

FARMINGTON AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL★REPORTER

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WINTER 2026

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ABOUT:

Farmington School Reporter is a publication of Farmington Area Public Schools, ISD 192. Please direct comments or questions to the district office at (651) 463-5013.

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FHS Launches New Pathways Program to Prepare Students for the Future

Farmington High School (FHS) launched its new Pathways program this fall, bringing hands-on, career-connected learning directly into the school. The initiative is designed to keep students engaged, help them earn industry certifications and college credit, and prepare them for life after high school, all without having to leave campus.

"There was a loss of opportunities for students when we had to discontinue the off-site career courses due to budget cuts," said Leah Bott, Farmington High School Pathways coordinator. "But the Pathways program was established to bring those students back into the high school, keep them here throughout their day, and still provide for hands-on, career-related experiences, all while earning certifications and college credit."

The program continues to grow as interest increases. "The sky's the limit," Bott said. "Our goal is to expand the program in ways that meet the needs of the community and the families we serve, while sustaining the resources and partnerships that make these experiences possible."

This year, FHS is offering Pathways in Engineering, Technology & Manufacturing; Health & Human Services; Business & Technology; Agriculture; Digital Media & Arts; and Work-Based Learning, which places students in real-world environments while they earn high school credit.

For Principal Ryan Meyer, the impact goes beyond school walls. "Having our students stay here on campus and access high-interest, high-need career pathways is really exciting," he said. "The more I talk to people in our school, the more I talk to our learners, I know they're really excited about these opportunities, too."

But Meyer notes that sustaining quality programs requires continued support. "All the equipment we use for the nursing assistant courses doesn't just show up on our loading dock for free," he said. "There is a real investment involved, and these opportunities can have a significant impact on our Farmington community."

That community impact is part of Meyer's long-term vision. "If students have an interest in nursing, manufacturing, welding, business — let's try to keep them here in town. Let's help build and grow our community."



Students are already feeling the benefits. "Having different career pathways is really valuable because it gives us the opportunity to explore future fields and understand what we might want to pursue," said sophomore Lucy Manthei.

For student Sophia Krchnavy, the CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) Pathway feels like real-life preparation. "There's so much more that people who aren't in the healthcare world don't see," she said. "This is the first stepping stone for a lot of healthcare careers."

With strong student interest, and a growing lineup of offerings, Farmington's Pathways program is opening doors and shaping futures, one hands-on class at a time.



A MESSAGE FROM
SUPERINTENDENT JASON BERG:

Staying Focused on Student Success

As we begin a new calendar year and look ahead to 2026, I'm proud of the direction Farmington Area Public Schools is heading. With the support of our community in passing the referendum, we have a renewed sense of clarity and purpose, one that keeps our students at the center of every decision we make.

Across our schools, we are seeing meaningful progress in literacy instruction. Over the past two years, our teachers have engaged in deep, graduate-level professional learning and now have high-quality curricular resources to match that training. Their work has not been easy, but it has been extraordinary. We are building a strong, coherent foundation of literacy that will benefit students whether they are entering the district, advancing within schools, or transitioning between buildings. That alignment will continue to grow as we prepare for expanded professional development for our teachers and implementation at the secondary level starting in the 2026–27 school year.

We are also seeing exciting momentum in our high school Pathways program. By expanding career-connected learning, we are giving students more ways to explore their interests, earn credentials, and understand their options after graduation. This is part of our broader commitment to ensuring every student leaves Farmington with confidence in their next steps.

The referendum process gave our community a chance to look “behind the curtain,” strengthening transparency and trust. I’m grateful for the engagement we saw and for the support provided by our community that will help us sustain the work ahead.

What gives me the most hope is what I see when I visit classrooms: students who are curious, engaged, and supported by adults who believe deeply in them. Our greatest strength has always been our people — our staff, our families, our community, and most importantly, our students.

Thank you for your partnership. Together, we are building the foundation for an even brighter future for our learners.



Voters Approve Operating Levy to Support Students

STRONG STUDENTS. *STRONG COMMUNITY.*

FARMINGTON AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

On November 4, voters approved a new operating levy to support teaching, learning, and student opportunities across the district. Among those casting ballots 58% voted in favor of the referendum and 42% were opposed.

Funding from the levy will be available starting with the 2026-27 school year. It will provide critical local resources to maintain manageable class sizes, preserve academic and extracurricular programs, and support teachers and staff. District leaders said the approval reflected the community’s ongoing commitment to quality education and support for the success of Farmington Area students.

“This vote represents a shared purpose across our community to invest in what matters most, our students,” said Superintendent Jason Berg. “We are deeply grateful for our community’s support and for the engagement that helped bring this important measure forward.”

The 2025 election marked the district’s third attempt to secure an operating levy after unsuccessful votes in 2023 and 2024. As it prepared for this year’s referendum, district officials emphasized listening to residents, communicating clearly, and demonstrating fiscal transparency and accountability.

School Board Chair Kyle Christensen highlighted the importance of maintaining those connections. “We are committed to keeping the lines of communication open and engaging with our community in meaningful ways,” Christensen said. “The community’s support reinforces that when we work together, we can create strong schools and even stronger communities.”

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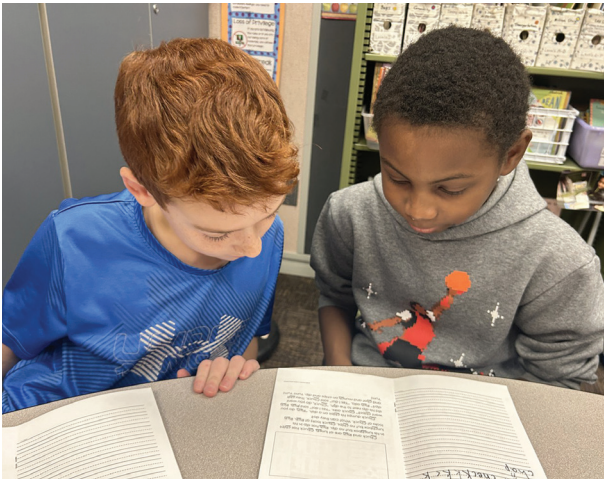
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Investments in Early Literacy Support Long-Term Student Success

READING IS MORE THAN JUST A SCHOOL SUBJECT. IT IS A LIFE SKILL.

At Farmington Area Public Schools, administrators and educators are making literacy a top priority, knowing that students who read fluently and understand what they are reading, are much better prepared for school, work, and everyday life.

Last year, the district increased its commitment to students by adding a literacy coach at every elementary school, in addition to an existing district-wide literacy coach. This shift has had a major impact on both teachers and students, strengthening instruction and improving student outcomes across the district.



“What this provides for our teachers is immediate professional development,” Farmington Elementary Principal Kim Bolleson said. “Whether it’s co-teaching or side-by-side coaching, the teachers have someone at school to support them.”

This hands-on, embedded coaching model gives teachers real-time feedback, new ideas, and strategies they can use immediately in their classrooms.

“To meet the needs of every single one of our students, that’s a lot of work and a lot of pressure on teachers,” said Farmington Elementary Literacy Coach Alli Sand. “So having a literacy coach there to help educators figure out what each student needs really lowers stress for teachers.”

The district’s focus on reading is intentional. Educators emphasize that reading fluency and comprehension are essential for daily life, from following directions to learning new skills. Without strong reading abilities, students often struggle to access content across all subject areas.

In addition to coaching, the district is also in its third year of implementing a structured reading intervention curriculum called *You Fly*. The program is producing promising results, with teachers reporting accelerated learning among students who need extra support and fewer students requiring interventions overall.

“The majority of our elementary schools met or exceeded their building goals,” Instructional Coach and Riverside Elementary Literacy Coach Melissa Zey shared. “That’s something we haven’t seen in years.”

Teachers credit the progress to more consistent expectations, clearer resources, and strengthened professional development.



“For the first time, educators feel like the supports, resources, and training are really in place,” Zey said. “It feels like we’re finally doing a good job systematically educating our kids.”

Looking ahead, district leaders plan to continue building on this momentum. By supporting teachers, strengthening literacy instruction, and meeting students where they are, Farmington Area Public Schools is creating a strong foundation for long-term success. The structures are helping students grow not just as readers, but as confident, capable learners prepared for the future.



EVERY TIGER HAS A STORY



Tiger Preschool

Teachers from Tiger Preschool programs are generating creative, high-impact lessons that support the goals of the Minnesota READ Act and the district's early literacy focus. In one class, Ms. Kate arrived dressed as a pizza delivery driver to launch an engaging phonics activity. Students then “built a pizza” using toppings that begin with the “p” sound. The lesson highlighted the program’s purposeful approach to early literacy — using creativity, movement, and fun to build strong foundational skills.

Akin Road Elementary

Family STEM Night was a big hit at Akin Road this fall, which brought science and creativity to life for learners and their families, making it an evening of discovery for all ages. The hands-on, engaging event was made possible through community partnerships with the FHS Robotics Team, Collins Aerospace, and the Bell Museum.



Farmington Elementary

This fall, Farmington Elementary hosted a special “Live to Give” night with its students and families that was focused on spreading kindness and giving back to the community. Together they worked to create messages of gratitude and encouragement, sharing positivity throughout the community and reinforcing the school’s commitment to service.

Meadowview Elementary

The University of Minnesota Bell Museum’s ExploraDome popped up at Meadowview for several days this fall, transforming the gymnasium into an immersive space experience. Learners explored the night sky, planets, and galaxies, inspiring big questions and even bigger dreams about the universe.



North Trail Elementary

North Trail learners have been utilizing outdoor spaces to spark curiosity and practice scientific thinking. This fall, students explored why leaves change color and fall from trees, making real-world observations that deepen their understanding of seasonal change.

Riverview Elementary

Riverview learners buzzed with excitement as the Metropolitan Mosquito Control District taught them about local insect life. A guided walking field trip helped students discover unique bug species and learn how science applies to their everyday environment.



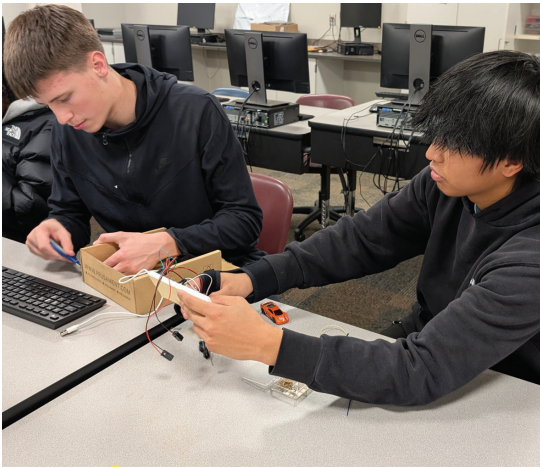


Boeckman Middle School

Boeckman learners joined Farmington Parks and Recreation and the Parks Commission for a special ribbon cutting at the newly renovated Westview Park. Last year the school’s learners helped select the playground equipment and now the students’ ideas have become reality for the benefit of the larger community.

Dodge Middle School

Dodge middle schoolers have been learning guitar in music class, blending technique and creativity as they take on new challenges. The program helps learners build confidence, develop musical skills, and experience the joy of making music together.



Farmington High School

In the Engineering, Technology, and Manufacturing Pathway at FHS, students are developing practical, career-connected skills. Their hands-on projects foster critical thinking, collaboration, and attention to detail — preparing them for success in college, career, the military, and beyond.

Thinking
ABOUT
**MAKING
A MOVE
IN 2026?**



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High School Students are Engaging in Rigorous Coursework at Record Levels

Farmington High School (FHS) is seeing remarkable momentum in rigorous academic coursework, with more students than ever choosing opportunities that not only challenge them, but also earn them college credit and prepare them for life after graduation.

Enrollment in Advanced Placement (AP) courses has grown by 47% from 2022 to 2025, with more than 700 FHS students enrolling in AP classes this year, the most in the school’s history. Concurrent enrollment courses, where students earn college credit through university partners, have seen a 56% increase in enrollment during the same period.

These increases reflect a broader culture of academic ambition at FHS, where students are encouraged to explore advanced pathways and discover what excites them. Whether students enroll in AP Chemistry, College in the Schools Writing, University of Minnesota Calculus, or college-level Career Pathways courses, learners are building confidence and gaining valuable experience with expectations they will encounter beyond high school.

FHS students are also demonstrating strong performance. This year, the school celebrated dozens of AP Scholar Award winners, which are awarded to students who earned consistent scores of 3 or higher (on a 5-point scale) across multiple

exams. The number of FHS learners earning the highest possible score on three or more exams, known as “Perfect 5s,” also increased.

These achievements are more than metrics. They are evidence of a supportive academic environment where students are willing to push themselves, teachers are committed to preparing learners for rigorous coursework, and the district is expanding opportunities aligned with student interests and future goals.

As Farmington continues to grow its Pathways program and strengthen college-level offerings, learners are engaging deeply with challenging content and leaving high school increasingly ready for the future they choose, whether that be college, career training, military, or the workforce.

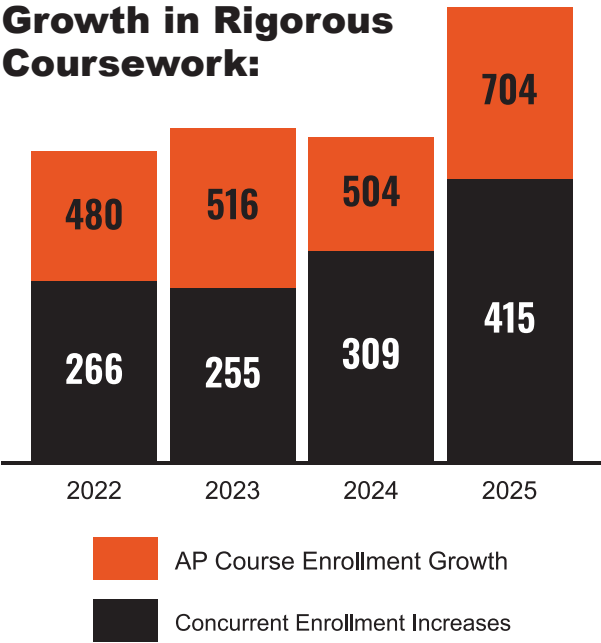
College-Level Learning Becoming the Norm at FHS

A growing number of students are taking college level courses.

WHY IT MATTERS:

- Exposure to college-level expectations
- Opportunities to earn college credit
- Development of critical thinking, collaboration, and persistence skills
- Stronger preparation for postsecondary options

Growth in Rigorous Coursework:



32	AP Scholars
22	AP Scholars with Honors
5	AP Scholars with Distinction
3	Students earned “Perfect 5s” (score of 5 on three or more exams)

Intramural Basketball Program Builds Community at FHS

Farmington Community Education’s High School Intramural Basketball league tipped off in early December, bringing strong energy to the gym and full enrollment for the season. With 120 students in grades 9–12 participating, including both Farmington High School (FHS) students and homeschooled residents, the program offers a fun, inclusive way for students to stay active and connected during the winter months.

Designed for all experience levels, the league provides opportunities for students to build teamwork, leadership, and communication skills outside of a traditional athletic season. After registration, teams of 6–10 players were formed, with students able to request teammates and select co-ed or gender-specific team formats. Over six regular-season weeks and two weeks of playoffs, each team plays two games per night, ensuring meaningful time on the court for all participants.

While the league is recreational in spirit, it still follows standard basketball rules to maintain competition and fair play. Students take on important responsibilities, including tracking fouls and serving as referees when their teams are not playing. Program coach Joe Bullis is on site to support student officials and help guide decisions as needed. Sportsmanship remains a central focus to ensure a positive experience for everyone involved.

The season runs through February 11 and has already become a highlight for many students, offering a supportive environment where they can build friendships, strengthen skills, and enjoy friendly competition. If early games are any indication, Community Education’s intramural league is shaping up to be a memorable winter both on and off the court.



School Board Approves New Boundaries for 2026–2027 School Year

The Farmington Area School Board voted unanimously on December 8 to approve new elementary and middle school attendance areas that will go into effect in the fall of 2026. The decision concluded a months-long review of enrollment trends, school capacity, residential growth, and community feedback.

The updated boundaries are designed to balance enrollment across schools, strengthen long-term capacity planning, and prepare the district for continued residential development in Farmington and Lakeville. Several schools are nearing capacity, while others have space available, key factors that shaped the district’s planning process. The realignment also establishes more consistent feeder patterns between elementary and middle schools.

A Boundary Advisory Committee made up of parents, community members, Marschall Line representatives, and district staff met throughout the fall to study data and review multiple scenarios. After evaluating options and gathering public input, the committee presented its recommendation to the Board in November. The district then invited feedback on the proposal, which the Board considered before taking action in December.

The realignment is expected to affect approximately 240 of the district’s 6,400 students. The day after the vote, the district mailed notifications to families who were impacted, outlining next steps, timelines, and available options. One such option available to families is “legacy status,” which allows current fourth and seventh graders to remain at their existing school for one additional year if they choose.



SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE AND IDENTIFY 2026-27 SCHOOL ASSIGNMENTS.



Finance Advisory Council Brings Community Perspective to Budget Decisions

For district parent and corporate finance professional Andrew Sheets, joining the district’s new Finance Advisory Council (FAC) last spring was an opportunity to apply his expertise while gaining a clearer understanding of how school budgets work.

“I have a vested interest in what’s going on with school budgets. It was a way to offer my professional experience and personally develop a better understanding of the school budget.”
- Andrew Sheets

What he discovered was more complex than expected. “I didn’t realize how complex school finance is, as there are a lot of things out of the district’s control.”

According to Director of Finance Jane Houska, the district created the council to enhance transparency and help community members better understand public-school funding. Members review financial information, share community perspectives, and offer feedback on how to communicate clearly with residents.

Sheets said district leaders have welcomed the group’s ideas and have been responsive to its feedback. For example, when the council noted that financial materials were too text-heavy, the district replaced dense paragraphs with clearer infographics and straightforward explanations. FAC members also encouraged shifting budget communication only talking about cuts toward return on investment rather than cuts and deficits.

The changes from the FAC have helped financial information feel more accessible and relatable.

The council also helped shape financial successful operating levy referendum, which passed 58% to 42%. For Sheets, the narrow margin of community support underscores the need for continued engagement. “The district must keep communicating the return on community investment and how those funds are being used for the things people voted for.”

Houska agrees. The partnership with the council relies on year-round dialogue, accessible data, and a shared expectation that the community has a voice in how the district uses its resources. “We must uphold our responsibility as a transparent steward of public funds.”

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Our learners thrive as they grow into creative problem solvers, thoughtful collaborators and community leaders.



ENROLLMENT
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR 2026–27





KINDERGARTEN: Your Student's Journey Begins Here

Kindergarten enrollment for the 2026–27 school year is now open!

Starting kindergarten is a joyful milestone and we're here to make the transition smooth, exciting and full of possibility. Our full-day kindergarten program combines joyful learning, nurturing relationships, and a school community where every child is known, valued, and supported.

Kindergarten Information Night

January 14, 2026 at 6 p.m.
FHS Lecture Hall

Meet school and district leaders, learn what kindergarten looks like in Farmington Area Public Schools, and get your questions answered.



TIGER PRESCHOOL: Where Early Learning Begins

Registration for the 2026–27 school year opens March 2!

Our Tiger Preschool classrooms spark curiosity and build foundational skills through play-based learning. Families can choose from a variety of program schedules designed to support each child's growth and readiness for kindergarten.



SUMMER KIDS CONNECTION: A Summer of Learning and Fun

Registration for 2026 Summer Kids Connection opens February 2!

Kids Connection offers full-day care and engaging summer programming for students in grades K–5. Hands-on activities, field trips, and themed experiences make summer a great time to explore, create, and connect.

JANUARY

- 12 School Board Meeting
- 13 DMS Choir Concert, 7 p.m.
- 15 BMS Choir Concerts, 6 & 7:30 p.m.
DMS Choir Concert, 7 p.m.
- 19 No School (Holiday)
- 20 DMS Band Concert, 6 p.m.
- 22 Conferences (FHS)
- 26 No School (Staff Development Day)
School Board Meeting

FEBRUARY

- 5 FHS Choirpalooza, 7 p.m.
- 9 School Board Meeting
- 10 Conferences (All Schools)
- 12 Early Release/Conferences (All Schools)
- 13 No School (Staff Development Day)
- 16 No School (Holiday)
- 19 BMS & DMS Solo/Ensemble Band Concerts
MVE Musical "RATS!" 6:30 p.m.
- 20 Cabaret, 7 p.m. at RBMS
- 21 Cabaret, 3 p.m. & 7 p.m. at RBMS
- 23 School Board Meeting

MARCH

- 2 Community Ed Summer Registration Opens
- 6 Early Release (End of Trimester 2)
- 9 No School (Staff Development Day)
School Board Meeting
- 10 8th grade Jubilee Band Concert (7 p.m. at FHS)
- 17 BMS 6th gr. Ensemble Band Concerts (6 p.m.)

Mar. 30 - Apr. 3:

No School (Spring Break)
Community Ed Open Swim, 12–2 p.m., DMS

APRIL

- 9 ACT Testing (gr. 11.)
Flexible Learning Day (gr. 9, 10, 12)
- 13 School Board Meeting
- 27 No School (Elementary)
School Board Meeting

- School & District
- Performing Arts
- Community Ed & Family