BUZZ FROM THE HIVE
A newsletter of the Ferndale Area School District

2023 "Every child known, safe, inspired, challenged, and empowered." 2023

Annual Public Notices

Federal Law, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that all school districts report the professional teaching qualification of teachers to the public. The Ferndale Area School District's professional personnel are all highly qualified teachers (100%). This means that every teacher has a college degree in the courses they teach and are certified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education with a teaching license. Additionally, all paraprofessionals (teacher aides) in the Ferndale Area School District are highly qualified (100%). This means that every teacher aide has a college degree and/or is certified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education with a Paraprofessional Credential of Competency certificate. All of our teachers and teacher aides receive professional development annually in their areas of study to continually update their knowledge and skills.

All instructional materials, including teachers' manuals, audiovisuals, or other supplementary instructional material, used in the instructional program shall be available for inspection by the parents or students in accordance with Board policy. Instructional materials do not include tests or academic assessments. Parents and students (age 18 and over) have a right to access information about the curriculum, including expected student learning outcomes, instructional materials and assessment techniques. For more information and/or to see the full board policy on review of instructional materials, please refer to Policy No. 105.1 Review of Instructional Materials by Parents/Guardians and Students under the Board Policies tab on the district's website www.fasdk12.org.

Attendance The Board recognizes that attendance is an important factor in educational success, and supports a comprehensive approach to identify and address attendance issues. The Board requires the attendance of all students during the days and hours that school is in session, except that temporary student absences may be excused by authorized district staff in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, Board policy and administrative regulations. For more information and/or to see the full board policy on attendance, please refer to Policy No. 204 Attendance under the Board Policies tab on the district's website www.fasdk12.org.

Enrollment of Students The Board shall enroll school age students eligible to attend district schools, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, Board policy and administrative regulations. School age shall be defined as the period from the earliest admission age for the district's kindergarten program until graduation from high school or the end of the school term in which a student reaches the age of twenty-one (21) years, whichever occurs first. District of residence shall be defined as the school district in which a student's parents/guardians reside. For more information and/or to see the full board policy on enrollment of students, please refer to Policy No. 200 Enrollment of Students under the Board Policies tab on the district's website www.fasdk12.org.

Homeless Each year, more than 800,000 school age children in the United States experience homelessness. The Ferndale Area School District is required to provide activities for, and services to, homeless children, including preschool age homeless children and youths, enabling them to enroll in, attend, and succeed in school or preschool programs. The law states that, pending resolution of a dispute about school placement, a school district must immediately enroll a homeless student in the student's school of origin or other school selected on the basis of the child's best interest. Homeless students are defined as individuals lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, which include the following conditions: sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or similar reason; living in motels, hotels, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations; living in emergency, transitional or domestic violence shelters; abandoned in hospitals; awaiting foster care placement; using public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings, as a primary nighttime residence; living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings; living as migratory children in conditions described in previous examples; living as run-away children, abandoned or forced out of homes by parents/guardians or caretakers, or separated from parents/guardians for any other reason; and living as school age parents/guardians in houses for school age parents/guardians if they have no other living accommodations.

If you know of a child/student who may be homeless, please call any of the school offices and notify staff there who will follow up on your concern. For more information on homeless education and/or to see the full board policy on homeless students, please refer to the district's website www.fasdk12.org, Homeless Education and Policy No. 251 Students' Experiencing Homelessness, Foster Care and Other Educational Instability under the Board Policies tab.

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Ferndale Area School District

Board of Education

President
Mrs. Susan Boyle - Dale
Vice-President
Mr. Richard Pavic - Ferndale
Secretary
Mr. Barry Himes - Ferndale
Treasurer
Mr. Jason Moschgat - Middle Taylor
Board Members
Mr. Joshua Hyland - Middle Taylor
Mrs. Kimberly Kinsey - Dale
Dr. James McKendree - Middle Taylor
Mr. Stephen Thompson - Ferndale
Mrs. Patricia Wilson - Dale

Administration

Ferndale Area School District
100 Dartmouth Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15905
814-535-1507

Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Jeffrey Boyer
Business Manager
Mr. David Gates
Director of Education
Dr. William Brotz
Principal PreK3 - 12
Mr. Travis Robison

Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School
600 Harlan Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15905
814-288-5757

Assistant Principal
Mr. Bernard Conway

Ferndale Area Elementary School
100 Dartmouth Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15905
814-535-6724

Assistant Principal
Mrs. Amy Mykut

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School Board Meetings

Board Workshop Meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month, except for the month of December, and when otherwise advertised.

Board Voting Meetings are held the fourth Wednesday of each, except for the month of December, and when otherwise advertised.

Meetings are not scheduled for the month of July.

Board Meetings are held in the Elementary School Board Room, 100 Dartmouth Avenue, Johnstown at 6:00 p.m. unless otherwise advertised.

The Open Records Law, effective January 1, 2009, allows increased access to public records. Information can be requested from the Ferndale Area School District by mail, fax, email or in person. The District has five business days to respond. If the District doesn't respond or denies your request, an appeal can be filed with the Office of Open Records. Copying fees, up to 25 cents per page, may be charged. The Ferndale Area School District has appointed Mr. David Gates, Business Manager, as their Right-to-Know Officer, given the responsibility of answering information requests from the public. You may contact Mr. Gates at Ferndale Area Administrative Office, 100 Dartmouth Avenue, Johnstown, PA 15905, telephone: (814) 535-1507. The form for requested information can be obtained on our website at www.fasdk12.org, District, under the Right-to-Know tab.

Gifted Education The Ferndale Area School District offers gifted support services in both of its buildings. This program focuses on enrichment and acceleration activities that supplement the regular education program. Instructional services are provided through direct instruction, teacher and student consultation, and classroom enrichment. The District conducts a screening process based upon review of all educational records and parent/teacher input to identify students who might qualify for gifted support services. When the data supports the need for a full evaluation, the District will seek parental consent. The evaluation includes observations from school personnel, performance on standardized assessments, review of the student's academic records, as well as family and teacher input. If the results of the gifted evaluation indicate that the student meets the Chapter 16 criteria as an individual who is in need of gifted support services, the gifted support team meets and develops a Gifted Individualized Education Plan (GIEP). Parents who believe that their child might be in need of gifted support services should send a written request for evaluation to the building principal.

Copies of parent rights and confidentiality issues are routinely provided to parents with the permission to evaluate and are also available to parents upon request. Parents who need more information about gifted educational programs and services or parental due process rights are encouraged to contact Adam Barbe, Ferndale Area School Psychologist, at 814-539-6168. For more information on gifted education and/or to see the full board policy, please refer to the district's website www.fasdk12.org, Gifted Education and Policy No. 114 Gifted Education under the Board Policies tab.

Food Services The Board recognizes that students require adequate, nourishing food and beverages in order to grow, learn and maintain good health. The food service program shall be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations, as well as federal guidelines established by the Child Nutrition Division of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The district shall ensure that, in the operation of the food service program, no student, staff member, or other individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability. For more information on food services and/or to see the full board policy, please refer to the district's website www.fasdk12.org, Food Services and Policy No. 808 Food Services under the Board Policies tab.

Food Allergy Management The Board is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for students with severe or life-threatening food allergies and shall establish policy to address food allergy management in district schools. For more information on food allergy management and/or to see the full board policy, please refer to the district's website www.fasdk12.org, Policy No. 209.1 Food Allergy Management under the Board Policies tab.

School Wellness Ferndale Area School District recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' physical well-being, growth, development and readiness to learn. The Board is committed to providing a school environment that promotes student wellness, proper nutrition, nutrition education and promotion, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning experience. In a healthy school environment, students will learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices that can improve student achievement. For more information on the school wellness policy; the most recent triennial assessment; how to participate in the development, implementation and periodic review and update of the School Wellness policy; and how to contact Wellness Committee leadership, please refer to district's website www.fasdk12.org, School Wellness and Policy No. 246 School Wellness under the Board Policies tab.

Tobacco and Vaping Products The Board recognizes that tobacco and vaping products, including the product marketed as Juul and other electronic cigarettes, present a health and safety hazard that can have serious consequences for users, nonusers and the school environment. The Board prohibits possession, use, purchase or sale of tobacco and vaping products, including the product marketed as Juul and other e-cigarettes, regardless of whether such products contain tobacco or nicotine, by or to students, by district employees and contracted personnel at any time in a school building; on school buses or other vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the school district; on property owned, leased or controlled by the school district; or at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property. The Board prohibits student possession or use of products marketed and sold as tobacco cessation products or for other therapeutic purposes, except as authorized in the Board's Medication policy. The Board prohibits student possession of any form of medical marijuana at any time in a school building; on school buses or other vehicles that are owned, leased or controlled by the school district; on property owned, leased or controlled by the school district; or at school-sponsored activities that are held off school property. Ferndale Area School District is a Smoke-Free District. It is the policy of the Ferndale Area School District that all buildings, property (including sidewalks and parking areas), outdoor fixed seating areas, vehicles owned or contracted and other designated areas of the Ferndale Area School District are designated to be tobacco free environments. For more information and/or to see the full board policies on tobacco and vaping products, please refer to Policies No. 222 and No. 323 Tobacco and Vaping Products under the Board Policies tab on the district's website www.fasdk12.org.

Discrimination/Title IX Harassment Affecting Students

The Board declares it to be the policy of this district to provide an equal opportunity for all students to achieve their maximum potential through the programs and activities offered in the schools without discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy or handicap/disability. The district does not discriminate in any manner, including Title IX sexual harassment, in any district education program or activity. Inquiries regarding the application of Title IX to the district may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education, or both. The Board designates the Business Manager, David Gates, as the district's Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator. The Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator can be contacted at 100 Dartmouth Avenue, Johnstown, PA 15905; Phone: 814-535-1507; Email: dgates@fasdk12.org. For more information and/or to see the full board policy on discrimination/Title IX harassment affecting students, please refer to Policy No. 103

Discrimination/Title IX Harassment Affecting Students under the Board Policies tab on the district's website www.fasdk12.org.

Nondiscrimination - Qualified Students with Disabilities

The Board declares it to be the policy of this district to ensure that all district programs and practices are free from discrimination against all qualified students with disabilities. The Board recognizes its responsibility to provide academic and nonacademic services and programs equally to students with and without disabilities. The district shall provide to each qualified student with a disability enrolled in the district, without cost to the student or parent/guardian, a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). For more information and/or to see the full board policy on nondiscrimination/ discriminatory harassment - school and classroom practices, please refer to Policy No. 103.1 Nondiscrimination - Qualified Students with Disabilities under the Board Policies tab on the district's website www.fasdk12.org.

Discrimination/Title IX Harassment Affecting Staff

The Board declares it to be the policy of this district to provide to all persons equal access to all categories of employment in this district, regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, genetic information, pregnancy 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. The Board also declares it to be the policy of this district to comply with federal law and regulations under Title IX prohibiting sexual harassment, which is a form of unlawful discrimination on the basis of sex. Such discrimination shall be referred to as Title IX sexual harassment. Inquiries regarding the application of Title IX to the district may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education, or both. The Board designates the Business Manager, David Gates, as the district's Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator. The Compliance Officer/Title IX Coordinator can be contacted at 100 Dartmouth Avenue, Johnstown, PA 15905; Email: dgates@fasdk12.org, Phone: 814-535-1507. For more information and/or to see the full board policy on discrimination/Title IX harassment affecting staff, please refer to Policy No. 104 Discrimination/Title IX Harassment Affecting Staff under the Board Policies tab on the district's website www.fasdk12.org.

Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs

Notice to Parents

According to state and federal special education regulations, Annual Public Notice to parents of children who reside within a school district is required regarding Child Find responsibilities. School Districts, Intermediate Units, and Charter Schools are required to conduct Child Find activities for children who may be eligible for services via Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. For additional information related to Section 504/Chapter 15 Services, the parent may refer to Section 504, Chapter 15, and the Basic Education Circular entitled "Implementation of Chapter 15." Also, school districts are required to conduct Child Find activities for children who may be eligible for Gifted Services via 22 PA Code Chapter 16. For additional information regarding Gifted Services, the parent may refer to 22 PA Code Chapter 16. If a student is both gifted and eligible for Special Education, the procedures in IDEA and Chapter 14 shall take precedence.

This Notice shall inform parents throughout the School District, Intermediate Unit, and Charter School of the child identification activities and of the procedures followed to ensure confidentiality of information pertaining to students with disabilities or eligible young children. In addition to this Public Notice, each School District, Intermediate Unit, and Charter School shall publish written information in the handbook and on the website. Children of ages three through twenty-one can be eligible for special education programs and services. If parents believe that the child may be eligible for special education, the parent should contact the appropriate staff members identified at the end of this public notice.

Children age three through the age of admission to first grade are also eligible if they have developmental delays and, as a result, need special education and related services. Developmental delay is defined as a child who is less than the age of beginners and at least three years of age and is considered to have a developmental delay when one of the following exists: (i) The child's score, on a developmental assessment device, on an assessment instrument which yields a score in months, indicates that the child is delayed by 25% of the child's chronological age in one or more developmental areas; (ii) The child is delayed in one or more of the developmental areas, as documented by test performance of 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on standardized tests. Developmental areas include cognitive, communicative, physical, social/emotional, and self-help. For additional information, parents may contact Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8.

Evaluation Process

Each School District, Intermediate Unit, and Charter School has a procedure in place by which parents can request an evaluation. For information about procedures applicable to your child, contact the school which your child attends. Telephone numbers and addresses can be found at the end of this Notice. Parents of preschool-age children, age three through five, and who do not reside in Altoona School District or Tyrone Area School District may request an evaluation in writing by addressing a letter to the Appalachia

Intermediate Unit staff. Residents of Altoona School District should address their requests directly to Altoona School District. Likewise, residents of Tyrone Area School District should address their requests directly to Tyrone Area School District.

Consent

School entities cannot proceed with an evaluation or with the initial provision of special education and related services without the written consent of the parents. For additional information related to consent, please refer to the Procedural Safeguards Notice which can be found at the PaTTAN website, at www.Pattan.net . After written parental consent is obtained, the district will proceed with the evaluation process. If the parent disagrees with the evaluation, the parent can then request an independent education evaluation at public expense.

Program Development

Once the evaluation process is completed, a team of qualified professionals and parents determine whether the child is eligible. If the child is eligible, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meets, develops the program, and determines the educational placement. School district staff, intermediate unit staff, or charter school staff will issue a Notice of Recommended Education Placement (NOREP)/ prior written notice. Parental written consent is required before initial services can be provided. Parents have the right to revoke consent after initial placement.

Confidentiality of Information

The School Districts, Intermediate Units, and Charter Schools maintain records concerning all children enrolled in the school, including students with disabilities. All records are maintained in the strictest confidentiality. Parental consent, or consent of an eligible child who has reached the age of majority under State law, must be obtained before personally identifiable information is released, except as permitted under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). The age of majority in Pennsylvania is 21.

Each participating agency must protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information at collection, storage, disclosure, and destruction stages. One official at each participating agency must assume responsibility for ensuring the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information. Each participating agency must maintain, for public inspection, a current listing of the names and positions of those employees within the agency who have access to personally identifiable information.

For additional information related to student records, parents may refer to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Retention/Destruction of Student Records- Special Education

In accordance with state and federal regulations implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), this notice is hereby given that in accordance with 24CFR 300.573, the School Districts, Intermediate Unit and Charter Schools listed below may destroy the special education records of students who exited from any special education program.

Special education records, which have been collected by the School Districts, Intermediate Unit and Charter Schools listed below related to the identification, evaluation, educational placement, or the provision of the Special Education in the district, IU or charter school must be maintained under state and federal law for a period of seven (7) years after Special Education services have ended for the student. Special education services end when the student no longer is eligible for services, graduates, completes his or her educational program at age 21, or moves from the School District, Intermediate Unit, or Charter School.

After seven (7) years, the records are no longer useful to the School District, Intermediate Unit or Charter School and will be destroyed in accordance with state and federal law unless the parent/guardian or eligible (adult) student contacts the responsible district that the parent/guardian or eligible (adult) student wishes to maintain the information as a personal record. These records may be useful to the parent/ guardian or former student when applying for post-secondary education/training, benefits or social services.

Records including student's name, address, grades, attendance, dates attended, grade level completed and year completed may be destroyed after seven (7) years have passed from the student's 21st birthday.

If you wish to request records or need additional information you may contact the responsible school entity.

Destruction will proceed where parents/guardians or eligible (adult) students have not requested records in accordance with the responsible school district's, Intermediate Unit's or Charter School's Notice of Destruction of Special Education Records.

Retention/Destruction of Student Records- PA State Assessments

In accordance with 34 CFR § 300.624, please be advised of the following retention/destruction schedule for the Pennsylvania Alternate System of Assessment (PASA), Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), and Keystone Exam related materials:

PSSA, Keystone Exam, and PASA test booklets will be destroyed one year after student reports are delivered to the administration associated with the test booklets.

PSSA and Keystone Exam answer booklets and PASA test materials will be destroyed three years after completion of the assessment.

This notice is only a summary of the Special Education services, evaluation and screening activities, and rights and protections pertaining to children with disabilities, children thought to be disabled, and their parents. For information or to request evaluation or screening of a public or private school child, contact the responsible school entity listed below. For preschool age children information, screenings, and evaluations requested may be obtained by contacting the Intermediate Unit.

SPECIAL EDUCATION CONTACTS

Ferndale Area School District
Mrs. Sutton Barron
100 Dartmouth Avenue
Johnstown, PA 15905
Phone: 814-539-6168

Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8
Dr. Amy Woomer
4500 Sixth Avenue
Altoona, PA 16602
Phone: 814-940-0223

The Intermediate Unit, School Entity, or Charter School will not discriminate in employment, educational programs, or activities based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, handicap, creed, marital status, or because a person is a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam era. No preschool, elementary, or secondary school pupil enrolled in a School District, Intermediate Unit, or Charter School program shall be denied equal opportunity to participate in age and program appropriate instruction or activities due to race, color, handicap, creed, national origin, marital status, or financial hardship.

How to Communicate a Question or Concern with the Ferndale Area School District

Whenever a parent or resident has a question, concern, complaint, suggestion, or request and is uncertain what procedure to follow in contacting the school district, it is requested that they refer to the Process Flow Chart below.

Many questions are easily and completely answered by communicating directly with the individual in charge of the class or program. Each concern should first be addressed at the level the initial action was taken in a calm and professional manner with appeals moving on to the next level on the chain of command. Contact information for staff members is available on the district's website www.fasdk12.org

Occasionally a parent or resident will call school board directors in an attempt to obtain an answer to their questions or concerns. Most often, these concerns are related to athletics, academics, or school discipline. Upon receiving such a call, the board director calls the district superintendent. The superintendent must then call the athletic director and/or building principal to inform him or her of the problem or concern. The athletic director and/or principal will then research the concern and communicate with the parent. Therefore, it is wise to call the first level contact individual so that he or she can respond without any undue delay.

AREA OF CONCERN	FIRST LEVEL	SECOND LEVEL	THIRD LEVEL	FOURTH LEVEL	FIFTH LEVEL
Athletic Programs	Coach	Athletic Director	Principal	Superintendent	
Athletic Facilities	Athletic Director	Principal	Business Manager	Superintendent	
Curriculum/ Instruction	Teacher	Principal	Director of Education	Superintendent	
Discipline	Teacher	Principal	Director of Education	Superintendent	
School Facilities	Building Custodian	Principal	Business Manager	Superintendent	
Guidance	Counselor	Principal	Director of Education	Superintendent	
Special Education	Teacher	Principal/ Coordinator of Special Education	Superintendent		
Student Concern	Teacher	Counselor	Principal	Director of Education	Superintendent
Technology	Teacher	Principal	Director of Education	Superintendent	
Transportation	Transportation Provider	Principal/ Coordinator of Special Education	Director of Education	Business Manager	Superintendent

Public Participation in Board Meetings

In order to permit fair and orderly expression of public comment, the Board shall provide an opportunity at each open meeting of the Board for residents and taxpayers to comment on matters of concern, official action or deliberation which are or may be before the Board prior to official action by the Board.

The Board shall require that all public comments be made at the beginning of each meeting.

If the Board determines there is not sufficient time at a meeting for public comments, the comment period may be deferred to the next regular meeting or to a special meeting occurring before the next regular meeting. The Board requires that public participants be residents or taxpayers of this district, a district employee or district student.

All individuals wishing to participate in an open Board meeting shall register their intent in writing with the Board Secretary or Superintendent at least five (5) days in advance of the meeting and shall include the name and address of the participant, topic to be addressed and group affiliation.

Advanced notification for inclusion on the agenda will provide an opportunity for the Board to take official action on the topic, if deemed necessary.

Participants without advanced notification may be permitted to address the Board during the public comment period; however, no official action will be taken at the meeting.

Participants must be recognized by the presiding officer and must preface their comments by an announcement of their name, address, and group affiliation if applicable.

Each statement made by a participant shall be limited to three (3) minutes' duration. All statements shall be directed to the presiding officer; no participant may address or question school directors individually.

For more information and/or to see the full board policy on public participation, please refer to Policy No. 903 Public Participation in Board Meetings under the Board Policies tab on the district's website www.fasdk12.org.

MORNING DELAYS, SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS, AND EARLY DISMISSALS

The Ferndale Area School District will announce any changes in the schedule on the following stations:

WJHT (92.1 FM)	WJAC CH. 6
WFGI (95.5 FM)	WWCP CH. 8
WKYE (96.5 FM)	WTAJ CH. 10
WRKW (99.1 FM)	
WCCL (101.7 FM)	
WNTI (990 AM)	
WNTJ (1490 AM)	

**ONE CALL NOW system: The district also utilizes an automated phone call system as well that will notify parents by phone, if parents have signed up for this service. For more information, contact the Elementary or Junior/Senior High School Office.*

We will notify the stations as early as possible when a change in the schedule is necessary.

It is the policy of the Ferndale Area School District to ensure an equal opportunity in employment and/or program services without any consideration of an individual's race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, age, religion, disability, veteran status, genetic information, and/or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The Ferndale Area School District employees and participants who have an inquiry or complaint of harassment or discrimination or who need information about accommodations for persons with disabilities should contact Mr. David Gates, Business Manager, Ferndale Area Administrative Office, 100 Dartmouth Avenue, Johnstown, PA 15905, Phone: (814) 535-1507.