Schools

This past holiday season, Lexington Local Schools came together to support the community in meaningful ways.

At Western Elementary, Mrs. Saurer's class, along with many other classrooms, continued the heartwarming tradition of adopting residents from Lex Court Care Nursing Home. Students thoughtfully selected gifts from residents' wish lists, spreading joy and making the season brighter for these special community members.

Before winter break, Eastern's Military Kids collected and delivered gifts to nursing home residents at Lexington Court Care Center, who appreciated each gift.

Lexington's Leadership Council students also stepped up, volunteering their time to organize and pack gifts for the Blessings and Bows Christmas Project. Their hard work helped deliver holiday cheer to children across Richland County, ensuring hundreds of gifts were ready for families in need.

Meanwhile, the Lexington Key Club helped make the annual Breakfast with Santa event a festive success. On December 7, the Lexington Kiwanis Club served sausage and pancakes to more than 900 community members. Santa delighted children with photos, the PAC showcased holiday films, Una Voce filled the air with carols, and orchestra students performed beautiful string music—creating a magical morning for all.

In the spirit of giving, the Junior High Student Council hosted a Thanksgiving food drive, collecting nearly 300 food items for the Heartland Church food bank. Their efforts helped stock the pantry for two weeks, supporting local families during the holiday season.

Lexington High School students and staff came together to collect over 1,000 toiletry items, valued at nearly \$2,500, for Catalyst Life Services.

Thank you to all students, staff, and families who helped make the holidays brighter for our community!





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## Celebrating Our Lexington Board of Education: *Honoring Dedication and Leadership*

Lexington Local Schools is proud to honor the dedicated members of our Board of Education. Their leadership, service, and commitment are vital to the success of our students, staff, and community.

This year marks a transition for our district as we begin without longtime board member Bob Whitney, who joined the Board in 1964. His legacy of dedication continues to inspire us, and we are honored that his daughter, Lore Whitney, has stepped in to carry forward his vision.

Each board member brings unique strengths, working together to provide exceptional educational opportunities and safe, innovative learning environments for our students. Their guidance is especially important as we advance the next phase of the elementary building project.

Superintendent Jeremy Secrist shared, "Our Board of Education members dedicate countless hours to decisions that impact every student, staff member, and family in Lexington. Their leadership is deeply appreciated."

We thank our Board of Education for their tireless dedication to shaping the future of Lexington Local Schools.



In January, the Ohio School Boards Association recognized our five board members for their service. Thank you for your dedication to our schools and community.