

## Our Opinion: Frontier deserves buildings made right

Residents of the Frontier Local Schools District should be very wary of how the state is addressing chronic problems with the district's new buildings.

And any other Washington County school district considering participating in the Ohio School Facilities Commission programs ought to be wary, too.

That's because contractors hired to build and renovate Frontier schools did shoddy work and, thus far, the state's done very little to fix it.

In the meantime, students will return to school in buildings that are wrought with problems, including significant roofing and masonry troubles.

An Ohio coalition that's checking the work of the OSFC contractors says there have been problems all over the state, but Frontier's problems are, by far, the worst. The group has urged the district to sue the state over the poor construction, but school officials have refrained from saying if they will go that route. So far, they've hoped working with the state would take care of the problem.

They are still waiting.

A contract is in place to make roof repairs, but, so far, there's been no movement we know of to take care of masonry problems. There are other concerns as well. Problems with insulation that could impact air and water flow, and incorrect building materials used in the construction process. Parents in the district have to be concerned.

That's why we think the district needs to strongly consider a lawsuit. Working out a deal with the state is iffy at best. It's the state that got the district in this predicament in the first place. Yes, a suit could be costly, but continuing on with students attending class in problem-plagued buildings is no answer. It's already been four years since the work was done. The state has had its chance to make things right. So far, it hasn't.

Previously, board discussions about what to do next have been held in executive session. That's unfortunate. We think more should be discussed openly so residents of the district really know what they are dealing with. Often, as was the case this week, when the newspaper seeks comment on the story, board members avoid commenting. The public is left wondering what's really being done to fix the problem once and for all.

The students of Frontier schools deserve better. They deserve problem-free schools that truly enhance their learning and a school board that can focus on making the district stronger, not being bogged down in the details of a construction project gone bad. A lawsuit should always be the last resort, but we think the situation in Frontier has reached that point. It might be the key to getting the state's attention and keeping it.