

# Master Plan Update

April 9, 2007

**What:** The Cleveland Metropolitan School District is about to update the Master Plan guiding the districtwide construction/rehabilitation project funded by Issue 14 and the Ohio School Facilities Commission.

**Why:** The update is required to keep the Master Plan consistent with changes in the district, chiefly a very large decline in enrollment, but also the new Schools of Choice program, and problems in executing the old plan.

**When:** Mid-April through May.

**Importance:** The update will govern which schools are rehabbed, which are demolished and built anew, and which are simply eliminated.

It will also be used to figure out which school projects will get co-funded by the OSFC, which pays for about two-thirds of qualifying projects, and which schools the district will have to finance with Issue 14 funds but without state matching if they are to be retained.

Ultimately, the decisions made will govern the size of a future capital improvements levy that the district will need to complete the project.

And obviously, the decisions made will be very important to parents of schoolchildren, neighborhoods and taxpayers.

**Background:** The current administration reports that the original Master Plan failed adequately to account for the time needed to assemble required real estate. This and apparently unforeseen problems, such as the extent of required asbestos removal at John Hay High School, caused significant delays in some projects. Each delay can cause a ripple effect on the timing of the rest of the projects. For instance, if one project is stalled by property acquisition, another might have to begin early to get the whole facilities overhaul done by the end of 2014 as envisioned.

The Master Plan was revised last year, due to such factors and the rapid enrollment decline, apparently without much fanfare. (Parents at Audubon school were apparently surprised this spring that the school is to close for demolition at the end of this school year. It had been moved from Segment 7 (2010-2012) to Segment 4 (2007-2009).)

Now, another update is required. The OSFC will fund only schools that are projected by enrollment trends to be needed in 2015. District enrollment, projected to be 77,000 students when the project was first planned, is now estimated to be 42,000 in the year 2015. This will result in a steep reduction in the number of schools that the OSFC will co-fund.