

IN

An IN Community Magazine

Fox Chapel Area

2023-2024 Fox Chapel Area School District State of the Schools

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FOX CHAPEL AREA

State of the Schools



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A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Fox Chapel Area Community,

What's our next? That's a question I often ask myself, and others, about the Fox Chapel Area School District. I find the answer to be vitally important to the direction we plot for our future. As our strategic vision states, we strive to create an engaging learning community that values belonging and focuses on the education of the whole student, and we do this through four pillars for success – purpose, passion, care, and community. But what does this really mean? And, what is possible in the future?

In some places, a strategic vision may just be something written down on paper. However, in the Fox Chapel Area School District, we strive to incorporate our vision into the heart of everything we do. It's not just a vision; it's a guiding principle. Our job is to create a path forward for every student, allowing them to see and reach their fullest potential, and their highest level of achievement, and not just in academics.

I see **purpose** as the district's core mission – to educate students so they can fulfill their purpose, both now and in their futures. This means supporting and offering a rigorous academic program, while allowing our students to approach things with curiosity and wonder. It also means providing the necessary safety nets for students who may need extra support, as well as providing springboards to propel students forward who may need more of a challenge.

Passion is what drives a person. It encompasses authentic, real-world learning experiences that bring concepts to life. For some, their passion may be a favorite subject or participation in the arts. For others, it may be athletics or serving their community. The district strives to expose students to many experiences so that they may discover their true passion and grow into who they wish to be.

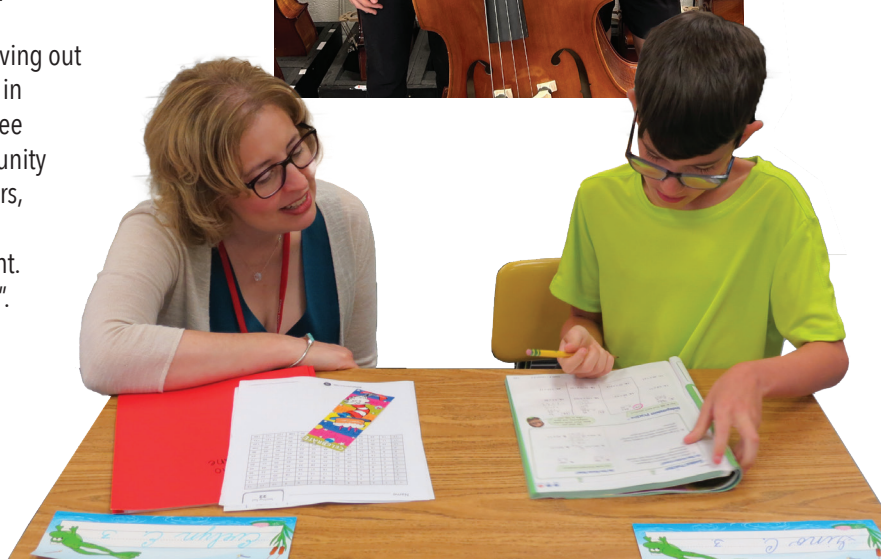
I see **care** as looking after oneself, as well as others. It includes understanding our students' needs as learners and individuals, as well as taking care of our learning community's physical and mental health and social-emotional well-being. Healthy students and staff members are better poised to fulfill their purpose and their passion.

Community is about building relationships with peer groups and is not just limited to the classroom. It is about working together and collaborating as part of a larger school community. It is about leading, serving, and being responsible to others.

On these pages, I hope you will see the myriad ways we are living out our vision. Every day, I see amazing work happening, not just in our classrooms and schools, but in our community as well. I see our students sharing their purpose, passion, care, and community with those around them. The talented students, staff, educators, administrators, school directors, parents and guardians, and community members make this a joyful learning environment. As a school district, we are always thinking, "What's our next?"

Sincerely,

Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac
Superintendent



BY THE NUMBERS

158,543

Number of student breakfasts served

358,618

Number of student lunches served



357

Professional staff members

78%

Had a master's or doctorate degree or equivalent

The average years of teaching experience was **19.7 years**.



Enrollment **4,181**

American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.12%
Asian	6.96%
Black or African American	3.68%
Hispanic	4.28%
Multiracial	6.63%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (not Hispanic)	0.02%
White	78.31%

36 Square Miles

The district serves the boroughs of Aspinwall, Blawnox, Fox Chapel, and Sharpsburg and the townships of Indiana and O'Hara.



68%

of high school students took at least one accelerated course.

Class of 2024



The following statistics are based on all graduates of Fox Chapel Area High School from the Class of 2024:

272 Total number of graduates

212	or	78%	attending 4-year colleges
28	or	10%	attending 2-year colleges/other
240	or	88%	continuing education



Of those students continuing their education at four-year institutions, **122 (58%)** are enrolled in colleges or universities outside of Pennsylvania.

6 National Merit Finalists and
22 Commended Students

613

Evidence-Based Reading & Writing

615

Math

FCAHS Average SAT Scores

The national average scores for all 2024 graduates taking the test were **520** in evidence-Based reading and writing and **510** in math.



A total of **219** members (81%) of the 272 students in the Class of 2024 took the SAT during their junior or senior year.

FCASD CONTINUES TO RANK HIGH

During the 2023-2024 school year, the Fox Chapel Area School District continued its strong showing in rankings by the Pittsburgh Business Times and Niche.

For the first time, the Fox Chapel Area School District topped the Pittsburgh Business Times' Honor Roll Ranking of the best-performing public schools in Southwestern Pennsylvania. For four of the previous five years, the district placed second in that category. Also for the first time, Fox Chapel Area came in first in the Honor Roll Ranking of all public school districts in Pennsylvania.

Among the other highlights in the Pittsburgh Business Times rankings: The district, for the first time, topped the Keystone Ranking (the ranking of all public-school 11th grades in the region); its sixth grade placed first, up from No. 3 in 2023; fifth grade came in first for the third consecutive year; fourth grade was No. 1 for the fourth time in five years; and the district's third grade led its peers for the third consecutive year.

The rankings incorporated three years of standardized test data (2021, 2022, 2023). They also exemplified "the hard work and efforts of so many during the physical school closures in the spring of 2020, the partial school reopening in 2020-2021, the district's full reopening in the spring of 2021, and the recovery/enrichment efforts in 2021-2022, as well as in 2022-2023," said Fox Chapel Area Superintendent Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac.

"Purpose in the classroom includes identifying the unique needs of each child and implementing a variety of instructional practices that guide students to think critically, collaborate with others, and develop the skills and knowledge that will help them to fulfill their potential and become successful learners. Purpose allows me to help students explore their own self-discovery through meaningful and authentic learning experiences."

– O'Hara Elementary Teacher Emily Suhevich



"Although we do not seek specific rankings, this recognition is something that should be a source of pride for everyone in the Fox Chapel Area School District community. This represents years of work and the efforts of multiple school boards, administrators, educators, staff members, families, and community members. We truly are #FCProud of this accomplishment."

Fox Chapel Area also maintained its high Niche rankings.

The district overall, as well as each of its six schools, once again received an overall A+ mark. For the seventh consecutive year, Fox Chapel Area received A+ ratings for its teachers, academics, and college preparation curriculum.

Individually, Fox Chapel Area High School was named the No. 3 public high school in Allegheny County (out of 57) and No. 10 in Pennsylvania (out of 683); Dorseyville Middle School placed No. 6 in the county (out of 78) and No. 14 in the state (out of 784); Fairview Elementary School came in at No. 8 in the county (out of 153) and No. 22 in the state (out of 1,622); Hartwood Elementary School was ranked No. 14 in the county and No. 32 in the state; Kerr Elementary School was No. 20 in the county and No. 40 in the state; and O'Hara Elementary School placed No. 17 in the county and No. 35 in the state.

Niche gathers data from multiple public sources, as well as reviews from students, parents, and residents, to arrive at its rankings.



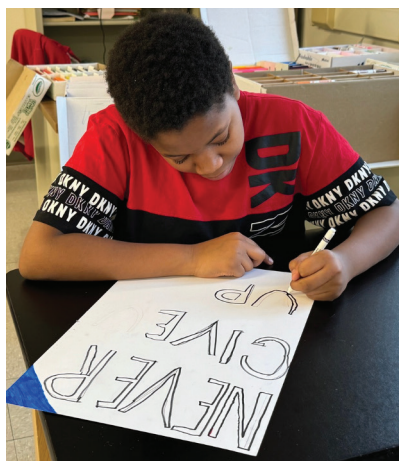


AWARDS SHINE NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT ON DMS

Dorseyville Middle School's learning community earned the national spotlight by accumulating a number of awards for efforts during the 2023-2024 school year.

- DMS earned PA "Don Eichhorn Schools: Schools To Watch" recognition in January 2024, one of 11 middle-grade schools in Pennsylvania to be honored for the 2023-2024 school year. The award was part of a recognition program developed by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform. It was the third time Dorseyville received Schools to Watch recognition.

Schools to Watch state leaders selected each school for its academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, social equity, and organizational structures and processes. In addition, each school has strong leadership, teachers who work together to improve curriculum and instruction, and a commitment to assessment and accountability to bring about continuous improvement.



"These schools demonstrate that high-performing middle-grade schools are places that focus on academic growth and achievement. They are also places that recognize the importance of meeting the needs of all of their students and ensure that every child has access to a challenging, high-quality education," said Bruce Vosburgh, state Schools to Watch director.

- In August 2024, DMS was recognized among 17 schools nationwide as part of the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) 2024 Schools of Distinction. AMLE's Schools of Distinction program recognizes exemplary schools and supports them through a process of strategic vision setting to help foster ongoing growth and success.



"To me, purpose is about igniting curiosity and building connections with our students. It's the thrill of empowering people to explore new ideas, solve challenges, and discover their potential. Every interaction with a student is an opportunity to inspire and uplift, be supportive and inclusive to make sure everyone feels like they belong, and to make a genuine impact on someone's journey. Together, we create a vibrant atmosphere where curiosity flourishes and everyone is inspired to reach their full potential."

– DMS Teacher Emily Grychowski



DMS, the first and only school in Pennsylvania to be named a School of Distinction, completed a rigorous review process that measured implementation of middle grades best practices and continuous improvement plans. After advancing from the initial application, the school community participated in a series of stakeholder interviews that included staff, students, and families.

During the review process, several attributes were evaluated to ensure that the school provides an education for young adolescents that is responsive, challenging, empowering, equitable, and engaging. Specifically, the evaluation team mentioned young adolescents being the foundation of all decisions made at Dorseyville Middle School, that high expectations are cultivated for the entire school community, that the school facilitates students taking responsibility for their own learning and making positive contributions to the world around them, that the school provides socially just learning opportunities, and that the school atmosphere is motivating for all learners.



**Distinguished
School**

- DMS was recognized in August 2024 as an Apple Distinguished School for the 2024-2027 program term. Schools are selected for this

distinction based on their commitment to continuous innovation in education and using Apple products to inspire, imagine, and impact teaching and learning.

Apple Distinguished Schools are considered centers of leadership and educational excellence, with a clear vision for how technology-rich environments support learning goals.

Approximately 900 schools in 37 countries have been named Apple Distinguished Schools since the inception of the program, and 24 of those schools are in Pennsylvania.

- In September, DMS was named a 2024 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. The 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," which 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. Thirteen schools in Pennsylvania were recognized for 2024, and only two are middle schools.

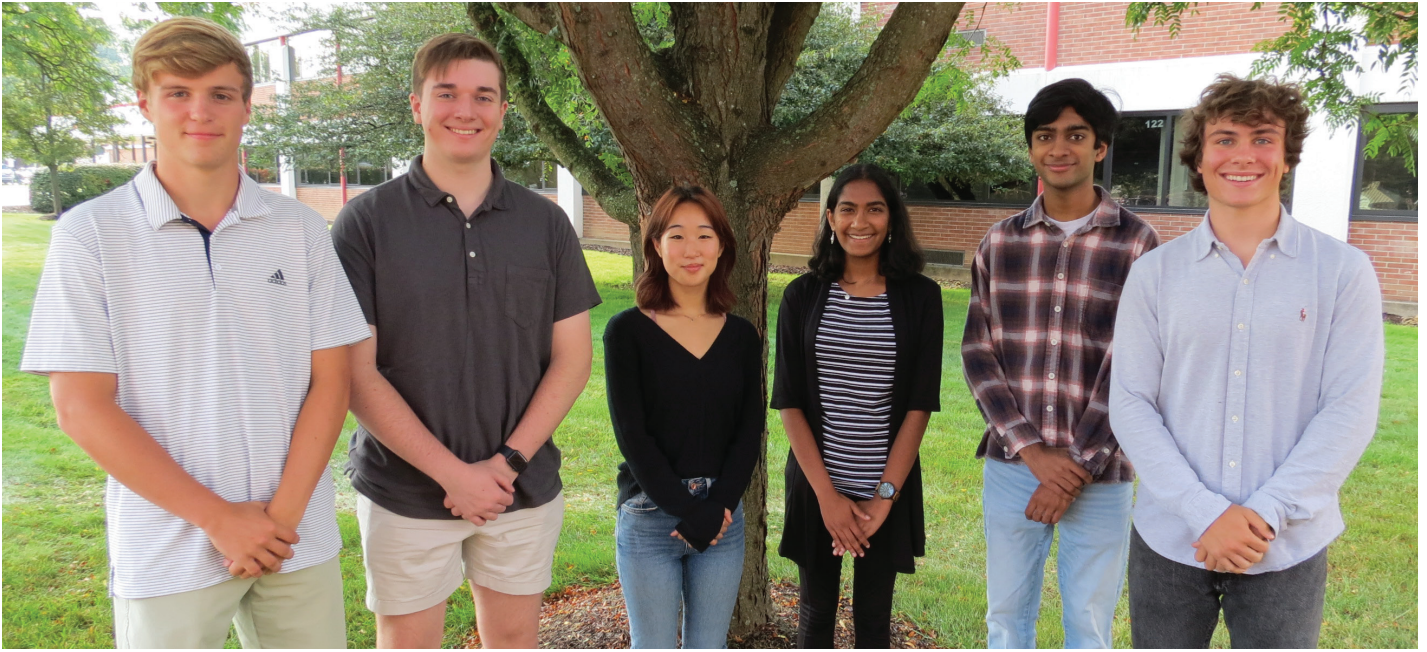
Each nominated school submits a comprehensive application detailing its school culture, programs, assessments, instructional practices, professional development, leadership, family, and community involvement.

"We are incredibly honored to be recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School," said Dr. Laura Miller, program principal at Dorseyville Middle 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."

This is the second time Dorseyville Middle School was named a National Blue Ribbon School. The first time was in 1994-1996. Over the years, all Fox Chapel Area schools have been named National Blue Ribbon Schools, with Fox Chapel Area High School and Fairview Elementary School also being named Blue Ribbon Schools twice.

According to Fox Chapel Area School District Superintendent Dr. Mary Catherine Reljac, Dorseyville Middle School offers an exemplary overall program that addresses not just academics, but the whole child.

"Dorseyville Middle School is a joyful place where the entire school community works together to fulfill the district's strategic vision pillars of purpose, passion, care, and community," Dr. Reljac said. "We are very proud of their efforts and that others recognize the work that happens day in and day out in the school community."



HIGHLIGHTS

- Six Fox Chapel Area High School seniors were designated as National Merit Finalists, and 22 were named Commended Students in the 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program. The Finalists were **Lucas Gravina, Chloe Kim, Shriya Krishnamurthy, Adhitya Thirumala, Abraham White, and Dylan Work**. The Commended Students were **Jacob Anthikad, Annalese Bartolacci, Dylan Berman, Joshua Correnti, Amelia Costello, Nicholas Cusano, Eliza Davis, Logan Dressman, David Feder, Adam Ferris, Emmett Gillespie, Darren Jayaratnam, Clara Kelley, Henry Koloc, Rachel Milcheck, Eduardo Phelan-Vidal, Lakshanya Rajaganapathi, Emily Torbert, Gloria Wen, Isabella White, and Bridget Yun**, and 2023 graduate **Liviya Rubin**.

- Junior **Anna Delale-O'Connor** was among only six students worldwide to receive a perfect score on the Advanced Placement (AP) World History: Modern Exam out of approximately 300,000 students who took the test in the spring of 2023.

- Fox Chapel Area High School was recertified as a National Banner Unified Champion School by the international headquarters of Special Olympics. Fox Chapel Area first received this designation in 2019. The honor is bestowed upon a small number of schools that demonstrate a commitment to inclusion by meeting 10 standards of excellence, developed by a national panel of leaders from Special Olympics and the education community, that center around inclusion, acceptance, and respect. Fox Chapel Area was one of 146 high schools in the nation to be named a National Banner Unified Champion School for 2023-2024 and was one of only two schools in Pennsylvania to be recertified this year.

"Our custodial staff takes pride in ensuring that all families and visitors are welcome and impressed with our facilities being operable, clean, and safe."

– High School Custodian Ken Trush





"As a principal, purpose means providing students with the best education possible while fostering their growth as learners and encouraging them to explore their interests. It's about creating a supportive environment where students can thrive both academically and personally."

– Kerr Elementary Principal Katelyn Toth



• Senior **Safiya Stewart** was recognized with the National African American Recognition Award. The honor is given as part of the College Board's National Recognition Programs that celebrate students' hard work in high school and showcase their strong academic performance.



• Sophomore **Theodore Tedesco** was named a National Community Service Ambassador by the United Nations Association of the USA and InnerView Technologies as part of the 2023-2024 Community Service Impact Awards. The program is designed to connect student community service activities, skill development, and commitment to sustainable development goals. Theodore also received a Zero Hero Award, sponsored by The Kroger Co., presented to students for taking action to help create communities free of hunger and waste.

• A team of Fox Chapel Area High School students was named the national grand champion in the 'Burgh Bash national invitational tournament, sponsored by Southwestern PA BotsIQ. The team was awarded first place in documentation, first place in battle, and was crowned the national grand champion for the second consecutive year. Team members were seniors **Ava McCaffrey, Eduardo Phelan-Vidal, Aiden Purcell, and Lucy Rygelski**; juniors **Jackson Hagler, Riley Puklus, Graeson Santucci, and Keegan Scanlon**; sophomores **Jackson Biehl, Krisztian Salvador, Benjamin Sun, and Jacob Williams**; and freshmen **Zhanyu "Eric" Jiang, Mikhail Lukichev, Ayush Patel, Mateo Phelan-Vidal, and Georgy Pistsov**. The team was also named the overall grand champion in the Pennsylvania BotsIQ 2024 Finals Competition.

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"I love coming to work, knowing students in middle school are growing in so many ways. They have so much on their minds, whether it's homework, a test, friends, extracurricular activities, practices and games, music lessons, and helping at home. I understand that I get to see them for a short time as they pass through the line, and for this short span of time, I try to look at each one, make eye contact, and wish them an awesome day. When they reply and smile back, I know my purpose for coming to work has been fulfilled."

– DMS Cafeteria Worker Anita Nesaw





- The Fox Chapel Area School District, in conjunction with three community organizations, was awarded a 2024 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence. The "Second-Graders Restoring Habitat at Salamander Park" was a joint project done in conjunction with students from the district, the Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania, the Allegheny County Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America, and Fox Chapel Borough Parks Commission and Public Works Department. As part of the project, second-graders restored habitat at Salamander Park and planted native trees.

- The annual Fox Chapel Area School District telethon was held in December 2023 and raised \$66,775 for Backpack for Hunger, a local volunteer organization that provides weekend food for students in need.

- The Fox Chapel Area School District was named among the Best Communities for Music Education for the 12th year. The award recognizes districts that demonstrate outstanding music achievement and provide an exceptionally high commitment and access to music education for all students.



- Junior **Kai Edwards** won seventh place in entrepreneurship at the 2024 Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) National Leadership Conference in June. This was Kai's second consecutive year to place at nationals.

- Fox Chapel Area High School senior **Benjamin Myers** was named a first-place national winner in the America's Field Trip contest. Benjamin was one of 25 (only two from Pennsylvania) to be named a first-place winner in the high school category for his essay, "What Does America Mean to You?"



"Care means ensuring that all students feel welcomed, safe, and supported by our school communities each and every day. It is important that our students feel as though they belong and have opportunities to develop meaningful relationships that last a lifetime. In caring for others, both students and adults, we develop as empathetic, kind, and happy individuals ourselves. Taking care of others is the best self-care one can experience."

– Executive Director of Secondary Education and Instruction Dr. Matthew Patterson



STUDENT HONORS & ACHIEVEMENTS

- Five Fox Chapel Area High School students were accepted into the national League of Innovative Students: senior **Shriya Krishnamurthy**; sophomores **Laila Golla**, **Joseph Shin**, and **Niko Vavpetic**; and freshman **Nadre Digbohau**. The League of Innovative Students comprises 30 high schoolers and is part of the Digital Promise League of Innovative Schools, an organization of school districts that promote innovation in education.

- High school seniors **Jacob Anthikad**, **Adam Ferris**, **Lucas Gravina**, **Katherine Haas**, and **Dylan Work** were selected as candidates in the 2024 United States Presidential Scholars Program. Approximately 5,000 students were named candidates, and 154 were from Pennsylvania. Students are first selected for the program based on their superior academic achievements. They are then further evaluated on their academic achievements, leadership and service activities, and an essay.

- A total of 181 Fox Chapel Area High School students were named Advanced Placement (AP) Scholars by the College Board for demonstrating college-level achievement on AP examinations taken in May 2024.

- The Policy Debate team of senior **Adhitya Thirumala** and junior **Moonyoung Hwang** finished in the top 16 at the Stanford University Speech and Debate Tournament. More than 2,600 students from 387 public and private secondary schools from 43 states participated in the tournament.



"Care is at the heart of everything I do. It's about more than just delivering lessons; it's about genuinely supporting my students' well-being, both academically and personally. When students know they are cared for, they feel safe to take risks, ask questions, and grow. My role is to create a nurturing environment where they can thrive, knowing I'm invested in their success and development."

– High School Teacher Ryan Devlin

- Four juniors were inducted into the National Business Honor Society: **Ridglee Boychuk**, **Kai Edwards**, **Caleb Shirk**, and **Sienna Siegel**.

- Five high school students qualified for the National Catholic Forensic League Grand National Tournament in Chicago: senior **Adhitya Thirumala**, junior **Moonyoung Hwang**, and sophomores **Ulyana Kubini**, **Joanna Li**, and **Zachary Rubin**.

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• Sophomore **Joanna Li** was named a 2024 Carson Scholar, and senior **Henry Koloc** was recognized for the fourth time. The award is based on high academic achievement and a student's commitment to community service.

• Six high school students placed at the Pennsylvania High School Speech League State Championship Tournament at Commonwealth University-Bloomsburg. The team of senior **Adhitya Thirumala** and junior **Moonyoung Hwang** were named the state champions in Policy Debate for the second consecutive year. Senior **Isabella White** won second place in Commentary. The Policy Debate team of sophomores **Joanna Li** and **Zachary Rubin** placed sixth. Sophomore **Priscila Hayetian** won seventh place in Programmed Oral Interpretation. Additionally, the Fox Chapel Area team won the 1st Place School Sweepstakes Award in the Small School Division for being the best overall team across all events.

• A group of Fox Chapel Area High School and Dorseyville Middle School students raised the most money in Pennsylvania for the 2024 Cool Schools Polar Plunge in February. The team raised \$46,642 to support Unified Sports teams.

• Fox Chapel Area High School's literary magazine, "Tapestry," was named a first-place winner in the 2023 American Scholastic Press Association's Annual Review and Contest Awards. The publication was one of 16 from across the nation in its category to receive a first-place award.

• Several Fox Chapel Area students placed at the 2024 Pennsylvania Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) State Leadership Conference in April. Senior **Micah Cagley**, junior **Gabriella Hample**, eighth-graders **Alessandra Sirio** and **Ayden Wang**, and seventh-grader **Rishabh Krishnamurthy** won first place; seventh grader **Dyutit Patro** and sixth-grader **Shiva Subramanian** won second place; sophomore **Joshua Shah** won

third place; and juniors **Kai Edwards**, **Jonah Kline**, and **Nathan Mackey**, sophomores **Zelia Herald** and **Zinta Jacob**, freshman **Sera Filar**, and sixth-graders **Annon Edwards**, **Russell Gardner**, and **Tucker Patsey** won fourth place. All 17 of these students qualified to participate in the FBLA National Leadership Conference. Fox Chapel Area High School first-place winners in open events (not eligible for the national competition) were seniors Micah Cagley and **Laney Porterfield**, and junior Kai Edwards.

"Passion in my role in the library and makerspace is about creating an environment where students and I can explore our interests and dive into what excites us most. The library isn't just a quiet corner; it's a place where students can find books and resources that speak to their unique interests, sparking curiosity and deeper exploration. It's fulfilling to be part of spaces where we are always learning, pushing boundaries, and exploring what we care about most."

– DMS Librarian/Makerspace Coordinator David Snyder



• Senior **Logan Dressman** placed third and sophomore **Karsten Buchert** won sixth place in the International Academic Competitions (IAC) 2024 Western Pennsylvania Regional History Bee in February. Both qualified for the IAC National History Bee and the IAC International History Olympiad.

• Two Dorseyville Middle School students won awards at the International Academic Competitions (IAC) Southern Pennsylvania Regional Finals. Eighth-grader **Jonah Driver** placed first in the eighth-grade History Bee competition, and seventh-grader **Thomas Pohl** was named the first-place winner in the seventh-grade contest. Both students qualified for the IAC National History Bee and the IAC International History Olympiad. Jonah also won first place in the eighth-grade regional Science Bee and qualified for the IAC National Science Bee and the International Environmental Science Olympiad.

• Juniors **Akshay Lath** and **Rodrigo Silva** were named second-place winners in Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's 2024 Ralph Munn Creative Writing and Teen Media Awards in the short film category for their submission, "The Hill District: A History of Jazz."

• Three Fox Chapel Area High School and A.W. Beattie Career Center students were inducted into the National Technical Honor Society: juniors **Shayna Horwitz**, **Gretchen Shelestak**, and **Emma Stein**. All three participate in Beattie's cosmetology program.



• Sophomore **Theodore Tedesco** was named part of the 2024 class of 18 Under Eighteen. The award, sponsored by Junior Achievement of Western Pennsylvania, recognizes young leaders who are revolutionizing their communities, leading with purpose, and using their voice to influence and ignite change.

• Seniors **Michael Shin** and **Alexandra Sroufe** were named 2024 Trib Total Media Outstanding Young Citizen awardees. The program honors students who demonstrate exemplary character and leadership, dedication to community service, and outstanding academic achievement.

"In regard to working with children at the high school, caring to me means seeing each student in their entirety. Care is making sure every student is as clear from as many obstacles as possible, so they are able to show us and themselves their full capabilities. One aspect that makes our district so unique and successful is that we truly care for the entire student in every aspect: socially, emotionally, physically, and as a result, academically. We provide a nurturing environment to promote student growth and well-being."

- High School Counselor John Baxter



STEM RECOGNITIONS

• 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 STEM competition for middle school students.

• Fox Chapel Area High School earned the College Board Advanced Placement (AP) Computer Science Female Diversity Award for achieving high female representation in AP Computer Science Principles. Schools honored with the award have expanded young women's access in AP computer science courses and improved gender representation in computer science.

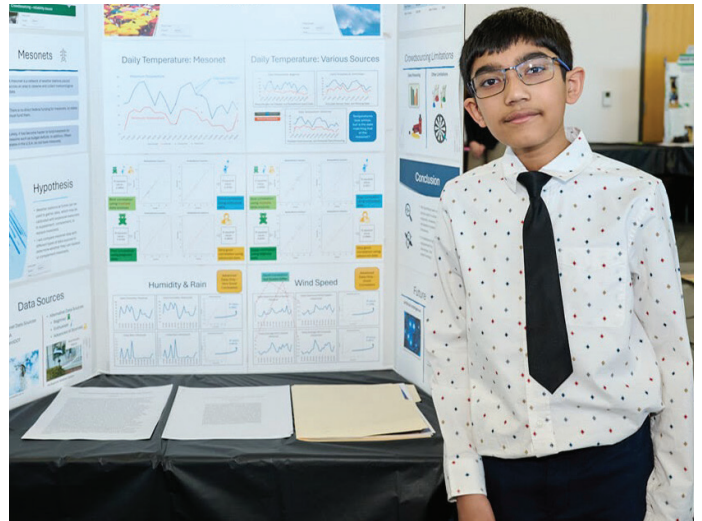
• A number of Fox Chapel Area students won first-place awards at the State Meeting of the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science (PJAS): senior **Lakshanya Rajaganapathi**; juniors **Anna Delale-O'Connor**, **Etash Jhanji**, and **Varnujah Rengaramanujam Kanagaraj**; and freshman **Rachel Kim**. Freshmen **Heidi Stiger** and **Param Thawani** also qualified for the state competition, during which Heidi won second place.

• A team of high school students was a state finalist and named among the top 20 teams in the 10th annual Pennsylvania Governor's STEM Competition. The team members were juniors **Rayna Huang** and **Etash Jhanji**, and sophomores **Ulyana Kubini**, **Joanna Li**, and **Joseph Shin**. The team developed a product called LocknProtect, a modern-day pill protector to keep opioid medications locked away from children and teens.



"Purpose means having respect and kindness at school. Care means thinking about and helping other people around you."

– Hartwood Elementary Third-Grader Grayson White



"Care is developing relationships with teachers and peers so that students can have the positive learning environment that they need. Care is fostered to create the most positive school experience for all students. The mutual respect from teachers and the student body help leave a good imprint on DMS."

– DMS Eighth-Grader Matthew Bartolacci

• Three middle school students won first-place awards at the 2024 Pittsburgh Regional Science & Engineering Fair: eighth-grader **Divya Thirumala**, seventh-grader **Rishabh Krishnamurthy**, and sixth-grader **Cora Good**.

• Five Dorseyville Middle School students scored high in the annual Pennsylvania Math League (PAML) Contest. The students are eighth-graders **Steven Hu** and **Henry Sun**, seventh-grader **Rishabh Krishnamurthy**, and sixth-graders **Shengfeng Fei** and **Brian Xu**. Additionally, Shengfeng also attained a perfect score. The annual PAML Contest is a mathematics competition offered to students in grades 4-12, and the students have 30 minutes to answer 35 high-level math questions.



• A team of middle school students won first place at the Hack the Ram competition at Pine-Richland. The students are eighth-graders **Steven Hu**, **Kanisk Prakash**, and **Siddarth Srinivasan**, and seventh-grader **PJ Hart**. Hack the Ram is a STEM hackathon to create technology with like-minded peers in a collaborative environment. Students were tasked to come up with a way to support environmental initiatives.



"As an educator within the Fox Chapel Area School District, my personal passion is getting to know my students from year to year. Each day at Fox Chapel brings new challenges and successes. I have found that if you can make even a minute connection with a student, those challenges are more easily overcome and the successes for both the students and me feel even more meaningful."

– Hartwood Elementary Teacher John McKechnie



• Five Fox Chapel Area students placed in the 2024 regional CalcuSolve tournament. Individually, Dorseyville Middle School sixth-grader **Brian Xu** tied for second place and Fairview Elementary fifth-grader **Elena Brown** was awarded third place. Additionally, the Fairview team of fifth-graders Elena, **Dante DiNardo**, and **Prisha Jhanji**, and fourth-grader **Daniel Wu** won second place in the team contest. CalcuSolve is a competition that tests students' problem-solving skills related to mathematics.

FINE ARTS & MUSIC RECOGNITIONS

- Fox Chapel Area High School sophomore **Mira Owens** was named the first-place winner in Congressman Chris Deluzio's second annual Congressional Art Competition. Mira's artwork, titled "JOY," is an abstract painting that contains imaginative depictions of her daily life in Western Pennsylvania. Mira's art is being featured in a gallery in the U.S. Capitol for a year.

- Seven high school students won awards in the Pittsburgh Region of the Scholastic Art Awards 2024 and qualified for national judging. The Gold Key winners were seniors **Emma Kim** (2 Gold Keys), **Mikayla Korczynski** (2 Gold Keys), and **Gabriella Urso**, and sophomores **Emiko Brasfield**, **Nora Kelley** (4 Gold Keys), **Mary Lynch**, and **Elyse Ritchie**.

- Three Fox Chapel Area students qualified for national judging for their submissions in the 2024 Pittsburgh Region Scholastic Writing Awards. Gold Keys were won by junior **Hannah Parker**, sophomore **Joanna Li**, and eighth-grader **Eliana Wellman**.



"For me, the best part of the day is the excitement when the doors open wide and children enter the halls laughing and talking with friends. I take so much pride in being part of our learning community and helping our children be successful."

– Fairview Elementary Personal Care Assistant Beth Ann Schmidt

- Nine high school students were selected to perform with the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) All-State Ensembles. Senior **Kristopher Pizzella** was chosen for the PMEA All-State Chorus, and junior **Marina Dunham** (bassoon) was selected for the PMEA All-State Concert Band. Seniors **Amelia Costello** (violin), **Elijah Herzer** (bass clarinet), and **Bridget Yun** (cello), and sophomore **Elliott Broyles** (trombone) were chosen for the PMEA All-State Orchestra. Senior **Chloe Kim** (clarinet), junior **Patton Johnson** (percussion), and sophomore **Joshua Shah** (flute) were selected for the PMEA All-State Wind Ensemble.



- The Dorseyville Middle School Philharmonic Orchestra earned the highest rating of "Superior" at the Trills & Thrills Music Festival at Hersheypark in May.

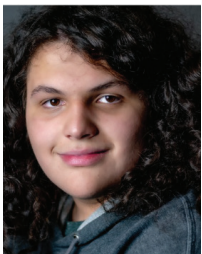




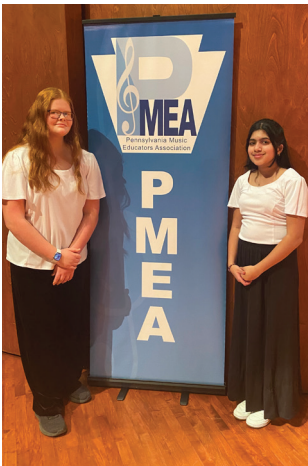
- The DMS Girls Chamber Chorus and the DMS FoxTones performed both separately and together as the DMS Combined Honor Choir at the Festival of Music adjudication at Cedar Point in May. The Girls Chamber Chorus and the Combined Honor Choir both earned the highest rating of "Superior," and the FoxTones earned an "Excellent" rating.

"Community is about building a positive culture within our four walls and extending those connections beyond the classroom. It's about connecting with community resources and partnering our students with the best the community has to offer."

– Executive Director of Elementary Education and Instruction Dr. Ashley Constantine



- The DMS Honors Band performed at the Festival of Music adjudication at Cedar Point in May. The band earned the highest rating of "Superior" and also brought home the "Overall Best Junior High Band Award."
- Senior **Kaylee Dunham** and junior **Lincoln Marshal** were named winners in Prime Stage Theatre's Fourth Annual High School Drama Awards. Kaylee won in the best student program/poster design category, and Lincoln won in the best actor category for Fox Chapel Area High School's fall play, "The Man Who Came to Dinner."



- Two high school students were chosen to perform with the PMEA Region I Choir: senior **Kristopher Pizzella** and junior **Alaina OKunewick**.

- Six Fox Chapel Area High School students were selected by audition to perform with the 2024 PMEA Region I Band: seniors **Elijah Herzer** (bass clarinet) and **Chloe Kim** (clarinet), juniors **Marina Dunham** (bassoon) and **Patton Johnson** (percussion), and sophomores **Elliott Broyles** (trombone) and **Joshua Shah** (flute).

- Four DMS students were selected to perform with the 2024 PMEA District 1 Junior High Band: eighth-graders **Ethan Beresik** (trombone), **Annabel Berkowitz** (bassoon), and **Claire Lesnik** (trumpet), and seventh-grader **Leah Sparks** (tenor saxophone).

- Dorseyville Middle School eighth-graders **Emily Shaw** and **Divya Thirumala** were selected to perform with the PMEA District 1 Junior High Chorus.

- Two DMS students were selected by committee to perform with the 2024 PMEA District 1 Junior High Orchestra: eighth-graders **Finn Johnson** (string bass) and **Matthew Wang** (violin).

- The Fox Chapel Area High School Marching Band won first place in the Class AA division at the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Marching Band Association competition at Norwin High School. Additionally, the band also received the highest scores in both Visual and General Effect. The theme of the show was "Cosmos." The band was under the student direction of senior **Chloe Kim** and junior **Luca Zgurzynski**.





STAFF ACCOLADES

- Fox Chapel Area School District Superintendent Dr. **Mary Catherine Reljac** served as a panelist on the Center for Digital Education's Leadership Council; for The School Superintendents Association's (AASA) national conference; for the League of Innovative Schools spring convening session; and for the ASU+GSV Conference, a collaboration between Arizona State University and Global Silicon Valley.

- The Fox Chapel Area School District won 11 national awards in the 2024 National School Public Relations Association Publications and Digital Media Excellence Awards contest, and eight state awards in the Pennsylvania School Public Relations Association's 2023 Excellence in Education Communications Contest. The winning entries were coordinated by **Bonnie Berzonski**, the district's coordinator of communications, and **Jill Leonard**, the district's community engagement specialist.

- Dorseyville Middle School literacy teacher **Scott Vensel** was named to the 2023 class of Righteous Among the Neighbors by the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh and the LIGHT Education Initiative. Righteous Among the Neighbors honors non-Jewish Pittsburghers who have supported the Jewish community and stood up against antisemitism. Mr. Vensel is the coordinator of the LIGHT Center at DMS.



- Fox Chapel Area School District Maintenance Supervisor **Richard Perkins** received the David L. Nett Leadership Award at the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials 69th Annual Conference in March. The award was given to the members of the Western Pennsylvania Facility Directors Association for the 2022-2023 school year, during which Mr. Perkins served as the vice president of the regional chapter. Mr. Perkins received the award, in part, for his dedicated leadership for the facilities profession in school business.

- Fox Chapel Area High School world languages teacher **Kelly Barone** was designated as a Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association Global Educator. This is the second time Ms. Barone has been named a Global Educator by the organization. The honor reflects the culture, environment, and priorities established to encourage and recognize insight and forward-thinking to prepare students for success.



"Purpose means to have a reason to do something and knowing why something should be done. A purpose could be something that is important to you, or someone else. It is important to have a purpose, because it motivates you to do something. Purpose is a step on the way to help students reach their full potential."

– DMS Eighth-Grader Zoey Liu

- High school counselor **John Baxter** was inducted into the National Technical Honor Society at A.W. Beattie Career Center for his mentorship and leadership over his 22 years as a school counselor.
- In September 2023, Simon & Schuster published "Remembrance: Selected Correspondence of Ray Bradbury." This book featured letters between Fox Chapel Area High School English teacher **Greg Miller** and the world-renowned author. Mr. Miller was a close friend of Mr. Bradbury, who served as his mentor.
- High school social studies teacher **Jennifer Klein** was a presenter at the Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies Conference in October 2023. The topic was how to stimulate civil dialogue in the classroom.
- High school Transition Coordinator Dr. **Stacie Dojonovic** presented at various national and regional conferences, including the Conference on Autism, Intellectual Disability, and Developmental Disabilities; the Council for Administrators of Special Education Conference; and the Council for Exceptional Children Special Education Convention.
- The following employees attained 25 years of service with the district during the 2023-2024 school year: Fairview Elementary School – **John Anderson, Wendy Donaldson, and Stacey Reese**; O'Hara Elementary School – **Tracy Barbosky, Danielle Gumto, and Tracey Planz**; Dorseyville Middle School – **Todd Ashbaugh, Jill Bennett, Thomas Hartman, Francesca Sciulli, Christopher Studebaker, and David Wygonik**; and Fox Chapel Area High School – **Jennifer Cuda and Annette Sparrow**.



"Community means a lot of people who help each other."

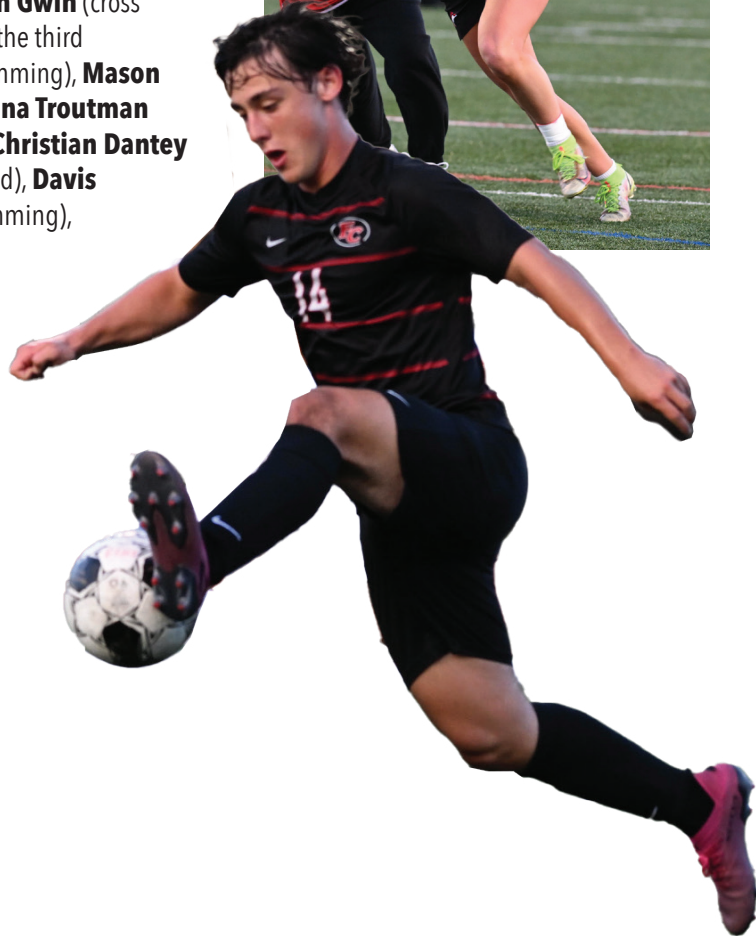
– Hartwood Elementary Third-Grader Avery Munsch

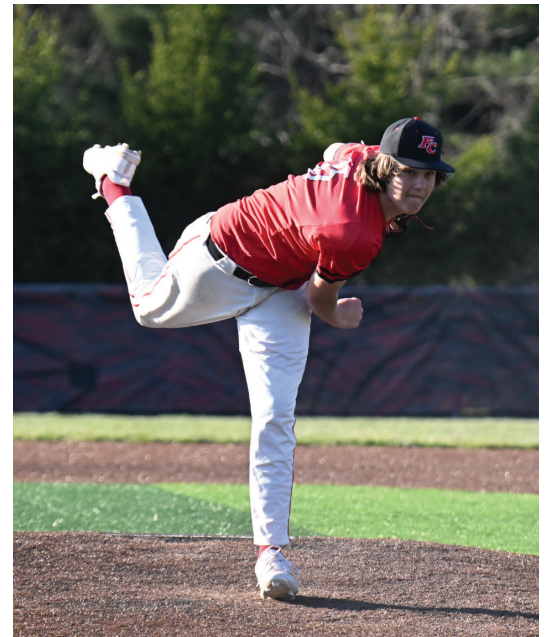




ATHLETIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- A total of 932 Fox Chapel Area High School students and 562 Dorseyville Middle School students participated in interscholastic athletics.
- The boys basketball team and girls soccer team qualified for state competition.
- Individual state qualifiers were seniors **David Fuhrer** (golf), **Rowan Gwin** (cross country, indoor track, and track & field), **Jackson Hagler** (diving, for the third consecutive year), **Henry Koloc** (swimming), **Isabella Marcos** (swimming), **Mason Miles** (indoor track and track & field), **CJ Smith** (swimming), and **Anna Troutman** (indoor track and track & field); juniors **David Black** (cross country), **Christian Dantey** (swimming), **Owen Howell** (swimming), **Anna Kintner** (track & field), **Davis Kittsley** (golf), **Grace Kovach** (swimming), **Sarah Pasquella** (swimming), **Alyssa Quackenbush** (track & field), and **Margaret Rusche** (swimming); sophomores **Arman Alborzi** (swimming) and **Claire Conti** (track & field); and freshmen **Cameryn Brindza** (swimming), **Charlotte Rusche** (swimming), **Josephine Stanczak** (swimming), and **Taylor Wilkinson** (track & field).
- The following teams won section championships: girls golf (sixth consecutive year), boys golf (third consecutive year), boys cross country (undefeated in the section for the fifth consecutive year), girls cross country (undefeated), boys wrestling (first time since 1971), girls swimming and diving (fifth consecutive year undefeated in the section), boys swimming and diving (fourth consecutive year undefeated in the section), boys tennis (second consecutive year undefeated in the section), and baseball.
- All high school teams had an average 3.79 QPA. Boys swimming and diving earned a 4.06 team QPA, and girls tennis earned a 4.03 team QPA to win top honors.





• The Fox Chapel Area High School girls varsity soccer team won the WPIAL Class 4A championship and qualified for the PIAA playoffs. The team members were seniors **Katherine Friday, Sage Good, Addison Jump, Megan Mulhern, Sydney Schutzman, Madeleine Stone, Anna Troutman, and Lila Valkanas**; juniors **Maya DiPasquale, Madeline Grimsley, Gianna Patterson, Alyssa Quackenbush, Paige Solomon, and Bella Urso**; sophomores **Cassie Classen, Summer Hill, Emily Korczynski, and Lily McLaughlin**; and freshmen **Antonia Linzoain, Emily McKee, Lia Pizzella, Caylie Wilkinson, and Taylor Wilkinson**.

• Junior **Pablo Linzoain** was named to the all-state boys soccer team. The team was selected by the members of the Pennsylvania Soccer Coaches Association.

• Senior **Sydney Schutzman** was named to the All-American Girls Lacrosse Team, one of only eight from Western Pennsylvania to be selected. An All-American exhibits superior skills and techniques, and possesses exceptional game sense and knowledge, while also embodying sportsmanship.

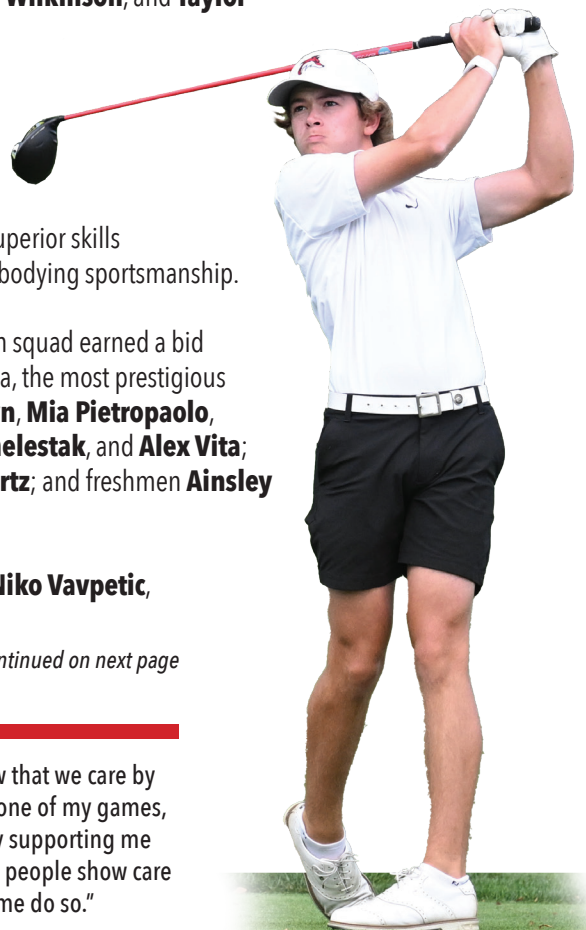
• For the second consecutive year, the Fox Chapel Area varsity cheerleading competition squad earned a bid to compete at the National High School Cheerleading Championship in Orlando, Florida, the most prestigious high school national championship in the country. Members were seniors **Fiona Brown, Mia Pietropaolo, and Sophia River**; juniors **Maurena Cilenti, Mary Ann Frauenholz, Gretchen Shelestak, and Alex Vita**; sophomores **Catherine Conway, Lillian Fontenot, Trista Jackson, and Emma Kurtz**; and freshmen **Ainsley Goode and Evie Rosen**.

• Two members of the Fox Chapel Crew Team, senior **Lucas Gravina** and sophomore **Niko Vavpetic**, qualified for the Scholastic Rowing Association of America national regatta.

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"I think that at Fox Chapel people show care in many different ways. My friends and I show that we care by being there for one another. When a teacher asks me about my weekend or knows about one of my games, it shows me that they care about me more than just as a student. My coaches show care by supporting me in all aspects of my life, not just the sport that I play for them. I think that though all these people show care differently, one way they all show they care is by wanting to see me succeed and helping me do so."

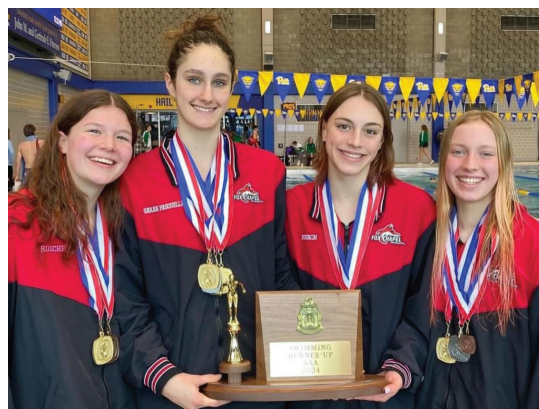
– High School Senior Adina Rosen





• The boys varsity basketball team qualified for the PIAA Class 5A team tournament. The team members were seniors **Jefferson Moorefield-Brown**, **Thomas Patterson**, and **Will Siegel**; juniors **Matthew Begg**, **Caden Kaiser**, **Isaac Moser**, and **Asher White**; sophomores **Alejandro Betancourt-Jones**, **Anderson Dockey**, **Viktor Golalic**, **Nathan Johnson**, **Max Melocchi**, **Gino Pototo**, **John Rehak**, and **Samuel Troutman**; and freshmen **Grant Fenton**, **Elias George**, and **Joseph McGivney**.

• Four swimmers and one diver won second- and third-place medals at the PIAA swimming and diving championships: junior **Sarah Pasquella** (second in 100-yard breaststroke and third in 200-yard freestyle), junior **Jackson Hagler** (third in diving), and the 200-yard freestyle relay team of juniors **Grace Kovach** and Sarah Pasquella, and freshman **Charlotte Rusche** and **Josie Stanczak**, which placed third.



• Five swimmers won gold medals at the WPIAL Class 3A championships. Junior **Sarah Pasquella** won first place in the 200-yard freestyle. The 400-yard freestyle relay team won WPIAL gold for the third consecutive year. The team members were juniors **Grace Kovach** and Sarah Pasquella, and freshmen **Charlotte Rusche** and **Josie Stanczak**. Junior **Owen Howell** won a gold medal in the 200-yard individual medley. Other second- and third-place winners at WPIALs were senior **Christian Dantey** (second in 200-yard freestyle and third in 100-yard breaststroke); junior **Jackson Hagler** (second in diving); Charlotte Rusche (third in 200-yard freestyle and 500-yard freestyle); Grace Kovach (third in 100-yard freestyle); and the 200-yard freestyle relay team of Grace Kovach, Sarah Pasquella, Charlotte Rusche, and Josie Stanczak, which placed second.

• Senior **Anna Troutman** won first place in the high jump at the WPIAL Track & Field Championships. Anna also won first place in the high jump at the Tri-State Track Coaches Association (TSTCA) Indoor Championships. This was the third year Anna qualified for the state indoor competition and the second consecutive year she won first place in the high jump at the TSTCA meet.

• Senior **Mason Miles** came in second at the WPIAL Track & Field Championships in shot put and third at states, and sophomore **Claire Conti** placed second at WPIALs in discus.

• Senior **Colin Lazzara** was named the 2024 Western Pennsylvania Boys Alternative Sport Positive Athlete for his participation in Unified Bocce. The awards, issued by the Western Pennsylvania Positive Athlete organization, are based on a student-athlete's character; positive attitude; and ability to lead, encourage, and respect everyone around them.





- Freshman **Clara Koteski** won the WPIAL Class 3A Section 4 individual golf title.
- Senior **David Fuhrer** won the WPIAL Class 3A Section 8 individual golf title.
- Senior **Rowan Gwin** was the individual first-place winner at the WPIAL Class 3A Section 4 cross country championships for the second consecutive year.
- Senior **Will Siegel** was named the WPIAL Class 3A Section 3 singles champion, and seniors **Ben Hallman** and **Travis Malone** were named the WPIAL Class 3A Section 3 doubles champions.
- Three members of the Fox Chapel Area High School girls soccer team, seniors **Katherine Friday** and **Anna Troutman**, and freshman **Emily McKee**, were named all-WPIAL Class 4A selections.
- Boys soccer team members senior **Colin Lazzara** and juniors **Milo Chiu** and **Pablo Linzoain** were named to the Class 4A all-WPIAL team.



• Senior **Colin Lazzara** was chosen to participate in the 2023 Western Pennsylvania Soccer Coaches Association boys all-star game.

• Girls head soccer coach **Carlo Prati** was named the WPIAL Class 4A Section 1 coach of the year.

• Two high school boys wrestling coaches were honored by the Pennsylvania Wrestling Coaches Association. Head coach **Michael Frank** was named the WPIAL Class 3A Section 1 coach of the year, and assistant coach **John Baxter** was named the assistant coach of the year.

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"Interconnected with a student's passion and care for activities and people, community is the people that share the same passion and care about the same things that you do. A student's community can range from the people they spend time playing sports with to the people they make music with and beyond."

– High School Senior Hannah Parker



- Junior **Sienna Siegel** received an honorable mention to the WPIAL Class 3A 2023 Western Pennsylvania Girls' Tennis Sportsmanship Award. The student-athletes who received honorable mention awards were nominated by an opposing coach or player, and/or a WPIAL official.

- Senior girls soccer player **Katherine Friday** was named to the TribLive High School Sports Network Fab 15 all-star team.

- Junior **Pablo Linzoain** was named to the TribLive High School Sports Network Fab 15 all-star team. He was also named to the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette All-Area Boys Soccer Team.

- Juniors **Dominic Casile**, **Tyler Goldstein**, and **Liam Wiseman** were selected for the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Hockey League all-star game. Additionally, varsity head coach **Cam Raidna** was selected as a coach for the Class 2A team for the third consecutive year.

- Senior third baseman **Mia Dunleavy** was chosen to participate in the inaugural 2024 Western PA Senior Softball All-Star Game. The team featured the WPIAL's top graduating players.

- Senior **Scarlett Hancock** was selected to participate in the We Serve First Foundation All-Star Girls Volleyball Classic at Kiski Area High School.

- Two high school seniors, **Jefferson Moorefield-Brown** and **Will Siegel**, were selected to play in Roundball Classic basketball games. Additionally, Jefferson was the top scorer and was named the MVP for the WPIAL Class 5A silver team.

- Seniors **Isabella Barbour** and **Skylar Byrnes** were selected to play on the Cager Classic East girls basketball team.

