



FLORENCE CITY SCHOOLS

END OF YEAR REPORT
2020-2021



FLORENCE BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Florence City Schools Board of Education is a corporate body comprised of elected members from the six districts across the city of Florence. The Board of Education oversees and manages a public school district's affairs, personnel, and properties. Board members conduct a regular public meeting on the second Tuesday of each month at the FCS Technology and Professional Development Center, 541 Riverview Drive, Florence, Alabama. Each meeting begins at 5:00 P.M.



Ms. Laura Hardeman
District 5 - President



Mr. David Howard
District 2 - Vice President



Ms. Vicky Kirkman
District 1



Ms. Lynn Sparks
District 3



Mr. Tom Wissert
District 4



Dr. Rachel Winston
District 6

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Your System. Our Community. One Florence.

The Vision: Tomorrow...Today!

The Mission: Empower students to explore, create, challenge, innovate and lead.



A Message From the Superintendent

Greeting Falcons,

What a ride it has been since the COVID-19 pandemic began. To put the journey in perspective, we have to go back to March 16, 2020. At that time, it was unclear if campuses would re-open in the fall or what a school day would look like if they did. But, over the summer of 2020, we gained a little hope. It was enough hope to begin the school year in some form of face-to-face instruction.

On Wednesday, August 4, 2020, I spoke to the faculty and staff of Florence City Schools and told them that the theme for this year would be to “chop wood and carry water.” In short, I wanted us to take care of students, ourselves, and to have school. These goals came to me after reading *Chop Wood, Carry Water* by Joshua Medcalf. The book outlines nine principles, but for the 2020-2021 school year, I chose to focus on three; it is essential what you become in the process, success contains hard work, and our value is constant.

During the 2020-2021 school year, we went through the process of redefining school. School for some was five days a week. For others, school attendance was shifted to three days a week, or even virtual every day. Everything about what school was and how it operated changed. How we fed students changed. How we sang in chorus and what we wore to athletics practices changed. Through the process of all of that change, we became more of a community. We began to show the community our spirit of service, whether it was feeding the Falcons or doing home visits to check on students who had been absent virtually. In facing unprecedented adversity, we became what we said we were, members of our community.

Through all of the change, we learned that there is no substitute for hard work. As Florence High School principal Dr. Roderick Sheppard often says, “Hard work pays off.” While there were many struggles this year, we also learned that, with hard work, we could persevere through the pandemic to excel athletically, academically, and in workforce development. In a year where everyone thought we would shut our doors, through hard work, we were able to have school and have school at a higher level than any of us anticipated in August of 2020.

The final thing we learned is that our values should always stay constant. There is a quote from the book *Chop Wood, Carry Water* that says, “When you're on a winning team, it's easy to feel good about yourself. But when you're on the losing team, it's just as easy to feel down and depressed. Our value doesn't change regarding the results produced in life. Don't tie yourself too close to your performance.” There were times this year that we looked like we were on the losing team. For educators and education, there were times when things looked gloomy, but the reality of it is, our values draw us to service. Results do matter, but we have to be willing to serve before we can get to outcomes. If COVID taught us nothing else, what we, as educators, have to contribute to society cannot be replaced by computers. Our value has something to do with our expertise, but it has everything to do with our service.

Thank you all for allowing us to serve the students and community of Florence, Alabama. Florence City Schools is your school system. Florence, Alabama, is our community. There is no difference between the two. We are one Florence.

Go Falcons!

Dr. Jimmy D. Shaw, Jr.
Superintendent
Florence City Schools

Your System.

The Falcon Family

Amidst a pandemic, "chop wood and carry water" became the mantra for FCS as the 2020-2021 school year approached. Here is a look back at what makes Florence City Schools a beacon in the Shoals community. Students, teachers, administrators, and leaders of FCS uphold our motto every day - Your System. Our Community. One Florence. It is what makes us the Falcon Family.

AUGUST, 2020

August 5: FCS welcomed our teachers and staff back to school. However, the 2020 Opening Institute was a bit different. Instead of meeting in one location, the event was live-streamed to each campus to help observe social distancing guidelines.

August 11: For the first time in school system history, learning for our 7-12 students shifted to alternating in-person days. The decision to implement the Silver and Blue Remote Learning Plan was sparked by guidelines from ADPH.

August 20: Once again, FCS campuses filled with smiling faces as the 2020-21 school year began.

SEPTEMBER, 2020

September 11: The Florence Falcon Varsity Football team returned to the gridiron to host the Albertville Aggies at Braly Stadium. Tickets were sold online for the first time in history. Social distancing protocols were also put in place for the safety of fans and athletes.

September 21: Florence City Schools is blessed to have such a supportive business community around us. Publix and the Shoals community generously donate thousands of dollars to our school system annually. We use the funds to support our students in many different ways.

September 29: FCS students are empowered by our mission statements to think outside of the box and explore the world around them. FMS seventh-grader William Leffel did just that. He saw lots of plastic waste following football practices. Leffel initiated a plan to get a recycling bin donated to the fieldhouse for the waste.

OCTOBER, 2020

October 2: In October, FCS joined the Governor's Office in honoring the healthcare community for their efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Falcon Family participated in "Light Up Friday Nights to show appreciation for our school nurses."

October 6: A panel made up of FCS school board members, system administrators, and school principals interviewed candidates for the Chief School Financial Officer position. FCS streamed the candidate interviews live on YouTube and our website.

October 12: Back to School 2.0! FCS welcomed back students onto campuses who have been virtual learning for the first nine weeks of school. Florence High School, Florence Freshman Center, and Florence Middle School also transitioned from Silver and Blue Days for grades 7-12 to in-person learning 5-days a week.

NOVEMBER, 2020

November 10: The Falcon Family welcomed our newest school board members. Ms. Lynn Sparks, Dr. Rachel Winston, and Mr. Tom Wissert were all sworn in for their four-year term on the Florence City Schools Board of Education. In addition, Ms. Laura Hardeman, Mr. David Howard, and Ms. Vicky Kirkman continued their service as elected board members.

November 11: Although 2020 was not a typical school year, our campuses found ways to honor our Veterans. Florence High School utilized the FHS Digital Media Department to live stream their Veterans Day program to classrooms across campus. The stream allowed organizers to invite Veterans into the FHS auditorium and give them a proper thank you.

DECEMBER, 2020

December 3: The Florence Education Foundation presented four classroom grants to teachers across FCS in honor of some special Falcons. More than \$6,000 was given to teachers in memory of Mr. Willard Hice, Mr. Joel Anderson, and Mr. William "Bill" Gullett. The memorial grants go to purchase classroom supplies and technology.

December 11: For the seventh year, My 101.5's Hunter Jackson has boarded a school bus and stayed until he reached a predetermined number of Christmas toys for children in northwest Alabama. Because the Shoals community outpoured support, more than 3,000 gifts were collected in 2020 for Stuff the Bus.

JANUARY, 2021

January 11: Not only did the U.S. celebrate the 2021 College Football Playoff National Champions, but they also applauded Weeden Elementary School's, Mrs. Carol Behel. As the 2019-2020 Alabama teacher of the year, Mrs. Behel represented the state at the game and cheered on the Crimson Tide.

January 15: Florence City Schools is very blessed to have so many highly qualified teachers in our classrooms. Two of them were surprised by administrators for being nominated as District Teachers of the Year. For 2020-2021, Weeden Elementary's Rachel Graves for Elementary Teacher of the Year and Florence High School's Karen Sammons was the Secondary Teacher of the Year.

FEBRUARY, 2021

February 26: Through a partnership with the Alabama Department of Public Health and North Alabama Medical Center, FCS staff members were given the opportunity to receive their first round of COVID-19 vaccines.

February 28: As a pioneer across Alabama, FCS is known as a model for many education programs. AL.com, a state publication, profiled the FCS School Mental Health Program as the state legislature increased funding to assist students.

MARCH, 2021

March 2: The Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools (CLAS) announced two FCS schools received the 2020 CLAS School of Distinction Award. Harlan Elementary received a nomination for their "Goodnight Harlan" video series that promotes family reading time at home. In addition, Kilby Laboratory School received a CLAS nomination for their "Kindergarten Buddies" program. Sixth-graders at the school are partnered with kindergarteners and mentor them throughout the school year. Harlan went on to be named a 2021 CLAS Banner School in May.

March 7: FCS students and faculty leaders produced and broadcast the annual UCPShoals.org telethon. Students in our Florence High School Digital Media Department worked behind the scenes to televise the yearly event. Everyone's efforts resulted in raising awareness and \$81,000 for our community.

APRIL, 2021

April 13: The Alabama High School Athletic Association named FHS Senior Mary Claire Ridgeway the Class 7A Bryant-Jordan Scholar-Athlete winner for 2021. Also #1 in her graduating class, this four-sport athlete scored a near-perfect 35 on her ACT.

April 30: The doors to the new FCS Parent Resource Store opened for the first time. This one-stop shop provides emergency resources like clothing and school supplies to FCS students in need. Services are referral-based through our school principals.

MAY, 2021

May 11: The Alabama State Department of Education announced Weeden Elementary School teacher Rachel Graves named the District VII Elementary Teacher of the Year. Graves went on to represent FCS as a finalist for the Alabama 2021-2022 TOY.

May 20: FCS awarded the latest Associate's Degree Pathway participants their acceptance letters into the program. These rising Freshmen have committed to earning their Associates's Degree through NWSAC while also earning their high school diploma. This program offers degrees in Applied Science, Medical Technology, and Welding.

The Falcon Feeder

Dedicated to Our Kids



THE FIRST CUSTOM BUILT CONCESSION TRUCK IN ALABAMA SCHOOLS

Florence City Schools (FCS) unveiled the acquisition of The Falcon Feeder in January 2021. It is a custom-built concession truck and a dream purchase of the FCS Child Nutrition Program (CNP).

As the COVID-19 pandemic set in during March of 2020, Florence City Schools and volunteers stepped up in our community. Over two months, more than 60,000 meals were served to children in northwest Alabama through the Feeding the Falcons initiative. As successful as the program had been, FCS Child Nutrition Program Coordinator Tara Talmage raised concerns. She was afraid that many children were likely going hungry due to a lack of personal transportation. It was at that moment Talmage began to explore avenues to reach more students and families in need.

During her research, Ms. Talmage discovered the No Kid Hungry organization. No Kid Hungry is a national campaign run by Share Our Strength. They are a nonprofit working to solve problems of hunger and poverty in the United States and around the world. As a child hunger organization, ending childhood hunger is their primary focus.

Through the leadership of Superintendent Dr. Jimmy Shaw, Florence City Schools applied for a monetary grant from the No Kid Hungry program. This particular grant assists school systems significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic who participate in the USDA Feeding Programs. Its goal is to reach the children who may not have a way to receive nutritious meals. Upon completing the grant process, FCS received \$100,000 to be used for a food delivery truck. With the approval and support of the Florence Board of Education, The Falcon Feeder became a reality.

After researching and developing the specifications needed for The Falcon Feeder, the project went out for bid. Concession Nation, a Florida-based company that specializes in custom-built food trucks, submitted the winning bid at almost \$130,000.

The layout of the 18-foot cabin utilizes every inch for food holding, transportation, and distribution. The Falcon Feeder contains commercial-grade coolers, warmers, and a freezer. An onboard 12kW diesel generator powers the truck.

The Falcon Feeder gives FCS the flexibility to reach our students where they are. Summer delivery routes are driven daily across the city of Florence. The paths give children direct access to the truck to receive meals. These are very similar to a traditional bus route and have stops at specific places and times.

Launching Falcons

Florence City Schools recognizes we have a very diverse population of students, and we make a pathway for all students to be successful. Thinking “outside of the box” is customary on our campuses. Our faculty and staff are constantly challenging themselves to find new ways to reach our students where they are. One example of that is the Launch program at Florence High School.

In 2009, Florence High School partnered with the Southwire Company to form one of the first career-readiness programs in northwest Alabama. Since that time, 12 for Life has helped hundreds of FHS students gain valuable work experience and, most notably, their high school diploma. In just nine years, 12 for Life has assisted in lifting the graduation rate at FHS by nearly 30 percentage points.

Building on the successes of 12 for Life, Florence High School unveiled the Launch Program in 2018.

“Special things happen when you partner and listen to business, industry, and employment agencies, and I think that is what we have started to do in Florence City Schools on a much larger scale,” explained Launch Program Director Dr. Corey Behel. “Each student has potential within them, and what we are focused on intensely is moving them towards productive career outcomes.”

In Launch, Florence High School partners with high-interest, high-ability students and places them with local and national companies who want to give the students real-world life work experience. These internships help students identify possible careers they wish to pursue through college or trade school after high school graduation.



2018

Banner Program

The Launch Program at Florence High School earned the 2018 CLAS Banner Program of Distinction. It is an award presented by the Council for Leaders in Alabama Education with the purpose of identifying, recognizing, and publicizing schools with outstanding educational programs.

\$20K

Apprenticeship Earnings

Students who participate in apprenticeships through the Launch program earn on average \$20,000 during their junior and senior years at Florence High School.

90+

Business Partners

Launch is recognized as the state of Alabama's largest internship/apprenticeship program among high schools. Students have the opportunity to work in the marketing, engineering, medical, fashion, music, and community services fields.



Florence City Schools

2020-2021 By the Numbers

First School

1820

An established school
district in 1890

ENROLLMENT

4,665

2,573

B-3 to 6th grade

2,092

7th to 12th grade

Accredited by Southern Association
of Colleges and Schools (Cognia)

SYSTEM BRAND

Your System. Our Community. One Florence.

VISION

Tomorrow...Today!

MISSION

**Empower students to explore, create,
challenge, innovate and lead.**

Academic Schools

W.C. Handy ECDC

Forest Hills Elementary

Harlan Elementary

Kilby Laboratory

Weeden Elementary

Hibbett Intermediate

Florence Middle School

Florence Freshman Center

Florence High School

DISTRICT BUDGET

\$63.7 Million

Virtual School Course Offerings 73

Advanced Placement Courses 21

Career Tech Course Offerings 92

Florence Academy of Fine Arts 124

Mobile Device to Student Ratio 1:1

Florence City
Schools' Annual
Fiscal and
Economic Impact
on the Shoals

\$151

MILLION

Combined Size

1.083

Million Square Ft.

Student-to-Faculty Ratio

12:1



13

AHSAA 7A
Varsity Sports

376

Full-time
Teaching Faculty

Graduates in
May, 2021

346

One Florence.

Students, teachers, and faculty members give back to a city that blesses them.

Florence High School

Florence High School bears the name of the beloved city that is the jewel of Lauderdale County. As such, our district motto of “your system, our community, one Florence” coincides with the fact that we are the one public high school that represents the city. One of our tenets in educating students is to teach the importance of giving back to the community that offers so much to us.



FAFA Dance hosted the North Alabama Dance Festival and brought in over 150 students from the community into Florence High School, and raised over \$1,000 for coronavirus relief for local dance studios in our area through their annual service project.



FCCLA made Christmas Cards and delivered them to elder care facilities across the Shoals, as they could not have visitors at the time. We are also proud of our Digital Media students, who continue to handle the broadcasting duties for the annual United Cerebral Palsy Telethon, broadcast throughout the entire state.

Florence Freshman Center

For February, the Florence Freshman Center Key Club had a Black History Door Decorating Contest that celebrated black history's prominent and hidden figures. Each Florence Mentoring Program (FMP) class was encouraged to decorate a door with facts and pictures of black men and women who have significantly impacted American history. Additionally, Key Club members sold inspirational bracelets to encourage students to make a difference in the world. The winning FMP class received a sweets party. More importantly, the contest winners donated the proceeds to the organization of their choice: St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. The students and teachers made it a great success and a powerful reflection of how FFC celebrated Black History Month.



One Florence.

Florence Middle School

Service is an important part of being an FMS student. This year our students had several opportunities to help our local community.

In February, the FFA hosted a hygiene drive to benefit students in our community. Community partners, teachers, and students donated shampoo, conditioner, soap, and other hygiene products resulting in the collection of 1,715 items.



In addition to our school-wide drives, several of our student clubs spent time creating cards and letters filled with words of encouragement to residents of several local assisted living communities. Florence Middle School is blessed with students who understand the importance of helping and encouraging others.



Hibbett Intermediate School

Hibbett Intermediate School partnered with our local Salvation Army to fight hunger during the 2020 Mac and Cheese Drive to help fill bags for Angel Tree Families. Hibbett students brought 835 boxes of macaroni and cheese to provide to families in need. Connect classes held a friendly competition to see which class could raise the most boxes. Mrs. Diver's 6th-grade Connect class won by bringing 386 boxes of macaroni and cheese. The winning students received a donut and hot chocolate party to celebrate the spirit of giving. Special thanks to Mrs. Hasting's class for sorting, organizing, and counting the boxes!



At Hibbett Intermediate School, we strive to teach our students to give back to the community and strengthen their emotional development by showing empathy to others. Teaching empathy encourages tolerance and acceptance of others. Empathy allows us to understand how others feel to respond appropriately to the situation, an essential skill for all. It also helps students build a sense of security and stronger relationships with other students and adults. Teaching students healthy habits at an early age produce a caring learning community. Participating in this community service project is another way in preparing our students for Tomorrow...Today!

We appreciate the opportunity to give back to our community by partnering with the Salvation Army! We look forward to many more opportunities for our students in the future.

One Florence.

Weeden Elementary School

Weeden Elementary strives to help students develop positive character traits and show empathy for others, not only in our school and classrooms but throughout the local community. Students at Weeden receive opportunities to engage in community service projects through their participation in school-sponsored student organizations, such as Weeden Student Council and Weeden Hope Ambassadors. By serving others, students develop a sense of pride in our school, develop a respect for those they serve, and are motivated and inspired to become good citizens.

During the 2020-21 school year, our Student Council organization participated in three community service projects. Our school partnered with the Salvation Army by hosting a school-wide drive to collect boxes of macaroni in the fall. This year, our school collected over 1,000 boxes of macaroni and cheese distributed to needy families in our area! In February, student council members designed Valentine cards and wrote encouraging letters to our elderly friends at a local nursing home. Finally, our students participated in the Florence Citywide Cleanup this spring, sponsored by the Florence Solid Waste Department. Students helped clean up our community and restore the beauty of our city by picking up trash on and around the perimeter of the Weeden Elementary campus.

In conjunction with our school partnership with the Hope Institute, we created the Weeden Elementary Hope Ambassadors program. This ambassador program is just one of many strategies that have been put in place to help develop positive character traits and leadership skills among our students. Students are chosen to serve as ambassadors because of their willingness to assume leadership roles and serve as positive role models to their peers.



The Weeden Student Hope Ambassadors provide constant encouragement to our faculty and staff, and community leaders. This year, our students wrote letters of encouragement to district and community leaders. They also provided treats for a local business to thank them for their support for our school through their gracious and continued donations.

Harlan Elementary School

Students and faculty at Harlan Elementary have spent this unprecedented year focused on giving back to our community. We have declared this year the “Year of Kindness.” This initiative aims to create a kinder school climate through a simple checklist of intentional acts of kindness. Students were encouraged to complete each kind act over the course of a week and take part in additional community-building events and community service projects. Our students donated various food and personal care items to local shelters and organizations in need. They also created artwork for residents at a nearby nursing home and made cards for patients on the Covid-floors at local hospitals. Our Peer Helpers, a select group of student ambassadors, made banners for healthcare professionals to thank them for their hard work during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Third and Fourth grade STEM classes demonstrated kindness by making bird feeders with recycled water bottles and distributed them to local assisted living facilities. At Harlan, kindness isn't just a character trait but an expectation we put into action.



One Florence.

Forest Hills Elementary School

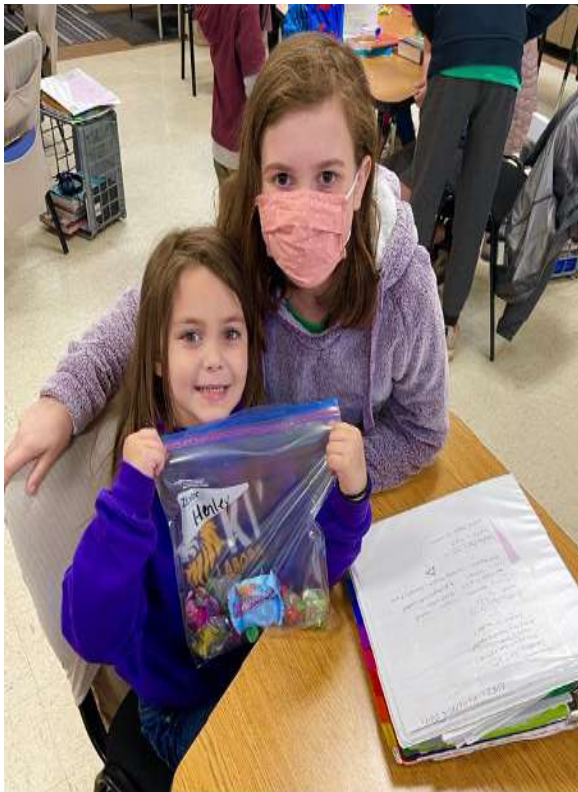
Every morning, the students of Forest Hills recite our Forest Hills Commitment together, “I will be respectful, responsible, and safe to make the world a better place.” Making the world a better place is truly our end goal for the students of Forest Hills. Not only do we strive to prepare our students to enrich the world around them by teaching academics, but we also have a strong belief in character education instruction. This year, instilling virtues of character in our students was a bit more challenging than during a typical school year because of Covid safety protocols. Still, we did not let that stop us from teaching our students the value of virtuous lifestyles and giving back to our community.



Each year, Forest Hills participates in the American Heart Association’s Kids Heart Challenge. The Challenge aims to raise awareness for healthy lifestyle choices and raise funds to support American Heart Association research. Students celebrate the culmination of their learning with a Jump Rope Glow Party. Last year, Forest Hills students set a new record of raising \$10,000 during the Kids Heart Challenge. This year, due to Covid restrictions, students could not go door-to-door for their fundraising efforts. Instead, they were required to use an app and other technology outlets for fundraising. Forest Hills students rose to the challenge and set a new record of raising over \$20,000 during the Kids Heart Challenge for the American Heart Association!

Kilby Laboratory School

The faculty, staff, and students at Kilby Laboratory School spent this last year amid a COVID pandemic....in turn, allowing us to help one another. This year, “normalcy” was a far-removed expectation. Yet, the students still managed to provide a sense of normalcy for the young Kindergarten students through a peer mentoring program called “Kindergarten Buddies.” Through this program, 6th-grade students served as mentors for the kindergarteners to help them adjust to life at Kilby and their first year of school life in a pandemic. The 6th-grade students took advantage of opportunities to assist with reading, math, and unique learning through games and fun interactions. Guided playtime on the playground also helped ease the minds of the kindergarten students who were otherwise anxious about being at school and learning so many new skills and concepts. The 6th Grade buddies assisted with instilling proper mask-wearing habits and hand-washing techniques for their little buddies. Our Kilby students found ways to give back within the building even through a pandemic while setting up our younger learners for success!



One Florence.

W.C. Handy School

Thanks to a grant through the Alabama Department of Early Childhood, W.C. Handy Early Childhood Development Center began offering classes for children ages six weeks and up. The competitive tuition-based program provides experiences designed to stimulate the growth of critical developmental skills in a loving, caring environment. The program received licensing through DHR in November 2020, allowing them to serve up to 50 children. Even though this was not required, it shows the faculty and staff's commitment to providing a quality early learning program. Since the program can only serve a limited number of students, the classes quickly filled. It became apparent that our community needed additional early learning programs.



Partnerships have been established with community and business partners to offer our children additional activities and learning opportunities. A TVA grant allowed Handy to offer specific STEM activities to introduce coding to the Pre-K students. W. C. Handy hopes to expand these opportunities further next year. Additionally, Steve Trash presented world-class interactive magic and environmental science program to remind the students of the importance of taking care of our world. Students were spellbound and had such a good time!

As Handy closes on its second year as an early learning center, they are grateful for the investment made by Florence City Schools and the Alabama Department of Early Childhood to our program at W.C. Handy. Looking towards the future, they have plans to expand and improve the outdoor learning activities on the playground. Play-based learning allows children to explore the world and experience new things. If you have not visited this special little place, please make plans to do so.

Career & Technical Education

The Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs at Florence City Schools strive to provide all students a variety of rigorous, relevant, and high-quality educational pathways. No matter the post-graduation plans of a student in Florence City, FCS CTE strives to provide students with the necessary technical and soft skills training. By giving students these opportunities, they can earn industry-recognized certifications and credentials before their graduation. Over 1500 Florence students in grades 7-12 participated in at least one career and technical education program this past school year. FCS Career and Technical education programs could persevere and excel during a year filled with quarantines and changes to the overall school structure. The CTE teachers spent their summer and fall transforming lessons and activities typically hands-on and required technical equipment into digital individualized learning activities. Considering the many accomplishments and goals that the students and faculty of CTE met during this challenging year, it is exciting to imagine what will be achieved in the months and years to come.

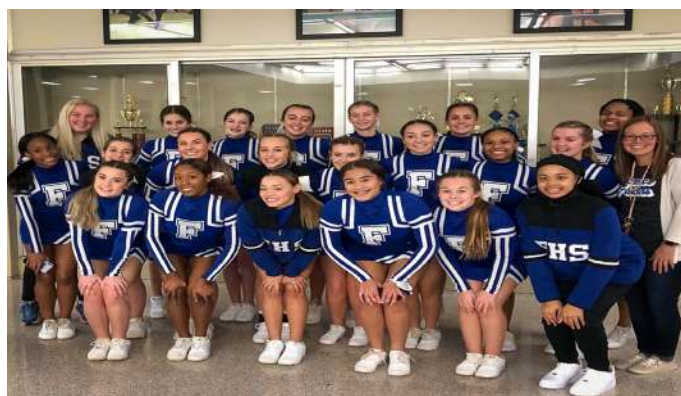


One Florence.

Falcon Athletics

The 2020-21 athletic season was one to remember for the Florence City Schools Athletics Department. Coming off the COVID -19 Pandemic that abruptly ended all Spring sports, we were uncertain about the future of the Fall/Winter sports season. Through the guidance of the Alabama High School Athletic Association and the Alabama Department of Public Health, we were able to develop a best practices plan to resume athletics and summer workout sessions and prepare for competition in the Fall.

The Falcon coaches and student-athletes had success in all three seasons of sports despite the lingering effects of the pandemic. We are happy to have had sporting seasons for our student-athletes, but it was even more rewarding to see them succeed. The pictures below illustrate just a few of the successes the Falcons realized.



Florence High School Athletics awarded the 2020-21 District 7 AHSAA Sportmanship Award.



Florence High School's Mary Claire Ridgeway named the 7A Bryant Jordan Scholar-Athlete of the Year.



Florence High School's Kneeland Hibbett became the first individual State Champion (Javelin) in FHS history.



Florence High School's baseball team had the best record and best playoff run in school history.

Florence Academy of Fine Arts

The Florence Academy of Fine Arts has emerged as the leader of Fine Arts in the State of Alabama. FAFA staff members work diligently to develop each young person within their specialized program. Under the motto of "Not bound by tradition but freed by imagination," FAFA students are encouraged to live their dreams.

Within the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, our faculty worked to find innovative approaches to give our students all they needed to succeed and take their talents to the next level. That dedication paid off in all areas of FAFA. You can find some of our student's exemplary work in the pictures on this page. If your child is interested in the Arts, they need to be in Florence City Schools and the Florence Academy of Fine Arts.



FAFA students won Best Instrumentalist and Best Vocalist at the Southeastern Mic Check Invitational.



FAFA Dance was recognized and invited to the prestigious International Fringe Festival.



FAFA Fashion presented a New York style show "Express Yourself!"



The Big Blue Falcon Band received Superior ratings in competitions.



FAFA Digital Media won Gold and Silver awards at Skills USA.

Tomorrow...Today!

Empower students to explore, create, challenge, innovate and lead.



Science

While earning their high school diploma, students who wish to follow a career path into the medical industry may participate in science classes which can elevate them into receiving an Associates Degree from NWSCC in Science or Medical Technology at graduation.



Technology

Technology is an important component of the developmental skills of FCS students. The use of robotics in our curriculum enables students to visualize, model, prototype, solve and report comprehensive design problems. Robotics clubs begin in the 3rd grade.



Engineering

The Engineering program enables students to make an informed career choice through the study and application of mechanical, electrical, and other engineering systems. Students conduct research and design engineering projects to enhance abilities and interest in the field of engineering.

Florence City Schools has a long-standing tradition of being at the forefront of education not only in our region but across the state of Alabama. Our mission is to provide our students with the means to reach their total potential no matter the pathway.

FCS is a proud member of the Alabama Math, Science, and Technology Initiative (AMSTI). Over its history, AMSTI has received both national and international attention for its effectiveness at raising achievement scores and improving student interest in math and science. Fortune 500 CEOs selected AMSTI as one of 35 "programs that work" from across the nation.

AMSTI's motto is Learning by Doing. FCS teachers receive hands-on training in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) throughout the year and are then taken to the classroom. Our students explore STEM first-hand through the curriculum and experiments. The University of North Alabama facilitates AMSTI's mission for Florence City Schools with teacher coaching, resources, and additional classroom support.

AMSTI is just one part of the Florence City Schools plan to make sure our students are ready for the future. FCS enrolled students receive either an iPad or Chromebook to assist them along their education pathway.

The Days of Yesteryear.



Patton School, 1891-1960

This collection of pictures help illustrate how Florence City Schools has grown into a premier school distinct in our community, region, state, and nation. The milestones behind us fuel our forward-thinking for tomorrow.



The Maud Lindsay Free Kindergarten, early 1900's



Coffee High School Band, early 1920's



Burrell Normal School, Class of 1933



Bradshaw High School, 1966



florencek12.org

