

the SCHOLAR CHRONICLE

FEDERAL WAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  WINTER 2024

EACH SCHOLAR: A VOICE. A DREAM. A BRIGHT FUTURE.



A NOTE FROM
DR. DANI
PFEIFFER,
SUPERINTENDENT

Hello Staff, Families, and Community,
It's hard to believe we're more than halfway through the 2023-24 school year! This year is flying by, and I've seen our scholars grow and achieve so much progress toward their goals. In just the last few months, we've celebrated the following accomplishments:

- 121 scholars from Woodmont K-8 achieved perfect attendance in the month of October and 161 Mark Twain scholars achieved perfect attendance in the month of November
- 8 scholars from all four of our comprehensive high schools earned a spot at the WIAA Boys and Girls Cross Country State Championships
- Decatur's Future Farmers of America scholars took home top awards in the Washington State Fair goat show.
- Federal Way High School's ProStart scholars earned the People's Choice award at the American Culinary Federation and Washington State Chef's Association 2023 Bite of the Apprentice fundraiser
- 8 Thomas Jefferson High School scholars finished first in their category at the Math is Cool State Masters Championship
- Jazmin and Titus from TJHS were awarded full scholarships through the QuestBridge National College Match program
- Kysen from DHS won the YoungArts Award with Distinction for the Jazz/Trombone Discipline in the 2024 National Arts Competition
- Todd Beamer and Decatur DECA scholars won Thrive awards in DECA's Chapter Campaigns as part of DECA's leadership program
- 7 more FWPS teachers earned National Board Certification, growing the number of National Board-Certified teachers in our district
- And so much more!

It's exciting to celebrate even the smallest successes—every step forward brings each scholar closer to graduation and postsecondary success. Over the next few months, we'll continue to support our scholars and provide the tools needed to reach their goals. You can learn more about some of the ways we're doing this throughout the next few pages of this publication and stay up to date with the latest information by visiting our website, following us on social media, and subscribing to my weekly newsletter at www.fwps.org/enewsletter.

In Partnership,

Dr. Dani Pfeiffer



In the Child Development class, a TBHS scholar puts their learning into action to support elementary students at the nearby Enterprise Elementary School.

Camelot Elementary's Green Knights shared their knowledge of environmental sustainability during a visit from Governor Jay Inslee, Superintendent Dr. Dani Pfeiffer, Board President Dr. Jennifer Jones, and other district leadership.



During DiscoverU week, FWPS scholars explored college and career opportunities with themed days and activities. These Twin Lakes Elementary scholars learned about jobs in FWPS during a college and career fair at their school!

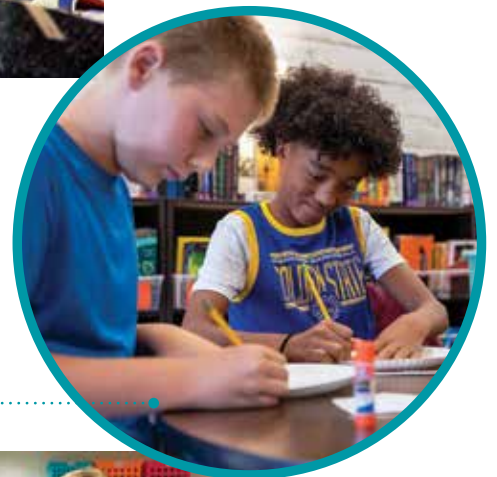
Computer Science Education Week challenged scholars of all grade levels and coding experience to level up their coding skills with Hour of Code.



March is National Reading Month, and we're getting ready to celebrate with our annual Scholar Recommended Booklist and other literacy-focused celebrations.



In fifth-grade science, students will dive into the fascinating world of matter. They'll explore questions like: How do shadows change throughout the day? How do the lengths of day and night change from day to day? And, what can we learn from the night sky as it changes throughout the year?



FWPS is proud to partner with Project Lead the Way to offer multiple Biomedical Science courses at three of our four comprehensive high schools, as part of the Health Sciences CTE Program of Study.

In the Skilled and Technical Science CTE Program of Study, high school scholars can take art classes, like Pottery, to develop and learn skills necessary for careers in this field.



CELEBRATION OF FEDERAL WAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS ALUMNI

With nearly every single graduate defining their next steps after graduation, we know our scholars are going on to do great things. Whether it's coming back to teach or work here in Federal Way Public Schools, going off to pursue higher education, or jumping directly into a career, we've heard so many stories so far, and we want them to keep coming in!

Over the last year, you've heard from:



YOUCEF

FWHS CLASS OF 2014

Youcef has embraced a career as a software engineer and credits his success to the power of hope and community.



PARAS

TAF@SGH CLASS OF 2019

Paras graduated from UW Foster School of Business in 2023 and is embarking on a career in investment banking.



MORGAN

DHS CLASS OF 2011

Morgan is thriving in her career as a firefighter with Key Peninsula Fire Department and has come back to FWPS to read to scholars at her old elementary school, Brigadoon.



MARANA

OLYMPIC VIEW ALUM

Marana got to help rebuild her old elementary school during her time as an apprentice carpenter with FORMA construction.

You can read through past alumni spotlights on our website at www.fwps.org/alumnispotlight and learn more about where our scholars are going after they leave our school system.

If you are an FWPS alum and want to share your story, or if you know of a great FWPS alumni story you'd like us to share with the community, fill out the form on our website or email us at comments@fwps.org.

COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

★ After School All Stars

After School All Stars provides free, comprehensive, year-round out of school time programs that keep students safe and help them succeed in school and in life. Along with our school partners, we provide opportunities for students to develop skills, knowledge, healthy relationships, and positive habits they need to succeed!

In Federal Way, After School All Stars supports scholars at Lakota Middle School with high-quality expanded learning opportunities. The collaborative between Geeking Out Kids of Color, After School All Stars, and FWPS provides expanded learning programs in the areas of Academic Readiness, Career Exploration, STEM, Wellness/SEL, and the Arts. Lakota Middle School students can register for All Stars After Hours to participate in 60 minutes of daily tutoring and homework help, led by teachers and staff of the collaborative. They also select at least 2 enrichment activities/clubs per session

(6-12 weeks in length) for 90 minutes—a Monday/Wednesday activity and a different Tuesday/Thursday activity.



Federal Way Public Schools values strong community partnerships.

We strive daily to grow our partnerships based on the needs of our scholars.

If you would like to partner with FWPS, learn more at

www.fwps.org/community-partners

What makes you #FWPSProud?

Our scholars, staff, and community accomplish amazing big and small things every day that we should all be #FWPSProud of. Whether it's conquering a new reading level, retaking a test and earning a better grade, supporting our classrooms, winning a big game, or simply being a positive role model to peers, every advancement and win is worth celebrating.



HELP US HIGHLIGHT THE AMAZING THINGS HAPPENING IN THE DISTRICT! NOMINATE A STAFF MEMBER, SCHOLAR, OR COMMUNITY MEMBER TODAY! WWW.FWPS.ORG/FWPSPROUD



NOW MORE THAN EVER SCHOOLS CAN'T DO IT ALONE



to the following community partners for their generous donations that positively impact the lives of scholars attending Federal Way Public Schools.

- Bridging A Gap Weekend Feeding Program
- Auburn School District, Superintendent Dr. Spicciati, and Director of Athletics & Activities, Rob Swaim
- Federal Way Public Schools' Executive Director of Capital Projects, Michael Swartz, and Director of Equity and Athletics, Jerry Peterson
- Burlington Stores and AdoptAClassroom.org
- Seattle Kraken and the One Roof Foundation
- Seattle Seahawks and the Seattle Seahawks Charitable Foundation
- Consulate General of the Republic of Korea in Seattle
- JTM Construction and Garner Construction WBE
- Brooklake Church, We Love Our City Federal Way, Family Life Community Church, Grace Church, South King Firefighters Foundation, and community member Ted Colby
- South King Fire & Rescue, South King County Professional Firefighters IAFF Local 2024 and the South King Firefighters Foundation
- Right At School
- UNIONBAY
- Community partners who helped put on the annual Federal Way Cares for Kids Holiday Giving Event
- Mentors in the Mentor and Me Program, Inspiring Girls Now in Technology Evolution program, Construction Pre-Apprenticeship Program, INCUBATOR Entrepreneurship program, and the Youth Employment Support Network program
- Federal Way Lions Club
- Hoffman Construction Company
- St. Luke's Lutheran Church
- United Way King County

This list reflects donations received as of 2/13/2024.



COMPLETED!

- ✓ **MIRROR LAKE ELEMENTARY**
Opened Fall 2020
- ✓ **EVERGREEN MIDDLE SCHOOL**
Opened Winter 2021
- ✓ **WILDWOOD ELEMENTARY**
Opened Winter 2021
- ✓ **LAKE GROVE ELEMENTARY**
Opened Fall 2021
- ✓ **THOMAS JEFFERSON HIGH SCHOOL**
Opened Fall 2021
- ✓ **STAR LAKE ELEMENTARY**
Opened Fall 2022
- ✓ **FEDERAL WAY MEMORIAL FIELD**
Opened Fall 2023
- ✓ **OLYMPIC VIEW K-8**
Opened Fall 2023



We're almost done with all projects promised under the phase 2 school construction bond! Illahee Middle School is the last project to be completed, thanks to voter approval of this school construction funding back in November 2017. Thank you again for each one of you who made these new facilities possible for our scholars.
See the latest on Illahee below!



CONSTRUCTION

ILLAHEE MIDDLE SCHOOL is well into construction and is on track to be completed in the winter months of the 2024-25 school year:

- The concrete slab has been poured
- Complete renovation of the gym is under way
- Wood framing of the first floor is more than 70% complete
- The new school structure is anticipated to be dried-in (waterproof) by the end of May 2024.



Wood framing at the main entry by the classroom wing.



Aerial photo looking NW.

Our construction partners have done so much in such a short time, and it's exciting watching this school come together! While we're on track to have the school completed in the winter months of next school year as planned, a change has been made to the move-in schedule. Initially, we were hopeful that the school would be complete in time for a winter break move-in, however, with the potential for delays in the rainy season, scholars



Sheetrock in the gym area has begun.

will finish out the 2024-25 school year at the temporary campus and move into their brand-new school in time for the first day of the 2025-26 school year.

For more information about each school construction project, visit www.fwps.org/bond.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS FOR THE 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR AND BEYOND

Over the last few months, since October 2023, we've put out regular updates about our budget in our weekly newsletter and in multiple school board presentations. As we've shared in these updates, many school districts in Washington state are experiencing a "perfect storm" of financial pressures. This includes Federal Way Public Schools. We strive to be transparent with our community and have been providing regular updates to staff, families, and community, as we work to remain fiscally responsible with decreased revenue in the years ahead.

There are three key pressures resulting in a lower revenue for Federal Way Public Schools, beginning in the 2024-25 school year: Enrollment declines, the end of ESSER, and legislative inequities.

Enrollment

- Enrollment has dropped across Washington state by approximately 48,000 students or 4.2% since the 2019-20 school year. Nearly every district in King County has experienced a decrease in student enrollment over the last few years, approximately 5.3% for King County as a whole.
- Similar to King County, Federal Way Public Schools has seen a decrease in enrollment of 5.5%. While we're starting to see a slight upward trend, we are still roughly 1,300 students under our pre-pandemic enrollment.
- For funding purposes, every 100 scholars generate approximately \$1 million in funding, which means this decrease in enrollment represents a roughly \$13 million loss in funding for Federal Way Public Schools.

The End of ESSER Funding

- Federal Way Public Schools was fortunate to receive significant, one-time federal funding to help alleviate pandemic impacts.
- These funds helped maintain pre-pandemic staffing levels, allowed us to have an established guest teacher at each school, paid for academic and mental health support, PPE, and more.
- This is the last year these funds, known as ESSER, will be distributed. There will be no ESSER funds available in the 2024-25 school year and beyond.

Legislative Impacts

- Federal Way Public Schools continues to have a gap in funding caused by



inequities in the state's funding model. While the legislature has made some progress recently in the areas of special education and social emotional support, K-12 education is still not sufficiently funded by the state.

- Two legislative impacts uniquely affect Federal Way: Regionalization and Local Effort Assistance.
- Regionalization attempts to recognize that the cost of living in some districts is higher than other districts and provides an adjustment in funding from the state, based on local home values. However, Federal Way Public Schools receives less regionalization funding than nearly every other school district in King County, creating a nearly \$11 million dollar funding gap.

- Local Effort Assistance is funding provided to school districts with lower property values, which we have received for several years. However, due to the recent unprecedented increases in home values, Federal Way Public Schools is also losing Local Effort Assistance.

- We have advocated for legislative resolutions to fix these issues for several years, and we will continue to do so, as noted in our district's Legislative Priorities for 2024.

We know we will need to reduce our budget by approximately \$6.5 million in the 2024-25 school year to account for the decrease in revenue caused by these impacts.

We have a strong financial team, and we have been proactively preparing for this change in revenue, with approximately \$5.5 million already trimmed from the budget in the 2023-24 school year. However, we know we will need to continue to right-size and reduce our budget to remain fiscally responsible in the years to come. Currently, we are targeting a \$6.5 million decrease for the 2024-25 school year, but it's important to note this could change, based on a number of factors, like enrollment projections and the results of the current legislative session.

The work we do every day in every role across the district is guided by the mission, values, and goals outlined in our strategic plan, including the budgeting process. As we move forward with the budget reduction process, we will continue to be guided by our established values and provide regular updates to our staff and the community through our e-newsletter and board presentations.

the SCHOLAR CHRONICLE

FEDERAL WAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS WINTER 2024



In Teacher Academy, scholars partner with a local elementary school teacher and learn skills needed to work in the field of education. Learn more: www.fwps.org/CTE

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The Scholar Chronicle is published periodically throughout the year by Federal Way Public Schools. Write us at 33330 8th Avenue South, Federal Way WA 98003, or call 253-945-2000. Visit our website at www.fwps.org. Follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/fwps210 Twitter: @fwps210

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FEDERAL WAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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NONDISCRIMINATION and EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT
Federal Way Public Schools does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of race, color, national origin or ethnicity, religion, creed, sex or gender, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, age, marital or family status, veteran or military status; disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal. The District provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. For more information: www.fwps.org

ECRWSS

Postal Patron



Ready, set, read!

March is **National Reading Month**, a time we highlight the importance of reading and literacy. The month will kick off with Read Across America Week, when students will engage in a variety of reading activities to promote strong reading skills and daily reading habits. In addition, we'll share all the ways FWPS is celebrating reading, including our annual Scholar Recommended Booklist, reading challenge, and reading resources. Learn more at www.fwps.org/ReadingMonth.

Want to learn more about what's coming up? Visit our website at www.fwps.org/calendar for the school year calendar and upcoming district events!



UPCOMING EVENTS

SAVE THE DATE!

2024 STEM Exploration Night is March 14

Be sure to mark your calendar for the seventh annual STEM Exploration Night on Thursday, March 14, 6-8 p.m. at Federal Way High School.

STEM EXPLORATION NIGHT 2024
MARCH 14 | 6-8 PM | FWHS



FWPS.ORG/STEMNIGHT

HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES * PRIZES
WORKSHOPS * FILM FESTIVAL
PANELS * FOOD * AND MORE!



FEDERAL WAY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mark your calendars and get ready to celebrate with

THE CLASS OF 2024



As of December 2023, graduation dates, times, and locations are as follows:

Friday, June 7, 2024

at the **Federal Way Performing Arts and Event Center, 51510 Pete von Reichbauer Way South, Federal Way, WA 98003:**

- Employment and Transition Program | 10:30 a.m.
- Internet Academy and Career Academy | 2 p.m.
- Open Doors at Truman | 4 p.m.
- TAF@Saghalie | 6 p.m.

Sunday, June 9, 2024

at the **ShoWare Center, 625 West James Street, Kent, WA 98032:**

- Thomas Jefferson High School | 8:30 a.m.
- Federal Way High School | noon
- Decatur High School | 3:30 p.m.
- Todd Beamer High School | 7 p.m.