



MORRIS SCHOOL DISTRICT

*A World of Opportunity*

## **Opportunities for Student Success at Frelinghuysen Middle School**

How we define success significantly impacts the way students think about themselves and their place in school and in the world. Here in the Morris School District, we try to reinforce the notion that success takes many forms, and we aim to provide a wide range of opportunities in different contexts where students can be--and *feel*--successful. Sometimes success is the basketball player who catches a rebound and scores the winning point just as the buzzer sounds. Sometimes it's the first-time actor, glowing as she hears the enthusiastic cheers of her classmates during the curtain call. Success may be the student who ventures a bold rhetorical move in his essay for English class. Or it may be the student developing leadership skills in a service activity.

With full attention to the core academic subjects as well as an impressive offering of electives in the visual and performing arts and in STEM, FMS provides our students with the strong foundation they need for success in high school and beyond. But equally as important, our teachers, counselors, and administrators are committed to helping middle school students succeed in ways that transcend traditional metrics like grades and test scores: taking chances and making mistakes in a supportive environment, connecting with others and building relationships, discovering new areas of competence, setting goals and determining the strategies to reach them--even falling short of our expectations but working hard to get back on track.

All of this represents our vision of student learning and success in middle school.

Best wishes,

Mackey Pendergrast  
Superintendent of Schools

**Future City Teams Win "Most Resilient City" and Place  
Second Overall at State-Wide Competition!**



As part of our Quest program, 13 groups of seventh- and eighth-grade students worked for months conceptualizing, researching, and designing model cities that could sustain a natural disaster. Three exemplary projects were selected to represent FMS at this year's "Resilient City" competition!

[Read Article](#)

## 7th & 8th Graders Earn First Place at General Knowledge Bowl ... Again!



Our seventh- and eighth-grade teams emerged as champions of the General Knowledge Bowl competition at Newark Academy for the second year in a row! Both teams stood firm against area public and private schools as they answered questions about art, geography, literature, math, history, and many other disciplines.

[Read Article](#)



## **FMS Production of *Annie* a Smash Hit!**

From the desk of Director Tara Montague:

*The first week of March brought a bunch of snow and a ton of optimism to Frelinghuysen Middle School Theatre, when in the midst of the most snow we've had all year, nearly one hundred students performed in the musical Annie! Frelinghuysen continued its traditional no-cut policy in musical tryouts, which accounts for a cast of this size. The show also included an amazing 30-piece orchestra made up almost completely of middle and high school students!*

*The actors lit up the stage, performing memorable songs and scenes that their audience is sure to remember for years to come. Their families are so proud of them, and hope you had the opportunity to enjoy this amazing show, brought to you by a cast and crew with tons of heart!*

[View More Photos](#)

## **FMS Students Qualify for County and State Chemistry Competitions!**

On February 15, all FMS students participated in the BASF-sponsored *You Be the Chemist* challenge, part of a national program designed to inspire interest in chemistry. Nine students qualified for the Morris County Competition on March 2, and two have qualified for the NJ State Competition on August 14. Congratulations, and good luck!



Read more about the [You Be the Chemist Challenge](#)



## Winter Sports Achievements

Girls basketball won the Morris County championship for the second year in a row, defeating Dover, Brooklawn, and Roxbury to get to the number one spot!

And the wrestling team finished the season 12-0, placing third in the Morris County championship. The team had 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st place finishers among them!

Congratulations to all our student athletes!

## Spotlight on ELA

You've seen the scores ... our FMS students have consistently out-performed the state average on the PARCC English Language Arts test for the past two years, showing marked improvement every year since we implemented wide-scale revisions to our ELA curriculum.

But what does the classroom experience look like? Here is a peek at what our 6th, 7th, and 8th graders are reading and writing about in their daily 80 minutes of ELA.

**Inviting students to imagine themselves as "real writers."** FMS students acquire a significant arsenal of writing tools throughout the sequence of ELA courses in grades 6-8. Their growth as writers entails developing, practicing, and refining a confident facility with several types of evidence-based writing. They leave our middle school program prepared to engage a range of genres and rhetorical situations at a deeper level, ready to take on literary analysis, creative writing, and writing about informational and technical texts as required in high school and college.

**Writing samples from our students:**

Personal Narrative, Grade 6: ["Who Stole the Pickles?"](#)

Argument, Grade 7: [A comparative rhetorical analysis](#)

Op-Ed, Grade 8: ["The Need for a Fracking Ban"](#)

**What's in our students' reading queues?** These are just some of the works of fiction our English classes explore together ...



## Winter Band Concert Draws HUGE Crowd!



The FMS music program provides budding musicians multiple opportunities to gain valuable performance experience. Our band students played to a completely packed house at the Winter Concert in December!

#### SPRING CONCERTS

**District Orchestra Concert:** April 2 @ MHS 7:00 PM  
(MHS and FMS Orchestras)

**District Bands of Morris Concert:** April 4 @ MHS 7:00PM  
(MHS Wind Ensemble, Spectrum Jazz Ensemble,  
FMS 8th Grade Band, FMS Wind Symphony)

**Jazz Night:** May 9 @ MHS 7:00PM  
(MHS Spectrum Jazz Ensemble, MHS Jazz Choir,  
FMS Falcon Big Band - special guests)

**FMS Spring Band Concert:** May 15 @ MHS 7:00PM  
(All FMS Bands)

*And best of luck to the Falcon Big Band at their upcoming jazz festivals!*

[View More Photos](#)

### **Visual and Performing Arts Students to be Honored at Upcoming Board of Education Meeting**

At 99.8%, FMS student participation in visual and performing arts courses (a NJ State Department of Education indicator of college and career readiness) well exceeds the state average.

Later this spring, the Morris School District Board of Education will recognize the achievements of our visual and performing arts students, including all FMS honor band and choir participants. We look forward to this special evening and will announce the date in the coming weeks.



FMS 2018-19 Honor Choir, pictured here with Choral Director Gillian Erlenborn

*ENJOY THE SPRING  
AND ALL END-OF-YEAR  
ACTIVITIES!*