

IN

An IN Community Magazine

Fox Chapel Area

A group of five cast members from the musical 'Shrek' are posing on a stage. In the center, a man dressed as Shrek wears a red and blue patterned tunic, a blue skirt, yellow leggings, and gold boots, with a red and blue hat. To his left, a woman in a red dress and a man in a grey tunic and black hood stand. To his right, a man in a white tunic and a woman in a green dress and red braided hair stand. The background is a wooden structure with a sign that says 'G' and 'M'.

Fox Chapel Area High School's 'Shrek The Musical'



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FOX CHAPEL AREA

School News



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A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Friends,

I have been fortunate to have worked at a number of really great school districts over the years. And I do not say this lightly – the Fox Chapel Area School District is the best place I have ever worked. The School Board, administration, staff, and the community work hard to ensure that every student who walks through our doors receives a quality education and achieves success. This is not always easy, as we must continually work to thoughtfully consider every program that we offer and every student's strengths and needs as we move forward. But it is well worth the struggle, as you will see the success of students and the exciting new programs that we are offering.

- This year's early graduation included four students who took advantage of Fox Chapel Area Online (FCAO) to complete their high school requirements. This nontraditional online high school program made it possible for two of those early graduates to follow their dreams to become professional dancers. In fact, one young lady completed all four years of her requirements through our online program.
- I am pleased to announce that a new summer program, Empower2018, will be available for rising 10th, 11th, and 12th graders. The program is unique because it is open to high school students from schools across Western Pennsylvania. Our very own Western Pennsylvania Learning Academy at Fox Chapel Area High School has partnered with Dale Carnegie & Associates to create this new, innovative leadership program. In addition to the Empower2018 leadership program, the Western Pennsylvania Learning Academy is offering FIRST STEP to our incoming ninth graders. The program will enable them to learn skills that will help them achieve success, not only in high school, but throughout their lives. Additionally, for our younger students, the second STEAM camp will be offered for incoming students in first through ninth grades.
- A new sport has been added to the high school – indoor bocce. As a part of the Unified Sports program, students with and without disabilities share equal participation in events that continue to foster a fully-inclusive setting in our school district. This team sport unifies the entire student body and has received amazing support from our students.

I hope that as you read through these pages, you will experience the same pride that I have for the students in our school district – as well as all of the people who make it happen.

Sincerely,

Gene Freeman, Ed.D.



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through these pages,
you will experience the
same pride that I have
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as all of the people
who make it happen.*



The Fox Chapel Area High School first graduating Class of 2018.

FOUR-YEAR ONLINE STUDENT GRADUATES EARLY

One of 18 to Receive Early Diploma

High school graduation ceremony... ✓

High school diploma in hand... ✓

Commence making dreams come true... ✓

Ever since Katelyn Photopoulos was a little girl, she dreamed of being a professional dancer. In January Katy was one step closer to accomplishing her dream as she was one of 18 Fox Chapel Area High School seniors to graduate as part of the school's early graduation ceremony. But Katy's story is a little different from the others as she did all four years of her high school education online through Fox Chapel Area Online (FCAO). She is the first student to go all four years of high school through FCAO as a fully-cyber student.

Katy, a resident of Indiana Township, does it all... ballet, jazz, and modern. But she is also a competitive ballroom dancer, which requires a lot of travel, and she has been dancing since she was two- or three-years-old.



Following the ceremony, early graduate Ruopeng Wang pulled out his cell phone and called several of his friends to come to the auditorium and get a photo with him.

"I'm a dancer and I do Point Park College's pre-professional high school program," Katy

said, explaining that doing FCAO allowed her to dance, while focusing on school at the same time. It's a program that has her dancing and training for long periods each afternoon. She said she dedicated the first three to four hours every morning to completing her online schoolwork. If she needed extra time, she would work on the weekends or on the way to dance competitions.

Katy praises Fox Chapel Area's online program. "I liked my classes a lot," she said on her graduation day. "In the FC online program, you have actual teachers you can contact. They help you a lot to make sure you succeed, even though you aren't coming to school every day. You can also customize how you want to learn, which was really nice."

According to Randi Leonard, Fox Chapel Area's online learning coordinator, Katy made the most of her cyber experience. "She was able to put her energy into achieving her goals of becoming a professional and competitive ballroom dancer while excelling in her online courses. Katy took the time to establish a rapport with her course instructors, meet with teachers and tutors face-to-face as needed, and participate in school events."

Katy said that with other online programs she might have spent a lot of time on her own, teaching herself the concepts with little to no contact with actual teachers. She liked that FCAO offered a completely different experience. She specifically mentioned taking chemistry and how the



Lead Principal Michael Hower personally congratulated each early graduate as part of the ceremony.

face-to-face tutoring sessions she had with Fox Chapel Area High School teacher Peter Shiner helped her.

Katy's goal is to become a Radio City Rockette and, for the past two years, she has participated in the Rockettes Summer Intensive program. This is a one-week program where students accepted by audition get to work with the world-renown dancers and Katy has already developed friendships with some of the Rockettes.

Now that she has finished high school, Katy has started classes at Community College of Allegheny County to get a jump-start on her academic studies. She will attend Point Park College in the fall on scholarship where she plans to major in dance, and may even double major by adding sports, arts, and entertainment management. She also plans to spend her summers in New York City attending the Broadway Dance Center Professional Semester.

Another early graduate was also a fully-cyber student, starting in 10th grade. Eliana Tolentino is a ballet dancer who practices and performs regularly through the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. She has been dancing with the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School since 2004 and her goal is to be a professional dancer with a ballet company. She has appeared in several ballet performances including "Cinderella," "Giselle," and the "The Nutcracker."



The high school hosted a reception for the graduates and their guests.

FCAO Online

Fox Chapel Area Online (FCAO) is available to students in the Fox Chapel Area School District in grades six-twelve. Whether a student is fully cyber or "flexes" their schedule to include some in-school and some online courses, the program offers the ability for students to pursue their dreams and interests while receiving a Fox Chapel Area High School diploma. Over the past seven years, the program has grown and is now up to 260 online course enrollments and each course is facilitated by a Fox Chapel Area teacher. The online program is perfect for competitive athletes, students with medical needs, aspiring performers, students with jobs, and students who want to take more courses than their class schedule allows. For more information, visit fcaonline.fcasd.edu.



2018 Early Grads Take Part in Special Ceremony

Fox Chapel Area High School's early graduation ceremony has become a special tradition for graduates and their families. Parents, family members, teachers, friends, and school counselors often attend to see the students celebrate this major milestone in their lives.

According to Lead Principal Michael Hower, not every school district can offer an early graduation, but because of the block scheduling, some students are able to obtain all of the credits they need midway through their senior year. He pointed out, "These students have met all the requirements of a very rigorous curriculum. The block schedule allows these students to start chasing that next step, that dream."

Early graduates this year have plans to attend college, travel, and work. One graduate, Ruopeng Wang, has since traveled to China to visit his father and friends there. Ruopeng was born in China and moved to the United States when he was 14-years-old. He plans to major in electrical engineering in college. Following the ceremony, Ruopeng said he will miss his friends and his teachers, but he won't miss the schoolwork, he added, laughing.

During the early graduation ceremony, Program Principal John McGee, Ph.D., pointed out that the special day is "not only a milestone for you. It's a milestone for your families." Perhaps, most importantly, he said, "As you go forward, know that we are very proud of you." He also reminded the students that they can always call if they need anything. "Just because you've graduated, doesn't mean you are no longer our kids."

Students who graduate early are also invited back to special events like the prom, and can also participate in the more formal June graduation ceremony with their classmates.

Fox Chapel Area's 2018 early graduation class included: Amanda Bozic, Taylor Braun, Brea Burkovich, Taylor Grandizio, Troy Hazard, Hailey Johnson, Ananya Malkani, Madison Marcussen, Shanna McKaveney, Mallory McNally, Kennedie Morris, Katelyn Photopoulos, Adam Skvorak, Eliana Tolentino, Anna Troyan, Anthony Upton, Ruopeng Wang, and Victoria Winegarden.



DMS STUDENTS HONOR SCHOOL BOARD



In honor of School Director Recognition Month, Dorseyville Middle School students wanted to give each of the School Board members a personal memento. They used their artistic talents to create unique handcrafted gifts so that Board members could feel appreciated for the time and talents they devote to the district's students.

All of the handmade items were crafted by sixth, seventh, and eighth

grade students and represented what they learn in art class. This included pieces from graphic design, digital photography, ceramics, drawing, metalwork, jewelry, modern crafts, and painting.

According to DMS art teacher Nanci Goldberg, the art department and the students truly enjoyed creating and sharing their artworks with the Board. "We love to have the opportunity to



- 1 A quartet of DMS eighth-grade orchestra members performed one of their favorite pieces for the School Board in honor of School Director Recognition Month in January.
- 2 Members of the DMS Student Government presented each Board member with a handcrafted gift.
- 3 Students from the Hartwood Elementary School Fifth Grade Band honored the Board in February by playing for them prior to the School Board meeting.
- 4-6 A sampling of the handcrafted items created by the DMS art students.

showcase our curriculum and the outstanding work our students are capable of," Ms. Goldberg stated. "The students seemed genuinely touched to be asked to create art for the School Board members and they love to show off what they can do."

The eighth-grade student council officers presented the gifts to the Board members. The officers are President Mia Martier, Vice President Anna Szymanski, Social Media Chair Kaylee Uribe, and Secretary/Treasurer Siddharth Yende.

Additionally, an orchestra quartet from DMS performed one of their favorite

pieces, Scott Joplin's "The Entertainer," for the Board. The quartet included eighth-grade orchestra members Nathaniel Mueller, Kaylee Uribe, Ben Vesper, and Annie Yonas.

School Director Recognition Month is a program of the Pennsylvania School Board's Association. It was started in 1985 and is held to honor school directors for their dedication and the many hours that they voluntarily spend to help students. Students from all six of the Fox Chapel Area schools take turns preparing a meaningful way to honor the Board each January.



O'HARA STUDENTS PERFORM FOR AREA SENIOR CITIZENS

The O'Hara Elementary 4th and 5th Grade Chorus took their winter concert on the road and presented performances at Lighthouse Pointe and Hampton Fields on January 18. The repertoire included: "Come Celebrate," "Tum Balalaika," "On the Back of an Eagle," "Ghost Ship," "Jubilate Deo," "The Tailor of Gloucester," "Bonse Aba," "Winter Fantasy," and "Jingle Bell Rock."

"We were so glad to be able to take our students to share their gifts with these special members of the community," said O'Hara music teacher Heidi Pandolfi. "Our students and the residents truly enjoyed this special opportunity."

According to fifth grader Marina Dunham, "I loved performing for the residents. It was nice to see their faces when we were singing the music." She added, "I think the residents enjoyed having visitors. They probably don't see many kids. I bet they get to see adults usually. Seeing kids was probably fun for them. It was also probably nice for them to hear a concert."



Photo Courtesy John Young

"It was so fun singing for the residents," said fourth grader Dan DeMotte. "I especially loved singing 'On the Back of an Eagle.' I thought the residents really enjoyed that song too. I felt like singing for them was really meaningful. I think we sang well and they probably don't get the chance to see younger children very often. They were so nice."



A Vietnam veteran and Navy photographer and resident of Lighthouse Pointe, John Young, took photos of the performance and then shared them with Mrs. Pandolfi. On the day of his visit to O'Hara, he talked with her about his career as a photographer and his service to our country. He also shared how much the children's performance meant to him. In fact, he enjoyed the visit so much that he would like to create flyers and posters to promote next year's performance so that none of the other residents will miss it.

The performances were part of a community service outreach, and this is the second year that the O'Hara chorus visited area senior citizen centers.





The telethon student hosts interviewed Jeremy Kronman and his son Ben. Mr. Kronman has been involved with the Make-A-Wish Foundation for 13 years and has served as both a board member and vice chairman of the Board. Ben is a volunteer for the organization.

ANNUAL TELETHON BENEFITS MAKE-A-WISH

In a return to its roots, the 28th Annual Fox Chapel Area School District Telethon benefited Make-A-Wish® of Greater Pennsylvania and West Virginia – the same charity chosen for the very first telethon in 1990. The 2017 telethon raised nearly \$39,000.

Students from all six schools in the district (including Fairview, Hartwood, Kerr, and O'Hara elementary schools; Dorseyville Middle School; and Fox Chapel Area High School) participated. Teacher, parent, and community representatives also got involved and made donations during the live event



The members of the high school conservation club donated \$150 from their "dirt" sale.



A telethon host interviewed Make-A-Wish Development Coordinator Samara Silverstein.

that is produced by the digital media production students and coordinated by the high school student government.

This was senior digital media student Abbe Cohen's fourth year working on the telethon. "I've gotten to work my way up from a freshman floor manager to a senior director," she said.

Although Abbe enjoyed working on the telethon, she acknowledged that it requires a lot of work. However, she believes that it is important to help others. "This telethon does such amazing things for people and I've wanted to be a part of it since fifth grade," Abbe said. "Make-A-Wish is a

FCEA COLLECTS BLANKETS TO HELP OTHERS

Members of the Fox Chapel Educators Association (FCEA) recently collected more than 165 new and gently-used blankets. The association collected the blankets over a two-week period as part of its endeavors to reach out beyond the Fox Chapel Area schools and into the communities. The blankets were donated to two Aspinwall residents who venture out every Monday evening to personally deliver blankets to the homeless in the greater Pittsburgh area. The FCEA feels that this underpublicized charity is very worthwhile and decided to conduct a blanket collection to assist in the efforts.

According to Fairview Elementary School computer science teacher and FCEA President-Elect Lisa Lang, reaching out to serve others in the community is a very important lesson for everyone. "We realize it isn't only necessary to educate the students academically, so we choose these types of projects to not only give back to the community, but to model stewardship for our students."

The members of the FCEA have made it a priority to help others. In the past, they have conducted food, book, and clothing drives that benefit the Fox Chapel Area School District community and beyond. The FCEA has 381 members and includes teachers, librarians, nurses, and school counselors.



Fairview Elementary School teachers Dennis Emert and Kristen Bost fold donations from the FCEA blanket drive. Mr. Emert is an instrumental music teacher and Mrs. Bost is a second-grade teacher.



Fairview Elementary School teachers Mrs. Bost (left) and Lisa Lang box donations from the FCEA blanket drive. Mrs. Lang, a computer science teacher, is the FCEA president-elect.



The digital media production students produced the telethon.

great organization and I loved working with them and talking to people involved. I could not be more proud of the other students in the TV department for helping me to put on such a great show and raise so much money for Make-A-Wish."

This year the telethon was available in high definition and was streamed live on the Swift Fox Media YouTube channel. The telethon was also aired live December 22 through Verizon FIOS and Comcast.

The 2017 telethon total brings the money raised by Fox Chapel Area School District students to more than \$805,000 over the last 28 years for various local and regional charities.



A Hartwood Elementary School fifth grader proudly sports his ugly sweater. The school sponsored an ugly sweater day with all proceeds going to Make-A-Wish.



Students across the district held many fundraisers for the telethon.



Dorseyville Middle School Student Council officers presented the middle school's contribution to Make-A-Wish on-air during the telethon.



The Fox Chapel Area bocce team members celebrated a great play!

LAUNCH OF NEW SPORT UNIFIES STUDENTS

It's a sport in which mere inches can mean the difference in scoring a point or not, and at times, referees must carefully take a tape measure to make the determination. There is applause after each of the players rolls the ball, aiming to get close to the target called a pallino. "It's going to be close," the announcer says as an athlete rolls a ball through the playing court.

Well over 100 students, teachers, and parents of athletes attended the first-ever indoor bocce match played at Fox Chapel Area High School on January 25. The newest high school sport, indoor bocce, is unique because it is designed to include an equal number of students with disabilities alongside their peers who do not have disabilities. Part of the Unified Sports program offered in Allegheny

County schools and sponsored by Special Olympics, the two teams of eight athletes on the Foxes bocce team hold regular practices and competitions – just like all of the high school interscholastic athletic teams.

Although students with disabilities are included on interscholastic sports teams, they sometimes cannot fully take part. "This gives them the opportunity to participate in an entire sport, in every way with their peers," said life skills teacher and one of the Foxes bocce coaches Anna Hopper.

"They want to do something in school like everyone else."

According to senior Bailey Beal, who watched the Foxes bocce team compete from the stands, "These kids are the best!" She was excited about the great turnout for the first competition.



A member of the Foxes bocce team launched his ball. It takes strategy to decide just how hard to roll the ball to maximize a shooter's advantage. Even if the ball is close to the target, the next opponent may strategically hit that ball away from the pallino.



Special Education Facilitator Michele Fischer and Jack Aducci completed online training in order to qualify as referees. They attend team practices and officiate at matches.

“We tried to get everyone to come. This is awesome!”

Freshman bocce team member Benny Friedman was a fan favorite. Bailey pointed out that he is on the sidelines helping at every football game, and members of the football team attended the bocce match to see him play and cheer him on.

In the first match of the afternoon, it seemed as though the Shaler Area Titans were going to dominate. Then the Foxes came from behind in the final minutes to tie the match. The match went into overtime, but the Foxes couldn't hold on, and Shaler Area won. Between matches, the high school cheerleading squad performed cheers to help build the crowd's enthusiasm. Once again in the second match, Shaler Area led, but this time the Foxes came from behind, tied, and then defeated their opponent.

Senior Arky Hagan and freshman Jack Nury, both members of Best Buddies, were the announcers who provided the



Each member of the team rolls a ball, and the object of the game is to land the ball closest to the pallino, a target on the bocce court. The team whose bocce ball is closest to the target is “in,” and the opposing team is “out.” At the end of each round, the “in” team scores a point for every ball that is closer to the target than any of their opponent's balls.

play-by-play commentary for the home bocce matches. “I just wanted to help out,” Jack said. “I thought it was great.”

An officer of Best Buddies, Arky agreed, saying, “I thought it was really fun!”

Members of the Fox Chapel Area High School Indoor Bocce Team include: seniors Brooke Hagmaier, Lainey Kasian, Alexander Miles, and Rachel Miles; juniors Kate Feczko, Sabrina McQuarrie, Jasmine Rychorcowicz, Lexie Schutzman, Carly Shelestak, and Zachary Yonas; sophomore Claudia DeMartino; and freshmen Benny Friedman, Crispin Galyardt, Paul Ortiz, Elijah Rynkiewicz, and Emma Wecht.

In addition to Mrs. Hopper, the Foxes' coaches include the district's Transition Facilitator Stacie Dojonovic, Ed.D., and Fox Chapel Area High School Program Principal John McGee, Ph.D.

The Foxes bocce team played a second match against Avonworth High School later in February and participated in the countywide match on March 7. Winners from the countywide matches will participate in the state finals to be held in Hershey.



The high school cheerleading squad helped build enthusiasm and support during the Foxes bocce tournament.



Student announcers provided the play-by-play for the enthusiastic crowd during the match.



Director of the Western Pennsylvania Learning Academy, Lisa Gibson, meets with two students who are enrolled in Empower2018.

NEW SUMMER PROGRAMS TO BOOST LEADERSHIP SKILLS

What happens when you combine two widely popular and successful summer learning programs? You create a new learning opportunity that will Empower high school students with skills that last a lifetime! The Western Pennsylvania Learning Academy at Fox Chapel Area High School has partnered with Dale Carnegie & Associates to create Empower2018, a new and innovative leadership program.

"I am so excited about this program because we were able to take the best of the former STEMM Academy and LAUNCH programs and use those as a foundation to build something totally new that will help our students to not only be successful in their chosen career path, but in life," said Lisa Gibson, the director of the Western Pennsylvania Learning Academy and Fox Chapel Area High School's gifted education coordinator. "One of the main purposes of the summer program is to help students learn to communicate well and network, and to help students learn to showcase their skills and talents."

Through a series of interactive, real-life experiences and professional exposure, Empower2018 will offer students the opportunity to learn and practice social, professional, and interpersonal skills. Attendees will also realize their leadership potential, step outside of their comfort zone, and step into their growth zone. "The skills they will acquire are universally coveted by today's employers, regardless of technical skill sets," Mrs. Gibson said.

She continued, "Our program is totally unique, especially in that it can be accessed by students from any school district."

Open to incoming 10th, 11th, and 12th graders, the 13-day comprehensive leadership program will include eight complete Dale Carnegie Training™ sessions. Dale Carnegie's "Skills for Success for Young Adults" focuses on five key areas that are





critical for future success. The comprehensive Empower2018 program will earn students two college credits.

A nine-day emerging leadership program is also available for 10th, 11th, and 12th graders that includes four modified Dale Carnegie Training sessions.

In addition to the Dale Carnegie classes, Empower will include a blend of workshops that focus on mindfulness, leadership, executive functioning skills, building a positive digital footprint, professional networking, and more. There will be keynote speakers, active sessions, and networking breakfasts in which the students will interact with professionals from a multitude of career paths in order to practice their new-found networking skills.

Fox Chapel Area High School junior Tori Crittendon, who has already signed up for the summer program, anticipates that it will help her be able to communicate better in a work environment and also help her feel more confident when interviewing and speaking with adults. "I think it's a good résumé builder and it will help me become a better leader. I will be learning things people don't learn until they're actually in a work environment," she said. Freshman Xavier Perry agreed saying that he anticipates the program will help him learn leadership skills that will enable him to be the best that he can be, while still helping others realize their potential for success.

Need-based financial aid is available for the Empower2018 program and there are discounts for families enrolling more than one child. Enrollees also receive a 50 percent discount on the career-related summer Fox Chapel Area Online (FCAO) courses, College and Career Essentials and SAT Prep. The Empower program was developed by Mrs. Gibson; Fox Chapel Area High School Lead Principal Michael Hower; Fox Chapel Area High School social studies teacher Lesley Cowles, Ed.D.; and Fox Chapel Area School District's Online Learning Coordinator Randi Leonard.



EMPOWER2018

Comprehensive Leadership Program

June 18-22, 25-28 & July 10, 12, 17 & 19

8:45 a.m.-1 p.m.

For incoming 10th-12th graders

Price: \$800

- Eight complete Dale Carnegie Training™ Skills for Success for Young Adults sessions
- Two eligible college credits for completing full Dale Carnegie course
- Interactions with motivational speakers and business professionals

Emerging Leadership Program

June 18-22 & 25-28

8:45 a.m.-1 p.m.

For incoming 10th-12th graders

Price: \$400

- Four modified Dale Carnegie Training sessions
- Interactions with motivational speakers and business professionals

FIRST STEP for Incoming Freshmen

Also associated with Empower2018 is FIRST STEP, a five-day preparatory program specifically designed for incoming Fox Chapel Area High School freshmen. Students will practice academic strategies for success including understanding the importance of their cyber profile, discovering their leadership potential, experiencing the value of teamwork, and identifying and utilizing quality resources. Additionally, students will acquire personal, interpersonal, organizational, and learning skills and strategies enabling success in high school and beyond.

"FIRST STEP Empower2018 will focus on the necessities of high school transition, learning skill-sets, thinking strategies and executive functioning skills, and intrapersonal & interpersonal leadership skills," according to high school social studies teacher Lesley Cowles, Ed.D., who is the program's coordinator.

The FIRST STEP program will be held June 18-22. Tuition is \$50 and students will take part in Empower2018 motivational and keynote speaker events. District transportation and financial aid are available for FIRST STEP.

For more information, visit wpalearning.fcasd.edu, contact Lisa Gibson at 412/967-2479, or email Lisa_Gibson@fcasd.edu.



SECOND SUMMER STEAM CAMP PROMISES FUN WITH LEARNING

“STEAM camp was really fun and I made some great friends! I learned how to 3D print, and at the end of the camp, I 3D printed my own working fidget spinner! It was really cool to see it build my design layer by layer.”

“The VEX robots camp was very fun! I learned about coding and robotics... It was challenging, but fun, too!”

“The escape room camp was a great experience. It was fun to go try a real escape room, but even more interesting to learn how to build our own.”



These are just some of the comments made by the enthusiastic students who participated in Fox Chapel Area School District's first-ever summer STEAM camp last June. The district will offer these exciting camps again this summer to rising first through ninth graders.

Students will have a range of camp opportunities to choose from that infuse Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, and Mathematics into stimulating learning experiences. Some of this year's camp topics and activities will include robotics, Shark Tank, rocket science, circuitry, drones, escape rooms, Rube Goldberg contraptions, science Olympiad, and graphic design.

The 2018 summer STEAM camp will be held June 18-22 at Hartwood Elementary School from 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. The cost is \$225 and need-based scholarships are available. On the final day of the camp, students will show off what they learned, built, and created at an open house for family members.



Photo Courtesy
Ben Fillo for The Sprout Fund



Photo Courtesy
Ben Fillo for The Sprout Fund

Anyone interested may also make a donation toward the camp. Donations will fund scholarships that will help students who receive free-and-reduced-lunch take part in a STEAM camp at no cost. The first \$1,000 of donations will be personally matched by district administrators.

To register and/or make a donation, please visit: <https://fcassteamcamp2018.eventbrite.com>.

KERR BOOSTER PROMOTES POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

Kerr Elementary School third-fifth grade students were treated to a spring booster thanks to the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) staff and student committees. On February 23, students participated in rock painting and team-building activities, and watched videos created by their fellow students.

The videos, part of the Kerr Kids Care Video Series, featured topics such as dignity, the golden rule, random acts of kindness, and empathy. They were shown to the students and teachers then facilitated discussions on the positive concepts addressed in the videos.

The rock painting was part of the school's "Kerr Kindness Rocks" initiative. The rocks have been placed outside of teacher Stan Strzempek's room as part of a special garden. "When a student is looking for a little positive encouragement, they may visit the garden and take a rock. When he or she no longer needs that rock, they may leave it in the community for others to find, thus paying it forward," Mr. Strzempek said. The idea was the



The painted rocks will be placed in this special garden in the school. Each of the rocks has a positive message designed to give students encouragement. The "Kerr Kindness Rocks" initiative is supported by the student council.



Kerr student council sponsor Stan Strzempek gave instructions on how to decorate the kindness rocks. He told the students, "I want you to decorate it. I want you to put your heart and soul into it."

brainchild of Kerr fifth grader Ava Andrascik, who came up with the idea when her aunt told her about a similar project in her community that had a tremendous impact. Ava liked the idea because it was something that could involve everyone in the school. "Especially fifth grade because it's our last year here and it lets everyone leave their mark on the school," Ava said after she decorated her very own special rock featuring the words "Never give up!"

The lesson taught in the team-building activities in the gym was that students need to work together in order to achieve success. Students found themselves working cooperatively to find creative solutions on how to get from one place to another on their scooters without touching the gym floor. Physical education teacher Alex Slezak brought the students together at the end to talk about the importance of individuals pulling together to think about the good of the whole team.

Kerr holds two PBIS boosters each year, said Kerr Behavior Specialist Stacy Trpcic. "These boosters serve as a motivator and a reminder to our students to work really hard on our goals of respect, responsibility, and integrity."

At the end of the day, all of the students watched the movie "Wonder,"



Three Kerr students proudly showed off the rocks that they decorated.



Kerr students participated in team-building activities in the gym as part of the spring booster.

which encompasses the themes of kindness and acceptance.

As an effort to carry this lesson out in the community, the Kerr students hope that when residents see a #KERRROCKS out in the community, that they will pick it up, admire it, let it brighten their day, post about it on social media with that special hashtag, and, most of all, pay it forward!



NEW BOARD MEMBER TO DEVOTE ENERGY TO PROMOTING PUBLIC EDUCATION

With four of her five children graduated from Fox Chapel Area High School, Edith Cook, Ph.D., said she felt now was the time to serve on the Board of School Directors. “After attending the emergency District Forum meeting last January regarding state funding, my resolve was strengthened to devote energy to helping our district promote the value of public education and to help address potential threats to public funding,” Dr. Cook said. She was elected in November and sworn in at the School Board reorganization meeting on December 4.

“As a parent in this school district, I know first-hand that our exemplary reputation is well-deserved. My children have all received an excellent education from Fox Chapel Area schools.” As a member of the School Board, she said, “I hope that my skill set will be an asset to the district and I intend to contribute to efforts to achieve our mission of maximizing student learning, achievement, and development.”

Dr. Cook currently holds the position of senior director of institutional research and effectiveness at Carlow University. She attended the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, and earned bachelor’s degrees in psychology and East Asian studies, has a master’s degree in program evaluation and



planning, and a doctorate of philosophy in evaluation and policy analysis from Cornell University. In addition to serving on the School Board, Dr. Cook is an active member of Global Pittsburgh, has taught English as a second language through the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council, volunteers with the Jewish Family & Children’s Services, and is a former president and board member of the Fox Chapel American Association of University Women (AAUW). As a former Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities program fellow, she led a team of clinicians, educators, and young people with disabilities and their families to improve coordination of services related to the transition to adulthood.

A 15-year resident of Fox Chapel Borough, Dr. Cook said she can often be found walking the family dog, Bumi, at the Squaw Run dog park. Her husband, Arnold “Arnie” Cook, is an inventor and entrepreneur, who frequently shares his expertise with Fox Chapel Area students, explaining how to design hands-on solutions and how to test and patent ideas. The couple’s children include: Talora Martin (Class of 2011) who attends Case Western Medical School; Christin Cook (Class of 2013) who teaches in a school district outside Kyoto, Japan; Jocelyn Martin (Class of 2013) who is a Minnesota Reading Corps volunteer; Adam Cook (Class of 2017) who attends Allegheny College; and Quentin Cook, a student at Dorseyville Middle School.

Dr. Cook replaces long-time School Director Joel R. Weinstein who retired from the Board in December after more than 21 years of service.



COORDINATOR OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TO SUPPORT LITERACY GOALS



Photo Courtesy Hill's Studio

As the district's new coordinator of English language arts, Dana Simile is excited to provide leadership that ensures all students thrive and grow as learners. "The language arts department has a goal to challenge each student to reach his or her maximum potential," she said. "Critical reading and academic writing is essential to success. It

is my hope to support the department in these endeavors."

On the job since December, Mrs. Simile will devote much of her time to working directly with teachers through staff development. "Research shows that students benefit most through teacher education and empowerment," Mrs. Simile said. "My ambition is to support teachers' professional learning and the implementation of quality instructional practices to facilitate positive student outcomes."

Mrs. Simile brings broad experience in English language arts instruction to the district, having experience at all grade levels K-12 and has worked with teachers and administrators from

many districts over the years. Prior to being hired at Fox Chapel Area, she worked in various grade levels as a teacher, reading specialist, gifted educator, and instructional coach in both the North Hills and Quaker Valley school districts.

Mrs. Simile said she is interested in research-based instructional practices, student engagement, and helping develop critical thinking skills in the classroom. She also has a special interest in the area of writing instruction.

Mrs. Simile has a bachelor's degree in biochemistry and political science from Washington & Jefferson College. She has a master's in education from Chatham College, as well as a master's in education/instructional coaching with a reading specialist degree from Slippery Rock University.

She and her husband, Tony, are residents of Hampton Township. They enjoy the arts, including ballet, theatre, and museums and like to travel to cities, especially New York. Interestingly, Mrs. Simile is also a certified personal trainer and teaches classes at a local gym. She has also coached many softball teams throughout the years, including some high school varsity teams.

"My ambition is to support teachers' professional learning and the implementation of quality instructional practices to facilitate positive student outcomes."

SCHOOL BOARD REORGANIZATION MEETING

The Fox Chapel Area Board of School Directors held its annual reorganization meeting December 4, 2017. Terry L. Wirginis was re-elected president, Nancy B. Foster was re-elected vice president, and Sandra M. Garbisch was re-elected assistant secretary. The Board also appointed Robert Mauro as the treasurer.

The Board set the meeting schedule and will meet on the following dates for the remainder of the year:

Agenda Study Sessions

April 9* (Fox Chapel Area High School); May 7* (Dorseyville Middle School); June 4 (O'Hara Elementary School); August 13* (Fox Chapel Area High School); September 10* (Fox Chapel Area High School); October 1 (A.W. Beattie Career Center); November 5 (Kerr Elementary School); and December 3* (Fox Chapel Area High School).

Regular Business Meetings

April 9*; May 7* (Dorseyville Middle School); June 11; August 13*; September 10*; October 8; November 12; and

December 3*. All regular business meetings and combined meetings are held at Fox Chapel Area High School unless otherwise indicated.

The School Board's annual reorganization meeting will be held December 3, immediately following the December combined agenda study session and regular business meeting.

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

Additionally, as part of the reorganization meeting, re-elected Board members Mr. Mauro; Somer Obernauer Jr.; and Dharmesh Vyas, M.D., Ph.D., and newly-elected Board member Edith L. Cook, Ph.D., were all sworn in by Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas Judge, The Honorable Kevin G. Sasinoski.

Lisa M. Rutkowski and Eric C. Schmidt are also members of the Fox Chapel Area Board of School Directors.

**Indicates a combined agenda study session and regular business meeting.*



INDOOR TRACK & FIELD MAKES STRIDES AS INTERSCHOLASTIC SPORT

Even though it's called "indoor" track, chances are you'll often see members of the Foxes' winter team braving the elements as they traverse local neighborhoods or, as long as conditions permit, training outside on the high school's track and field. They don't seem to mind the elements too much, nor does coach Tom Moul, who often runs alongside his athletes.

Coach Moul, also a science teacher at the high school, founded the team as a club sport in 2011, and continues to lead it in its second year as a school-sanctioned interscholastic sport. The transition has not changed the opponents they face, but it has eliminated the athletes having to pay meet fees on their own and find transportation to and from competitions. But, even better for the team as a whole, their new status has produced increased commitment among the student-athletes, as well as spurred membership to its highest levels ever.

"Kids are now attracted to the program because, as an interscholastic sport,





Photo Courtesy Hill's Studio

it allows them to compete officially, earn athletic letters, and put their accomplishments on their college résumés,” says Coach Moul, who also heads up the cross country and outdoor track teams. “Plus, I think many of them have had good success and experiences outdoors in either cross country or track and want to continue training. Of course that’s something we, as coaches, encourage, especially for distance runners because their program is designed for them to go from one season to the next, and then peak in mid-May for the WPIAL championships.”

If their record-breaking times are any indication, the athletes are way ahead of schedule and week-by-week are shattering more and more records.

Senior Andrew Jeffrey broke the school indoor record in the 60-meter dash, and the boys’ 1,600-meter relay team of senior Ben Kronman, junior Korey Simmons, sophomore Evan Kieffer, and freshman Jaques Moye, also made school history this season when they broke the previous indoor record. Additionally, the 4 x 200-meter relay team of Andrew, Ben, Evan, and senior Ryan Weinberger also broke a school indoor record.

The girls also had great success in 2018 and broke a number of school records of their own. Sophomore

Maddy Kieffer broke the record in the 400-meter dash twice, and junior Erasmia Yager set a new shot-put record. The 1,600-meter and 4 x 200-meter relay teams of juniors Abby Baldauf, Marissa Hardiman, and Carolyn Veith, along with Maddy, also made history by setting new school records. So did junior Sarena Seeger (in the 1,600-meter; the 3,000-meter; and the 3,200-meter). Sarena also helped break the record as part of the 3,200-meter relay and the distance medley relay teams that also included junior Annika Urban and sophomores Brooke Kraly and Grace Sisson.

The entire crew of record-breaking athletes advanced to the Tri-State Track & Field Coaches Association (TSTCA) meet, including sophomore Christian Fitch, who qualified in the 3,000-meter run, had a great breakout year as a freshman in 2017, and is exceeding expectations again this year. The TSTCA event, which was held February 17 at Edinboro University, is the equivalent of the WPIAL championships in other sports.

At the TSTCA meet the following students medaled: Christian (second place), Sarena (fourth place), Grace (sixth place), and Annika (eighth place) – 3,000-meters; Sarena (fourth place) and Grace (sixth place) – mile; and Andrew (eighth place) – 60-meters.

Based on their times during the season, Sarena and Grace both qualified in the mile for the state meet that was held February 25 at Penn State. This is the first time since it became a school-sponsored sport that the team has sent representatives to states.

“It was great that Sarena and Grace qualified,” says Coach Moul. “They fed off each other and pushed themselves the entire time and had a great race. Sarena isn’t even a miler normally, so that makes her performance even more impressive.”

“I think the transition into an interscholastic sport at Fox Chapel Area High School certainly has helped by virtue of continuity and what’s best for their progress,” continues Coach Moul. “Moreover, there is a certain group of kids who absolutely love track and field and love to compete. This gives them the opportunity to do that, while also developing the camaraderie that goes along with being on a team.”

Senior thrower Seth Bowman agrees. “We spend so much time together while we’re traveling to meets that can be up to two hours away – and then we’re there for up to eight hours. That has created a really tight-knit group where we’re all working toward a common goal and it’s fun because we always cheer each other on.”





FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 2017-2018 FACTS & FIGURES

2017-2018 STUDENT ENROLLMENT

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (K-GRADE 5)

Fairview Elementary School	358
Hartwood Elementary School	371
Kerr Elementary School	365
O'Hara Elementary School	673
Total Elementary Enrollment	1,767

SECONDARY SCHOOLS (GRADES 6-12)

Dorseyville Middle School (6-8)	896
Fox Chapel Area High School (9-12)	1,346
Total Secondary Enrollment	2,242
Total District Enrollment	4,009

CLASS OF 2017

The total number of graduates in the Fox Chapel Area High School Class of 2017 was 321. The percentages of 2017 graduates entering some type of postsecondary education were as follows:

Four-Year Colleges	236 or 74%
Two-Year Colleges	51 or 16%
Total Continuing Education	287 or 90%

AVERAGE SAT SCORES

	Evidence-Based Reading & Writing	Math	
Class of 2017	611	606	
	Critical Reading	Math	Writing
Class of 2016	563	572	557
Class of 2015	562	574	561
Class of 2014	568	583	569
Class of 2013	567	578	561

A total of 240 members (72 percent) of the Class of 2017 took the SAT during their junior or senior year. The national average scores for all 2017 graduates taking the test were 538 in evidence-based reading and writing and 533 in math.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF STATISTICS

NUMBER OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Elementary	172
Secondary	213
Total	385

MASTER'S OR DOCTORATE DEGREE OR EQUIVALENT

Elementary	75%
Secondary	81%

AVERAGE YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Elementary	18 Years
Secondary	18 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

2018-2019 Fox Chapel Area School District Calendar

August 2018				
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
I	I	I	P/C	FC
13	14	15	16	17
P	P	FC		(2)
20	21	22	23	24
				(7)
27	28	29	30	31

September 2018				
X				(11)
3	4	5	6	7
X				(15)
10	11	12	13	14
		X		(19)
17	18	19	20	21
				(24)
24	25	26	27	28

October 2018				
				(29)
1	2	3	4	5
		E/+		(34)
8	9	10	11	12
				(39)
15	16	17	18	19
				E/C (44)
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

November 2018				
			1	R (49)
			2	
E/CONF	CONF+			(53)
5	6	7	8	9
				(58)
12	13	14	15	16
		E/+ (61)	X	X
19	20	21	22	23
X				(65)
26	27	28	29	30

December 2018				
				(70)
3	4	5	6	7
				(75)
10	11	12	13	14
				(80)
17	18	19	20	21
X	X	X	X	X
24	25	26	27	28
X				
31				

January 2019				
	X			(83)
1	2	3	4	
				(88)
7	8	9	10	11
			(92)	FC
14	15	16	17	18
P				R (96)
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

February 2019				
				(101)
				1
				(106)
4	5	6	7	8
			(110)	P
11	12	13	14	15
X				(114)
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	

March 2019				
				(119)
				1
				(124)
4	5	6	7	8
				(129)
11	12	13	14	15
				E/C (134)
18	19	20	21	22
X	X	X	X	X
25	26	27	28	29

April 2019				
				R (139)
1	2	3	4	5
				(144)
8	9	10	11	12
			(148)	X
15	16	17	18	19
				(153)
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

May 2019				
		1	2	(158)
				3
				(163)
6	7	8	9	10
				(168)
13	14	15	16	17
				(173)
20	21	22	23	24
X		K/E		(177)
27	28	29	30	31

June 2019				
				E/C (182)
3	4	5	6	7
P	P	FC	P/C	R
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

1st Grading Period – October 26 – 44 days
 2nd Grading Period – January 17 – 48 days
 3rd Grading Period – March 22 – 42 days
 4th Grading Period – June 7 – 48 days

November 5 – Elem/Sec Early Dismissal &
 Parent Teacher Conference Day
 November 6 – Parent Teacher Conference Day
 (No School for Students)

June 7 – Last Day for Students = 182 Days
 (unless make up days are required)

June 13 – Last Day for Professional Staff = 195 Days
 (unless make up days are required)

First Semester

8/13-15	New Teacher Induction Days
8/16	Professional Development/Clerical Day
8/17 & 22	Full Clerical Days
8/20 & 21	Professional Development Days
8/23	First Day for Students
9/3	Labor Day
9/10 & 19	Fall Break
10/10	Elem/Sec Early Dismissal
10/26	Elem/Sec Early Dismissal & Clerical Day
11/5	Elem/Sec Early Dismissal & Parent Teacher Conference Day
11/6	Parent Teacher Conference Day
11/21	Elem/Sec Early Dismissal
11/22-26	Thanksgiving Break
12/24-1/1	Winter Break

Second Semester

1/18	Full Clerical Day
1/21	Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday & Professional Development Day
2/15	Professional Development Day
2/18	Presidents' Day
3/22	Elem/Sec Early Dismissal & Clerical Day
3/25-29	Spring Break (*See note below)
4/19	Spring Holiday
5/27	Memorial Day
5/29	Kennywood Day & Early Dismissal
6/7	Last Day for Students Elem/Sec Early Dismissal & Clerical Day
6/9	Commencement
6/10 & 11	Professional Development Days
6/12	Full Clerical Day
6/13	Professional Development/Clerical Day

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
R	Report Cards Available

April 15-May 3 shaded areas indicate PSSA testing windows. January 7-18 and May 13-24 shaded areas 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 10, 11, 12, and 13, 2019**

*Please Note: The 2019 spring break does not fall around the Easter holiday, as it traditionally has. This is due to the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) testing that is mandated by the state.





FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT DIRECTORY

District Administration

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

District Resource Staff

Executive Director of Elementary Education and Instruction: Ashley L. Nestor, Ed.D.
Executive Director of Secondary Education and Instruction: Matthew J. Harris, Ed.D.
Director of Special Education and Pupil Services: Timothy A. Mahoney
Executive Director of Instructional and Innovative Leadership: Megan Cicconi
Director of Literacy: Sari Brecosky
Director of Student Achievement and Instructional Verification: G. Daniel DiDesiderio III, Ed.D.
Coordinator of English Language Arts: Dana Simile
Director of Ancillary Services: Daniel Breitzkreutz
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, Ed.D.

Hartwood Elementary School

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

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: Kristy L. Batis
Assistant Principal: Stephen P. Edwards

Dorseyville Middle School

3732 Saxonburg Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/767-5343
Principal: Jonathan T. Nauhaus
Assistant Principal:
Cassandra L. Pencek

Fox Chapel Area High School

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

For the latest information on school activities and weather-related delays and cancellations, visit the Fox Chapel Area School District 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.

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

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

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

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

FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL BOARD

Photo Courtesy Hill's Studio



Front Row (left to right): Robert Mauro, Treasurer (2021 - Region III); Nancy B. Foster, Vice President (2019 - Region III); Gene Freeman, Ed.D., Superintendent; Terry L. Wirginis, President (2019 - Region II); and Sandra M. Garbisch, Assistant Secretary (2019 - Region II)

Second Row (left to right): Lisa M. Rutkowski (2019 - Region I); Edith L. Cook, Ph.D. (2021 - Region III); Somer Obernauer Jr. (2021 - Region I); Eric C. Schmidt (2019 - Region I); and Dharmesh Vyas, M.D., Ph.D. (2021 - Region II)

Third Row (left to right): David P. McCommons, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent; Kathleen Anuszek, Board Secretary; and Paul J. Giuffre, Esq., Solicitor

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

School Board meetings are usually scheduled for the first and second Mondays of each month at 7 p.m. The public is invited to attend.