

IN

Fox Chapel Area

**School District Cited
by White House for
Computer Science
Initiatives**



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FOX CHAPEL AREA

School News



Fox Chapel Area School District

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A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Friends,

It is indeed an honor that our school district was recognized by the White House for our level of commitment to computer science education. I am proud that our programs were noted on a national level and included on a short list of school districts in a White House Fact Sheet pertaining to the President's address in late January. In that speech, President Obama stressed the importance of computer science programming and education in K-12 schools and laid out plans to boost computer science education across the nation. Our district has demonstrated a commitment to computer science education and will work to remain a technology leader.

While it is gratifying that Fox Chapel Area continues to be recognized on a national level, I am even more pleased with what I personally see our staff and students accomplishing in computer education every day. Our progressive and innovative computer science curriculum ensures that every student has daily access to computers, knows how to use technology as a learning tool, and has the opportunity to experience how technology fits into his or her everyday life. I think you will be impressed at how our teachers have begun to teach programming and coding – even at the kindergarten level. Beginning next year, all elementary students will engage in a full coding curriculum, and staff across the district will receive professional development training in computer science, coding, and digital fabrication. Additionally, the high school will begin offering the new Principles of Computer Science Advanced Placement course in the fall of 2016.

I hope you will join me in being amazed at what our students and staff are accomplishing by turning the pages and reading about not only our computer science program, but also about so many other accomplishments both in and out of the classroom. A team of young women from the high school believes that robotics and STEM education should be introduced to girls at a young age, so they offered a program for elementary school girls. The high school art department hosted an artist-in-residence, and more than 400 students worked together under her direction to create a giant mosaic sculpture and a hallway mural that will be enjoyed by generations to come. And, once again, our students have outdone themselves – raising over \$70,000 to help a worthy cause in this year's telethon.

Over the coming months, our students, under the direction of our dedicated staff, will showcase their best academic work at various state and national competitions. I look forward to sharing their honors and awards with you and celebrating all that we have accomplished together.

Sincerely,

Gene Freeman, Ed.D.



Our progressive and innovative computer science curriculum ensures that every student has daily access to computers, knows how to use technology as a learning tool, and has the opportunity to experience how technology fits into his or her everyday life.



Kindergartners in Michelle Ulanowicz's class work in the Digital Dream Studio at O'Hara Elementary School where they practice a coding activity. Learning about computer science gives students the opportunity to think creatively while collaborating, solving problems, and taking responsible risks – all of which are skills needed in today's society. Mrs. Ulanowicz says that it's important for even the youngest students to learn about computer science. O'Hara's Digital Dream Studio is a place where students of all grade levels can come together to dream, plan, and create. An Allegheny Intermediate Unit STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) grant, funded by the Chevron Corporation and the Benedum and Grable foundations, helped pay for the Digital Dream Studio at O'Hara Elementary.

DISTRICT RECOGNIZED BY WHITE HOUSE

Identified for Its Commitment to Computer Science Education

The White House recently recognized the Fox Chapel Area School District for its commitment to computer science education. In his weekly address at the end of January, President Barack Obama announced his Computer Science for All Initiative, stating how it will ensure that students can compete in a high-tech, global economy. He discussed his plan to enhance the K-12 computer science curricula across the nation. Fox Chapel Area School District was among those identified as a leader in computer science education and was listed in the White House Fact Sheet pertaining to the President's address.

"To be identified for our commitment to computer science education is quite an honor, but to be included on the White House's short list of national computer science leaders is truly a prestigious distinction," said Fox Chapel Area School District Superintendent Gene Freeman, Ed.D.

The list of school districts also included Broward County Public Schools, the nation's sixth largest public school system,

and High School District 214, the second largest school district in Illinois.

"We are proud of our Board members, our leadership team, our teachers, and our students for once again demonstrating Fox Chapel Area's excellence," Dr. Freeman said.

He is proud of the district's progressive and innovative computer science program and the fact that technology is used as a tool for learning across the curriculum. Every aspect of the curriculum was developed with a specific purpose and every student learns how computer science fits into his or her daily life. The district is beginning to infuse coding in computer science at all levels of learning. Students in the elementary schools have been participating in a variety of activities that are developing their coding skills. Beginning in kindergarten, students have been involved in the Hour of Code, a national movement to engage all K-12 students in coding experiences. Students work in the elementary computer classes using the latest physical tools and software that develop coding, robotics, and gaming skills. These skills are being included in the

elementary computer curriculum as part of the district's commitment to computer science at all levels. The entire middle school has also participated in the Hour of Code and students experience elements of coding and robotics in their technology education and business courses there. The high school offers a variety of experiences in coding from full courses in computer science, to coding in the technology and engineering courses. In addition to the Computer Science Advanced Placement (AP) class already offered, Fox Chapel Area High School will also offer the new Principles of Computer Science AP class when it launches in the fall of 2016.

Additionally, the district recently hosted nearly 150 educators and showcased its innovative computer science initiatives as part of the Fox Chapel Area School District FabCon. FabCon, presented in partnership with the Pittsburgh FAB Network and made possible by The Grable Foundation, provided a professional development opportunity for local educators interested in learning about digital fabrication and the creation of a Fab Lab.

"Our staff will continue to work with other leaders in computer science education to research and update what we offer our students," Dr. Freeman stated. "Computer science education is constantly evolving and it's important that our students know how to use the latest innovative technologies for their learning."

Photos continued on page 12 >

Coding Begins in Kindergarten



Kindergarten teacher Michelle Ulanowicz explains a precoding exercise to her kindergarten students. The students use a "Puzzlets" game to learn precoding skills. In the game, "Cork the Volcano," published by Digital Dream Studios, students use precoding skills to move the figures, all while building coding confidence.



Students search for their Puzzlet pieces that will create the code to help move the game character.



Students place the Puzzlets in the "Play Tray." The Puzzlets represent different commands that will determine how the game characters move and how they will get to their goal.



The "Play Tray" is connected to the computer. When the code is entered by the students placing the Puzzlet pieces, they then push the computer scroll pad to test if their code will help the character reach its goal.



Mrs. Ulanowicz and her kindergarten students celebrate as the game character reaches its goal and moves on to a new level.



DMS Students Expand Computer Science Coding Principles



Dorseyville Middle School business applications teacher Cathie Gillner helps a small group of sixth graders code using a simplified version of code called Blockly where they pull in blocks of code to help the robots perform a task. The students have to think through the process and problem solve how they will command the robot to complete a task.



Dorseyville Middle School sixth grade students use Bloxels, a video game creation platform. Students use their district-provided iPads to photograph their Bloxel creation and it is then turned into a video game.



Students create commands for coding tags (wireless electronic blocks that each have a different function such as motion or sound) that connect wirelessly to an app and are then used to build or create something. They brainstorm what they want to create and then code the tags through the app. Each time the students command the tag through the app, they can test to see if their idea is working.

High School Students Learn and Write Basic Programming



Students in grades 9-12 can elect to take basic programming, as well as introduction to Java at the high school. They can also choose to take Computer Science Advanced Placement, and an additional AP computer science course will be offered next year.



Students in the high school's basic programming class work together to develop a program that will help someone paint a room. By entering the room dimensions, the program the students write will determine the surface area and how much paint will be needed, as well as the cost to paint the room.



High school math teacher Dan Klipa helps a student in the basic programming class.

HARVARD VISITORS AWED BY DISTRICT'S CREATIVITY AND LITERACY PROGRAM

Lead researchers from the Harvard Graduate School of Education's Agency *by* Design, a part of Project Zero, visited Kerr Elementary School to observe the Creativity and Literacy Program on February 4. The researchers, in Pittsburgh to lead professional development for their Agency *by* Design Pittsburgh Educator Cohort, visited two sites – including the Creativity and Literacy Program – identified as offering exemplary and innovative educational programs that demonstrate “maker-centered” learning.

As a maker site, the Creativity and Literacy Program encourages and empowers young children to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of a concept through making or creating, using a project-based approach.

Creativity and Literacy Program Facilitator Alison Francis demonstrated how the program supports early learning. On the day of the visit, preschoolers were busy exploring light and shadows with their parents and engaging in very thoughtful and purposeful playing and learning.

According to Fox Chapel Area School District's Director of Instructional and Innovative Leadership, Megan Cicconi, “The researchers were amazed at the quality of this early childhood program that develops literacy and 21st century skills through technology and hands-on experiences.”

Jessica Ross, a lead researcher of Harvard's Project Zero and Agency *by* Design, said one of the most striking things about the Creativity and Literacy Program is the fact that parents and children work together and that parents are invited, early on, to be a part of the school culture.

“That’s not something you run into every day. Having parents and children in the room together and having parents enter into the conversation about what’s happening in the school is really remarkable,” Ms. Ross stated. “What a great way to introduce parents to what’s going on in the schools.”



Child and parent interaction is integral to the learning process. Here, a child and her mother explore the concepts of opaque and translucent as part of the Creativity and Literacy Program.

She further described the Creativity and Literacy Program classroom as an “inviting,” “intriguing,” “creative,” and “stimulating” place. She also stated that the Fox Chapel Area School District program provides a unique way to combine literacy with the “making” strand of learning. Parents and children are encouraged to take home special backpacks that include several activities where they are introduced to a text and are then invited to explore that text through hands-on activities.

Mrs. Cicconi, who visited the Creativity and Literacy Program with the Harvard researchers, is a co-leader of the Pittsburgh Educator Cohort. The cohort is made up of 20 educators from the region, three from Fox Chapel Area, including Mrs. Francis. This cohort will be exploring prototyping and testing assessment tools in the context of maker-centered learning over the next year.

The Agency *by* Design Pittsburgh Educator Cohort is made possible due to the dedication and generous support of The Grable Foundation.



Mrs. Francis facilitates a large-group activity with preschoolers and their parents at the beginning of a Creativity and Literacy Program session.



Creativity and Literacy Program Facilitator Alison Francis demonstrated how she supports early learning to Shari Tishman, Ed.D.; Jessica Ross; and Edward Clapp, Ed.D.; who are lead researchers of Harvard's Project Zero Agency *by* Design. Project Zero is an educational research center at Harvard.



Visitors observe a large group activity.



It works!

A third grade student holds her robot motor with bending pliers as her high school mentor applies heat to shrink-wrap the attached wire.

ELEMENTARY GIRLS ROCK ROBOTICS

A team of five Fox Chapel Area High School girls who excel in robotics believe in the value and importance of younger girls discovering their talents in STEM-related fields. So much so, that they devised an after-school class, Girls Rock Robotics, for elementary-age girls so that they could learn about and build their own robots.

“When I was younger, the idea of making a robot was mind blowing, but here these girls are making one in elementary school,” said freshman Courtney Kennedy, who along with Kristen Friday, Theresa Heidenreich, and Annika Urban (also freshmen) and Helen Paulini, a sophomore, teamed up to design and lead the class for elementary girls. High school gifted education teacher Lisa Giguere and robotics engineering teacher Ken Grimm were the faculty facilitators for the project and also served as mentors for the high school students. They coached them throughout the entire process and attended every after-school session at Fairview.

Girls Rock Robotics, a five-week class held on Wednesdays, was part of Fairview Elementary School’s Great Expectations after-school program sponsored by the Fairview PTO. A total of 15 girls in grades three through five, plus one first grader, each built a ladybug bot from scratch under the direction of their five high school female mentors.

After the first class, Annika said, “We weren’t really sure what to expect in terms of how much the girls would know



High school robotics engineering teacher Ken Grimm helped class participants to use molds to make plastic bug shells in the vacuum pressure machine. He and gifted education teacher Lisa Giguere were facilitators in the Girls Rock Robotics class.

about robotics. After talking to the girls, we learned that their levels of robotics experience really differed – some had very little initial knowledge, and some had a lot of experience working with robots.”

In order to build their robots, the younger girls used concepts from each of the STEM areas – Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. They learned to use metric measurements, align motors with different polarity, strip the ends of wire using wire cutters, solder wire to the components of their robots,

and use mold forms to make plastic shells that cover and protect the robot components.

Each member of the high school team worked with a small group of the younger girls. As they built the robots, the older girls showed the younger girls step-by-step what to do, explained safety, and incorporated discussion about electricity and circuits.

“At the beginning of each class, we went over what we were going to do that day. We explained what the steps were and what each part does,” Courtney explained. “Hopefully, making their own robots and learning about some STEM fields will inspire the girls to continue on exploring STEM. By offering the class, we are hoping to get girls interested in STEM, and to show them that girls can do anything.”

If the enthusiasm of the younger girls in relation to their success in building the mini robots is any indication of the high school team reaching their goal of exposing young girls to STEM fields, then mission accomplished!

“They seemed to enjoy the new experience and the new equipment,” Kristen commented. “They were genuinely interested in building robots.”



A mentor shows a first grader how to tape the motor onto the bent piece of metal to ensure the proper directions of polarity.



With the help of her mentor, a third grader cuts the shrink-wrapped electrical wire to the correct size.



Once the ladybug bots were decorated and assembled, the girls tried running them.

Third grader Francesca Iasella said she took the Girls Rock Robotics class because, “I thought it would be cool.” She said she likes science and math. “Math is kinda challenging. I like to figure out problems. Easy is boring!” she announced.

Her sister, fourth grader Anna, who also took the class, said that she and Francesca were already somewhat familiar with robots. “I think it’s a really good experience,” Anna said of the class.



A high school mentor explains how to glue the two switches to the back of the battery holder, how to measure and cut a metal holder to use as a motor plate, and then how to test and tape the motors into place.

Third grader Kate Henn said when she heard about the after-school robotics class, “I said, ‘Wow! maybe I can experience building a robot.’” She hopes to become a scientist or engineer. “I am really interested in robotics.”

“It’s great seeing so many girls curious about STEM and interested in taking our robotics class,” Helen said. “Elementary school is an especially great time to try new activities and get exposure to new

subjects, which might even help form interests later on.”

Kristen agreed, saying, “I think it is important that the girls learn about robotics and STEM concepts at such a young age so that by the time they get to the high school, they are aware of their interests.”

After forming their bug shells, the rockin’ robotic girls got to paint and decorate them. “I want mine to be purple,” third grader Hannah Parker said, after expressing that her favorite part of the class was using “cool machines.”

Once decorated and assembled, each girl got to try out the autonomous robot that she created then take it – and her new robotics knowledge – home.

And as Theresa pointed out, she hopes that the girls learned not only about robots and STEM subjects, but also patience, teamwork, and the value of helping each other. “I want the girls to know that math and science can be difficult at times, but are extremely valuable skills to learn and understand... It was also great to see the girls helping each other out on various difficult steps.”



Wearing safety goggles that they decorated themselves, the younger girls measured wire and, using wire cutters, stripped the ends so that they could be soldered to make connections to components of the robots.



The girls were divided into small groups and their mentors explained step-by-step how to build their own robots.

“We’ve had some awesome comments from the girls,” Courtney said. “Everything in STEM is so exciting that I, and the other group members just want to share everything we know about it. Even if the girls might not love robotics, I think it’s important for them to see that older girls are doing STEM-related things, and they can too.”

High school freshman and member of the Girls Rock Robotics team Kristen Friday said about her experience as a mentor to younger girls, “It was really fulfilling to know that I helped to instruct younger girls how to build a robot. The experience was amazing, watching the girls’ skills unfold and seeing how they progressed throughout the five weeks that we worked with them. I learned so much throughout the process, and I hope the younger girls did as well.”

Convinced that elementary students will benefit from a robotics program and STEM opportunities, members of the team plan to look at options to continue an elementary robotics program in the future.

ARTWORK TO MAKE BIG STATEMENT ON HIGH SCHOOL LANDSCAPE

Mosaic Sculpture Designed and Created by Art Students

“It was a great way to make Fox Chapel an original place and gave students the ability to put our spin on the school,” said high school junior computer art student Micah Ziff about the major mosaic art project set to be erected at the high school later this spring.

A large interactive outdoor sculpture that will become a permanent installation near the stadium was designed, made, and built by students taking art at the high school. Additionally, students are creating a mural that will adorn the entrance to the art department. Created under the direction of guest artist-in-residence Laura Jean McLaughlin and the high school art teachers, the major art project has been met with enthusiasm from the high school’s 400+ art students.

“Students’ unique designs are the backbone of the artwork, which give it a great personality and will combine to create an absorbing interactive piece,” according to art teacher Sarah Stewart. “They took pride and care in all aspects of the design, fabrication, and documentation, which will be evident in the finished work.”

Fairly large in scope, virtually every high school student enrolled in an art class this school year provided input and will have worked on the major project that was funded by grants from the 2012 Fox Chapel Area School District Gala Fund, the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, and the high school PTO, as well as the high school site-based team.

Ms. McLaughlin, a professional ceramicist and mosaic artist with a studio in Pittsburgh, worked on-site with the students four hours a day for 20 school days beginning on October 27. On the first days, she met with the young artists in a large-group setting to work out the initial designs. Students played a creativity



Artist-in-residence Laura Jean McLaughlin works with high school art students.

exercise based on a surrealist parlor game. According to ninth grade art class student Daniel Andrud, Ms. McLaughlin had folded paper into four sections. Playing the “game” the first student drew a head, then folded down the section and handed the paper off to another student whose task was to draw a midsection of a body without knowing what the head looked like. A third student drew an image of the body down to the knees before passing the folded paper to a fourth student to draw an image of knees to toes.

“It was cool to see how it went together,” Daniel said.

Once the drawings were completed, students and staff voted to select their favorites. Ms. McLaughlin then combined the winners to create the designs for each of the 16 panels that will make up mosaic cubes. When installed, the sculpture panels will rotate independently, creating 256 combinations from the 16 completed mosaic panels.

Students next learned how to use tile nippers, place and glue the mosaic pieces, and grout the mosaic. Due to space limitations, only 25 students could work on the project at a time, so art teachers made up a rotation schedule to ensure that all students had a chance to work on the mosaics.

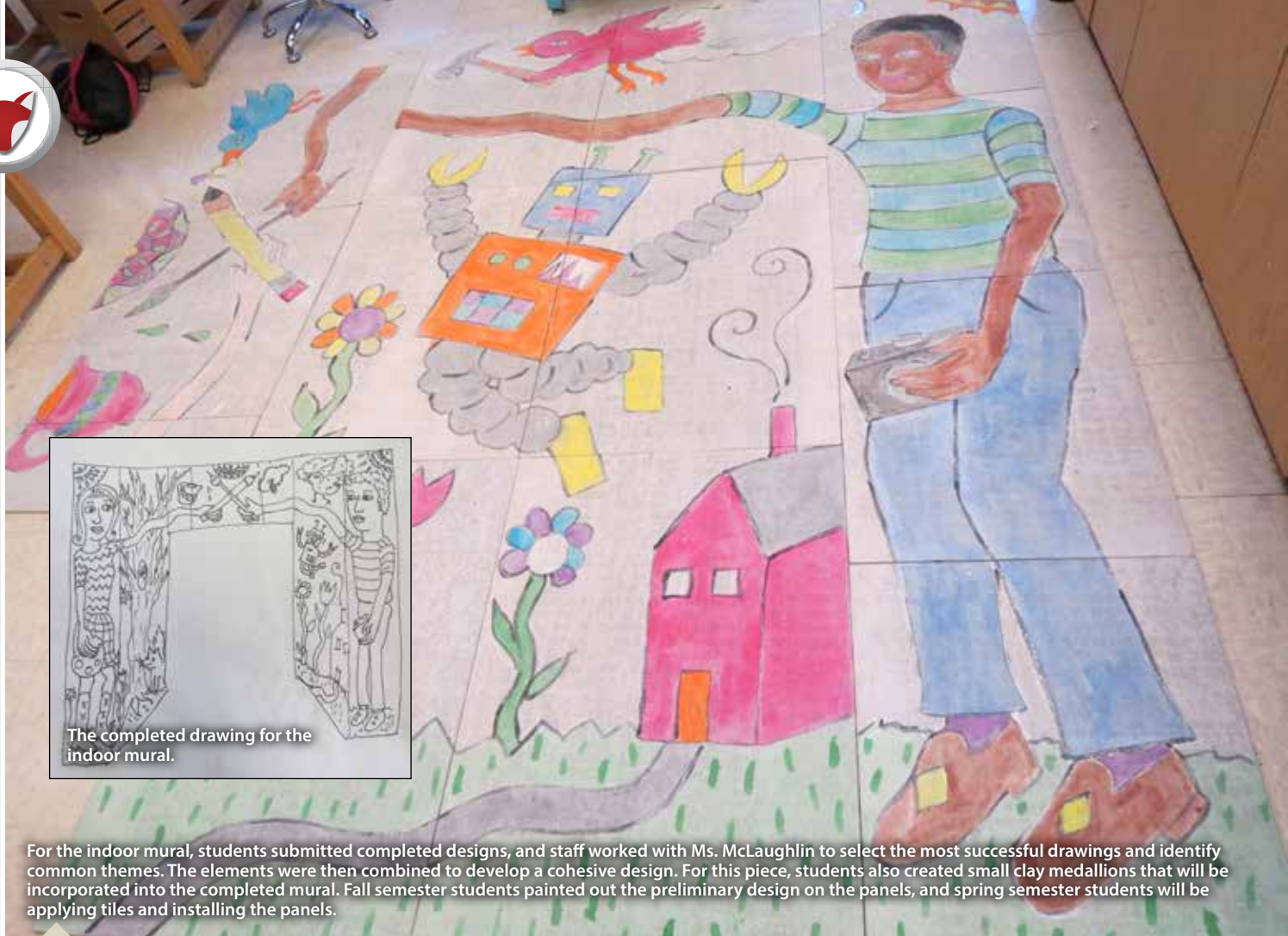
Senior Brooklyn DePellegrini, who has taken classes in computer art, photography, and ceramics at the high school,

said this is her first experience working on a mosaic. “I liked gluing all the pieces down and seeing it come together.” She added, “I want to see it when it’s all done.”

Ninth grader Paige Johnson, who took a jewelry class this year, described the process as like looking at a skeleton and putting puzzle pieces together. She said, “I really like working

Art teacher Sarah Stewart works with students as they glue mosaic tiles on the sculpture panels.





The completed drawing for the indoor mural.

For the indoor mural, students submitted completed designs, and staff worked with Ms. McLaughlin to select the most successful drawings and identify common themes. The elements were then combined to develop a cohesive design. For this piece, students also created small clay medallions that will be incorporated into the completed mural. Fall semester students painted out the preliminary design on the panels, and spring semester students will be applying tiles and installing the panels.



Artist-in-residence Ms. McLaughlin observes as a student cuts tile.

with my hands.” What made this project especially interesting to her, was “working on a whimsical piece – not what you see everyday.”

Micah commented about his experience, “It taught me how to be patient – a good skill, in and out of art.”

of the project, which is a permanent and visible installation, but also for the sake of communicating with supporters, community members, and participants.” She added, “With a project of this scale, not everyone who participates gets to see every aspect of the completion, so this becomes a way to connect the dots.”

It was a huge undertaking and involved countless hours; 80 hours alone were spent with Ms. McLaughlin. The project continues as second semester art students will be placing the mosaic tiles that will complete the mural for the entrance to the art wing.

Ms. Stewart also invited two students to document the entire process on video. “Documentation is important, not only for preserving and understanding the history

Tori Panza, a senior television production student, took leadership in documenting and sharing some of the progress, with the support of media arts teacher Doug Martin. “It’s cool to see the progress made every day,” she commented.

Senior Hansen Bursic, a National Art Honor Society member and a photography student, worked with Tori to create a short documentary of the project. “They did remarkable work and donated significant time outside of the project editing and combining film,” Ms. Stewart said.

A computer rendering of the finished outdoor mosaic sculpture. Each panel measures 30 inches tall by 36 inches wide, and the finished sculpture will be roughly 11½ feet tall.





to their work once it is installed. I think they will be very proud to see the culmination of their efforts and to see what they created be a part of the high school's landscape for years to come. In some sense, it is a way to leave their mark and a legacy. It is a testament, not just to their creative powers, but also to what they are able to accomplish

when working together in an organized effort toward a common goal."

"This will be here for a long time and knowing you worked on it is pretty cool," said Daniel.

Other art students also took turns in photographing work to document the progress throughout the duration of the project. Portions of their documentation can be seen on the district's website at <http://www.fcasd.edu/arts/artist-in-residence.html>.

According to Ms. Stewart, the artist-in-residence project "provided a richness of experience for the students. It is a unique opportunity for students – from working with a professional to seeing collaboration at work."

Ms. Stewart continued, "It will be great to see how students react



A student breaks tile into mosaic pieces that will be used for the artwork.



Students place mosaic tiles on one of the panels for the outdoor sculpture.

Daniel Andrud, a ninth grader who recently moved to Fox Chapel Area from Michigan, says he is impressed with the fact that there are so many opportunities for students to experience art classes and different art media here. "Other places are cutting down their art programs," he said.

Among the more than 400 high school students who elected to take an art class this year, Daniel said, "I like art. It really interests me." Like the other art students, he was enthusiastic about working under the direction of artist-in-residence Laura Jean McLaughlin.

While across the nation schools are cutting art budgets, Fox Chapel Area High School continues to grow art programs – in numbers of course offerings, variety of art media, and students who choose to participate in one or more art classes. Courses are offered both as five-day and three-day a week options to accommodate the scheduling needs of students and include three or four levels of computer art, ceramics and fibers, jewelry and glass, drawing and painting, and photography. A hands-on art history course, as well as Studio Art Advanced Placement (AP) and Art History AP courses and a portfolio class are also part of the curriculum. The high school has a National Art Honor Society and various art clubs and organizations. Additionally, students frequently are involved in innovative opportunities such as the artist-in-residence project, the Major Works and Grand Salon cross-curricular experiences, and a huge exhibit at the G-20 Student Summit held at Fox Chapel Area High School several years ago.

In the spring of 2015, Fox Chapel Area High School became the first school to be awarded a Programs of Distinction status in the visual arts, a new program by the Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools.



The new natatorium (pictured here in an architect's rendering) features an eight-lane pool and will provide seating for approximately 270 spectators.

HIGH SCHOOL RENOVATION PROJECT WINDING DOWN

The final portion of a major renovation project at Fox Chapel Area High School is scheduled for completion later this spring. The new natatorium is the final major piece of the renovation project and the district expects the pool to be open by late April. Several setbacks delayed completion, including complications due to the harsh winter last year and more recently, issues with the pool tank.

Terracon Engineering, who specializes in aquatic design and swimming pool engineering services, was hired to remediate the issues and is being paid by the general contractor. According to the Director of Ancillary Services Daniel Breitreutz, the school district will not release the performance bond and take over ownership of the pool until 100 percent of the work is completed and accepted by the school district.

The driveway in the back of the high school will be reopened at the end of this school year, and buses will continue to load and drop off in the front of the school until next year.

While the renovations brought some short-term disruptions, the high school has remained open for students and staff since the groundbreaking ceremony in April 2014. In addition to the new natatorium, major renovations included: a new auditorium, an upgraded library/media center and commons area, a new atrium-style entrance, and a new cafeteria, as well as new windows and upgraded hallways, locker rooms, and bathrooms. Other improvements included a new HVAC system, lighting, and roof.

The renovation project provides for the most effective learning spaces and incorporates the latest technology. The project also took into account additional school safety features. According to Superintendent Gene Freeman, Ed.D., "The renovation will benefit our students for years to come. Overall, the improvements will significantly enhance the learning environment."

The district took advantage of historically-low market interest rates and funding for the renovations was made available

through the sale of bonds in the spring of 2013. The total cost of the high school renovation project is expected to be about \$36 million.

Renovations on Other Schools Slated to Begin This Summer

District officials anticipated renovations at the middle school and the elementary schools when they began planning in 2013, and Dorseyville Middle School is the next facility that will be renovated. The roof has already been replaced and upcoming infrastructure improvements will be made to the HVAC as well as the electrical and plumbing systems. This work is slated to begin this summer.

Fairview and O'Hara elementary schools will get new roofs this summer, but the scope of additional renovation work on the elementary buildings is still in the early planning stages.

Replacement of Turf, Track Renovations to be Paid Through District Capital Funds

The life expectancy of turf and track is about eight to ten years, and Fox Chapel Area High School's football field and track are near the end of their useable life cycle. Plans are underway to replace the artificial turf and track this summer and the new field will have a similar look to the current field. The track and turf were last replaced in 2007. The track at Dorseyville Middle School will also be replaced. The district has anticipated these projects and has money set aside through the ongoing capital projects fund. Additionally, revenues from ticket sales to athletic events will help to fund the track and field improvements. The cost for the entire project, including installation, is expected to be approximately \$1.1 million.

The tracks at both schools and the turf field at the high school are used not only by student athletes but also by physical education classes. The track and field are also used by community members throughout the year.

TELETHON BREAKS RECORD

Raises More Than \$70,000 for Live Like Lou

Fox Chapel Area School District students held their 26th annual telethon December 23, 2015, and raised more than \$70,000! Coordinated by the marketing and television production students of the high school, this year's telethon raised a record-breaking total, including a matching donation of \$25,000 that was made by an anonymous school district family.

This year, the telethon raised money for Live Like Lou, an organization that helps ALS patients and their families in Western Pennsylvania. The theme that the students chose this year was "Onward," which is the theme of Live Like Lou.

Live Like Lou, a fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation, is a local organization focused on raising awareness of ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's Disease), supporting scientific research targeted at finding a cure, and providing care for ALS patients and their families in Western Pennsylvania. Live Like Lou was founded by Neil Alexander and his wife Suzanne in 2012. Unfortunately Neil passed away from complications from ALS in early 2015, but Mrs. Alexander continues the work of this important charity in his honor.



WTAE broadcaster and the host of WTAE's "Chronicle" Sally Wiggin appeared as a celebrity guest and interviewed Suzanne Alexander, a co-founder of Live Like Lou.

The telethon involved students from all of the schools in the Fox Chapel Area School District. This year's telethon total brings the total amount raised by Fox Chapel Area students to more than \$698,000.





The Fox Chapel Area High School first graduating Class of 2016.



An early graduate accepts congratulations and gets her diploma from school and district administrators.



Principal Michael Hower addresses the early grads and their families and friends.

JANUARY 2016 EARLY GRADUATES

“This is not the end. It’s just the beginning,” Superintendent Gene Freeman, Ed.D., told the graduates, family, and friends of the first graduating Class of 2016. The 12 early graduates participated in a ceremony and a reception January 21 to celebrate their special accomplishment.

“This is truly a special event,” Senior/Lead Principal Michael Hower said as he opened the ceremony. In his remarks,

he stated that this is a group of students who knows what they want to do. “This group really has it together and is ready to take the next step,” he commented.

As a part of the informal ceremony, the students shared that they will be continuing their education, working, volunteering, playing sports, and possibly traveling in the upcoming months. Several of the students thanked their teachers for always being there to support them.

Dr. Freeman told the group that he was proud of not just the achievements of the graduates, but of the families who helped them get to where they are today.

The early graduates included: Hailey Balog, Madeleine DiMedio, James DiVittorio, Charles Fletcher, Rebecca Francis, Emily Hartz, Nasreen Hashmie, Jadian Jackson, Tyler Simoncic, Asia Stewart, Carlos Valenzuela, and Shealyn Viccari.



FAIRVIEW STUDENTS HONOR SCHOOL BOARD

The Fairview Elementary School students stood anxiously outside the room where the School Board was meeting. They were excited to honor the Fox Chapel Area School Board for School Director Recognition Month.

The approximately 25 students in kindergarten through fifth grade sang the “Fairview Foxes” for the School Board and presented them with small tokens of appreciation for all of their hard work. Parents accompanied their children and both parents and School Board members took photos and videos of the performance. The song “Fairview Foxes” was written by the school’s fifth graders a few years ago as part of a Great Ideas Grant.

School Director Recognition Month is held each January. It was started by the Pennsylvania School Boards Association in an effort to recognize the time and commitment that School Board members devote to their schools and communities.



SCHOOL BOARD REORGANIZATION MEETING

The Fox Chapel Area Board of School Directors held its annual reorganization meeting December 1, 2015.

Terry L. Wirginis was elected president, Nancy B. Foster was elected vice president, and Sandra M. Garbisch was re-elected assistant secretary.

The Board also set the following meeting schedule for 2016:

Agenda Study Sessions

April 4 (Hartwood Elementary School); May 2 (Dorseyville Middle School); June 6 (O’Hara Elementary School); August 15 (Fox Chapel Area High School – August 15 is a combined agenda study session and regular business meeting); September 12 (Fox Chapel Area High School – September 12 is a combined agenda study session and regular business meeting);

October 10 (A.W. Beattie Career Center); November 7 (Kerr Elementary School); and December 5 (Fox Chapel Area High School – December 5 is a combined agenda study session and regular business meeting).

Regular Business Meetings

April 11; May 9; June 13; August 15 (August 15 is a combined agenda study session and regular business meeting); September 12 (September 12 is a combined agenda study session and regular business meeting); October 17; November 14; and December 5 (December 5 is a combined agenda study session and regular business meeting). All regular business meetings are held at Fox Chapel Area High School.

The School Board’s annual reorganization meeting will be held December 5,

immediately following the December combined agenda study session and regular business meeting at Fox Chapel Area High School.

All Board meetings are held on Mondays at 7 p.m.

Additionally, re-elected School Board members Mrs. Foster, Mrs. Garbisch, Somer Obernauer Jr., Lisa M. Rutkowski, Eric C. Schmidt, and Mr. Wirginis were sworn in by the Honorable David Wecht, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, at the reorganization meeting. Dharmesh Vyas, M.D., Ph.D., also elected, was sworn in on a different date.

Treasurer Charles R. Burke Jr. and Joel R. Weinstein are also members of the Fox Chapel Area Board of School Directors.



KAYLA SLOVENEC JOINS ELITE CLUB

Scores her 1,000th Career Point

When Kayla Slovenec was nine-months-old, her mother was astonished to find her atop their kitchen table, a feat that was pretty atypical for a baby that age. Little did they know then that Kayla's active nature would lead to a great high school basketball career filled with many achievements and honors.

Most recently, Kayla made her mark in Fox Chapel Area High School history by scoring her 1,000th career point during the girls' basketball team's final regular season game on February 5 at Armstrong High School. It was a fitting tribute to her four-year varsity career, and her skills were further put to the test in the WPIAL AAAA playoffs.

Kayla's 1,000-point achievement placed her in good company – she joined an elite club that includes former players Jennifer Papich who was a star at Gannon University, and Erin Mathias, who currently plays for Duke University and is doing very well there. They remain two of the school's most highly decorated girls' basketball players.

"Kayla is a naturally gifted athlete and a good team leader," said head coach Jennifer O'Shea of the 5'7" guard who always has a smile on her face. "She's also a very unselfish player and a great passer."

The senior was also a savior of sorts last year when three of the team's top players were out for the season with injuries, and a new coach was leading them. Kayla's position was changed to point guard and her leadership skills and fortitude were challenged in every game. She was keenly aware that her

teammates were depending on her to pick up the slack for the players missing from the court.

"We really needed her to score," said Coach O'Shea. "We couldn't have won without her contributions each game. There was a lot of pressure on her to perform."

What a difference a year can make. This year, her teammates were all healthy and they worked in tandem to produce an 11-3 section record. Mrs. O'Shea said Kayla has become known for her ability to forcefully drive to the basket and for her Eurostep. The Eurostep is a slick basketball move in which an offensive player picks up her dribble, steps in one direction, and then quickly takes a second step in another direction. It's a difficult skill that most high school girls can't do because if not done precisely, it borders on becoming a traveling violation.

"I've always been full of energy and I love the nonstop, going back-and-forth part of the game," said Kayla, who also played soccer and softball up until middle school and was a four-year member of the high school Lady Foxes' volleyball team. "All of my life I've been called the Energizer Bunny!"

Kayla's abundant energy was working at full-force during the first-round game of the WPIAL Class AAAA girls' basketball playoffs. In fact, she was the Lady Foxes' high scorer with 11 points.

Following this year's basketball season, all of her energy will be focused on playing basketball in college. If history is an accurate predictor, Kayla will climb to new heights in this endeavor as well.



DMS 8TH GRADE BOYS' BASKETBALL TEAM UNDEFEATED

All season, the Dorseyville Middle School 8th Grade Boys' Basketball Team coaches instructed their squad to play hard, play smart, and play together. The boys paid close attention to their coaches' instructions and the payoff was sweet – they had a perfect 22-0 record.

Coach Matthew Senkoski believes it is only the second time in decades, if ever, that a DMS boys' basketball team has gone undefeated in both regular season and tournament games.

"It was a pretty special season and a tremendous team accomplishment," says Mr. Senkoski of the 13-member squad. "We had a group of players who were all good individually, but also could work together. They sacrificed the 'me' for 'we' and brought out the best in each other."

In addition to the regular season results, the boys closed out the year as the Shaler Area Junior High Tournament Champions. Earlier in the year they also won the North Allegheny Holiday Tournament and the Western Pennsylvania Junior High School Basketball Championship, where they were the only team in grades seven through nine to defeat tournament host Pine-Richland.



Members of the DMS boys' 8th grade basketball team were Scott Bitar, Samuel Brown, Joseph D'Cunha, William Generett, Brendan Kelly, Andrew Landman, Ronald Livingston, Matthew Mattioli, Michael Rice, Gusti Sunseri, Shane Susnak, Brevin Urso, and Arnold Vento. Coach Senkoski was assisted by Geoff Dutelle.



The Dorseyville Middle School 8th Grade Boys' Basketball Team holds the first-place trophy from the Western Pennsylvania Junior High School Basketball Championship in February.



FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 2015-2016 FACTS & FIGURES

2015-2016 STUDENT ENROLLMENT

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (K-GRADE 5)

Fairview Elementary School.....	355
Hartwood Elementary School	334
Kerr Elementary School.....	404
O'Hara Elementary School.....	708
Total Elementary Enrollment.....	1,801

SECONDARY SCHOOLS (GRADES 6-12)

Dorseyville Middle School (6-8).....	971
Fox Chapel Area High School (9-12).....	1,396
Total Secondary Enrollment.....	2,367
Total District Enrollment.....	4,168

CLASS OF 2015

The total number of Fox Chapel Area High School graduates in the class of 2015 was 341. The percentages of 2015 graduates entering some type of postsecondary education were as follows:

Four-Year Colleges	259 or 76%
Two-Year Colleges.....	41 or 12%
Total Continuing Education	300 or 88%

AVERAGE SAT SCORES

	Critical Reading	Math	Writing
Class of 2015.....	562	574	561
Class of 2014.....	568	583	569
Class of 2013.....	567	578	561
Class of 2012.....	554	573	549
Class of 2011.....	567	577	563

A total of 277 members (81 percent) of the Class of 2015 took the SAT during their junior or senior year. The national average scores for all 2015 graduates taking the test were 495 in critical reading, 511 in math, and 484 in writing.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF STATISTICS

NUMBER OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Elementary.....	173
Secondary	219
Total	392

MASTER'S DEGREE OR EQUIVALENT

Elementary	69%
Secondary	75%

AVERAGE YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Elementary	17 Years
Secondary	17 Years

THE COMMUNITY

The Fox Chapel Area School District is located in a dynamic suburban community about 11 miles northeast of downtown Pittsburgh. The district includes six municipalities (the boroughs of Aspinwall, Blawnox, Fox Chapel, and Sharpsburg and the townships of Indiana and O'Hara) representing a wide range of social, economic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. The schools provide a comprehensive array of educational opportunities to serve the needs of this diverse population and to meet the high expectations of its residents. The district encompasses an area of about 36 square miles with approximately 30,000 residents.

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Fox Chapel Area School District is a nationally recognized, award-winning school district that produces high achievement in students, with a motivated and professional faculty and an involved and caring administration. There are six schools in the district.

VISION

The Fox Chapel Area School District will be recognized as one of the top-performing public school districts in the nation. Toward that end we will:

- Challenge each student to reach his/her maximum potential level of achievement.
- Provide scholarly experiences that deepen understanding, creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, innovation, and collaboration.
- Provide an environment that promotes inclusiveness and embraces diversity.
- Foster a culture that encourages student involvement in the community and raises awareness of civic responsibilities.
- Build relationships with postsecondary institutions, businesses, and industry to create and sustain programs that prepare students to excel beyond high school.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Fox Chapel Area School District exists to maximize student learning, achievement, and development.

CORE VALUES

Respect – Responsibility – Integrity

2016-2017 Fox Chapel Area School District Calendar

APPROVED 3/7/16

August 2016				
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	<i>I</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>I</i>
<i>P</i>	<i>FC</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>FC</i>
22	23	24	25	26
<i>P/C</i>				
29	30	31		

September 2016				
			1	(4) 2
<i>X</i>				(8) 9
5	6	7	8	(13) 16
12	13	14	15	(18) 23
19	20	21	22	(23) 30
26	27	28	29	

October 2016				
				(28) 7
3	4	5	6	(32) 14
10	<i>E/+</i>	<i>X</i>	12	(37) 21
17	18	<i>E/+</i>	19	(42) 28
24	25	26	27	
31				

November 2016				
	1	2	3	<i>E/C</i> (47) 4
<i>E/CONF</i>	<i>CONF+</i>			(51) 11
7	8	9	10	(56) 18
14	15	16	17	
		<i>E/+</i> (59)	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>
21	22	23	24	25
<i>X</i>				
28	29	30		

December 2016				
			1	(63) 2
				(68) 9
5	6	7	8	(73) 16
12	13	14	15	(78) 23
19	20	21	22	
<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>
26	27	28	29	30

January 2017				
<i>X</i>				(82) 6
2	3	4	5	(87) 13
				(90) 20
9	10	11	12	<i>FC</i>
<i>P</i>	16	17	18	(95) 27
23	24	25	26	
30	31			

February 2017				
		1	2	(100) 3
				(105) 10
6	7	8	9	
13	14	15	16	(109) <i>P</i>
<i>X</i>				(113) 24
20	21	22	23	
27	28			

March 2017				
		1	2	(118) 3
				(123) 10
6	7	8	9	(128) 17
13	14	15	16	<i>E/C</i> (133) 24
20	21	22	23	(138) 31
27	28	29	30	

April 2017				
				<i>E</i> (143) 7
3	4	5	6	
<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>	<i>X</i>
10	11	12	13	(148) 21
17	18	19	20	(153) 28
24	25	26	27	

May 2017				
1	2	3	4	(158) 5
				(163) 12
8	9	10	11	(168) 19
15	16	17	18	(173) 26
22	23	24	25	
<i>X</i>		<i>K/E</i>		
29	30	31		

June 2017				
			1	(177) 2
				<i>E/C</i> (182) 9
5	6	7	8	
<i>P</i>	<i>FC</i>	<i>P/C</i>		
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

1st Grading Period – November 4 – 47 days
 2nd Grading Period – January 19 – 43 days
 3rd Grading Period – March 24 – 43 days
 4th Grading Period – June 9 – 49 days

November 7 – Elem/Sec Early Dismissal & Parent Teacher Conference Day
 November 8 – Parent Teacher Conference Day (No School for Students)
 June 9 – Last Day for Students = 182 Days (unless make up days are required)
 June 14 – Last Day for Professional Staff = 195 Days (unless make up days are required)

First Semester	
8/17-19	New Teacher Induction Days
8/22	Professional Development Day
8/23 & 26	Full Clerical Days
8/24 & 25	Professional Development Days
8/29	Professional Development/Clerical Day
8/30	First Day for Students
9/5	Labor Day
10/11	Elem/Sec Early Dismissal
10/12	Fall Break
10/19	Elem/Sec Early Dismissal
11/4	Elem/Sec Early Dismissal & Clerical Day
11/7	Elem/Sec Early Dismissal & PT Conf Day
11/8	Parent Teacher Conference Day
11/23	Elem/Sec Early Dismissal
11/24-28	Thanksgiving Break
12/26-1/2	Winter Break
1/16	Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday & Professional Development Day

Second Semester	
1/20	Full Clerical Day
2/17	Professional Development Day
2/20	Presidents' Day
3/24	Elem/Sec Early Dismissal & Clerical Day
4/7	Elem/Sec Early Dismissal
4/10-14	Spring Break
5/29	Memorial Day
5/31	Kennywood Day & Early Dismissal
6/9	Last Day for Students
	Elem/Sec Early Dismissal & Clerical Day
	182 Days (unless make up days are required)
6/11	Commencement
6/12	Professional Development Day
6/13	Full Clerical Day
6/14	Professional Development/Clerical Day
	195 Days (unless make up days are required)

I New Teacher Induction Day
C Clerical Day
FC Full Clerical Day (No School for Students)
P Professional Development Day (No School for Students)
E Elem/Sec Early Dismissal
X Holiday/Break/No School
 + Act 80 Day
CONF Parent Teacher Conference Day
K Kennywood Day



April 3-7 and April 24-May 12 shaded areas indicate PSSA testing windows. January 9-23 and May 15-26 indicate Keystone Exams testing windows. Refer to the FCASD website (www.fcasd.edu) for specific grades tested in each time frame. **Make up days (if necessary): June 12, 13, and 14, 2017**



FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

District Administration

611 Field Club Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/963-9600
www.fcasd.edu
Superintendent: Gene Freeman, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent:
David P. McCommons, Ed.D.
Director of Business Affairs:
L. Douglas McCausland

District Resource Staff

Director of Secondary Education and Instruction:
Matthew J. Harris, Ed.D.
Director of Elementary Education and Instruction:
Ashley L. Nestor
Director of Special Education and Pupil Services:
Lonnie Carey, Ed.D.
Director of Instructional and Innovative Leadership:
Megan Cicconi
Director of Federal Programs and Student
Achievement: Alicia Gismondi
Director of Educational Technology: Scott W. Hand
Director of Ancillary Services: Daniel Breitreutz
Director of Athletics: Michael O'Brien
Coordinator of Communications: Bonnie Berzonski

FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOLS

Fairview Elementary School

738 Dorseyville Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/963-9315
Principal: Rebecca A. Stephan

Hartwood Elementary School

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

Kerr Elementary School

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

O'Hara Elementary School

115 Cabin Lane
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/963-0333
Principal: Michael E. Rowe, Ed.D.
Assistant Principal: To Be Determined

Dorseyville Middle School

3732 Saxonburg Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/767-5343
Principal: Jonathan T. Nauhaus
Assistant Principal: Patricia A. Clark
Assistant Principal:
James Phillip Prager Jr.

Fox Chapel Area High School

611 Field Club Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/967-2430
Senior/Lead Principal:
Michael H. Hower
Program Principal:
Daniel E. Lentz, Ph.D.
Assistant Principal – Senior Program:
John J. McGee, Ph.D.
Assistant Principal –
Intermediate Program:
Rebecca J. Cunningham, Ed.D.

For the latest information on school activities and weather-related delays and cancellations, call the Fox Chapel Area School District 24-Hour Information Line at 412/967-2500 or visit the website at www.fcasd.edu.

The athletic events calendar can be found on the Fox Chapel Area School District athletic website at www.fcasdathletics.org and click on "SCHEDULE STAR."

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: Lonnie Carey, Ed.D.
(412/967-2435)
Address: Fox Chapel Area School District
611 Field Club Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238

FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL BOARD

Photo Courtesy Town and Country Studio



Front Row (left to right): Sandra M. Garbisch, Assistant Secretary (2019 - Region II); Gene Freeman, Ed.D., Superintendent; and Nancy B. Foster, Vice President (2019 - Region III)

Row 2 (left to right): Lisa M. Rutkowski (2019 - Region I); Charles R. Burke Jr., Treasurer (2017 - Region III); Terry L. Wirginis, President (2019 - Region II); and Joel R. Weinstein (2017 - Region III)

Row 3 (left to right): Somer Obernauer Jr. (2017 - Region I); Dharmesh Vyas, M.D., Ph.D. (2017 - Region II); and Eric C. Schmidt (2019 - Region I)

Row 4 (left to right): L. Douglas McCausland, Board Secretary; Paul J. Giuffre, Esq., Solicitor; and David P. McCommons, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent

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 regular business meetings are usually scheduled for the second Monday of each month at 7 p.m. and are held at the high school. The public is invited to attend.