

October 14, 2024

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL — The Board of School Directors of the Fox Chapel Area School District held its regular business meeting at Fox Chapel Area High School October 14, 2024. Vice President Ronald P. Frank called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. Also in attendance were President Marybeth Dadd (via telephone); Assistant Secretary Vanessa K. Lynch (via telephone); Treasurer Eric G. Hamilton; Amy B. Cooper; Adam G. Goode; Jessica Haselkorn, Ph.D.; and Ariel Zych. Katie Findley was absent.

GUESTS (October 7, 2024)

Certificates of Merit — The Board presented certificates of merit to the following students:

•Seven Fox Chapel Area High School seniors have been designated as National Merit Semifinalists and 23 have been named Commended Students in the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program. The Semifinalists from Fox Chapel Area High School are **David Black, Anna Delale-O'Connor, Benjamin Fiedler, Rayna Huang, Arnim Kuchhal, Zhana Neumann, and Rohit Velankar**. The Commended Students from Fox Chapel Area High School are **Omar Al-Bataineh, Murugan Ayyanar, Noelle Dick, Maya DiPasquale, Alaina Hershey, Owen Howell, Moonyoung Hwang, Etash Jhanji, Patton Johnson, Alex Kim, Evan Krieg, Nathan Mackey, Devon McDonald, Noah Miller, Pierce Osterholm, Rachel Pegher, Hyunoh Ro, Caleb Shirk, David Sorisio, Mya Wilson, Caterina Wu, JinLiang Zhang, and Yuqi Zhou**.

All of these students were selected based on their 2023 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) scores. Each year, more than 1.3 million juniors complete the PSAT/NMSQT and are automatically entered in the National Merit Scholarship Program. Approximately 16,000 advance to become Semifinalists and about 34,000 are Commended. The Semifinalists represent less than one percent of the nation's high school seniors and the Commended Students scored in the top 5%. A Semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT or ACT scores that confirm the student's earlier performance on the qualifying test. Semifinalists must also participate in school and community activities, demonstrate leadership abilities, and receive other awards and honors. The Commended Students are recognized for their exceptional academic promise.

The Semifinalists now have the opportunity to advance to the Finalist level and compete for some 6,870 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$26 million to be offered in the spring of 2025.

A Lens on Learning — Each month, we focus on student work in our schools to highlight lessons, growth, and successes of all kinds. On October 7, Fox Chapel Area High School math teacher **Justin Guadagni** made a presentation on the high school's Algebra I math lab and the math lab course. He discussed why the math lab was created and how it differs from a traditional high school math class. Activities in the math lab include discovery-based tasks, hands-on experiments, and computer-simulated experiments to help the students gain a deeper understanding of linear algebra.

FOX LEADERSHIP COUNCIL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE — Fox Chapel Area High School senior **Luca Zgurzynski** from the National Honor Society presented the Board with information on the upcoming (October 23) Fox Chapel Area High School Boo Bash for elementary students in pre-kindergarten through fourth grade.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Enrollment and Fire Drills — Received the enrollment and the fire drills report.

Information

•**DMS Named 2024 National Blue Ribbon School**

Dorseyville Middle School has been named a 2024 National Blue Ribbon School by the United States Department of Education. United States Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona today recognized 356 schools as the 2024 cohort of National Blue Ribbon Schools. This prestigious recognition highlights schools that excel

in academic performance and/or make significant strides in closing achievement gaps among different student groups.

Dorseyville was recognized as an “Exemplary High Performing School.” Exemplary High Performing Schools are among the top performers in their state as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests. The department recognizes all schools based on student performance data, including assessment results, student subgroup performance, and graduation rates. A total of 13 schools in Pennsylvania are being recognized for 2024, and only two are middle schools.

“The National Blue Ribbon Schools Award is a testament to the exceptional achievements of students and educators at each of these schools,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. “The 2024 National Blue Ribbon Schools are raising the bar for our nation’s students, serving as models for effective teaching and intentional collaboration in their schools and communities. As we celebrate their achievements, let us look to these schools for inspiration as we champion education as the foundation of a brighter future for every child.”

Each nominated school submits a comprehensive application detailing its school culture, programs, assessments, instructional practices, professional development, leadership, family, and community involvement.

“We are incredibly honored to be recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School. This achievement reflects the hard work, dedication, and commitment of our students, staff, and community to academic excellence and creating a nurturing environment for all learners,” said Dr. Laura Miller, program principal at Dorseyville Middle School, who completed the comprehensive application for the school.

National Blue Ribbon Schools are led by leaders who articulate a clear vision of instructional excellence and uphold high standards. They showcase effective teaching methods and offer robust professional development for their staff. Data-driven instruction is a hallmark, and there is a concerted effort to ensure every student succeeds. Collaboration among families, communities, and educators is a key component of their success.

Up to 420 schools may be nominated each year. The department invites nominations for the National Blue Ribbon Schools award from the top education official in all states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and the Bureau of Indian Education. Private schools are nominated by the Council for American Private Education.

This is the second time Dorseyville Middle School was named a National Blue Ribbon School. The first time was in 1994-1996. Additionally, over the years, all of the Fox Chapel Area School District schools have been named National Blue Ribbon Schools (beginning in 1991-1992), with Fox Chapel Area High School and Fairview Elementary School also being named Blue Ribbon Schools twice.

•**Student Named Among Top 300 in National Science Competition**

Dorseyville Middle School eighth-grader **Rishabh Krishnamurthy** was named one of the Top 300 Junior Innovators in the Thermo Fisher Scientific Junior Innovators Challenge (Thermo Fisher JIC) for the second consecutive year. Thermo Fisher JIC is the nation’s premier science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) competition for middle school students. The Thermo Fisher JIC, a program of Society for Science, seeks to inspire young scientists, engineers, and innovators to solve the grand challenges of the future. The Top 300 Junior Innovators (including 15 from Pennsylvania) were selected from 1,862 entrants from 48 states, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands who applied to compete in the Thermo Fisher JIC. Students who are named in the top 10% of their local science fair were eligible to enter the contest. Rishabh was chosen based on his project “Can Crowdsourced Weather Monitoring Work,” for which he was awarded a first place in the Pittsburgh Regional Science and Engineering Fair in April 2024.

“The next generation of scientists and engineers emerging from middle schools today is remarkable,” said Maya Ajmera, president and CEO, Society for Science and executive publisher, Science News. “Their projects

tackle real-world problems with creativity and rigor beyond their years. I congratulate each and every one of the Top 300 Junior Innovators and wish them the best of luck in their scientific and engineering careers.”

“The Top 300 projects are an extraordinary reflection of what matters most to these students and their dedication to improving lives through the use of STEM,” said Dr. Karen Nelson, chief scientific officer, Thermo Fisher Scientific. “Congratulations to the entire class of 2024 Junior Innovators – your example strengthens our ambition to make STEM education equitable for all youth.”

Each of the Top 300 Junior Innovators received a \$125 award from Department of Defense (DoD) STEM, as well as a special prize package.

•FCAHS Students Win 2024 Teen Media Award

Fox Chapel Area High School juniors **Akshay Lath** and **Rodrigo Silva** were named winners in Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh’s 2024 Ralph Munn Creative Writing and Teen Media Awards. Akshay and Rodrigo were awarded second place in the short film category for their submission, “The Hill District: A History of Jazz.”

“The sheer talent showcased in this year’s entries is truly inspiring,” said Simon Rafferty, library services supervisor – STEAM Learning. “We are so grateful that these brave young artists chose to share their work with us.”

Kizuwanda Raines, also of STEAM Learning, praised this year’s entrants saying, “These teens are so inspiring and have motivated me to try my hand at something!”

The contest, sponsored by the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, was open to all high school students in grades 9-12 across Allegheny County. More than 300 submissions were received in the categories of poetry, short prose, cover art design, short film, music, photography, 3D art, 2D art, and fashion, and a total of 28 first-place, second-place, and honorable mention winners were named in the categories.

The winning entries in poetry, prose, and works of art were on display at the main library in Oakland. The entries of the winners and others are also published in an anthology which is distributed to all public libraries in Allegheny County. This year, 43 teens had their poetry and prose published.

All of the winners were recognized for their creative content at a reception during the library’s end-of-summer extravaganza.

Fox Chapel Area School Board Upcoming Meetings

October 15, 2024 – 6 p.m. – Academic Committee Meeting – Administrative Offices Staff Development Room
October 22, 2024 – 6 p.m. – Projects and Planning Committee Mtg. – Admin. Offices Staff Development Room
November 4, 2024 – 7 p.m. – Agenda Study Session – High School LGI Room
November 11, 2024 – 7 p.m. – Regular Business Meeting Kerr Elementary Gym
November 12, 2024 – 6 p.m. – Governance Committee Mtg. – Administrative Offices Staff Development Room
November 19, 2024 – 6 p.m. – Academic Committee Mtg. – Administrative Offices Staff Development Room
November 26, 2024 – 6 p.m. – Projects and Planning Committee Mtg. – Admin. Offices Staff Development Rm.
December 3, 2024 (Tues.) – 7 p.m. – Reorg. Mtg. & Comb. Agenda Study Sess. & Reg. Bus. Mtg. – HS LGI Room
January 7, 2025 – 6 p.m. – Governance Committee Meeting – Administrative Offices Staff Development Room
January 14, 2025 – 6 p.m. – Academic Committee Meeting – Administrative Offices Staff Development Room
January 21, 2025 – 6 p.m. – Projects and Planning Committee Mtg. – Admin. Offices Staff Development Room
February 4, 2025 – 6 p.m. – Governance Committee Meeting – Administrative Offices Staff Development Room
February 11, 2025 – 6 p.m. – Academic Committee Meeting – Administrative Offices Staff Development Room
February 18, 2025 – 6 p.m. – Projects and Planning Committee Mtg. – Admin. Offices Staff Development Room
March 11, 2025 – 6 p.m. – Governance Committee Meeting – Administrative Offices Staff Development Room
March 18, 2025 – 6 p.m. – Projects and Planning Committee – Administrative Offices Staff Development Room
April 28, 2025 – 6 p.m. – Academic Committee Meeting – Administrative Offices Staff Development Room

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

APPROVAL OF MINUTES — Approved the minutes of the combined agenda study session and regular business meeting dated September 9, 2024.

FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD — Public comment is limited to residents or taxpayers of this district. The first public comment period is for items that are scheduled for deliberation or official action on the agenda. To register to make a public comment, please contact the Board Secretary during business hours, but no later than 12 p.m., on the day of the meeting by email (boardsecretary@fcasd.edu), telephone (412-967-2413), or at the district office (611 Field Club Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238). Please provide your name, complete address, telephone number, the subject of the comment or topic to be addressed, and any group affiliation. During the meeting, the Board Secretary will call those community members scheduled to comment by telephone. Sign-in sheets will also be provided at each meeting for those attending who wish to offer public comment and did not register in advance.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS — Upon the recommendation of the superintendent, the Board took action on the following items of business:

Facilities/Transportation

Additional School Bus Drivers – 2024-2025 School Year — Ratified hiring the additional ABC Transit, Inc., drivers from the list effective for the 2024-2025 school year. All required licensing, clearances, and all other essential employment requirements for school bus operators under the laws of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania have been verified.

H.F. Lenz Co. – Agreement – Fox Chapel Area High School Electrical Design Project — Approved the agreement between the Fox Chapel Area School District and H.F. Lenz Co. for services related to the Fox Chapel Area High School electrical design project at a cost of \$9,500. **This is a new agreement.**

H.F. Lenz Co. – Agreement – Fox Chapel Area High School Structural Investigation and Drilling Project — Approved the agreement between the Fox Chapel Area School District and H.F. Lenz Co. for services related to the Fox Chapel Area High School structural investigation and drilling project at a cost of \$5,450. **This is a new agreement.**

H.F. Lenz Co. – Agreement – Dorseyville Middle School HVAC Design for Esports Lab Project — Approved the agreement between the Fox Chapel Area School District and H.F. Lenz Co. for engineering services related to the Dorseyville Middle School HVAC design for the esports lab project at a cost of \$2,750. **This is a new agreement.**

Finance

Disbursements (Fund 10) – September 2024 — The general fund disbursements (Fund 10) in the amount of \$12,507,322.80 from September 1, 2024, through September 30, 2024, were approved.

Disbursements (Fund 31) – September 2024 — The capital reserves fund disbursements (Fund 31) in the amount of \$12,984 from September 1, 2024, through September 30, 2024, were approved.

Finance Report – August 2024 — The finance report for August 2024 was acknowledged and filed for audit.

Budget Transfers — Several budget transfers for 2024-2025 were approved.

PowerSchool Group LLC – Agreement – eFinancePlus Upgrade — Approved the agreement between the Fox Chapel Area School District and PowerSchool Group LLC for the eFinancePlus standard upgrade pack and

custom configuration development, for the period October 15, 2024, through October 14, 2025, at a cost of \$13,920. **This is a necessary upgrade for our current software.**

Instruction

Settlement — Approved the settlement of a claim by the parents of a student as presented.

Legislation/Policy

Policies – Revised – First Reading — Approved the first reading of the following revised policies: No. 218 – Student Discipline, No. 218.1 – Weapons, No. 249 – Bullying/Cyberbullying, No. 323 – Tobacco and Vaping Products, No. 351 – Controlled Substance Abuse, No. 707 – Use of School Facilities, No. 801 – Public Records, No. 805 – Emergency Preparedness and Response, No. 805.1 – Relations with Law Enforcement Agencies, No. 806 – Child Abuse, and No. 904 – Public Attendance at School Events.

Personnel

Candidates for employment under this section were approved subject to verification of the results of physical and drug screening examinations, required clearances, and all other essential employment requirements under Policy and Administrative Regulations 304-AR and 304-AR-4.

Resignations

Supplemental Contract – Athletic — Accepted the following athletic supplemental contract resignation:

- **Zachary A. Price**, intramurals, MS activity sponsor 12, MS ski club (50%), due to personal reasons, effective September 10, 2024.

Supplemental Contract – Non-Athletic — Accepted the following non-athletic supplemental contract resignation:

- **Brianne L. Claus**, overnight camp counselor, due to personal reasons, effective October 2, 2024.\

Appointments

Educational Support — Ratified the following personal care assistant appointment:

- **Trinity R. Washington** as a personal care assistant at Dorseyville Middle School, effective September 23, 2024. Salary was set based on the salary scale for personal care assistants, Step 1, with benefits as per the Fox Chapel Area Education Support Professionals Association Collective Bargaining Agreement. This position is available due to the resignation of **Cameryn Herevia**.

Custodial/Maintenance — Approved the following personal custodial appointment:

- **Eric V. Johnson** as a 10-month, 8-hour per day custodian at Dorseyville Middle School for a probationary period, effective October 15, 2024, pursuant to the Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The salary and fringe benefits were set as per the CBA. This position is available due to the resignation of **David Ulrich**.

Supplemental Contracts – Athletic — The following athletic supplemental contracts were approved, effective October 15, 2024: **Edward C. Farrell** – Wrestling, HS 2nd Assistant; **Todd Hillman** – Swimming, HS Diving Head; and **Larry Troutman** – Softball, HS Head.

Supplemental Contracts – Non-Athletic — The following non-athletic supplemental contracts were ratified, effective for the 2024-2025 school year: **Kelly Barone** – Mentor Teacher – HS, **Joshua Bryan-Branker** – Band Director Kerr/Fairview, **Mairi Cooper** – Orchestra Director – HS, **Kaila Derry** – Mentor Teacher – HS, **Anne Englert** – Attire Coordinator (HS), **Evan Hertrick** – Mentor Teacher (50%) – FV, **Amy Jakubek** – Overnight Camp Counselor, **Maureen Johnson** – Bus Monitor #6 Elementary – O’Hara (50%), **Amy Montgomery** – Mentor Teacher – HS, **Hannah Roux** – Bus Monitor #4 Elementary – O’Hara, **Karli Spangler** – Band Director – Hartwood/O’Hara, **Amy Wickman** – Mentor Teacher – HS, and **Miranda Zarlino** – Bus Monitor #6 Elementary – O’Hara (50%).

Leaves

Professional — Approved the following professional leaves:

- **Emily C. Hinojosa**, reading support teacher at Fairview Elementary School, for childrearing/adoption leave, under Article Eleven (D) of the Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement, effective November 14, 2024, with return scheduled for April 7, 2025.
- **Jacqueline J. Kissinger**, school counselor at Hartwood Elementary School, for childrearing/adoption leave, under Article Eleven (D) of the Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement, effective April 7, 2025, with return scheduled for the clerical day before the last nine weeks of the 2025-2026 school year.
- **Gina M. Sacriponte**, elementary teacher at O'Hara Elementary School, for childrearing/adoption leave, under Article Eleven (D) of the Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement, effective November 4, 2024, with return scheduled for March 28, 2025.

Change of Status

Educational Support — Approved the following secretarial change of status:

- **Heidi A. Celender**, 12-month building secretary at Fairview Elementary School, as the secretary to the executive directors of elementary and secondary education and instruction, effective date to be determined. There is no change in salary or benefits. This position is available due to the retirement of **Sharon Long**.

Student Worker

Athletic — **Michael Didomenico** was ratified as a student athletic worker at an hourly rate, effective for the 2024-2025 school year.

Volunteer

Athletic — The following athletic volunteer was approved, effective October 15, 2024: **Lucas Malmberg** – Wrestling, HS.

Corrections

Supplemental Contracts – Non-Athletic — The following non-athletic supplemental contracts were previously ratified/approved in error, effective for the 2024-2025 school year: **Kelly Coffield** – Mentor Teacher – HS, **Anna Hopper** – Mentor Teacher – HS, **Debra Polesiak** – Mentor Teacher – HS, and **Emily Spurdute** – Mentor Teacher – HS.

Corrections

Updated Supplemental Contracts – Non-Athletic — The following non-athletic supplemental contracts were ratified and corrected:

- **Candace Erb**, previously approved as Mentor Teacher – FV (100%), as Mentor Teacher – FV (50%) for the 2024-2025 school year.
- **Tracey Planz**, previously approved as Bus Monitor #1 Elementary – O'Hara (50%), as Bus Monitor #1 Elementary – O'Hara (100%) for the 2024-2025 school year.
- **Jessica Resek**, previously approved as Bus Monitor #1 Elementary – O'Hara (50%), as Bus Monitor #5 Elementary – O'Hara (100%) for the 2024-2025 school year.

Operations/Cooperative Services

Fox Chapel Area School District Comprehensive Emergency Management (CEM) Plan — Approved the district's Comprehensive Emergency Management (CEM) Plan. This multi-hazard plan replaces the basic emergency plan, and is in compliance with state and federal emergency guidelines under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA). This plan must be approved annually.

Dagostino Electronic Services, Inc. – Agreement — Ratified the agreement between the Fox Chapel Area School District and Dagostino Electronic Services, Inc. for annual preventative maintenance, extended

coverage hours, priority response, and routine system upgrades, effective September 6, 2024, at an annual cost of \$13,440, and authorized the superintendent to execute the agreement on behalf of the district. **This is a new agreement.**

Printing/Copying Management Services Request for Proposal — Authorized the issuance of a Request for Proposal for printing/copying management services. **The district is issuing a Request for Proposal to consider services, quality, and costs of copier/print vendors and manufacturers. The document will be issued to a number of selected vendors and manufacturers, will be posted on the district website, and will be advertised.**

Donation – Guyasuta Garden Club — Accepted the donation of \$500 from the Guyasuta Garden Club to be used for the new courtyard at Dorseyville Middle School.

Donation – JAM #bethekindkid — Accepted the donation of \$450 from JAM #bethekindkid to be used toward Project Kindness (\$200) and to establish a JAM Packed Closet (\$250) at Hartwood Elementary School.

SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD — Public comment is limited to residents or taxpayers of this district. The second public comment period is for other matters of concern within the authority of the School Board. To register to make a public comment, please contact the Board Secretary during business hours, but no later than 12 p.m., on the day of the meeting by email (boardsecretary@fcasd.edu), telephone (412-967-2413), or at the district office (611 Field Club Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238). Please provide your name, complete address, telephone number, the subject of the comment or topic to be addressed, and any group affiliation. During the meeting, the Board Secretary will call those community members scheduled to comment by telephone. Sign-in sheets will also be provided at each meeting for those attending who wish to offer public comment and did not register in advance.

FOX CHAPEL EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE

BOARD COMMENTS

ADJOURNMENT — The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

The Fox Chapel Area School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, and/or any other basis prohibited by law, and prohibits discrimination, including harassment, in any employment practice, education program, or activity that it operates. Retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, makes a report of harassment or discrimination, files a complaint of harassment or discrimination, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation or grievance process is also a violation of the Fox Chapel Area School District's nondiscrimination policy and is prohibited.

To report information about conduct that may constitute discrimination under Title IX, Section 504, or the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), please refer to the district's nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures at www.fcasd.edu/about-us/need-to-know-disclosures/compliance-statement.

The Fox Chapel Area School District has designated individuals to coordinate efforts to comply with and carry out its nondiscrimination responsibilities. Questions regarding the Fox Chapel Area School District's commitment to nondiscrimination, as well as related laws, regulations, and district policies, may be referred to the following employees:

*Title IX: David P. McCommons, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent
(412/967-2456) David_McCommons@fcasd.edu*

*Section 504 and ADA: Timothy A. Mahoney, Ed.D., Director of Special Education and Pupil Services
(412/967-2435) Timothy_Mahoney@fcasd.edu*

Address: Fox Chapel Area School District, 611 Field Club Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238