

FOX CHAPEL AREA

School News



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A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Fox Chapel Area Family,

I hope that this time of year is filling you with love, joy, togetherness, and all of the warmth and comforts that the holiday season brings.

As fall faded into winter, I reflected on the first four months of the school year and our many academic, artistic, and athletic achievements, some of which you will read more about on the following pages. While many of these successes do not come as a surprise to me, as I see the hard work, diligence, and dedication that fill our classrooms each day, I certainly never take them for granted. Our students, staff, and the other members of our school community who support our learning continue to be a great source of pride for me, and I look forward to what we will continue to do together.

Just to name a few of these accolades:

- Twenty-two Fox Chapel Area High School students were recognized in the National Merit Scholarship Program, continuing Fox Chapel Area's long reputation of excellence in the program.
- Eighty-eight high school students were inducted into the National Honor Society this fall.
- All of our schools received an A+ grade in the most recent Niche rankings, and our schools also performed well locally, statewide, and nationally in U.S. News & World Report rankings released during the fall.
- Our high school fall play and Dorseyville Middle School musical marked the return of live performances in our district and showcased our students' incredible talents.
- The Fox Chapel Area High School marching band placed first in its division at a regional competition and received awards in two categories.
- Our students and staff have supported various local and national charities through food drives, fundraisers, and other initiatives.
- Nearly all of our fall sports teams participated in the postseason. Additionally, several of our teams and individual student-athletes qualified for state competitions.

You'll also be reading on page 11 about the district's participation in Learning 2025, a national initiative to reshape education in public schools. I look forward to continuing our work on this project after winter break and throughout the spring, and doing our part to help forge a future of which our students, staff, and community can be proud.

Until then, have a magical and memorable holiday season!

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac
Superintendent



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and the other members
of our school community
who support our
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NEW O'HARA PRINCIPAL FOSTERS EXCITING ATMOSPHERE

When Ben Canan was a young boy, he always looked forward to going to school. Now, he works to create that same kind of feeling for the students at O'Hara Elementary School.

"I loved school as a kid," says the new program principal, "and I want to help create an environment that excites children and helps them feel inspired, engaged, and included. That's my main interest as an educator."

Mr. Canan, who began working at O'Hara Elementary in early November, strives to do "whatever it takes" to support students, families, and staff.

"I'm looking forward to contributing to the process of creating the best culture and community possible in our building," he says. "In addition, it is my goal to not only assist O'Hara students in maintaining notable academic accomplishments, but do what I can to help them continue to grow."

Mr. Canan notes that he has been impressed by the welcome he has received from everyone in the school.

"The students, staff, and families have been friendly, welcoming, and helpful," he says. "And O'Hara students are so kind. I have lost count of how many students

have come up to me to introduce themselves, ask me about my day, give me a friendly wave, or chat about Pokemon or basketball. They have been accepting and welcoming."

Mr. Canan also has been impressed by the number of social and emotional supports that are in place for students.

"At O'Hara alone, we have a multitude of interventionists, full-time

counselors, a school resource officer, and community members who support students. I'm impressed because there is such a need for that. There are so many safety nets for our kids, and I'm excited to take my place as part of that team."

Mr. Canan is a firm believer that a strong support system can have an exponential effect on students, and he even developed a special advisory program in his former school district, Mt. Lebanon, where each child was assigned to a trusted adult in the school.

"I'm proud of the work that our team did to plan for and roll out that program, and I think that it proved to be a benefit to



students," he says. "We began that program in the fall of 2019, and the connections from our advisory groups helped us to continue to care for and connect with our students during the unexpected closures that occurred that spring."

Prior to coming to the Fox Chapel Area School District, Mr. Canan served as an assistant middle school principal and an acting elementary school principal in the Mt. Lebanon School District. He began his teaching career in the Moon Area School District. Mr. Canan has a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and a master's degree from California University of Pennsylvania. He was born and raised in Moon Township.

Mr. Canan, a marathon runner, and his wife, Keira, live in Carnegie with their two young children. They enjoy hiking and playing outside as a family. He describes his son as an adventurous "mover and groover." Because his daughter is an "insatiable reader," he is grateful that they live very close to a library.

"I fully envision our daughter being just like Matilda from the Roald Dahl book (minus the mind control powers, of course), walking herself down to the library with a wagon and bringing home every book they have," he says, laughing.

"I loved school as a kid, and I want to help create an environment that excites children and helps them feel inspired, engaged, and included."



DISTRICT KEY IN NATIONAL EFFORT TO RESHAPE PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Fox Chapel Area School District is joining peers around the region and throughout the United States in helping to redesign the public school educational experience.

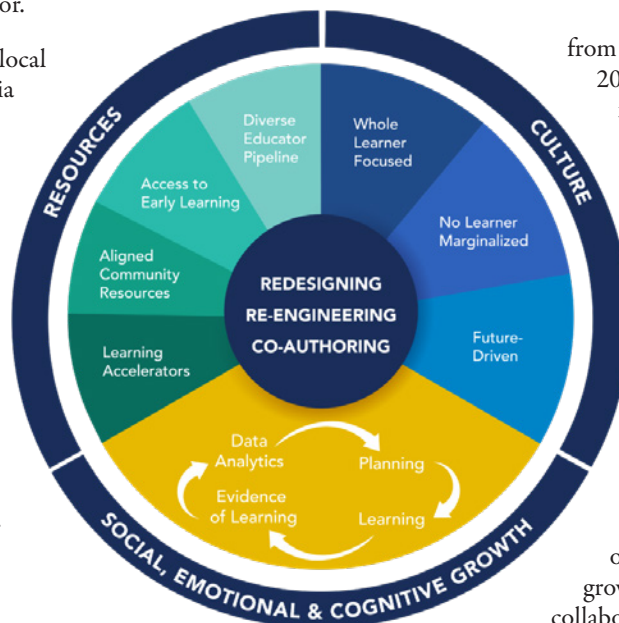
An initiative of The School Superintendents Association (AASA), the goal of Learning 2025 is a “student-centered, equity-focused, future-driven education.” Thought leaders in various disciplines, including education, business, community, and philanthropy, are collaborating on the redesign, which will focus on three main areas: culture, resources, and social, emotional, and cognitive growth.

“Everyone associated with a school system – from superintendents to principals to teachers to school boards to parents to community leaders – must take bold steps to work together as systems on behalf of the well-being, self-sufficiency, and success of our students,” says Dr. Daniel Domenech, AASA executive director.

Fox Chapel Area will join 30 other local districts in the Western Pennsylvania Learning 2025 Alliance, including Butler Area, Deer Lakes, Elizabeth Forward, Franklin Regional, Hampton, Seneca Valley, and South Fayette. Gregg Behr, executive director of the Pittsburgh-based Grable Foundation, serves on the Learning 2025 Commission, and Grable Fellows Dr. Bart Rocco and Dr. Bille Rondinelli will assist the Western Pennsylvania cohort. Both Dr. Rocco (Elizabeth Forward) and Dr. Rondinelli (South Fayette) retired



Fox Chapel Area School District Superintendent Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac and Deputy Superintendent David McCommons are leading the district's participation in Learning 2025.



from their superintendent positions in 2018 but continue to be active in the field of public education.

The Learning 2025 initiative will build on innovation in curriculum and instructional approaches that already has been occurring in school districts across the region, says Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac, Fox Chapel Area superintendent.

“Learning 2025 not only recognizes the existing work in the school district, but it provides opportunities to further deepen and grow those initiatives while working collaboratively with leaders across the nation as we determine where we go next,” Dr. Reljac says.

Reljac says.

Fox Chapel Area administrators, teachers, and other staff members will have the opportunity to participate in synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities, engage with different groups, hear from a number of guest speakers, and gain access to a host of national resources.

“I’m excited for the opportunity to showcase the work of students, staff, and our school community, and I am humbled to be able to learn with others,” Dr. Reljac says. “What we will be doing will make a true positive impact on our students.”



Fox Chapel Area Director of Special Education and Pupil Services Timothy Mahoney discusses the district's involvement in Learning 2025 at a district staff meeting.



2021 NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTEES

Fox Chapel Area High School held its annual National Honor Society (NHS) induction ceremony on September 27, 2021. Speakers included the four NHS officers, seniors Janise Kim (president), Ann Yonas (vice president), Annabel Siddons (secretary), and Shea Davison (treasurer), who spoke about the four pillars of the NHS – scholarship, service, leadership, and character. Additionally, Superintendent Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac spoke to the students about their commitment to scholarship, community, and academic endeavors. Lead Principal Dr. Michael Hower also commended the students on their steadfast commitment to academics amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

This year, 88 students were inducted into the Fox Chapel Area High School NHS. Those inducted were seniors Lidia Cavicchioli, Zhiyi Chen, Nicholas Contento, Jacob Donovan, Grace Heary, Kate Kinst, Madeleine Muller, Carissa Shepard, and Shrivardhan Thada. Juniors inducted were Lilly Adamo, Donay Allen, Delaney Asbury, Aisling Beresford, Kathryn Billings, Abigail Boleng, Caroline Bonidy, John Paul Brach, Maya Bradley, Talia Bugel, Davina Chang, Ava Clump, Emilia Cody, Elijah Conklin, Sophia Demetri, Collin Donaldson, Anna Drum, Samuel Elder, Christopher Ernharth, Evelyn Fabel, Matthew Fiedler, Zoe Fitzsimmons, Dylan Flanders, Mia Fortun, Arjun Golla, Lilygrace Goodworth, Zachary Gordon, Caleb Hahl, Helia Hamidi, Sonny Hur, Noah Indianer, Katherine Jenkins, Cali Johnson, Ananth Kashyap, Trevor Katz, Leah Kenyon, Matigan Kirk, Paul Kullmann, Anna Li, Jonathan Li, Nathania Lingam, Lawrence Liu, Scarlett Luden, Mia Lynch, Schuyler Mainier, Tatum Markel, Nathan Moore, Makayla Mulholland, Mercer Murton, James Nanci, Mia Nury, Michael O'Day, Payton O'Toole, Aadil Pattada, Rachel Persichetti, Marley Pistella, Diya Reddy, Jack Resek, Christina Ricci, Stella Ruane, Lindsay Scheffler, Arvind Seshan, Sophie Shao, Peyton Shema, Elsie Smith, Prajval Sreenivas, Oliver Stephany, Jackson Stevens, Zachary Sullivan, George Tabor, Ethan Tan, Joseph Thomas, Daniel Uhl, Blaz Vavpetic, Daniel



The Fox Chapel Area High School National Honor Society officers are, from left to right, Treasurer Shea Davison, Secretary Annabel Siddons, Vice President Ann Yonas, and President Janise Kim.

Wang, Lydia Weidner, Luiza Weissmann, Joseph Zgurzynski, and Matthew Zoschg.

Students in their sophomore year who have an unweighted cumulative Quality Point Average (QPA) of 3.5 or higher are invited to apply for membership in the NHS. Applicants must also have a minimum of two service activities and be involved in at least two additional clubs and/or groups. They must exhibit leadership qualities and provide character references. Once they are inducted, they must maintain their QPA and continue their community service work through NHS-sponsored projects and other organizations.

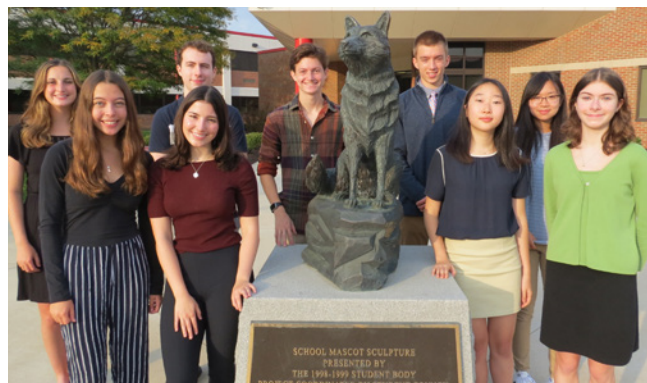
According to Fox Chapel Area High School National Honor Society co-sponsor Lisa Gibson, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented some fairly large obstacles for students.

“The inductees’ commitment to academics is very apparent, despite the challenges of the last two years,” Mrs. Gibson says. “I am so proud of their ability to achieve academic excellence and remain committed to serving their community in a way that sets a positive example for their peers.”

22 SENIORS RECOGNIZED IN NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Nine Fox Chapel Area High School seniors have been designated as National Merit Semifinalists in the 2022 National Merit Scholarship Program. The Semifinalists are Noah Bradley, Zhiyi Chen, Shea Davison, Russell Fenton, Anna Ferris, Claire Hamilton, Janise Kim, Zoe Lakkis, and Nathaniel Mueller. The Semifinalists represent less than 1% of the nation's high school seniors and have the opportunity to advance to the Finalist level and compete for approximately 7,500 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$30 million in the spring of 2022. A Semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school staff member, and write an essay.

Additionally, 13 high school seniors were named Commended Students. They are Patrick Alexander, Andrew Byersdorfer, Justine Eng, Cara Felman, Maia Gravina, Thomas Healy, Owen Hershey, Uma Muzumdar, Emma Szymanski, Shrivardhan Thada, James Trageser, Eduardo Weissmann, and Siddharth Yende. The Commended Students represent the top 5% of the nation's high school seniors and are recognized for their exceptional academic promise.



The Fox Chapel Area High School National Merit Semifinalists are front row, left to right, Claire Hamilton, Shea Davison, Janise Kim, and Zoe Lakkis, and back row, left to right, Anna Ferris, Noah Bradley, Nathaniel Mueller, Russell Fenton, and Zhiyi Chen.

This year's National Merit Semifinalists and Commended Students were selected based on their 2020 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test scores. All of the students who take this test are automatically entered in the National Merit Scholarship Program. Approximately 16,000 advance to become Semifinalists, and about 34,000 are Commended.

FCASD SCHOOLS CONTINUE TRADITION OF STELLAR RANKINGS

The Fox Chapel Area School District and its schools continue to perform well among peers in a pair of national, state, and local rankings.

U.S. News & World Report Best K-8 Schools

U.S. News & World Report, for the first time ever, announced Best K-8 Schools rankings during the fall.

At Fox Chapel Area, all four elementary schools were ranked in the top 5% of elementary schools in Pennsylvania. Dorseyville Middle School placed in the top 2% of all middle schools in the state. In Pennsylvania, 1,752 elementary schools and 939 middle schools were ranked. Specifically, Fairview Elementary School ranked No. 1 in the state, and O'Hara Elementary School was ranked No. 9.

The 2022 rankings included state-level data on more than 80,000 public elementary and middle schools from across the country.



"I want to congratulate the students, staff, parents/guardians, and others who helped us attain these remarkable rankings," says Superintendent Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac. "It's wonderful that even those outside the district recognize the hard work and diligence that take place in our schools every single day."

U.S. News & World Report also ranks high schools, and, although the 2022 rankings have not yet been released, Fox Chapel Area High School has been awarded Silver Medal rankings by U.S. News & World Report over the past decade. In 2021, the high school was ranked in the top 10 regionally and in the top 5% in both the state and nationally.

Niche Rankings

The district has received an "A+ Overall Niche Grade" from Niche for the past five years and has ranked among the top 10 school districts in the state in Niche rankings during the past seven years. In the 2022 rankings, the district placed in the top 1% of school districts in the United States in the categories of Best School Districts, Districts with the Best Teachers, and Best Places to Teach. The district and its schools also consistently earn high rankings in the county and greater Pittsburgh area.





HOMECOMING 2021 CELEBRATION

After a one-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students, families, friends, and community members came together for a homecoming celebration October 1. The theme was "City Nights."

A carnival was held prior to the football game and included student and community-run booths and fundraisers, a giant slide, bouncy houses, a petting zoo, pony rides, and food trucks. Live music from the students and faculty was also featured during the community carnival. The Foxes played the Shaler Area Titans and celebrated a huge 28-14 win on the gridiron.

The freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior classes continued the tradition of performing their annual skits in the stadium prior to the game, with the senior class winning the skit competition.

The members of the 2021 Fox Chapel Area High School homecoming court were seniors Claire Hamilton, Nabeela Islam (queen), Billy Kwiarkowski, Jacob McWilliams, Nathaniel Mueller, Olivia Pelcher, Sophia Roth, and Lance Wilhelm (king). The homecoming court attendants were juniors Eleanor Fox and Oliver Stephany, sophomores Annalese Bartolacci and Jack O'Brien, and freshmen Gabriella Hample and Luca Zgurzynski. This year's crown bearers were homecoming princess Grace Casile and homecoming prince Michael Johnson.

Additionally, the Fox Chapel Educators Association sponsored a food drive in cooperation with the WPIAL's Food and Fund Drive and collected non-perishable food and monetary donations to support the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank and North Hills Community Outreach.

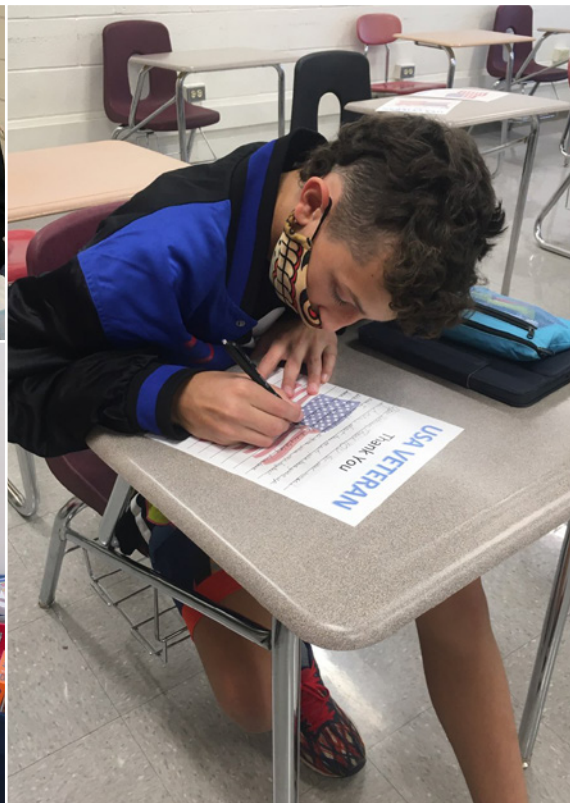
All homecoming activities were coordinated and sponsored by the Fox Chapel Area High School Student Government.





SCHOOLS THANK AND CELEBRATE VETERANS

Each of the six schools in the Fox Chapel Area School District honored veterans on Veterans Day. Through patriotic songs, speeches, cards, thank you notes, special collections of needed items, and the wearing of red, white, and blue, students paid tribute to those who have bravely served our country.



'SILLY' FUN FOR A GREAT CAUSE

On an unseasonably warm November afternoon, students in Mrs. Nicole Streets' kindergarten class at Fairview Elementary School got a chance to "silly string" their principal, Dr. Stephen Edwards. The class earned the opportunity to make the magnificent mess by raising the most money during the Fairview PTO's Fox Trot fundraiser. The fundraiser benefits PTO initiatives and programming for Fairview Elementary School students.



WORLD KINDNESS DAY CELEBRATED

On November 12, Fox Chapel Area High School and O'Hara Elementary School students commemorated World Kindness Day.

O'Hara Elementary School

O'Hara Elementary School students celebrated World Kindness Day by adding leaves to an "O'HARA BE-LEAVES IN KINDNESS" tree. All students in kindergarten through grade five were encouraged to write something they would do this year to be kind on a paper leaf and to place it on the tree in the commons area for others to see.

Some of the ideas included:

- "I say thank you to the bus driver."
- "I can be kind by helping: helping others, helping adults, helping classmates."
- "I can give everyone confidence."

The idea for the kindness tree came from fifth-grade student council president Holden Link, who researched school-wide activities for World Kindness Day.

"I want my classmates to see the leaves and know they are surrounded by people who care about them. I also want my O'Hara family to know that one act of kindness can grow into something beautiful, just like our Kindness Tree," Holden says.

According to teacher and O'Hara Elementary student council sponsor Kayla Walnoha, the kindness tree was a great idea to allow every student to have a chance to reflect on something that he or she could do to be kind.

"When we are all kind together, we can watch our kindness grow, just like how our tree blossomed on World Kindness Day," she says.



Fox Chapel Area High School

Fox Chapel Area High School students wrote phrases of positivity and hope on sticky notes to be placed around the building, including lockers, walls, and in the cafeteria. The project was arranged by the high school's Community Outreach organization.



DMS ART BRINGS HOLOCAUST TO LIGHT

At the beginning of October, art projects that last year's eighth-grade students at Dorseyville Middle School created in collaboration with the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh went on display for DMS students and staff members to view. The goal of the art initiative was to enable students and staff to deepen their understanding of the atrocities of the Holocaust.

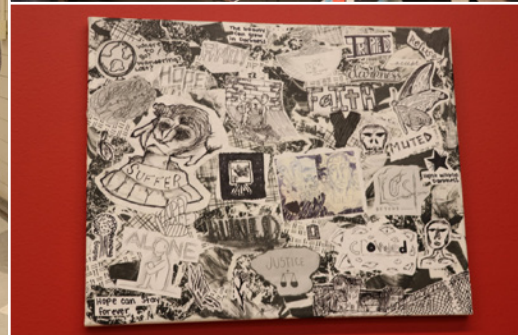
One of the projects that was displayed was funded by a grant through the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh, in conjunction with the national Butterfly Project. Students also collaborated with a muralist, Amanda Lynn, to create an original piece of art



influenced by the famous poem "The Butterfly" by Pavel Friedmann.

In addition, Nick Haberman, a Shaler Area High School teacher and founder and director of the LIGHT Education Initiative, was on hand to talk to students about the organization. LIGHT is an education initiative that connects K-12 students through human rights themes, including being an upstander, making responsible choices, kindness and love, and volunteerism and humility.

Dorseyville Middle school language arts teacher Scott Vensel, the LIGHT Center coordinator at DMS, was instrumental in facilitating the art projects at Dorseyville.



KERR TURKEY FEATHERS BRIGHTEN HOLIDAY FOR MANY

Kerr Elementary School students, families, and staff members participated in a turkey feather fundraiser organized by the school's Student Change Committee (formerly the student council) in November to benefit the Sharpsburg Family Worship Center's annual "Give a Gift" program.

For 25 cents, students could purchase a turkey "feather" and write their name on it, and it was stapled around their grade level's turkey. The grade that collected the most money won a movie party, and that was third grade.

Through the generosity of the Kerr community, it was a record-breaking year for the fundraiser, with a grand total of \$3,456.50 raised.

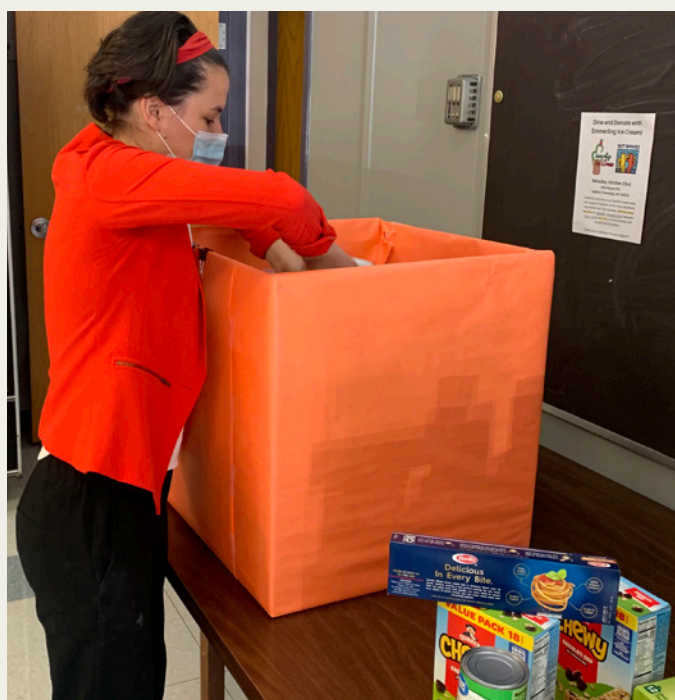


FCEA EFFORTS EXTEND BEYOND CLASSROOM

In October and November, members of the Fox Chapel Educators Association (FCEA) participated in food drives to support North Hills Community Outreach and to provide Thanksgiving meals for a group that supports homeless individuals in the area. The drives brought in cases of food, as well as hundreds of dollars.

According to high school counselor and president-elect of the FCEA, Rachel Machen, the association undertakes this, and other initiatives, every year to give back to residents of the district.

"We are a part of this community, and we understand that our reach extends well beyond the classroom. Throughout the school year, we always extend our hand to help throughout the area in various ways," she says. "This is just one of the ways that we can support not only our students, but the entire Fox Chapel Area community."



Hartwood Elementary School third-grade teacher Brianna Amoscato prepares food donations for delivery.



FALL 2021 ATHLETIC HIGHLIGHTS



BOYS AND GIRLS GOLF

Every year, Fox Chapel Area boys golf coach Bryan Deal sets the bar high for his players, and this season was no different. While the team was hoping to replicate its state championship from 2019, this year's players should have no regrets after finishing as the PIAA Class 3A runner-up. However, there's no doubt it was a heartbreaking finish. After tying State College Area during regulation play, the Foxes then fell short in a sudden death playoff.

The team was led by sophomore Davey Fuhrer, who carded a one-under-par 70 at the state tournament, followed closely by senior Owen Delaney with a 72. Seniors Max Johnson, Zachary Paper, and Eli Yofan all shot 75 to round out the Foxes' solid performance.

"I started to prepare for states the minute after we won the team WPIAL because I knew that I would play a big role in the outcome of the tournament for good or bad," says Davey, who got his first taste of high school golf after missing last season due to a non-golf-related injury. "When we came up just short, I was sad, but also proud of the team, how we played that day, and just making it there in the first place."

Leading up to the state tournament had been nothing less than spectacular. The team was the undefeated section champion and had another thrilling end to the WPIAL team finals, during which they defeated Central Catholic by one stroke. It was the second time in three years the Foxes claimed the WPIAL team championship. Eli was the team's medalist that day with an impressive 73. He also finished second in the WPIAL individual championships and advanced to the state individual tournament in York, where he finished in fourth place in Class 3A. Eli's finish was the school's best since Davey's uncle, Frank Fuhrer, won the state championship in 1976.



Yet, the season's success was not just about one golfer's accomplishments. Coach Deal says, "Any one of our varsity players were capable of being the medalist on any given day. What we looked for all season was consistency throughout our lineup, and that's what they gave us."

Seniors John Walsh and Riley Johnson, and junior Andrew Begg, were also solid contributors during the season.

"What stood out to me most this season was the camaraderie of the team as a whole," says Owen. "With such a senior-heavy group, I felt as though we could rely on each other to pick one another up if we weren't having our best day."

Coach Deal adds, "I'm very proud of how these young men represented themselves, their families, and our school district with class while competing at the highest level. While we all learned a very difficult lesson (at states), it doesn't diminish the great season we had."

The Fox Chapel Area girls golf team also turned in an impressive season.

Those people who know Tim Lang also know that his coaching style is to use popular quotes to support teaching points. This year, he began the season by sharing a comment made by former NFL player and coach Tony Dungy. Now a motivational speaker, Dungy has said, "You can't always control circumstances. However, you can always control your attitude, approach, and response. Your options are to complain or to look ahead and figure out how to make the situation better."

Coach Lang explains how the inspirational message was meant to motivate his squad. "It was intended to have the team think about the season in a different way. It applied to the approach to the upcoming season, as well as the championship matches

that we fell short of last year, and our need to adapt to various situations.”

Heeding his words, combined with a lot of hard work, resulted in impressive results. For the first time in 11 years, Fox Chapel Area girls golf started the postseason by winning the WPIAL Class 3A championship and earned an automatic berth to the PIAA Class 3A team championships in York. The 2017 team also qualified, but through an at-large invitation. This year’s squad placed third at the state level after solid play from seniors Baylin Bitar, Nina Busch, Erin Drahnak, and Grace Rygelski, and freshman Baustin Bitar.

Their success at both high-level competitions came after a four-peat section championship with a 10-0 undefeated season.

“It was just fantastic for the entire team to become WPIAL champions,” says Coach Lang. “From two years ago, when Nina and Erin were the foundation of this team, we always knew we needed to add a few more good golfers to make a great team. That was when we recruited Baylin and when Grace brought her game to a new level.

“One of the biggest and most welcome surprises was Baylin. She stepped up when it counted. After our first three players finished in the WPIAL team finals, we were down by one stroke. Baylin



beat her opponent by six strokes, and we finished with a five-stroke victory and were crowned the champion. And she almost did it again in the state finals.”

Also at the WPIAL individual championships, Nina placed second and advanced to the PIAA tournament.

“Last year was surreal, but this year was truly fantastic,” says Coach Lang. “It was time to finish what we started.”

This year’s team also included seniors Lauren Childs and Francesca Heidinger, sophomore Lucy Rygelski, and freshmen Gabrielle DeVita and Riley Francis-Perka.

CROSS COUNTRY

Getting to the PIAA Class 3A cross country championships had been a goal for seniors on the boys team for what seemed like forever. They had run together for many years and knew all too well that to get to states this year would depend upon a strong performance at WPIALs. So, the boys dug deep, put forth their best efforts, and placed third at the regional race. Their cumulative hard work earned them what they had wanted so badly – a coveted ticket to run on the Hershey championship course. It was the first time since 2013 that a Foxes boys cross country team advanced to states.

Senior Jack Lorence led six other solid athletes who competed in both the PIAA and WPIAL races, including seniors Owen Carter, Jordan Gwin, Ethan Napolitan, and Alex Staud; sophomores Rowan Gwin and Maxwell Kaiser; and freshmen Ethan Vaughan and Altai Yumak.

As a solo runner, Jack medaled in ninth place at WPIALs and qualified for states. However, he ran with the team, but remained eligible to medal with his individual time.

Prior to the season-ending fanfare, the undefeated team had clinched the WPIAL Class 3A Section 4 championship for the third consecutive year. They also won the annual Gateway Invitational and were the runner-up at the Tri-State Track Coaches Association tournament.

When remembering the particulars after the state race, Jordan says, “Jack and I gave each other a hug because we had done what we’d wanted to do since our freshman year together – we finally made it to states.”



“This group was able to accomplish what we thought was a long shot at the beginning,” says Coach Tom Moul. “I’m very proud of them.”



The girls team won the Gateway Invitational to start off the season and ended as the section runner-up. They had greater success when two sophomores, Laura Carter and Clara Kelley, qualified for states. It was Laura’s second time to qualify for the most prestigious race of the year, and Clara advanced after overcoming a lingering injury that had plagued her since last year’s track season.

“It was a nice ending to the season,” Coach Moul says. “All of them worked hard from the beginning of the summer, and it paid off in the end.”

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FIELD HOCKEY

For the second consecutive year, the Foxes field hockey team advanced to the WPIAL Class 2A championships and, once again, mirrored last year's finish as the runner-up.

Getting there again, however, was something the team and their coaches weren't always sure of. They had gotten off to a slow start at the beginning of the season but then won most of their games leading up to the playoffs. Part of that gradual progression was due to filling big shoes from last year's graduating class.

Senior captain and goalie Mira Tramontina says, "After having a season filled with new faces, learning, and making it to WPIALs, I would say this team exceeded my expectations. We had very strong players on both the offensive and defensive sides, and had a lot of team spirit. We were always here for one another."



"Overall, we are very pleased with the outcome of the season," says Coach Emily Humiston. "The girls used their opportunities to better themselves and the team, and that's really all we can ask for. Of course, a gold medal would have been nice, but there were so many other individual and team successes to be proud of throughout the season."

GIRLS TENNIS

Riding on the strength of the Foxes doubles teams, the girls tennis team earned the WPIAL Class 3A Section 3 championship after defeating Shady Side Academy, 3-2. The victory automatically advanced the squad to the Class 3A WPIAL championships.

Under Coach Alex Slezak's leadership, the program has advanced to the team playoffs each of his eight years and won the team section title five times. This season, the team concluded the regular season with a perfect 8-0 section record.

Also during the Section 3 playoffs, the Lady Foxes faced tough competition from Shady Side Academy; however, the Foxes' two doubles teams stepped it up to secure the win. Those teams included the senior duo of Anna Ferris and Bridget Kilmer, and Diya Reddy, a junior, and sophomore Sophie Carvelli.



Additionally, senior Carissa Shepard was the individual section champion for the second year in a row.

"I'm especially proud of our doubles teams because they really clinched the section for us," says Coach Slezak. "They did great, competed their very best, and worked hard. They were aggressive and played well. In singles, Carissa showed why she is the section singles champ again this year."

FOOTBALL

Life doesn't always follow a straight line, and that certainly was the case with Foxes football this season. The team faced more than its share of adversity but was able to push through many challenges to qualify for the WPIAL Class 5A playoffs.

In the first round at opponent Upper St. Clair's home field, the Foxes pulled off an unexpected upset of the Panthers, 13-10, who traditionally do well in the playoffs. Just as significant was the fact that Fox Chapel Area won with a first-time quarterback. Senior Khi'lee Patterson filled in after the team's starting quarterback, senior Collin Dietz, was injured in the last game of the season, and was bolstered by strong support from the offense and defense. The victory was especially meaningful from a historic perspective because it was the first time the program had won a playoff game in nearly 25 years.

The Foxes then advanced to the WPIAL quarterfinals against Penn-Trafford but fell to the Warriors, the eventual WPIAL and PIAA Class 5A champions.



"We did a lot of good, but we cannot be satisfied. We always have to strive for more than we achieved," Coach Tom Loughran says. "What I love about high school football is that each year we have to reload with other players, but this year we had a bunch of young kids who had the opportunity to play. As we move on to next year, we will build on those strengths."

BOYS SOCCER

"This year's team brought a mental toughness I haven't seen in some time," says Fox Chapel Area boys soccer Coach Erik Ingram of his team's 13-4-1 season and past appearances at the WPIAL Class 4A playoffs.

The fifth-ranked Foxes drew Penn-Trafford as their opponent in the first round of the playoffs and defeated the Warriors, 7-0. They went on to beat Canon-McMillan, 1-0.

The Foxes faced Seneca Valley in the semifinals and felt fairly confident they could get the job done after putting the only blemish on the Raiders' record earlier in the season. But, in a hard-fought battle that went into overtime, the Foxes lost, 1-0.

Junior defender Colin Westerberg says of the season as a whole, "We hit some bumps along the road; however, I felt as though we overcame all obstacles thrown at us and learned to face adversity as a unit. During the season, we were still figuring out



what was best for all of us and still trying players in different positions. By the end of the season, I thought we had everyone where they needed to be, and we were playing some of our best soccer of the year when we entered the playoffs."

In all, the Foxes scored 94 goals during the 2021 season and only conceded 19 goals in 20 games.

Coach Erik Ingram also hit a milestone this season with his 200th career win.



GIRLS SOCCER

Overtime shootouts and goalie saves during the WPIAL Class 4A playoffs were definitely highlights of the 2021 season as girls soccer defeated two higher-ranked teams, including undefeated, two-time champion North Allegheny. Besides having a group of very talented players, it was their tremendous heart and resolve that resulted in their ability to outplay the Tigers, and, before that, Bethel Park. The Lady Foxes were ranked ninth going into the playoffs.

At the Bethel Park matchup, senior Lauren Rabbitt sent the ball into the net in overtime, in the seventh round of penalty kicks, to win the game. She says the season was unlike any of the others she's played with the team.

"We had many ups and downs, but my favorite part was the run we had in the playoffs," says Lauren. "The team felt so

connected this year, which really helped us get as far as we did in the playoffs. The mindset on the field was very focused and determined. The whole team had each other's backs, from the energy on the bench to the trust in each other on the field."

Junior goalie Molly McNaughton was especially remarkable when defeating North Allegheny. With the game going into penalty kicks after two overtimes, the score was tied at 4-4. Senior Addie Piper scored the final penalty kick for the Foxes to make it 5-4, and then Molly blocked North Allegheny's final shot to win the game.

"Seeing the ball hit the back of the net when I kicked it for real, was the best feeling ever. It's a moment I will never forget," says Addie.

Coach Peter Torres adds, "The hard work and dedication from every member of the team led to our success."

» A number of Fox Chapel Area student-athletes were named to all-WPIAL and all-section teams during the fall season, and two coaches received section coach of the year honors.



May the holiday season
shower you with abundant
comfort and joy.

Fox Chapel Area School District

Fox Chapel Area School District
Holiday Card 2021

William Sokalski - Grade 3
Kerr Elementary School

SCHOOL BOARD REORGANIZATION MEETING

The Fox Chapel Area Board of School Directors held its annual reorganization meeting December 6, 2021. Marybeth Dadd was re-elected president, Ronald Frank was re-elected vice president, and Vanessa Lynch was elected assistant secretary. Eric Hamilton is the school board treasurer.

The board will meet on the following dates in 2022:

- January 10 (Combined Agenda Study Session & Regular Business Meeting)
- February 7 (Agenda Study Session)
- February 14 (Regular Business Meeting)
- March 7 (Agenda Study Session)
- March 14 (Regular Business Meeting)
- April 4 (Combined Agenda Study Session & Regular Business Meeting)
- May 9 (Combined Agenda Study Session & Regular Business Meeting)
- June 6 (Agenda Study Session)
- June 13 (Regular Business Meeting)
- August 1 (Agenda Study Session)
- August 8 (Regular Business Meeting)
- September 12 (Combined Agenda Study Session & Regular Business Meeting)
- October 3 (Agenda Study Session)
- October 10 (Regular Business Meeting)
- November 7 (Agenda Study Session)



The new Fox Chapel Area School Board members are, left to right, Katie Findley, Kimberly Andrews, and Ariel Zych.

- November 14 (Regular Business Meeting)
- December 5 (Reorganization Meeting and Combined Agenda Study Session & Regular Business Meeting)

All meetings begin at 7 p.m. and are scheduled to be held in the Fox Chapel Area High School large group instruction room.

Additionally, as part of the reorganization meeting, re-elected board members Amy Cooper and Adam Goode, and newly elected board members Kimberly Andrews, Katie Findley, and Ariel Zych were all sworn in by the Honorable Elliott Howsie, Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas judge.

NOTICES TO PARENTS OF CHILDREN WHO RESIDE IN THE FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

ANNUAL PUBLIC NOTICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES AND PROGRAMS, SERVICES FOR GIFTED STUDENTS, AND SERVICES FOR PROTECTED HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

■ IDEA – Chapter 14

In compliance with state and federal law, notice is hereby given by the Fox Chapel Area School District that it conducts ongoing identification activities as a part of its school program for the purpose of identifying students who may be in need of special education and related services. Child Find refers to activities undertaken by public education agencies to identify, locate, and evaluate children residing in the state, including children attending private schools, who are suspected of having disabilities, regardless of the severity of their disability, and determine the child's need for special education and related services. The purpose is to locate these children so that a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) can be made available. Identification activities are performed to find a child who is suspected as having a disability that would interfere with his or her learning unless special education programs and services are made available. These activities are sometimes called screening activities. The activities include: review of group data, conducting hearing and vision screening, assessment of

a student's academic functioning, observation of the student displaying difficulty in behavior, and determining the student's response to attempted remediation. Input from parents is also an information source of identification. If your child is identified by the district as possibly in need of such services, you will be notified of applicable procedures. Individualized services and programs are available for children who are determined to need specially-designed instruction due to the following conditions: autism/pervasive development disorder, blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, deaf blindness, orthopedic impairment, developmental delay, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, emotional disturbance, specific learning disability, and/or speech or language impairment. We offer a continuum of services for students with disabilities that begins with full inclusion in the child's home school and class, to separate programs within other schools in which peers without disabilities would not participate.

If you believe that your school-age child may be in need of special education services and related programs, or your child (ages three to school age) may be in need of early intervention, screening and evaluation processes designed to assess the need of the child and his/her eligibility are available to you at no cost, upon written request. You may request screening



and evaluation at anytime, whether or not your child is enrolled in the district's public school program. Requests for school-age evaluations and screenings are to be made in writing to: Special Education Department, Fox Chapel Area School District, 611 Field Club Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238. Requests for children ages three to school age should be made in writing to: Project DART, Allegheny Intermediate Unit, 475 East Waterfront Drive, Homestead, PA 15120.

Potential Signs of Developmental Delays and Other Risk Factors that Could Indicate a Need for Special Education Services

Some indications that your child may be a child with a disability who is in need of special education are:

- Exhibition of an emotional disturbance over a long period of time which affects your child's ability to learn;
- Consistent problems in getting along with others;
- Difficulty communicating;
- Lack of interest or ability in age-appropriate activities;
- Resistance to change;
- Difficulty seeing or hearing that interferes with the ability to communicate;
- Health problems that affect educational performance including attention problems;
- Difficulty performing tasks that require reading, writing, or mathematics; and
- When, a child who is at least three years of age but before he or she has started school as a beginner, scores on a developmental assessment device, on an assessment instrument which yields a score in months, which score indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in one or more developmental areas, or if the child is delayed in one or more of the developmental areas, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests.

Section 504 – Chapter 15

In compliance with state and federal law, the school district will provide to each protected handicapped student, without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services, or accommodations that are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities. A protected handicapped student must be school age with a physical or mental disability which substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program. You may request screening and evaluation for Chapter 15 services at any time, whether or not your child is enrolled in the district's public school program. Requests for evaluation and screening are to be made in writing to: Pupil Services Department, Fox Chapel Area School District, 611 Field Club Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238.

Gifted Education – Chapter 16

In compliance with state law, services designed to meet the unique needs of gifted students are provided. Students are

identified individually based on state law and district policy, and those students who possess superior intelligence scores or meet multiple criteria indicating gifted ability may receive services. If you believe that your school-age child may be eligible for gifted services, screening and evaluation processes designed to assess his/her eligibility are available to you at no cost, upon written request. You may request screening and evaluation at any time, whether or not your child is enrolled in the district's public school program. Requests for evaluation and screening are to be made in writing to: Pupil Services Department, Fox Chapel Area School District, 611 Field Club Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information gathered about your child is subject to the confidentiality provisions contained in federal and state law. The district has policies and procedures in effect governing the collection, maintenance, destruction, and disclosure to third parties of this information. For information about this, as well as the rights of confidentiality and access to educational records, you may contact, in writing: Pupil Services Department, Fox Chapel Area School District, 611 Field Club Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238.



PUBLIC NOTICE – STUDENT RECORDS

As a parent of a student in the Fox Chapel Area School District, you have certain rights in regard to your child's school records. These rights are guaranteed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 1974, and the Pennsylvania State Board of Education Regulations. These rights apply whether your child is exceptional or nonexceptional.

The district protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding exceptional and protected handicapped students in accordance with state and federal law and the district's student records policy.

You have the right to review, inspect, or obtain a copy of your child's records. Records are also open to school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in a child. You may make a written request for copies of your child's records at a fee not to exceed duplicating costs. If you believe that any information is inaccurate or misleading, you may challenge the contents of the records. You have the right to refuse individual consent where such permission is needed for releasing certain student information. Should you feel the district is not providing these rights, you may file a complaint with the Student Privacy Policy Office (SPPO), U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave. S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202.

If a child transfers to another school system, records will be forwarded after notification of enrollment is received from the new school.

According to the FERPA, 1974, various nonconfidential information can be released to outside agencies without your consent. This directory information consists of student's name; address; telephone number; email address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; dates of attendance; grade level; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; degrees, honors, and awards received; the most recent educational agency or institution attended; and other similar information.

If you do not want directory information about your child released, please notify the Fox Chapel Area School District deputy superintendent, in writing, at the beginning of each school year at 611 Field Club Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238.

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT REPORT CARD

In the fall of 2020, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) released the updated version of the Future Ready PA Index, a comprehensive progress report that provides parents and community members with easy-to-understand information about Pennsylvania schools and student success. For more information and to view the Future Ready PA Index and all Pennsylvania school results, visit <http://futurereadypa.org>.

ARMED FORCES/MILITARY RECRUITERS/MILITARY SCHOOLS

Both federal public law 107-110, section 9528 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and state laws require that school districts provide military recruiters access to secondary school students. The Every Student Succeeds Act, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002, and Pennsylvania Act 10 (The Armed Forces Recruiting Act) reflect these requirements. They collectively require school districts to provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as they provide to postsecondary institutions or to prospective employers. This would include the student's name, address, and telephone number. However, the law also allows parents/students the right to opt-out from this by requesting that the district not release information to armed forces, military recruiters, and/or military schools. The school counseling department offers a "Military Release of Information Opt-Out Form." The completion and return of the form serves as a parent's/student's request to withhold private information. Parental permission is required for those students younger than 18 years of age. Students 18 and older may sign for themselves. For further information, parents/students should contact the Fox Chapel Area High School counseling office at 412/967-2438 prior to the beginning of each school year.

ASBESTOS REINSPCTIONS

In compliance with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act, the EPA requires the district to perform reinspections of asbestos materials every three years. In December 2019,

accredited asbestos inspectors performed these reinspections and a certified asbestos management planner reviewed the results. The results of the reinspections are on file in the school district administration office as part of the asbestos management plan. The management plan is available for viewing by the public during regular school hours (Monday-Friday from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.).

MEDIA NOTIFICATION

Our schools are public buildings and our students, educational programs, school events, and community-oriented activities are sometimes made the subject of recording by video, audio, photography, livestreaming, and the like for use as instructional and informational tools. In addition, our students' work is sometimes published in print and/or electronic media. The district will allow students to be recorded, interviewed, livestreamed, and/or photographed and students' work to be published for legitimate public purposes. Additionally, our students and their work may also be featured on social media.

Throughout the school year, students may be recorded, interviewed, livestreamed, and/or photographed by representatives from newspapers, television stations, and radio stations, as well as district communications office personnel or their designees and these items may be publicly displayed. Students and their work and photographs may also appear in print media and/or electronically on places such as public websites, social media, and through broadcasts.

If parents/guardians object to such publication, a written objection must be filed. The district will not deliberately publish a child if a written objection has been filed. The district will also make a reasonable effort to avoid publication by any third party. It is understood that the district certainly has no control of the news media or others outside of the school organization. Student participation in school activities, especially athletics and other competitive events, increases the likelihood of publication of stories and images of those students. Additionally, please note that the written objection does not preclude your child's voice from being livestreamed for instructional purposes related to in-person instruction.

Written objections must be filed at the beginning of each school year with the Coordinator of Communications, Fox Chapel Area School District, 611 Field Club Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238, or email bonnie_berzonski@fcsd.edu. If a written objection has been filed in the past, a new letter of objection still must be filed each year. If parents/guardians do not file a written objection, their silence will serve as implied consent.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this information, please contact Bonnie Berzonski, Coordinator of Communications, at bonnie_berzonski@fcsd.edu, or at (412) 967-2452.



FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT DIRECTORY

District Administration

611 Field Club Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/963-9600
www.fcasd.edu
Superintendent: Mary Catherine Reljac, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent: David McCommons, Ed.D.
Business Manager: Kimberly Pawlishak

District Resource Staff

Executive Director of Elementary Education and Instruction: Ashley Constantine, Ed.D.
Executive Director of Secondary Education and Instruction: Matthew Harris, Ed.D.
Director of Special Education and Pupil Services: Timothy Mahoney
Executive Director of Instructional and Innovative Leadership: Megan Collett, Ed.D.
Director of Literacy: Dana Simile
Director of Student Achievement and Instructional Verification: G. Daniel DiDesiderio III, Ed.D.
Director of Ancillary Services: Daniel Breitreutz
Chief of School Police/School Safety and Security Coordinator: Joseph Kozarian
Director of Athletics: Michael O'Brien
Coordinator of Communications: Bonnie Berzonski
Community Engagement Specialist: Jill Leonard

FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOLS

Fairview Elementary School

738 Dorseyville Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/963-9315
Principal:
Stephen Edwards, Ed.D.

Hartwood Elementary School

3730 Saxonburg Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/767-5396
Principal:
Rachel Fischbaugh, Ed.D.

Kerr Elementary School

341 Kittanning Pike
Pittsburgh, PA 15215
412/781-4105
Principal: Paul Noro, Ed.D.

O'Hara Elementary School

115 Cabin Lane
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/963-0333
Principal: Kristy Batis, Ed.D.
Program Principal:
Benjamin Canan

Dorseyville Middle School

3732 Saxonburg Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/767-5343
Principal: Jonathan Nauhaus
Program Principal:
Laura Miller, Ed.D.

Fox Chapel Area High School

611 Field Club Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/967-2430
Lead Principal:
Michael Hower, Ed.D.
Program Principal (A-L):
Daniel Lentz, Ph.D.
Program Principal (M-Z):
John McGee, Ph.D.

CONTACT INFORMATION SOUGHT

The Fox Chapel Area School District is gathering emails of individuals who do not have children in the district but are interested in receiving occasional emails from the district. If you are interested in getting email from the district, please fill out the Google form at <http://bit.ly/FCASDContacts> so that you can be added to an email distribution list.

FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL BOARD

Amy B. Cooper (2025 – Region I); Marybeth Dadd, President (2023 – Region III); Katie Findley (2023 – Region I); Ronald P. Frank, Vice President (2023 – Region II); Adam G. Goode (2025 – Region III); Eric G. Hamilton, Treasurer (2023 – Region I); Vanessa K. Lynch, Assistant Secretary (2023 – Region II); Kimberly Joi Andrews (2025 – Region III); and Ariel Zych (2025 – Region II).

Region I covers all of Sharpsburg Borough and Wards 2, 3, and 4 of O'Hara Township; Region II covers Districts 2, 4, and 5 of Fox Chapel Borough and all of Indiana Township; and Region III covers all of Aspinwall Borough, Blawnox Borough, Wards 1 and 5 of O'Hara Township, and Districts 1 and 3 of Fox Chapel Borough.

School board meetings are typically scheduled for the first and second Mondays of each month at 7 p.m. in the high school large group instruction room. The public is invited to attend.

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

The Fox Chapel Area School District is an equal rights and opportunity school district. The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, or handicap/disability. The district shall make reasonable accommodations for identified physical and mental impairments that constitute disabilities, consistent with the requirements of federal and state laws and regulations.

Additional information pertaining to civil rights, school district policies, and grievance procedures can be obtained by contacting the compliance officers listed below between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday-Friday. This notice is available from the compliance officers in large print, on audiotape, and in Braille.

Title IX: David P. McCommons, Ed.D.
(412/967-2456)
Section 504 and ADA: Timothy A. Mahoney
(412/967-2435)
Address: Fox Chapel Area School District
611 Field Club Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238