



SPRING 2024

WORTHINGTON SCHOOLS FACILITIES OVERVIEW:

A DEEPER LOOK



Kilbourne Middle School

INTRODUCTION

For over two centuries, Worthington Schools has been a community of learners

CHANGING THE WORLD!

Throughout our community's history, our school buildings have served our ever-changing community. This report delves into the history, present state, and future plans for Worthington Schools' facilities, highlighting their impact on both education and our community. It emphasizes our district's commitment to providing top-notch educational facilities for its students.

HISTORICAL BEGINNINGS

Worthington's educational history began in the 1800s with a one-room log schoolhouse. This structure served as the cornerstone of the community's ongoing dedication to education, laying the groundwork for the district's future growth and solidifying the value of education as a core community principle.



EXPANSION AND TRANSFORMATION

Worthington Schools' landscape transformed significantly between 1916 and the early 1960s. The original Worthington High School, now the McConnell Arts Center, was opened. Recognizing the need for dedicated middle school space, Worthington School (later Kilbourne Middle School) was opened in 1938. As the student body grew, a new Worthington High School (later Thomas Worthington High School) was opened in 1951.

The district's elementary school footprint also expanded rapidly during this period. Colonial Hills, Evening Street, Wilson Hill, Brookside, and Worthington Estates elementary schools were all established, while Perry Middle School's construction in the 1960s further bolstered the district's capacity. The addition of Worthington Hills Elementary in 1971 marked the culmination of this era of significant facilities growth.



Worthington Estates Elementary School



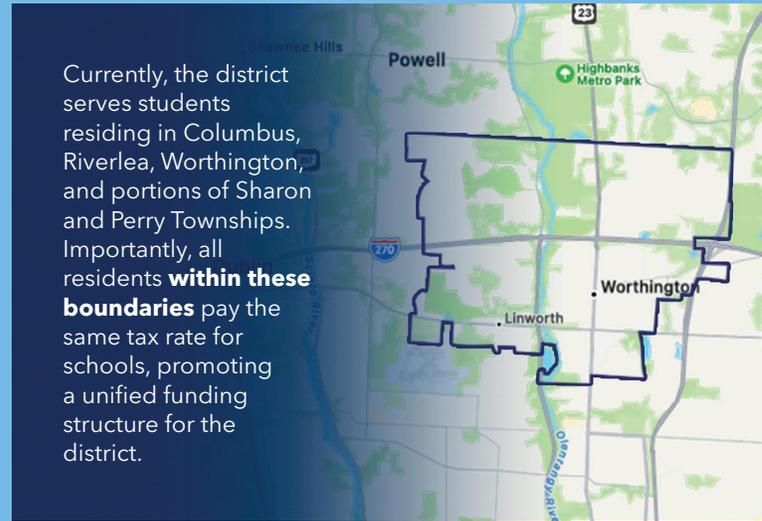
LINWORTH EXPERIENTIAL PROGRAM

Founded in 1973, Linworth caters to students seeking a non-traditional approach to high school. Focusing on self-directed learning in a smaller setting, Linworth offers flexible options like course contracts, seminars, and independent study. This program empowers students to take charge of their education.

EVOLUTION OF SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

Worthington Schools' boundaries have evolved over time through various mergers and territorial adjustments.

- In 1825, the district began as the Sharon Township School District.
- In 1854, the Worthington Village School District was established.
- These two districts merged in 1949, forming the foundation for today's Worthington Schools.
- Further expansion continued in 1950 with the inclusion of Perry Township and subsequent acquisitions throughout the 1950s and 1960s through Columbus annexations.
- An agreement with Columbus City Schools in 1968 saw Columbus acquire approximately 2,450 acres and 1,100 students from Worthington Schools. In exchange, Worthington retained the Anheuser-Busch property.



Currently, the district serves students residing in Columbus, Riverlea, Worthington, and portions of Sharon and Perry Townships. Importantly, all residents **within these boundaries** pay the same tax rate for schools, promoting a unified funding structure for the district.

RESPONDING TO GROWTH

The 1980s and early 1990s witnessed a surge in student enrollment, prompting significant expansion efforts. To accommodate the growing student population, the district constructed new buildings and expanded existing ones like Thomas Worthington High School (TWHS).

In the 1980s, Liberty, Sutter Park, Worthington Park, Granby Elementary Schools, and McCord Middle School increased the district's capacity to serve its growing student body.

The 1990s saw the construction of Slate Hill and Bluffsvie Elementary Schools to accommodate the expanding enrollment further.

All grade levels saw significant change during this period. In 1991, the district made the crucial decision to open a second high school, Worthington Kilbourne High School (WKHS).



Bluffsvie Elementary School



Worthington Kilbourne High School

EARLY 2000s

ADAPTING TO DECLINING ENROLLMENT

The early 2000s presented a new challenge: **declining enrollment**.

To ensure efficient resource allocation, the district made the difficult decision to **repurpose or close buildings** such as Sutter Park Elementary (now Sutter Park Preschool) and Perry Middle School. This period highlighted the district's adaptability and commitment to responsible fiscal management.



Phoenix Middle School

PHOENIX MIDDLE SCHOOL

Created in 2007, Phoenix Middle School fosters a unique environment for self-discovery and community engagement. The school emphasizes self-directed learning and student ownership of their progress, empowering them to take an active role in their education.

2015 + BEYOND

ADAPTING TO GROWTH AND COMMUNITY DESIRES

The 2010s brought a resurgence in enrollment, necessitating adjustments. Recognizing the community's preference for **neighborhood schools**, the district embarked on a **middle school reconfiguration**. This project involved transitioning the middle schools from 7-8 grade configurations to 6-8 grade configurations to create dedicated middle school spaces and alleviate pressure on elementary schools. This initiative showcased the district's responsiveness to community needs.



MODERNIZING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Recognizing the need for modern learning spaces to support 21st-century skills, the district embarked on the Master Facilities Plan in 2015. This comprehensive plan addresses:

- **Aging infrastructure:** Upgrading facilities to ensure safe, functional, and energy-efficient learning environments.
- **Enhanced learning opportunities:** Creating flexible and collaborative spaces that cater to diverse learning styles and foster innovation.
- **Operational efficiency:** Implementing sustainable practices and maximizing resource utilization.

A community-led Task Force was created to assist the school district in developing the plan.

WORTHINGTON ACADEMY

Worthington Academy (established in 2015) offers an alternative learning environment for Worthington High School students. The program integrates technology and personalized instruction for students seeking to fulfill credit requirements or explore different educational approaches.





MASTER FACILITIES PLAN PHASE 1: MIDDLE SCHOOLS

THE 2018 BOND ISSUE: ADDRESSING GROWTH AND MODERNIZATION

At the same time, the district was able to address two key needs: accommodating student growth and modernizing facilities. All four middle schools received comprehensive renovations and expansions. Notably, Perry and Worthingway Middle Schools were significantly reconstructed.

The bond issue also enabled the shift to a 6-8 grade middle school configuration starting in 2021 to address the growing student population. Additionally, the bond provided funds for improvements in other buildings, technology upgrades, and new school buses, ensuring a safe and well-equipped learning environment for all students.



HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BALANCE & NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL FEEDER PATTERNS

Worthington Schools experienced an imbalance in its high school student populations. Thomas Worthington High School neared capacity, requiring adjustments. To address enrollment imbalances between Worthington's high schools, the Slate Hill Elementary School attendance area shifted from Thomas Worthington High School to Worthington Kilbourne High School starting in the 2021 school year. This realignment optimizes the district's use of existing space and ensures equitable opportunities for students in both high schools.

Additionally, adjustments were made to balance the middle school feeder patterns in 2021. Students residing in the Brookside and Bluffsview areas transitioned from McCord Middle School to the newly reopened Perry Middle School. Similarly, Slate Hill students began attending Perry Middle School instead of Worthingway. Finally, Wilson Hill students moved from Kilbourne Middle School to Worthingway Middle School.

MASTER FACILITIES PLAN PHASE 2: HIGH SCHOOLS

VIEW THE PHASE 2
TIMELINE HERE:



This phase, funded by the 2022 bond issue and scheduled for completion by end of year 2026, will bring significant improvements to both high schools.

Thomas Worthington High School

Renovations and replacements will create a larger cafeteria, modernized science labs, and flexible learning spaces, eliminating the need for basement classrooms.



Worthington Kilbourne High School

Renovations will provide larger classrooms, increased natural light, a new roof, and a more efficient heating and cooling system.



ADDITIONAL UPDATES

- **Natatorium:** The natatorium will be an expanded ten-lane, 25-yard pool. It will support the swim, dive, and water polo teams from both Thomas Worthington and Worthington Kilbourne High Schools. With an anticipated size increase of 40 percent, the new space promises enhanced pool decking, increased spectator seating, and a more versatile environment for our schools and community.
- **Turf Fields, Field House, and Lacrosse Walls:**
 - » **TWHS:** Students have a new turf field with calibrated lighting, an adjacent fresh grass field, a lacrosse wall, and a renovated Field House.
 - » **WKHS:** New turf fields, a lacrosse wall, and visitor-side facilities upgrades.
- **Elementary and Middle Schools:** In addition to the high schools, other improvements include renovating nine playgrounds across the district and replacing the McCord Middle School track and scoreboard.



MASTER FACILITIES PLAN PHASE 3: ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Planning for the future involves **updating the elementary schools** to ensure they provide the same level of quality and innovation as the modernized high schools. The district is committed to **collaborating with our community** through open forums and surveys to gather valuable input and develop a comprehensive plan that reflects community needs and aspirations.

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

The community remains a vital partner in the district's success. The district actively encourages community participation through various **engagement opportunities**, including:

- **Community forums:** These forums provide platforms for open discussions and idea exchange regarding facility plans and overall district development.
- **Online surveys:** Online surveys offer another avenue for community members to share their perspectives and priorities.
- **School board meetings:** Attending school board meetings allows community members to stay informed about ongoing projects and voice their concerns and suggestions directly.

The district believes that a strong and collaborative relationship with the community is essential for achieving its vision and ensuring the continued success of Worthington Schools.

From its humble beginnings in a one-room schoolhouse to the ongoing modernization efforts, Worthington Schools has consistently demonstrated its commitment to providing exceptional educational facilities. This report highlights the district's journey, its dedication to educational excellence, and its strategic vision for the future, ensuring that Worthington Schools continues to be a source of pride for the community and a hub of academic achievement for generations to come.



SPRING 2024

WORTHINGTON SCHOOLS FACILITIES OVERVIEW: A COMPREHENSIVE INSIGHT

Historical Roots to Modern Routes

Trace the evolution from a single-room schoolhouse to expansive educational campuses.

Empowering Spaces

Discover how our facilities evolved over the years to meet modern learning and growing community needs.

Visionary Expansion

Explore the strategic developments shaping the future of our educational environment.

STAY CONNECTED



**WORTHINGTON
CITY SCHOOLS**

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