

IN Fox Chapel Area

Fox Chapel Area School District
2014-2015
**State of the
Schools**

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MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

What did you do on your summer vacation? Remember that first-day-of-school essay written after a long summer break? Kids wrote about their vacations away from home, trips to summer camp, or spending leisure time running through the sprinkler and playing with their friends. But this year, for hundreds of Fox Chapel Area students summer vacation included exciting experiences right here in our own schools.

In keeping with the district's mission to maximize student learning, achievement, and development, various educational opportunities were offered this past summer. Elementary and secondary staff revamped the summer program for students who would benefit from building and retaining language arts and math skills during the summer months. I am proud to say that our staff developed and taught a four-week program that incorporated the rigorous, updated educational standards for mathematics and language arts in a manner that elementary and middle school students found interesting, engaging, and even fun. Preliminary and post-testing showed that, indeed, the students who participated made significant gains in both mathematics and language arts. In addition to the changes to the summer program, a class was added to help incoming kindergartners prepare for success in school. At the high school level, for the fourth year, teachers presented a four-day summer seminar that focused on developing skills that help students make a smooth transition from the middle school to the high school. We are also proud of our Western Pennsylvania Summer STEM Academy, now in its fourth year.

Stories about the summer programs, as well as a summary of all of the great things our students and staff have accomplished over the past school year, are included in this state of the schools report. As you take a look, I think you will be pleased with the progress and gains you see our students have made.

2015 was a big year for our students, especially in grades four through eight. The state implemented the new common core curriculum, and our end-of-year PSSA scores reflected those changes. It is important to note that scores from the 2015 tests should not be compared to any previous test results. As expected, scores across the state were lower, and the 2015 test results will give each district a new baseline for future comparison. Fox Chapel Area parents received individual PSSA results for their children this fall.

The good news at Fox Chapel Area is that with the changes we made using data to guide instruction, our student growth in math and English language arts, overall, as calculated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, was at least six times better than the previous year. Even more importantly, it was our first year in many years to demonstrate growth for the majority of our advanced learners. There is significant evidence that Fox Chapel Area students have exceeded the growth standard for Pennsylvania learners. This success was accomplished by our staff individualizing instruction and using normed benchmarking to assess the growth of our students. It is important to also note that our high school students met or exceeded expectations for growth on the Keystone Exams in Algebra I, biology, and literature.

I would like to thank the students and staff who continue to build on the district's tradition of academic success. A very special thank you goes to the Board of School Directors whose true desire is to do what's best for all of our students while remaining fiscally responsible. Finally, I want to thank the parents and community members for their continuing and unwavering support of the Fox Chapel Area schools.

Sincerely,

Gene Freeman, Ed.D.
Superintendent



2014-2015 STATE OF THE SCHOOLS AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- High school sophomore Mihir Garimella was the winner in the 13-14 age category in the international Google Science Fair 2014 for his project, "FlyBot: Mimicking Fruit Fly Response Patterns for Threat Evasion." Mihir won a \$25,000 scholarship, plus \$25,000 in cash for being named the first Computer Science award winner. The award celebrates a project that has the potential to change the world through outstanding and innovative work in the field of computer science.
- Moments before high school orchestra teacher Mairi Cooper was named Pennsylvania's 2015 Teacher of the Year, her student, Eli Ziff, introduced her saying, "Ms. Cooper is not my teacher of the year, she is my teacher of a lifetime." The announcement was made during an awards ceremony in December 2014. Teachers were nominated by students, parents, colleagues, and community members. Mrs. Cooper is now this year's Pennsylvania nominee for National Teacher of the Year.
- Eighth grader Annika Urban was named a second place STEM Award Winner in the engineering category for her science fair project "The Stethophone" in the 2014 Broadcom MASTERS' National Science Fair STEM competition for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. She and the other 29 finalists from across the nation spent a week in Washington, D.C., and met with President Barack Obama.

HIGHLIGHTS

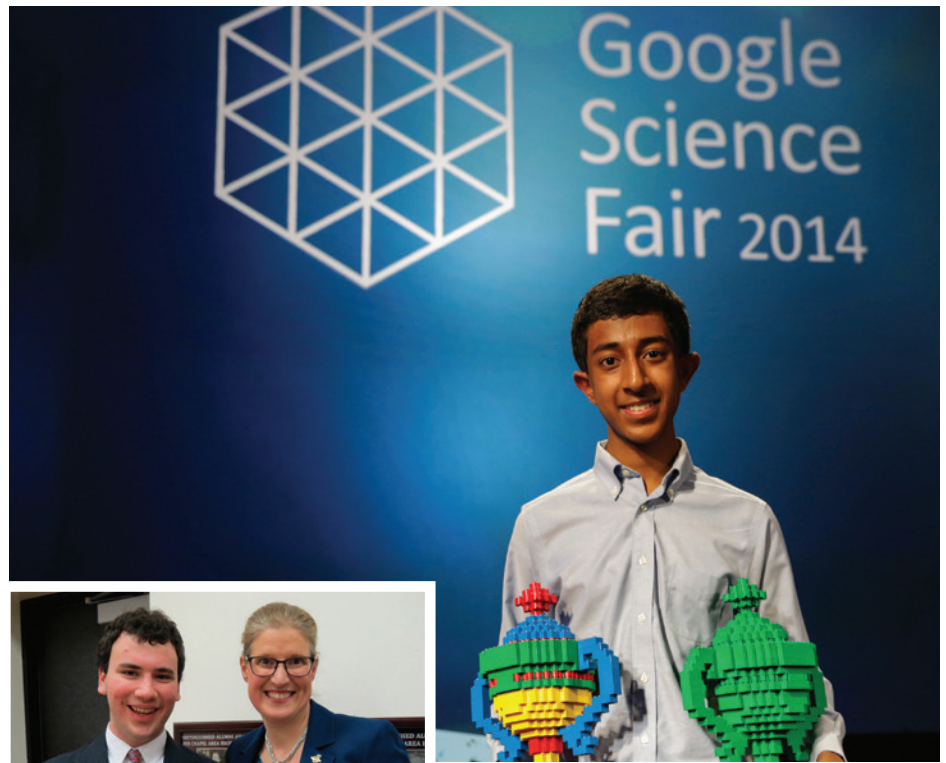


Photo Courtesy Scott Shuppi Photography

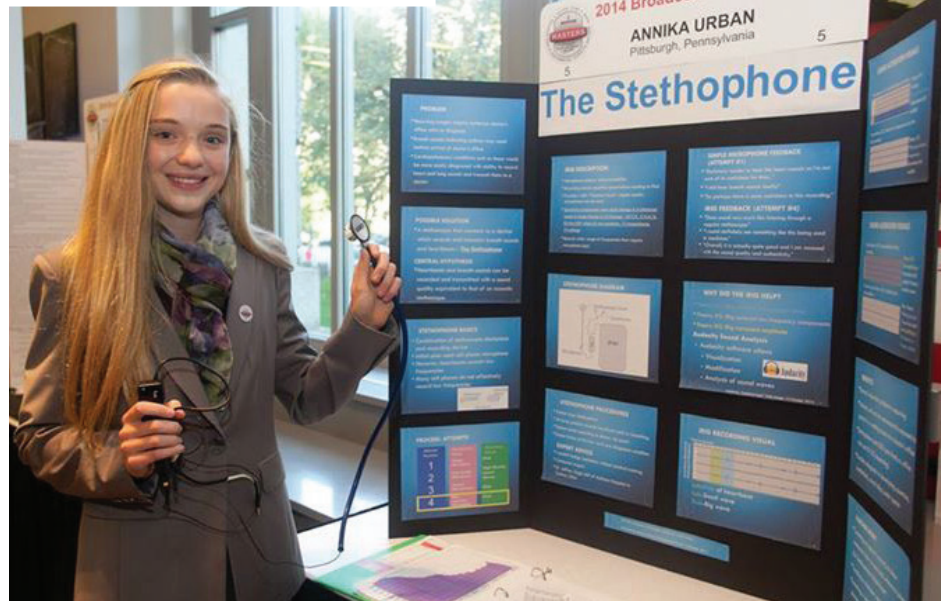


Photo Courtesy of Society for Science & the Public



- Nine high school seniors were designated as National Merit Finalists in the 2015 National Merit Scholarship Program, including Greta Altmeyer, Zoe Aridor, Anna Burns, James Docimo, Rama Godse, Frank Lou, Rishi Mirchandani, Elianna Paljug, and Samuel Waxman. Additionally, 12 were named Commended Students.



- The Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools recognized Fox Chapel Area High School for Programs of Distinction in Visual Arts. The Middle States Programs of Distinction initiative provides external validation of an accredited school's accomplishments in specific areas of expertise and enables schools to take accreditation to the next level. The high school is the first Middle States Association-accredited school to be recognized for Programs of Distinction in Visual Arts.

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- Three high school students won awards at the 2015 Intel International Science and Engineering Fair. Sophomore Mihir Garimella received a Second Place Grand Award for his project entitled, “Biologically-Inspired Flying Sensor Platform for Autonomous Emergency Response.” The team of junior Konrad Urban and sophomore Suvir Mirchandani won a Fourth Place Grand Award for their project titled, “Automated Illustration of Text to Improve Semantic Comprehension.”
- High school senior Sonia Appasamy received a 2015 Award for Aspirations in Computing given by the National Center for Women & Information Technology. She was one of 35 winners selected from across the nation, and one of only two winners from Pennsylvania. The award recognizes young women for their aptitude and aspirations in technology and encourages their continued interest in computing.
- A total of 140 high school students and 2015 graduates were named Advanced Placement Scholars by the College Board in recognition of their exceptional achievement on the college-level AP exams that they took in May 2015. Sam Burke, Gerry Chen, Margaret Mertz, and Samuel Waxman, all 2015 graduates, received the AP Scholar Award by earning an average score of 4 or higher on all AP exams taken and scores of 4 or higher on eight or more on their AP exams.
- For the sixth year, Fox Chapel Area High School received a Silver Medal rank from U.S. News & World Report. The annual rankings identify the country’s top-performing public high schools.
- The school district was awarded two \$25,000 grants as part of the Governor’s Expanding Excellence Pilot Mentoring Grant Program. Teachers and administrators from the high school and Fairview Elementary served as mentors to another school district to help them implement ideas to improve student performance. High-performing schools were identified based on a score of 90 or better on the 2012-2013 School Performance Profile.

LEARNING NEVER STOPS IN FOX CHAPEL AREA

This past summer school hallways were alive with several hundred students from all grade levels participating in various academic programs. Students in kindergarten through middle school enrolled in the Fox Chapel Area Summer Academy to brush up on skills that will help jump-start their educational experience during the regular school year. Incoming ninth graders learned good study habits and organizational skills. Finally, the popular Western Pennsylvania Summer STEMM Academy provided an opportunity for high school students to explore different career paths in the areas of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine.

Elementary Summer Learning Academy

This year’s revamped elementary school summer program expanded class time to a full day, and the district provided breakfast and lunch, plus bus transportation to and from Hartwood Elementary School, the site for the summer academy. Approximately 180 students participated in the four-week intensive academic program that offered them the opportunity to improve their skills and proficiency in language arts and mathematics. Twenty elementary teachers were selected to teach and the principals from all four elementary buildings frequently visited the summer academy.

“Although carefully designed to make lessons interesting and engaging, the content and instruction are rigorous,” said Ashley Nestor, the district’s director of elementary education and instruction, of the longer summer academy day that incorporated updated educational standards. She said that students were encouraged to participate who would benefit from building and retaining language arts and math skills during the summer months. In order to customize instruction to best meet the needs of the students, they were assessed at the



Hartwood Elementary School kindergarten teacher Barbara Scully guides a student as he practices printing his name, an important skill for incoming kindergartners.



Older elementary students learn about plot, making inferences, characters, and word study through carefully selected literature that would be interesting to the students. In the photo, students use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast story elements.

beginning of the summer academy and student progress was monitored throughout the 20-day program. The goal was that all of the students would demonstrate greater academic success and show improved test scores. In fact, the students did. They showed gains of 2.7 months in math and 0.74 months in reading, according to Mrs. Nestor. In order to keep the learning momentum going for these students, “Strategies are in place for targeted interventions so we can keep track of their gains,” she said. “And we’ll monitor their progress during the school year to ensure that their success continues.”

The teachers who led the classes also expressed positive comments about the summer learning academy. They felt the increased time with breakfast, lunch, and breaks resulted in greater student progress. Language arts teachers said that the routine, structure, small-group reading, read-aloud time, technology use, and writing activities worked well and the multiple centers in math offered the opportunity to switch activities and hold the students’ interest. One teacher said, “I feel each of my students made growth this summer. It was nice to see students feel confident when completing math problems that they had avoided at the beginning of the program.”

After the final day of the summer program, Tiffany Pastor, mother of upcoming fourth and fifth graders, said she chose to send her sons to the summer academy to continue the daily school structure. She said her boys came home everyday “in a great mood” and that the teachers made it fun. “They were absolutely amazing,” she said. “This year was by far the best.”



- The school district was named among the 2015 Best Communities for Music Education. This is the fourth year in a row that the district received this prestigious designation.
- The high school’s 2013-2014 literary arts magazine “Tapestry” was named a first place winner in the 2014 American Scholastic Press Association’s Annual Contest. Additionally, the magazine received a Special Category Magazine Award and was one of only ten from across the nation to be named among the “Most Outstanding High School Literary-Art Magazines for 2014.”
- High school sophomore Suvir Mirchandani won a Gold Medal and a Best in Grade, and senior Faith Kim, junior Julia Lynch, and sophomore Mary Clare O’Connor won Silver Medals in the national Scholastic Art & Writing competition.

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Teacher Ashley Thiebaud works with students who will be entering fifth grade as they analyze an anchor chart to explore elements of a nonfiction text. Nonfiction work begins in kindergarten, and by fourth grade, 50 percent of reading selections are nonfiction.



- High school junior Konrad Urban and sophomore Suvir Mirchandani were named finalists in the 2015 THINK Scholars Program for their project “Automated Illustration of Text to Improve Semantic Comprehension.” The Fox Chapel Area team joined five other national finalists to present their projects at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) XFair.
- High school sophomore Yelim Lee placed first in the nation on the comprehensive (calculus) level of the Rocket City Math League Competition. Additionally, Yelim and senior Gerry Chen were named silver medal winners in the USA Mathematical Talent Search.
- High school senior Rama Godse was named a semifinalist in the 2015 United States Presidential Scholars Program.
- High school seniors Elianna Paljug and Rachel Szabo were selected as semifinalists in the 2015 Class of the Coca-Cola Scholars Program.
- Sophomores Mihir Garimella, David Han, Jenna McKinley, and Suvir Mirchandani won Gold Medal awards on the 2015 National Latin Exam. Additionally, sophomore Emma Paulini won a gold award on the 2015 National German Exam.
- High school junior Amelia Porter Bacon and biology teacher Heather Skillen were named winners in the national DNA Learning Challenge for the lesson plan they coauthored on how to revolutionize genetics teaching in the classroom. A total of four projects were named winners from across the nation.



DMS Provides Opportunity for Students to Maintain and Build Skills

Similar to the elementary program, the summer learning program at Dorseyville Middle School was refined to give students engaging learning opportunities that will help them become proficient in the skills necessary for academic success.

According to DMS Assistant Principal Pat Clark, a total of 51 students attended the half-day summer academy that ran each morning five days a week for four weeks. Students could choose to participate in either or both language arts and math, offered as two 90-minute periods, and transportation was also provided for students.

Ms. Clark said, “The goal of the program was for students to maintain their skills in each area and provide extra learning opportunities for skills or concepts that might be a challenge for them.” She added, “Some who took the summer program were students who require extra support throughout the school year, but many just wanted to maintain their skills and be better prepared for the upcoming year.” Results show that middle school students enrolled in the program made significant gains in both math and language arts.

In addition to students looking for a boost in their language arts and math achievement, middle schoolers who are interested in science once again could opt to take the summer science academy taught by DMS science teacher Peter Pinko. Using a hands-on, problem-based learning approach, students participating in the summer science academy learn about a topic not covered in the regular middle school science curriculum. This year students studied the nature of light.





Debbie Burnett, an O'Hara Elementary School first grade teacher, guides a pre-kindergartner as he practices writing numbers.

Summer Programs Help Bridge Transitions

Being prepared for what's coming is important to student success – whether entering school for the first time, or making the transition to ninth grade at the high school.

For young children entering kindergarten, that means being ready to learn. A pre-kindergarten program was added to the elementary summer learning academy this year to assist incoming kindergartners who may need a boost in order to master skills that will help ensure their success. Teachers worked with the 15 children enrolled on letter and number skills, name writing, integrating literature and music, and guided writing. Learning was applied through play, and children also experienced snack time and calendar activities – all important components that make up a typical kindergartner's school day.

For students entering high school for the first time, having good study skills, setting goals, and developing effective organizational skills are crucial to a successful high school career. According to Fox Chapel Area High School Program Principal Daniel Lentz, Ph.D., the high school's freshmen summer seminar is a four-day program offered on four different weeks that focuses on executive functioning skills designed to help incoming freshmen become better students. The main components of the program are materials management, organization, time management, note-taking skills, study strategies, test-taking skills, and goal setting. He added that the executive skills covered are important, not only for high school students, but for success in college and beyond as well.

Dr. Lentz said that a video presentation, produced by the high school television production class, is an important part of the summer program. The video features junior and senior students who talk about their use of executive functioning skills and offer good advice to incoming freshmen. The new students benefit from hearing from their peers exactly where these skills are used.

"Feedback about the program has been very positive," according to Dr. Lentz. "Our students report every year that the skills they learned in this program proved to be valuable, especially as they entered into their more advanced courses their junior and senior years."

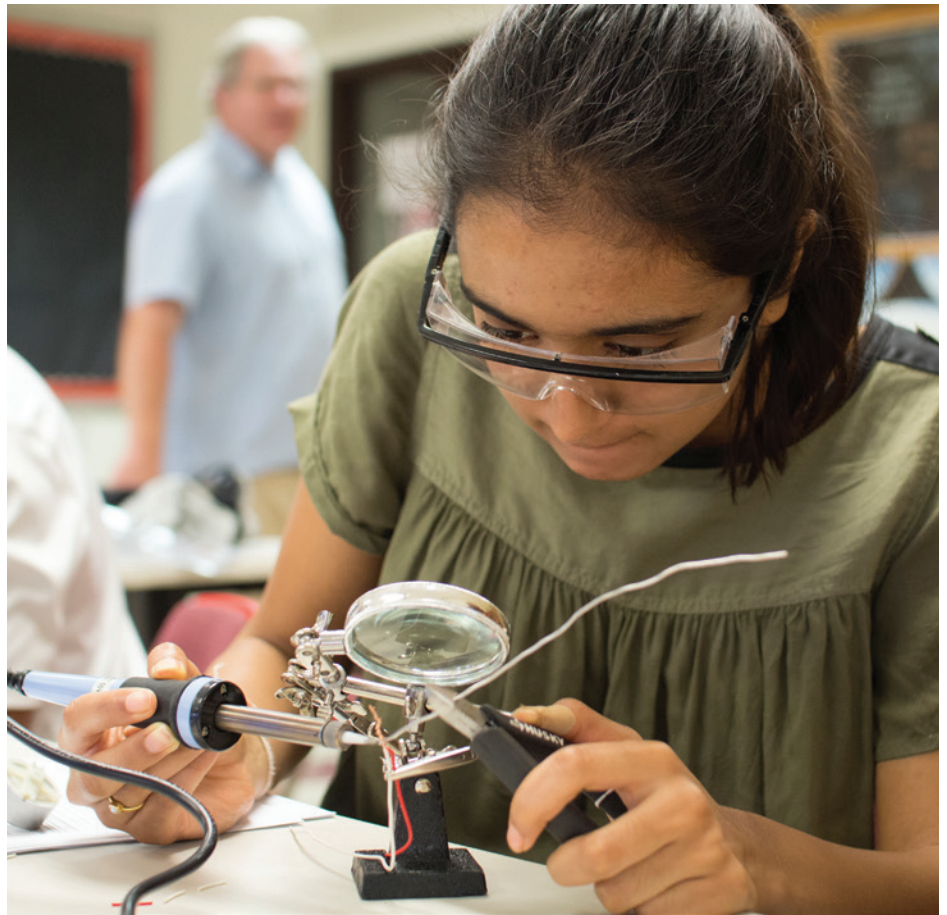
- 2015 graduates Brad Jamiolkowski, Christopher Selwood, and Andrew Wissinger placed first in Marketing at the 2015 Future Business Leaders of America National Leadership Conference. Junior Stephen Polcyn and sophomores Rohan Chalasani, Sophia Lee, and Yelim Lee also placed at the national FBLA conference. A total of 20 high school students qualified to participate in the national competition.
- High school senior Jennifer Mountz (trumpet) was selected by audition to perform with the prestigious 2015 National Association for Music Education All-Eastern Honors Band. The band was made up of approximately 120 of the top student-musicians from the eastern United States.
- A high school student spearheaded the grant application process in the GRAMMY® Signature Schools program to honor the work done by all the Fox Chapel Area music teachers. The award recognizes the top U.S. public high schools that are making an outstanding commitment to music education. The high school was one of 120 chosen as a semifinalist for 2015.



- High school senior Daniel Vargo was named one of 50 national winners in The National Society of The Colonial Dames of America Essay Contest.
- Senior Anna Wang and sophomore David Stebbins were named semifinalists in the national Stossel in the Classroom 2014-2015 essay contest.
- Five high school students advanced to the National Catholic Forensic League Grand National Championship Tournament that was held in Florida.

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- Three school district publications received Awards of Merit in the National School Public Relations Association 2015 Publications and Electronic Media Contest. Additionally, the district received an Award of Excellence for the IN Fox Chapel Area Community Magazine in the 2014 Pennsylvania School Public Relations Association Excellence in Education Communications Contest.
- High school senior Leah Eckman won first place and senior Kristina Mountz was named a second place winner in the 2014-2015 National Constitution Center Freedoms Essay and Playwriting Contest.
- A team of DMS students won first place in the 2014-2015 7th Grade Northeast Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl. The students competed against 23 schools from Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey.
- Twelve high school students and ten middle school students received first place awards at the 81st Annual State Meeting of the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS).
- A team of seven DMS seventh graders placed first in Pennsylvania in the 2015 Technology Student Association (TSA) Middle School TEAMS (Tests of Engineering Aptitude, Mathematics, and Science) competition.



A student uses a magnifying glass as she solders her robot. Students built a robot from scratch and programmed it in the three-day autonomous robot lab.

Summer is the Season for STEMM

Now in its fourth year, the Western Pennsylvania Summer STEMM Academy, sponsored by Fox Chapel Area High School, has become so popular that students are seeking to enroll as early as November for the upcoming summer, and all slots were filled well in advance of the start date in June.

“Most of our students are interested in medicine (the second M in STEMM), but all of them are excited to gain insight into the many opportunities that exist for them in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine,” said Fox Chapel Area High School teacher Lisa Giguere, who directs and coordinates the program.

The STEMM academy runs three weeks and is open to rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Enrollment is not limited to Fox Chapel Area High School, and this summer students from 13 area districts participated in the program. The cost for the program was \$400.

Current Fox Chapel Area senior Thomas Troyan said, “It’s easy to say, ‘I’m interested in math,’ or ‘I’m interested in science,’ but it means something different to see where these skills are applied in real life. Through STEMM, I was able to learn about these applications and see firsthand what can be done with these fields.”

Participating students had the opportunity to actively learn through interaction with doctors, professors, and business professionals in the STEMM-related fields through guest speakers, as well as activities and field experiences to universities, research labs, and STEMM-related businesses. They also learned through team projects with connections



STEMM academy participants took a field trip to the Center for Cognitive Brain Imaging at CMU to learn about scientific innovation in brain research. Here, a student gets to experience what it is like in an fMRI (Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging) using the center’s MRI simulator.

to real-world situations. Some of the activities and topics covered included cardio-surgery observation, autonomous robotic labs, big-data analysis, practice with laparoscopic simulators, and a forensic case study and presentation.

In addition to presentations and field experiences, Level Two is an intensive, highly-concentrated experience in a specific STEMM field. This summer, Level Two students were engaged in a content-specific targeted research project that was compiled and delivered in the model of a TED talk and students were mentored and coached throughout the entire process.

Additionally, interested students were also invited to attend a shorter STEMM sampler program. The sampler program was open to rising 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders.

According to Ms. Giguere, "The program has really flourished as we continue to make improvements and grow based upon student input and parent feedback. Some students have returned for the third year and have shared that their experiences at the academy have influenced their college and career aspirations and also encouraged them to enroll in more advanced mathematics, science, and programming courses during the school year."

- Eight high school students won first place awards and one received a third place award at the Pennsylvania TSA State Leadership Conference and some advanced to the national competition.
- High school junior Mark Calandra (cello) was selected for the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association All-State Orchestra. Additionally, five members of the high school orchestra were selected to perform with the PMEA Western Region State Orchestra and the PMEA District 1 Orchestra.
- Three high school students were selected by audition to perform with the 2015 PMEA All-State Wind Ensemble.
- The high school choirs (Concert Choir, Vulpes Cantantes, and the Madrigal Singers) received gold ratings as well as an Adjudicator Award at the Heritage Music Festival in Nashville, Tennessee. The Concert Choir and the Vulpes Cantantes also received first place awards. Additionally, the Madrigal Singers received an award for being the overall highest scoring ensemble of all the choirs in the entire competition.
- The Dorseyville Middle School Honors Band earned a second place award and a rating of "Superior" at a Music in the Parks festival at King's Island near Cincinnati, Ohio.

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Officer Scott Balint from the Allegheny County Police Bomb Squad demonstrates how a bomb suit and robots are used to search for bombs during a STEMM sampler day. Students had the opportunity to see for themselves how heavy the bomb suits are.



A student gets hands-on practice with a laparoscopic simulator, very similar to what would be used during a real surgical procedure, during a visit to the STAR Center. STAR stands for Simulation Teaching and Academic Research Center and it is affiliated with the Allegheny Health Network.



- Six high school students were selected by audition to perform with the 2015 PMEA District 1 Chorus and with the PMEA Region 1 Chorus.
- Three DMS eighth graders were chosen to perform with the PMEA District One Junior High Orchestra.
- Four high school students were selected to perform with the 2015 PMEA Region One Honors Band and seven were selected to perform with the 2014 PMEA District 1 Honors Band.
- Dorseyville Middle School was a Pennsylvania state finalist in the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow contest, a nationwide competition to increase interest in STEM by challenging teachers and students to take topics out of traditional classroom settings and into local communities.
- Two high school students finished in the top five and two others finished among the best at the Pennsylvania High School Speech League State Championship Tournament.
- Two O'Hara Elementary School students were named winners in the 2015 WQED PBS KIDS Writers Contest.



STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

2015 Keystone Results

PERCENT SCORING PROFICIENT OR ABOVE ON THE 2015 KEYSTONE EXAMS

School	Algebra I	Literature	Biology
Fox Chapel Area High School (Grade 11)	89.1%	90.7%	78.9%

The Keystone Exams replaced the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) tests at the high school. Beginning with the class of 2017, the state will require that students demonstrate proficiency in the end-of-course Keystone Exams in Algebra I, literature, and biology in order to graduate. However, it is already a requirement for Fox Chapel Area High School students to demonstrate proficiency in Algebra I and literature. The test results are banked until the students' junior year for reporting purposes.

Please Note: State accountability results for grade 11 were not released as of press time.

2015 SAT/ACT/PSAT Mean Scores

2015 SENIOR YEAR SAT MEAN SCORES

	Fox Chapel Area	Pennsylvania	Nation
Critical Reading	562	499	495
Math	574	504	511
Writing	561	482	484

A total of 277 members (81 percent) of the 341 students in the Class of 2015 took the SAT during their junior or senior year.

2015 ACT RESULTS

	Fox Chapel Area	Pennsylvania	Nation
English	26.7	22.5	20.4
Math	26.1	22.8	20.8
Reading	26.7	23.2	21.4
Science	25.5	22.5	20.9
Composite Score	26.3	22.9	21.0

A total of 120 high school students took the ACT in 2015.

2015 GRADE 10 PSAT MEAN SCORES

	Fox Chapel Area	Pennsylvania	Nation
Critical Reading	48.0	44.5	42.1
Math	48.4	45.9	43.4
Writing	44.9	42.6	40.1

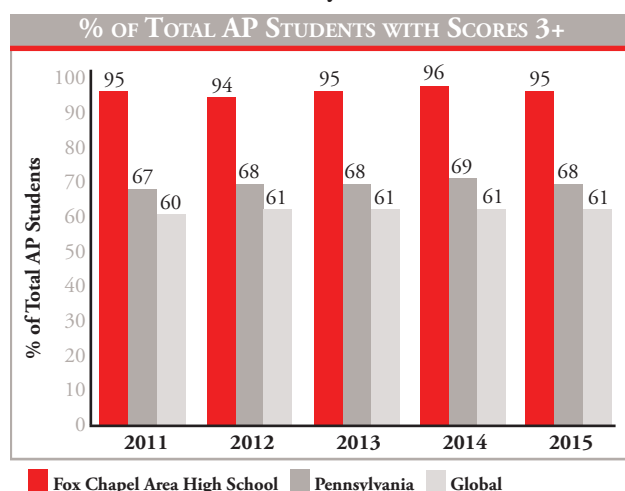
2015 GRADE 11 PSAT MEAN SCORES

	Fox Chapel Area	Pennsylvania	Nation
Critical Reading	50.4	46.6	47.4
Math	51.6	48.0	48.6
Writing	48.9	44.7	45.9

Fox Chapel Area High School students continue to outscore the state and nation on the SAT, ACT, and PSAT in all subject areas. The district administered the PSAT to all students in grades 10 and 11 during the 2014-2015 school year. The results of this assessment are being used to improve outcomes for students on the SAT and to increase college and career readiness.



Five-Year AP Test History



FOX CHAPEL AREA HIGH SCHOOL FIVE-YEAR AP TEST HISTORY

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total AP Students	258	257	259	256	310
Number of Exams	466	443	502	498	613
% of Total AP Students with Scores 3+	95.3	93.8	95.0	96.5	95.2

The high school offered 25 Advanced Placement (AP) courses during the 2014-2015 school year and many students take multiple courses. A total of 310 students completed 613 AP exams. Approximately 95 percent scored 3 or higher.

Success on an AP Exam is defined as an exam score of 3 or higher which represents the score point that research finds predictive of college success and college graduation. These findings have held consistent across the decades.

- District staff members continue to be elected to leadership positions in national, state, and regional organizations. Their expertise is also valued as many of them are frequently invited to make presentations at national, state, and regional conferences and workshops.
- Two high school students won first places in the 15th Annual German Day competition that was open to students from Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

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• Backpacks for Hunger, a program initiated locally at Kerr Elementary School two years ago to provide supplemental food for students in need on weekends, expanded to include Hartwood Elementary School and Dorseyville Middle School. The food is obtained through school staff and community donations and is packed and distributed by staff members and other volunteers each Friday afternoon. The Rotary Club of Fox Chapel Area made a \$1,000 donation to the program and designated the Backpacks for Hunger programs at Kerr and Hartwood as the lead beneficiaries of its 2015 fundraiser. The program at the middle school also receives funding through an interfaith ministries group.

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NEW ADMINISTRATOR CONNECTS WITH STUDENTS

When she was appointed director of elementary education and instruction last October, Ashley Nestor set out to visit every elementary classroom in the district. She achieved her goal, visiting all 87. "It was energizing just to be around the kids and to get to know them," she said of the experience.

Continuing the tradition, Ms. Nestor started this school year by visiting all of the kindergarten classes so that she could meet this year's incoming students.







MAJOR RENOVATION OF HIGH SCHOOL NEARLY COMPLETE

The high school renovations continued during the 2014-2015 school year. Slated to be completed during the 2015-2016 school year, the project is expected to cost approximately \$34 million. Major components of the project included:

- Renovations and upgrades to the library/media center and commons area were completed and include a classroom, modern café-style seating areas, large bifold glass doors that separate the library and commons area, and a new technology help desk.
- Completed in March 2015, the newly renovated auditorium features a new sound system, flooring, lighting, and seating.
- The completely overhauled and modernized cafeteria reopened to students for the start of the 2015-2016 school year.
- New lighting, a new sound system, and a new scoreboard were installed in the main gymnasium.
- The new school entrance, completed during the summer of 2015, includes updated security features and an atrium-style ceiling, and provides a more predominate-looking main entry to the building.
- All of the hallways have been refurbished with brand new lockers, classroom doors, paint, tiling, ceilings, and lighting.
- The final part of the renovation, the new natatorium, is slated to be completed during the winter of 2015-2016.



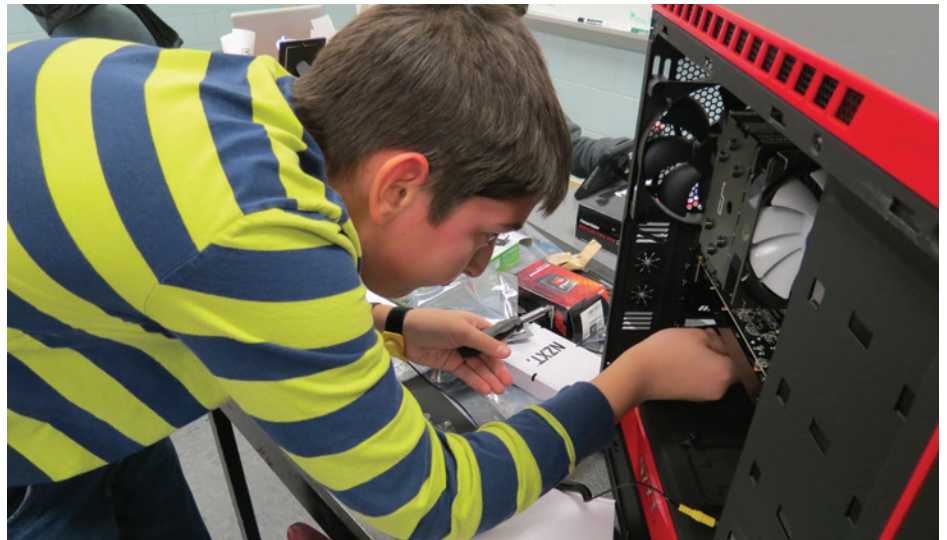
The district took advantage of historically low market interest rates and funding for the project was made available through the sale of bonds in 2013.



- The school district raised \$42,579 for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia Chapter through the 25th annual telethon. Students at all six schools participated by raising money. At the high school, marketing/management students and the TV production class students produced the telethon which was broadcast throughout the community. Fox Chapel Area students have raised more than \$628,000 for various local and regional charities.



- High school junior Che Esch was named a finalist for the Most Outstanding Volunteer of the Year as part of the 2015 Jefferson Awards of Public Service program.
- High school senior Rishi Mirchandani was named a gold medal winner in the Trib Total Media's 2015 Outstanding Young Citizen Awards program.



DMS STUDENTS PURSUE PERSONAL INTERESTS IN NEW PROGRAM

Introduced during the 2014-2015 school year, Genius Hour was scheduled on most Fridays at Dorseyville Middle School and gives students the opportunity to explore something they feel passionate about and develop that interest into a project.

Under the direction of teacher mentors, students are asked to submit a proposal they wish to pursue. Once approved, the students must keep a log and update it weekly, conduct research, and make a presentation. Most students chose to do individual projects, but students were also allowed to work in small groups. Projects may last for several months, an entire school year, or even up to three years. Projects range from students designing robotic arms, studying second languages, building a model city out of recycled materials, and creating a video time capsule featuring the students and staff of DMS. Some students design and conduct fundraisers for worthy causes and many of the students work on service projects. They learn valuable skills such as time management, documentation, communication, and how to present their findings.

According to Genius Hour teacher coordinator Jessica Painter, "The students have been given a voice in what they want to study and they have not disappointed."



ATHLETICS



Ten Fox Chapel Area athletes earned scholarships and/or roster spots at either Division I or Division II NCAA colleges and universities. Additionally, eight other athletes chose to play sports at Division III colleges/universities.



2014-2015 ATHLETIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Senior Elias Graca placed second at the indoor state track championship. His time of 1:50.86 ranked him second in the nation in the 800 meter. Additionally, he won the gold medal in the 800m run at the WPIAL Track and Field Championships, setting a meet record, and placed fourth at states. Elias was also named to the Pennsylvania Coaches Association All-State Track Team.
- High school junior Levi McCrady was named to the US Lacrosse All-American Team.
- The high school boys' varsity volleyball team won the WPIAL Class AAA Section 2 Team Title and the WPIAL Class AAA Championship. The team also participated in the PIAA Class AAA Championship and was the runner-up team.
- Thirteen high school athletes qualified to participate in the PIAA (state) individual championships. They were: Elias Graca and Mary Humphrey (cross country); Anthony Cordaro and Michael Gerger (boys' golf); Noah Cagley and Franny Dean (swimming); Miranda Simon (diving); Siddharth Rajuper (boys' tennis); Amanda Nord and Laurel Shymansky (girls' tennis doubles team); and Michael Bove, Elias Graca, and Caelen Miller (track and field).

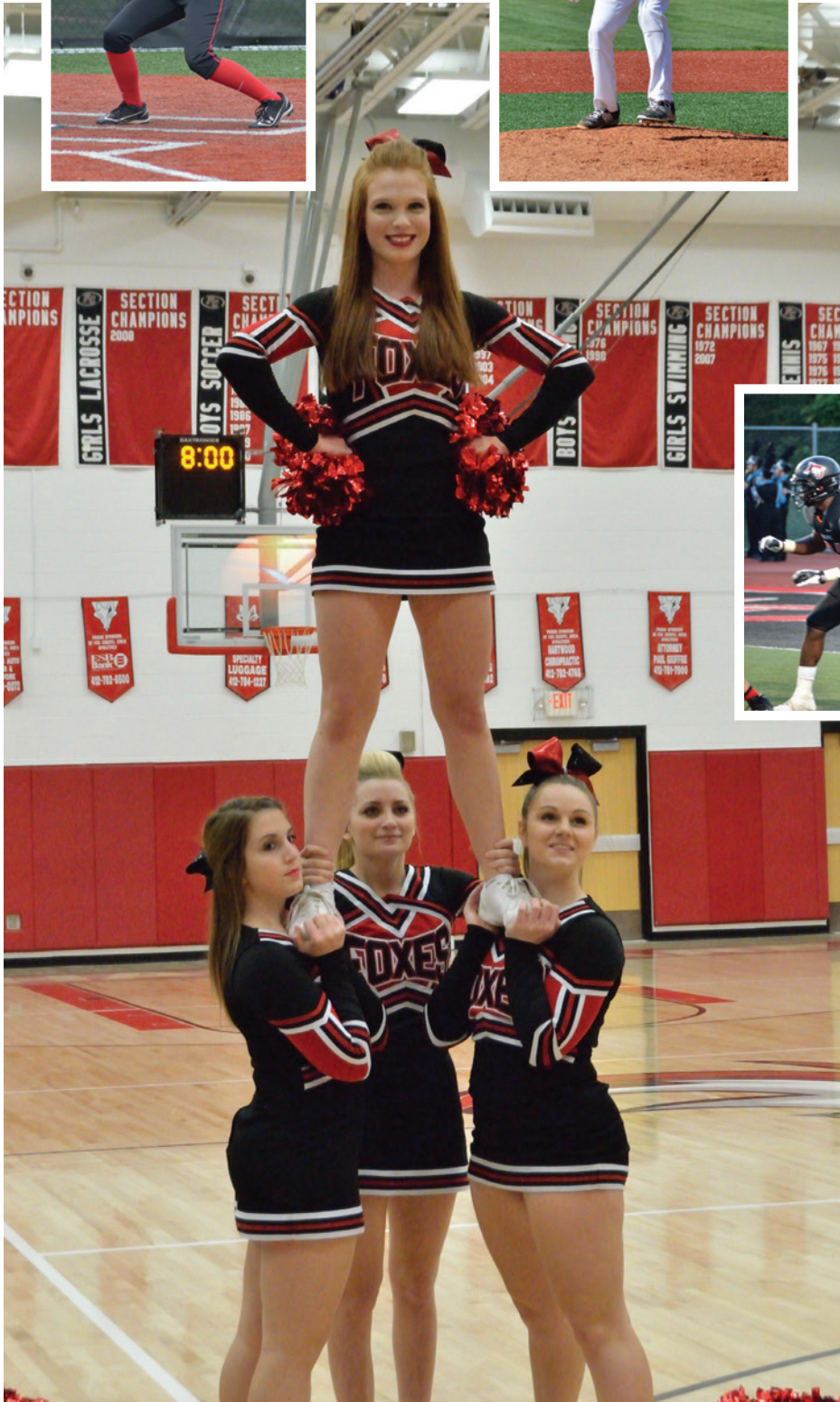
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- The boys' varsity basketball team qualified for the PIAA playoffs.
- High school junior Kota Furuhashi was selected for the Pennsylvania Soccer Coaches Association Boys' All-State Team.
- Twenty-two of 24 high school interscholastic athletic teams qualified for the WPIAL playoffs. The teams included: baseball, boys' basketball, boys' and girls' cross country, field hockey, football, boys' and girls' golf, gymnastics, boys' and girls' lacrosse, boys' and girls' soccer, softball, boys' and girls' swimming and diving, boys' and girls' tennis, boys' and girls' track, boys' volleyball, and wrestling.
- Sophomore golfer Anthony Cordaro won the WPIAL Class AAA Individual Championship. He and senior Michael Gerger both placed at the PIAA Western Regional Golf Tournament.
- The high school girls' varsity field hockey team won the WPIAL Class AAA Section 2 Championship.
- The high school girls' swimming and diving team was named the WPIAL Class AAA Section III co-section champions.
- Tennis team members junior Laurel Shymansky and freshman Amanda Nord were named the WPIAL Class AAA Doubles Champions and the WPIAL Class AAA Section 3 Doubles Champions.





- The boys' varsity golf team won the WPIAL Class AAA Section 4 Championship.
- High school senior wrestler Ian Moritz was named the WPIAL Class AAA Section 3 Champion in the 132-pound weight class.
- The varsity baseball team shared the WPIAL Class AAAA Section 3 Team Title.
- The varsity softball team won the WPIAL Class AAAA Section 2 Team Title.
- High school athletes continued to be named to special all-star teams and all-conference teams.
- Several members of the Fox Chapel Crew Club qualified to compete at the Scholastic Rowing Association of America National Championships.



FOX CHAPEL AREA HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2015



On June 7, 2015, a total of 341 seniors became the 54th class to graduate from Fox Chapel Area High School. Approximately 88 percent of those graduates are continuing their education and 41 percent are enrolled in schools outside of Pennsylvania. The graduates continued the tradition of being accepted to the top colleges and universities across the nation.



FOX CHAPEL AREA HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2015 COLLEGE CHOICES

Allegheny College • Arizona State University • Baldwin-Wallace University (2) • Brown University • Bucknell University • Butler County Community College • Community College of Allegheny County – Monroeville Boyce Campus (5) • California University of Pennsylvania (3) • Carnegie Mellon University (7) • Community College of Allegheny County – Allegheny Campus (13) • Community College of Allegheny County – North Campus (4) • Chatham University • Clarion University of Pennsylvania (4) • Coastal Carolina University • Cogswell Polytechnical College • College of Charleston • Cornell University • Denison University (2) • Drexel University • Duke University • Duquesne University (10) • Elon University (3) • Emory University • Fairmont State College • Fashion Institute of Technology • Florida State College • Florida State University • Fordham University • George Washington University (5) • Georgia Institute of Technology (2) • Gettysburg College • Green Mountain College • Grove City College • Harvard-Radcliffe • Indiana University of Pennsylvania (7) • Indiana University – Bloomington (6) • Ithaca College • IIT Technical Institute – Pittsburgh • James Madison University • John Carroll University • Kent State University (7) • La Roche College (2) • Lehigh University • Lycoming College • Marietta College (2) • Mercyhurst University • Messiah College • Miami University – Oxford (5) • Northwestern University (2) • Ohio State University (7) • Ohio University (4) • Palm Beach Atlantic College • Penn State Altoona (2) • Penn State Behrend (6) • Penn State New Kensington (2) • Pennsylvania College of Technology • Pennsylvania State University (8) • Pennsylvania Technical Institute • Point Park University (2) • Purdue University (2) • Rice University • Robert Morris University (3) • Rochester Institute of Technology • Rosedale Technical Institute • Saint Vincent College • School of the Art Institute – Chicago • Seton Hill University (3) • Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania (8) • Stanford University (2) • State University of New York – Stony Brook • Syracuse University (3) • The American University • The College of Wooster (2) • Thiel College (2) • Triangle Tech • Trinity College • Tufts University • Tulane University • University of Pittsburgh – Johnstown (4) • University of Alabama – Tuscaloosa • University of Arizona (2) • University of California – Los Angeles (2) • University of California – Santa Barbara • University of Cincinnati (2) • University of Colorado – Boulder • University of Dayton (8) • University of Hartford • University of Iowa • University of Maryland – College Park • University of Michigan – Ann Arbor (7) • University of Minnesota • University of Notre Dame (2) • University of Oklahoma • University of Pennsylvania (2) • University of Pittsburgh – Bradford • University of Pittsburgh – Greensburg (3) • University of Pittsburgh (26) • University of Richmond (2) • University of South Carolina – Columbia (4) • University of Utah • University of Vermont (3) • University of Virginia (3) • Virginia Tech • Wake Forest University (2) • Washington State University • Wesleyan College • West Virginia University (3) • Williams College • Xavier University • Yale University • Youngstown State University



Fox Chapel Area
SCHOOL DISTRICT

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412/963-9600 | www.fcasd.edu

DISTRICT ENHANCES ROLE OF INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY

Scott Hand Named Director



The Fox Chapel Area School District has revised and enhanced the position of coordinator of educational technology on the administrative team. Scott Hand, formerly in the

coordinator position, is the newly named director of innovation and technology. In his revised role, Mr. Hand will work to establish the district as a leader of innovation. "We have been involved in innovative instruction for many years and now we are poised to multiply our efforts in innovation and implementation, professional development, and showcasing the exciting and expanding instruction in our district," Mr. Hand says.

In addition to introducing innovative practices in technology to the schools, Mr. Hand will be connecting with outside organizations to strengthen professional networks within, among, and between districts, nonprofits, and industry. "After introducing and evaluating current and future technologies, teams will help enhance a K-12 curriculum ensuring all students are exposed to high-quality STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) experiences," according to Mr. Hand.

With coding and robotics instruction already a part of the middle school and high school curriculum, the district has begun exploring introducing elementary students, including kindergarteners, to coding and programming experiences and bringing robotics to the intermediate elementary grades. As technology quickly changes and evolves, the district hopes to provide students with exposure to these innovative experiences that enhance the core instructional programs, as well as capture and strengthen students' intellectual curiosity about the world around them.

Mr. Hand began working as a teacher at Fox Chapel Area High School in 2003 and he was appointed as the district's coordinator of educational technology in 2011.



NEW BOARD MEMBER BRINGS A YOUTHFUL PERSPECTIVE

Serving on the Fox Chapel Area School Board will provide Dharmesh Vyas, M.D., Ph.D., the opportunity to have greater input into the future of his children's education. But unlike some School Board members, Dr. Vyas' children are not yet even old enough to attend school.

"We have two young daughters and, like all other parents, their education in our school system is vitally important to my wife and me," Dr. Vyas, 42, says. "Serving on the Board allows me to have input into that future for them and for other children just like them."

Dr. Vyas reports that people have been "so gracious and welcoming" to his family since they moved here in 2011 and he looks at serving on the Board as a way to thank and give back to the community. Being a Board member is not a responsibility he takes lightly, he says.

"I realize that not only am I a new member of a well-established team of excellent Board members, but that the skill to govern is one that takes time to hone. Within that context, I hope to provide a fresh perspective to the Board with unique skills of leadership, continued learning, and decision-making that I have developed as a surgeon and mentor of students, residents, and fellows."

Dr. Vyas says that staying on the leading edge of education is vital for the Fox Chapel Area School District, and he is from a family where "education has always been important." He is also interested in professional development and keeping our teacher training strong as, "That effort directly translates into a better education for our children."

Dr. Vyas says the district's biggest strength is the diversity of the students and the community and he sees great benefits in that the families come from varying cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds.

An orthopaedic surgeon specializing in sports medicine, Dr. Vyas works in the orthopaedic surgery department at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. He is also the head team physician of the Pittsburgh Penguins. A graduate of the University of Illinois, Dr. Vyas also obtained his Ph.D. in molecular biology and a medical school degree there. He completed his orthopaedic surgery residency at the University of Chicago and a fellowship in sports medicine at the University of Pittsburgh.

His wife, Avni, also a doctor, is an ophthalmologist. The Vyas' have two daughters, Maya, age 5, who will attend kindergarten next school year, and Arya, age 3. The family lives in Fox Chapel Borough.

Dr. Vyas was appointed by the Fox Chapel Area Board of School Directors at its September 2015 meeting. He replaces Robert Mauro who resigned in September when he moved out of Region II of the school district. Mr. Mauro had served on the Board since 2008.

INCLEMENT WEATHER NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

We take the responsibility of delaying or canceling school very seriously. We recognize that delays and cancellations create inconveniences for parents/guardians who work outside of the home and that schedule changes take away from the continuity of teaching and learning. Please know that we will not interrupt the educational process unless we feel it is absolutely necessary.

Our number one concern is the safety of children. We depend upon the experience of our bus contractor to keep us informed concerning the ability of buses to travel the roads. The process of checking road conditions begins very early in the morning. From that information, a judgment is made to delay or cancel school. If we receive advance warning of a severe storm, and have sound information that it will arrive, we may cancel classes so that children do not arrive at school and become stranded.

Parents/guardians should discuss what their children should do in case of an early dismissal. If there is an early dismissal, children will be sent home on the buses. The high school students will be dismissed first, followed by the middle school and Hartwood Elementary students, and then the remainder of the elementary students. This order of dismissal is utilized so that older children can be at home when their younger brothers and sisters arrive. Parents/guardians should plan with their children how they wish to handle an early dismissal.

Buses may be unable to make it to the regular drop-off point. If that should occur, the driver will radio the bus garage and inform the school.

If the driver is able to see the bus stop and observe the children walk to the bus stop, the driver will allow the children to disembark from the bus to walk to their normal drop-off point. Parents should encourage their children to stand away from the side of the snow-covered roads and to use extreme caution at all times.

If the driver cannot make it to the drop-off point, he/she will radio the bus garage and inform the school. School personnel will then attempt to contact the parents/guardians. If the parents/guardians cannot be notified, the children will be taken back to school.

In the event that buses do not arrive at school on schedule at dismissal time, the children will be kept in the school. There are emergency provisions in each of the buildings and the students will be fed if they are stranded at school.

Parents/guardians of elementary children must have already completed and turned in to the building principal, an emergency card. This information will help the school personnel know who to contact in the event of an emergency or weather-related early dismissal. The card should include the parents'/guardians' emergency telephone numbers where someone can always be contacted.

Please be sure that your children are dressed for the weather. When there is a threat of snow and the wind chill is low, children should have hats, coats, boots, and gloves to wear.

Please remember that we are making a decision based on what is best for the entire school district. That decision may not always seem like the best decision for your section of the school district but may be appropriate for another area. The school district covers an area of approximately 36 square miles, so there are times when roads will be clear in one section and very bad in other areas. All roads are not treated or cleared at the same time, which can result in bus delays.

When there is a school delay, cancellation, or early dismissal, every parent/guardian in the district will receive a phone call from the district's school messaging system. Additionally, an announcement will still be placed on the district's information line at 412/967-2500 and on the district's website at www.fcasd.edu. Please note that during a power outage it *may not* be possible to place an announcement on the district's website and on the telephone information line. Delay, cancellation, and/or early dismissal announcements will also be placed on the following radio and television stations: KDKA (1020 AM), KDKA-TV, WPXI-TV, and WTAE-TV.

It is also important to note that if school is cancelled and student makeup days are necessary, they will be held in the following order: June 13, June 14, and June 15, 2016.

