

Historic Olive Branch School to Get New Roof

By Katie Wedell, Staff Writer - Dayton Daily News

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NEW CARLISLE — The historic Olive Branch School on West National Road will get a new roof by next fall.

The Tecumseh Local Schools Board of Education owns the 1908 school building, and the district has been using it for file storage while a group of residents works to raise enough money to restore the structure.

But the roof is leaking and some joists have structural damage, so it needs to get fixed, said William Berry, chairman of the Olive Branch School Preservation Society.

"It is part of (the school board's) responsibility to maintain the building," Berry said.

The preservation society has only raised about \$7,000, he said, and the roof replacement is estimated to cost \$35,000 to \$40,000.

"The board of education will provide the funds out of a capital improvements fund the taxpayers approved a number of years ago," Berry said.

The Tecumseh board has authorized up to \$50,000 for the project.

"It's a move in the right direction in the restoration of the building," Berry said.

The group hopes to eventually restore the interior and open it as a museum.

Built in 1908 but reconstructed in 1913 after a fire, the building was considered progressive for its time, according to the Preservation Society website. It was designed by noted Dayton architect Charles Inso Williams and was used as a school until the 1970s.

The building is on the National Registrar of Historic Places and has twice been named to Preservation Ohio's list of the 13 most endangered historic sites in the state, meaning it's in jeopardy due to demolition, disinvestment or indifference.

The school district's items inside the building shouldn't be affected by the roof work, Berry said.



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