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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



OCPS Chief Facilities Officer John Morris in 2021 (PERMISSION TO USE PHOTO)

OCPS renames administrative complex for Chief Facilities Officer, creates memorial fund

The Orange County Public Schools southern administrative complex has been renamed in honor of Chief Facilities Officer John Morris, who died November 2.

The School Board last night approved the new name "*John T. Morris Facilities Complex*" for the administrative campus at Oak Ridge Road and John Young Parkway that includes the Facilities leadership offices.

Morris, 65, played a key role in construction projects that touch the lives of thousands of Orange County children, taxpayers and visitors every day. From 2011 to 2021 he oversaw the construction of 102 new, renovated or replacement schools in every corner of the county, part of a \$3 billion, ongoing facilities program. He also played key roles in the construction of the Amway Arena and two phases of the Orange County Convention Center.

"He's shaped an entire community in the west side of town," said School Board member Pam Gould, who represents the fast-growing Horizon West area. "He's not only left an impression, he's left a legacy - every time we walk into a new building or a renovated building that happened during his watch - because his fingerprints, his heart and his passion were on each and every one of them," she said.

The Foundation for Orange County Public Schools has set up a memorial fund in Morris' name at <https://www.foundationforocps.org/p/793/john-morris-memorial-fund#.YYwbGWDMKF4>

Morris was known by his employees for his open-door leadership style, his kindness and his calm, thoughtful demeanor. A survey found overwhelming support for the name change.

Schools built during his tenure can be seen all over the county and include Windermere, Lake Buena Vista and Horizon high schools. He was particularly proud of the OCPS Academic Center for Excellence, the renovation of Lockhart Elementary and the replacement for Magnolia School. He believed strongly that every neighborhood deserved excellent school buildings, and watched every penny on behalf of taxpayers.

Morris oversaw a reduction of more than 50 percent in the number of portable classrooms needed over a decade even as the rolls of Orange County schools increased by thousands of students. His role with the school district also included overseeing maintenance and custodial services for 205 schools.

He is survived by his wife, Patti, and son, Matthew. A celebration of life will be held Thursday.

Please contact Lauren Roth, OCPS Facilities Communications, at 570-709-1630 or lauren.roth@ocps.net with questions.

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