

THE FREDDIESCOPE

A NEWSLETTER TO THE CITIZENS OF THE FREDERICKTOWN LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



Fredericktown Schools...

...Every day, Everyone Learning and Adapting to Excel in a Changing World

December 2024

Volume LIV, Number 2

Celebrating Fredericktown Since 1971

Mr. Chapman's Update

Dear Fredericktown School Community,

As we approach this special time of the year, I am reminded of our District's vision of "partnering with families and the community to provide all students with the best opportunities for success in a changing world." I am grateful for the support and commitment you and our community members show toward our students and school. Your partnership is essential to the foundation of Fredericktown Schools, and when people feel connected to our school community, they engage more because they feel like they are a part of something bigger. Our success is truly a community effort.

As we look ahead to the New Year, we will continue to celebrate the achievements of our students, support one another through our challenges, and work collectively to provide outstanding opportunities for our students.

I hope you enjoy this edition of the FREDDIESCOPE and get a glimpse of the many wonderful things our students and teachers are doing for each other and our community. Thank you for your continued support, encouragement, and trust. I Am deeply grateful to be part of a community that values the educational experience and invests in the growth of every student.



Wishing our Freddie Families a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!—GO FREDDIES!

Honoring those Who Have Served

This past Veterans Day, we had the distinct privilege of honoring all those who have served our nation. It was a heartfelt event filled with gratitude and reflection. A special thank you goes to our guest speaker, Fredericktown Alum Coast Guard Captain Emily Tharp. Her remarkable career has taken her to the far reaches of the Antarctic and Arctic, the Florida Keys, the Caribbean, and the Eastern Pacific Ocean via the Panama Canal. Along the way, Captain Tharp has been deeply involved in vital missions, including drug trafficking enforcement, migrant interdiction, border security, search and rescue operations, and providing scientific support. Her inspiring words were a testament to the dedication and resilience of our armed forces.

As part of the day's events, we also paid tribute to Fredericktown veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. Their names are proudly commemorated on a beautiful plaque, generously shared by Fredericktown's own Mr. Mickey Cochran.

This lasting tribute serves as a powerful reminder of their bravery and dedication, ensuring their legacy lives on within our community. In addition, Mickey Cochran brought in the flags that hang on poles throughout the village. These flags honor Fredericktown residents who are still listed as missing in action or were killed in action. This touching display reinforces the deep respect and gratitude we hold for those who gave so much for our freedom.



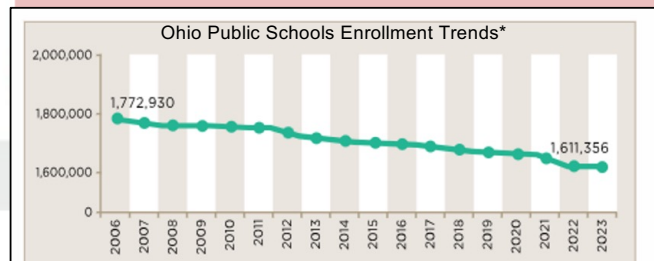
Today and every day, we remember the courage, sacrifice, and dedication of all our veterans. Thank you for protecting our freedom and serving our nation with honor. Thank You for Your Service!

Delivering a Low-Cost, High-Value Education at Fredericktown

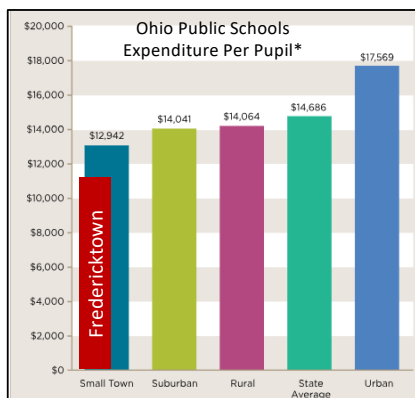
Fredericktown Local Schools take pride in delivering a high-quality education while maintaining fiscal responsibility. In an era of declining public-school enrollment and increasing financial challenges due to levy failures, our district has emerged as a leader in efficiency and value.

Since 2005-06, public school enrollment in Ohio has declined nearly 10%, a trend that has accelerated in recent years. Between 2018-2019 and 2023-2024, traditional public-school enrollment in Ohio dropped by 5.3%, a loss of nearly 81,000 students. Fredericktown has not been immune from this decline; we have seen an enrollment decline of 3.89% since just last school year. Several factors contribute to this decline:

- **Pandemic Impact:** Enrollment dropped by 2.8% nationally from 2020 to 2021, a higher than usual decline attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Poverty:** Districts with higher poverty levels experienced larger declines
- **School Choice:** Enrollment in charter, online, and private schools, as well as homeschooling has grown.
- **Declining Birth Rates:** Lower birth rates in Ohio and nationwide have reduced the number of school-age children.



*Source: Ohio DEW, Advanced Reports (2005-06 to 2022-23)



*Source: Based on data from Ohio DEW, District Profile Reports

These trends, coupled with the challenges of school levies not passing, have created revenue struggles for many public-school districts. Fredericktown has risen to these challenges with strategic planning and fiscal discipline.

According to the *Ohio Education By The Numbers* report from the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, the average Ohio school district spent more than \$14,500 per pupil in total operational expenditures in FY22. Urban districts spent the most (\$17,569 per pupil), while small-town districts, like Fredericktown, spent the least (\$12,942 per pupil). However, Fredericktown has gone even further, maintaining costs 14% below the state average at approximately \$11,170 per pupil.

This cost-effective approach maintains the high quality of education our district is known for. It reflects our dedication to maximizing the value of every dollar spent. Together, our staff, students, and community are committed to delivering exceptional educational opportunities while responsibly managing public funds, paving the way for future growth and success.

We Did It! Celebrating a Major STEAM Grant Award

We're thrilled to announce some incredible news: BOTH our High School and Elementary School have been awarded \$5,000 each through the Ohio STEM Learning Network (OSLN) STEM Classroom Grant Program, funded by Battelle! This \$1 million+ initiative is designed to provide students with innovative learning experiences in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM). With this funding, we're poised to bring even more dynamic, hands-on opportunities to our students. A huge shoutout goes to Mrs. Elyssa Shriver and Mrs. Heather Brake, our outstanding STEAM teachers, who worked tirelessly to write the grant applications and secure this amazing opportunity. Their dedication to advancing STEAM education in our schools is inspiring and truly commendable. Thank you for making this vision a reality!

What Does This Mean for Our Students? STEAM is more than just a curriculum. It's an approach to education that fosters critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration through hands-on, real-world projects. From brainstorming and designing to collaborating and problem-solving, students will engage with their learning in ways that inspire curiosity and perseverance.

Our STEAM journey begins in the elementary classrooms, where young learners will be introduced to foundational principles. These concepts will grow and evolve as students' progress through the grades, culminating in specialized opportunities at the high school level.

High school students will have the chance to participate in Project Lead the Way (PLTW) programs, choosing pathways that focus on either engineering or biomedical science. These programs are designed to prepare students for the future by providing them with practical skills and experiences that align with real-world careers.

With this grant funding, we'll be able to invest in cutting-edge resources and technology to enhance our classrooms. The possibilities are endless, from teaching coding and the basics of engineering at the elementary to increased biomedical programs, robotics and advanced engineering in high school. These tools will help our students explore STEAM fields in new and exciting ways, equipping them with skills that will serve them well beyond the classroom.

Stay tuned for updates on how these funds will be put to use and the exciting projects our students will undertake. Together, we're building a brighter future through STEAM!



Fostering Career Readiness from Kindergarten to Graduation

Career readiness is not just a conversation for high school students; it's a dynamic and ongoing dialogue that begins as early as kindergarten and evolves throughout a student's academic journey. Preparing students to explore and pursue their passions is a cornerstone of our mission, and this commitment is reflected in initiatives across all grade levels.

The importance of helping students answer the age-old question —“What do you want to be when you grow up?”— is a vital part of our approach. This year, Fredericktown Elementary hosted its 3rd Annual Career Day, featuring 38 community volunteers who shared their expertise, enthusiasm, and life experiences with students. These professionals represented 25 unique careers and hobbies, providing a diverse range of perspectives and insights. From farmers and firefighters to artists and engineers, the presentations sparked curiosity and opened young minds to a world of possibilities.

Career and Hobby Day is an opportunity to show our students the many pathways they can take, it's about inspiring them to dream big and to think about how their interests can grow into future careers.

As students transition to middle school, the focus shifts to exploration and self-discovery. Our 8th grade students had the opportunity to tour Knox County Career Center. They were able to visit 4 different labs to see what KCCC has to offer them in high school. Career readiness activities encourage students to identify their strengths and interests, connect them to potential career fields, and develop essential skills like teamwork and problem-solving.



By the time students reach high school, the career readiness program becomes more tailored and focused. Fredericktown High School offers a variety of resources, including career counseling, job shadowing opportunities, college and technical school visits, and military enlistment assistance.

Career and Hobby Day, KCCC tours and career counselors are just a few of the ways we strive to show our students the many pathways they can take, it's about inspiring them to dream big and to think about how their interests can grow into future careers. The district's career readiness initiatives ensure that every student is equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to navigate their future. By nurturing their interests from a young age and providing ongoing support, we empower students to turn their dreams into reality.

The success of these programs is a testament to the dedication of our staff, the enthusiasm of our students, and the unwavering support of our community. Together, we are creating a culture where the question “What do you want to be when you grow up?” is not only celebrated but actively explored at every stage of a student's educational journey.

Winter is Here & It's Cold Outside!

As cold weather becomes the norm, be prepared for potential delays or school cancellations. Making the decision to delay or close school is done with the safety of our students in mind. Road conditions, visibility, temperature, and wind chill all factor into making these critical decisions. Our goal is to always make the decision to delay or cancel as close to 5:30AM. When weather conditions make it necessary to close or delay school, SchoolMessenger will deliver a message to all student's main phone number and email listed in PowerSchool. If these numbers change for your family, please take a moment to update via our website or by calling the school secretary.

During these chilly days, if your child needs hats, coats, gloves, etc., please don't hesitate to let us know. We have resources to ensure all children have what they need.

Please reach out with needs to our District Social Workers:
Hannah Art - hart@fredschools.com
Cindy Truex - ctrux@fredschools.com





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Look Inside For...

- Mr. Chapman's Update
- Thank You Veterans
- Career Readiness
- We are STEAM Grant Winners

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