



Ohio Construction Coalition

“News Blast”

March 26, 2007

www.ohioconstructioncoalition.org

****O.C.C. Annual Meeting and Kick-Off Event will take place April 26;
See notice below and look for your invitation in the mail!****

O.C.C. PREPARING PRESENTATIONS FOR NEW O.S.F.C. BID RULES

With the initial new Responsible Bidder rules from the O.S.F.C. in place, the O.C.C. is beginning to have a video presentation created that will explain the new rules and their benefits to local school districts. O.C.C. representatives will present the video to individual school districts around the state as they come up for O.S.F.C. funding eligibility.

The O.S.F.C. unanimously passed a resolution last month that puts in place a set of 17 “contractor qualifications” criteria that school districts can now use to help choose “lowest responsible bidders” for their state-funded school construction projects. On May 18, the state will “fine-tune” the criteria with guidance from the O.C.C. and the State Building Trades Council.

The O.C.C. video presentation will include documentation of poor work at schools around the state, including the Frontier Local district, and graphic explanations about how Responsible Bidder language can help districts avoid such problems.

O.C.C. CONTINUES TO SUPPORT EMBATTLED FRONTIER SCHOOLS

On March 15 at an O.C.C.-arranged meeting, O.C.C. representatives (including legal counsel Joe D’Angelo) and representatives for Ohio Attorney General Marc Dann met with Frontier Local Schools District officials to discuss action to remedy poor construction work on the district’s new schools. The state, through the Attorney General’s Office, offered to fix the schools at no up-front costs to the district, and then go after contractors in court to re-coup some of the funding.

A sticking point with the new proposal from the state is that Frontier may have to pay for some of the repairs should legal victories not cover all the costs. Also, Frontier Schools officials have become leery of such promises after years of coming up empty on help from the state to repair the millions of dollars worth of bad work.

In light of this, the O.C.C. has pledged to continue to offer Frontier Schools legal support should it work with the Attorney General’s Office and the O.S.F.C.

The O.C.C. has been assisting the Frontier District, located in southeast Ohio, with planning legal action against the O.S.F.C. and certain contractors over the faulty construction, which includes leaking roofs and failing masonry work among many other problems on all three of its new buildings. The O.C.C. had been collecting funds for Frontier and was formulating a law suit for the school district.

STATE TO GO AFTER P.W. VIOLATORS, FAULTY SCHOOL WORK

Gary Dwyer, secretary of O.C.C. member the Ohio State Building and Construction Trades Council, reported to the O.C.C. Board during its March 19 meeting that Gov. Ted Strickland has vowed to have all bad O.S.F.C. school construction work in the state fixed. Gary also reported that Attorney General Marc Dann has pledged to go after violators of the state’s Prevailing Wage Law.

Gary asked those who know of Prevailing Wage Law violations to contact him at gedwyer@ameritech.net so that he can pass the information on to the Attorney General’s Office. Likewise, the O.C.C. will continue to introduce poor school construction work to the O.S.F.C.; you can report poor work to Calvin Jefferson at info@ohioconstructioncoalition.org.

The previous state administration had prosecuted a minimal number of violators in recent years, and as the O.C.C. has found, there are dozens and dozens of school construction projects with problems all over the

state. The O.C.C. is being credited with assisting to bring these issues to the forefront: “The Attorney General knows there is a watchdog group out there,” Gary said. “They are aware you are out there doing your work.”

O.C.C. MONITORING BILL TO CUT SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION FUNDS

The O.C.C. is examining and will closely watch an alarming, partisan new bill in the Ohio House of Representatives that would severely penalize school districts’ construction projects in the name of damaging the state’s Prevailing Wage Law.

[House Bill 114](#), introduced by Republican Rep. Lynn Wachtmann of Napoleon ([Web site](#)), would require the Ohio School Facilities Commission (O.S.F.C.) to cut 20% of the state funding for an O.S.F.C.-administered construction project if the school district requires payment of prevailing wages for the project.

While current O.S.F.C. rules exempt school districts from requiring use of the Prevailing Wage Law on state-funded projects, by law it is entirely an individual school district’ choice whether or not to have prevailing wages applied. Notably, two problem school construction projects are located in Watchmann’s area: Miller City, which is now bidding out its fourth standing seam metal roof, and Pandora Gilboa, where walls were blown down during construction.

Republican representatives Jeff Wagner, Danny Bulp, Bruce Goodwin, Diana Fessler, John Adams and Tom Brinkman are co-sponsoring the bill.

STATE WILL FUND APPRENTICESHIP COUNCIL FOR NEXT 2 YEARS

Gary Dwyer has also reported to the O.C.C. that Gov. Strickland has pledged to fund the Ohio State Apprenticeship Council for 2008 and 2009 with \$4.5 million. “It was a good day for the S.A.C. in Ohio,” Gary said.

Late last year, the O.C.C. joined the State Building Trades Council and others in a campaign to spread information about the S.A.C. in an effort to insure the state would not cut its funding.

O.C.C. ANNUAL MEETING, KICK-OFF EVENT IS APRIL 26!

The O.C.C. will be celebrating its promising beginning and charting its future during its first-ever annual meeting. You will be invited and the O.C.C. encourages you to attend! Following the annual meeting, the O.C.C. will host an official “Kick-Off” event at which public officials (and possibly Gov. Ted Strickland) and the media will be given a guided tour of the O.C.C. and one of our member’s training facilities.

The event will be held Thursday, April 26, beginning at 10 a.m. for the annual meeting, and the Kick-Off Reception and Lunch will be at 11:30 a.m. The event will be held at the Electrical Trades Center, 947 Goodale Blvd. in Columbus.

Please look for your invitation in the mail and R.S.V.P. See you there!

For past News Blasts, please visit the O.C.C. Web site, www.ohioconstructioncoalition.org, and click on “News.”