

FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

COMBINED AGENDA STUDY SESSION
AND REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

JANUARY 12, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

The combined agenda study session and regular business meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fox Chapel Area School District was called to order by president, Marybeth Dadd, at 7:03 p.m. on January 12, 2026, in the LGI Room at Fox Chapel Area High School. Prior to tonight's public meeting, members of the Board met in executive session to review confidential student matters that, if discussed in public, would lead to the disclosure of confidential information or information protected by law. The Board also reviewed with counsel information or strategy in connection with pending litigation matters and or issues about which identifiable complaints may be filed.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL-CALL

The Board members present at roll call were Mrs. Cooper, Ms. Dadd, Ms. Findley, Mr. Frank, Mr. Goode, Mr. Hamilton, Dr. Haselkorn, Mrs. Lynch, and Ms. Zych. Also present were Dr. Reljac, Dr. McCommons, Mr. Giuffre, and Mrs. Anuszek. Other members of the public were present.

GUESTS

• **Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) School Director Recognition Month** – Hartwood Elementary School students

FOX LEADERSHIP COUNCIL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Seniors Carissa Dobbie and Kalsey Thom talked about the opportunities and programs offered at A.W. Beattie Career Center. Both Carissa and Kalsey attend Fox Chapel Area High School and A.W. Beattie Career Center.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Reljac announced that the district received a Keystone Award of Excellence from the Pennsylvania Department of Education in recognition of being named a 2026 Purple Star School in support of military families.

• **A Lens on Learning** – Each month, we focus on student work in our schools to highlight lessons, growth, and successes of all kinds.

Tonight's presentation focused on the high school's business education seal of excellence.

Fox Chapel Area High School business education teacher Kim Hollern and junior Aiden Drucker shared information about the business education department and the seal of excellence program.

• **Presentation of the District Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2025** – Peter J. Vancheri, CPA, Hosack, Specht, Muetzel & Wood LLP

• **Proposed 2026-2027 School Calendar**

The proposed 2026-2027 school calendar is attached for review and available for the public on the district website. A final recommendation will be made to the Board of School Directors as part of the February 9, 2026, regular business meeting agenda.

• **District Telethon for Fox Families Care Raises \$101,001**

Fox Chapel Area School District students held their 36th annual telethon December 23, 2025, and raised \$101,001! This year's total brings the money raised by Fox Chapel Area students and staff to more than \$1,379,497 over the last 36 years for various local and regional charities.

The telethon raised money for the local organization Fox Families Care and involved students from all six schools in the Fox Chapel Area School District (Fairview, Hartwood, Kerr, and O'Hara elementaries; Dorseyville Middle School; and Fox Chapel Area High School). Student, teacher, parent, and community representatives participated in the telethon benefiting Fox Families Care by making donations. Additionally, this year, anonymous donors through Fox Families Care matched donations up to \$50,000. The public may also still make donations at <https://www.foxfamiliescare.org/donate>.

The telethon was broadcast beginning December 23 on the Swift Fox Media YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/@SwiftFoxMedia, and viewers can watch it any time after via the Swift Fox Media YouTube channel.

The telethon was coordinated by the Fox Chapel Area High School Fox Leadership Council and the high school's video production students, who plan and produce the event.

Fox Families Care is an organization that works to bridge the gap between the needs and resources of children and families in the Fox Chapel Area School District. The group invests in the needs of local children and works directly with the district in conjunction with other strategic community partners.

• **FCAHS Students Place in Regional DECA Competition**

A total of eight Fox Chapel Area High School students placed second and third in the 2025 Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) District 3 (regional) competition. Fox Chapel Area third-place regional winners were juniors **Marianna Iannarelli**, **Joseph McGivney**, and **Nico Zgurzynski** and freshmen **Delaney Liu** and **Dyutit Patro**. Fourth-place winners at the regional competition were junior **Dashel Wilson** and sophomores **Lucas Ahern** and **Purv Patel**.

The DECA District 3 competition was held December 3 at Duquesne University. Approximately 400 students from 12 high schools from across Allegheny and Westmoreland counties participated in the regional competition.

DECA is a global nonprofit career and technical high school and college student organization that prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management.

• **Students' Work Selected for Slippery Rock University Exhibition**

Six Fox Chapel Area High School students had their artwork selected for the Slippery Rock University Art Department 2025 Juried High School Art Exhibition. The students are seniors **Adele Grady**, **Nora Kelley**, **Emma Kuhns**, and **Samantha Van Kirk**; junior **Rylie Graham**; and sophomore **Troy White**.

The exhibition was held in November at the Martha Gault Art Gallery at Slippery Rock University.

The Fox Chapel Area High School students are under the direction of teachers **Joan Marangoni**, **Evan Rumble**, and **Sarah Stewart Vasquez**.

• **High School Students' Metalwork Chosen for Arts Showcase**

Eight Fox Chapel Area High School students had pieces accepted to the 2025 FUSION Youth Metal Arts Showcase. The students are seniors **Adele Grady**, **Raina Guzman**, **Riley Hemingray**, **Emma Kuhns**, and **Mary Lynch**; junior **Olivia Arca**; sophomore **Troy White**, and freshman **Elijah Turner**. Additionally, Adele won the prize for Best Use of Color for her piece, "Deep Sea Jewel."

The showcase was open to students in kindergarten through grade 12 from throughout the greater Pittsburgh area, and all work featured metal as a material or in the process of creating the art. The show featured small works in aluminum, pewter, copper, brass, and silver. The showcase was hosted by the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh MuseumLab as part of FUSION Fest and ran November 23, 2025, through January 3, 2026, in the lobby of the MuseumLab.

The students are under the instruction of Fox Chapel Area High School art teacher **Sarah Stewart Vasquez**.

• **FCAHS Students Nominees for Prime Stage Drama Awards**

Fox Chapel Area High School students received eight nominations in Prime Stage Theatre's 6th Annual High School Drama Awards. The students were nominated for their performances and/or involvement in "Our Town," the high school's fall play. The students nominated are senior **Robert Svenson** in the best actor category, senior **Grace Gouwens** in the best actress category, sophomore **Solomon Edwards** in the best supporting actor category, senior **Faye Muller** in the best supporting actress category, senior **Lily Cannon** in the best student stage manager category, juniors **Erin Stein** and **Elias Zeiner** in the best student sound design and/or operation category, and seniors **Abigail Haas** and **Molly Krajcovic** in the best student makeup design and/or application category. Additionally, Fox Chapel Area's fall play was nominated for the best student onstage run crew. The crew members were senior **Josiah Woodard-Lehman**; sophomore **Patrick Svenson**; and freshmen **Sidney George**, **Henry Muller**, **Audrey Seiler**, and **Rebecca Smith**.

The awards ceremony was held January 10, 2026, at the Hillman Center for Performing Arts on the campus of Shady Side Academy Senior School where the winners were announced. The awards were open to schools from across Southwestern Pennsylvania.

• **High School Students Win Awards at Pine-Richland Speech & Debate Tournament**

Three Fox Chapel Area High School students won awards at the annual Pine-Richland High School Speech and Debate Tournament. Senior **Sabina Mantella** won fifth place overall in Student Congress. Sophomores **Juliet Chrissis** and **Amelia Tedesco** won fifth place overall in Parliamentary Debate.

Additionally, as part of the competition, school superlatives are also awarded and the Fox Chapel Area High School team was recognized as the "Best Dressed" at the tournament.

More than 340 students representing 21 public and private high schools from Western Pennsylvania participated in the tournament that was held November 22, 2025, at Pine-Richland High School.

• **Girls Soccer Player Named All-American**

Fox Chapel Area High School junior **Emily McKee** was named to the High School Girls All-America Team for the fall of 2025. The team was selected by the United Soccer Coaches and total of 89 girls from across the United States were chosen. Players on this year's United Soccer Coaches High School All-America teams will be recognized for their accomplishments at the United Soccer Coaches All-America Ceremony January 17, 2026, in Philadelphia, in conjunction with the United Soccer Coaches Convention.

• **Soccer Player Wins Prestigious Moe Rosensteel Award**

Fox Chapel Area High School junior **Emily McKee** was named the winner of the 2025 Moe Rosensteel Most Outstanding Player Award. The honor designates Emily as the top girls soccer player in the WPIAL. The winner is selected by a panel of organizers, coaches, and members of the media.

• **Girls Soccer Player Named to All-State Team**

Fox Chapel Area High School junior **Emily McKee** was named to the Western Pennsylvania Soccer Coaches Association (WPSCA) All-State team. The members of the team were selected by the coaches.

• **Girls Soccer Players Named to All-WPIAL Class 3A Team**

Three Fox Chapel Area High School girls soccer players were named to the All-WPIAL Class 3A team. They are senior **Cassie Classen**, and juniors **Emily McKee** and **Caylie Wilkinson**. The teams were chosen by the WPIAL Soccer Coaches Association.

• **Players Named to Post-Gazette 2025 All-Area Girls Soccer Team**

Fox Chapel Area High School junior **Emily McKee** was named the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's 2025 Player of the Year. Additionally, her teammate, junior **Caylie Wilkinson**, was named to the Post Gazette's Elite 11 all-area team. The players were selected by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette sports staff and featured in the November 30 Post-Gazette.

• **Girls Soccer Player Named Trib HSSN Player of the Year**

Fox Chapel Area High School junior **Emily McKee** was named the Trib High School Sports Network (HSSN) girls soccer player of the year. She was the top choice from among 15 girls chosen for the all-star team.

• **Students Named to A-K Valley Girls Soccer All-Star Teams**

Three Fox Chapel Area High School girls soccer players were named to the A-K Valley girls soccer all-star teams. Junior **Emily McKee** was named the girls soccer player of the year. Senior **Cassie Classen** was named to the first team, and junior **Caylie Wilkinson** was named to the second team.

• **Fox Chapel Area Boys and Girls Soccer Players Named to All-East Region Team**

Two Fox Chapel Area High School soccer players were named to the United Soccer Coaches All-East Region Team. Senior **Rocco Didomenico** was named to the boys team and junior **Emily McKee** was named to the girls team.

• **Player Named to Post-Gazette 2025 All-Area Boys Soccer Team**

Fox Chapel Area High School senior **Rocco Didomenico** was named to the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette 2025 Elite 11 boys soccer team. The players were selected by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette sports staff and featured in the November 30 Post-Gazette.

• **Soccer Player Named to Trib HSSN All-Star Team**

Fox Chapel Area High School senior **Rocco Didomenico** was named to Trib High School Sports Network (HSSN) all-star team. Rocco was among 15 players chosen for the team.

• **Soccer Players Named to A-K Valley Boys Soccer All-Star Teams**

Four Fox Chapel Area High School boys soccer players were named to the A-K Valley soccer all-star teams. Senior **Rocco Didomenico** and **Sean Regan** were named the first team, and juniors **Rocco Poli** and **Sharif Zureikat** were named to the second team.

• **Field Hockey Players Named to All-WPIAL Team**

Four members of the Fox Chapel Area High School field hockey team were named to the All-WPIAL team. Seniors **Kathryn Siddons**, **Emma Srodes**, and **Brooke Thiele**, and junior **Melanie Pietz** were named to the team.

• **Valley News Dispatch Football All-Stars**

Three Fox Chapel Area High School football players were named to Valley News Dispatch football all-star teams. Senior **Harran Zureikat** was named to the first team, and seniors **Thomas Billings** and **Max Melocchi** were named to the second team.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT

There was no report.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Dadd asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the reorganization meeting or the combined agenda study session and regular business meeting dated December 2, 2025. On motion by Mr. Frank and seconded by Ms. Zych, the minutes were unanimously approved as submitted.

FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no comments.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Academic Committee Report

Mrs. Cooper, academic committee chairperson, gave a report.

B. Governance Committee Report

Mr. Frank, governance committee chairperson, gave a report.

C. Projects and Planning Committee Report

Ms. Zych, projects and planning committee chairperson, gave a report.

NEW BUSINESS

The superintendent recommended that action be taken on the following items of business:

FACILITIES/TRANSPORTATION

A. Facilities/Transportation

There was no business.

FINANCE

B. Finance

On motion by Mr. Hamilton and seconded by Mr. Frank, and after a discussion, it was unanimously resolved to approve the following Finance items:

1. Disbursements (Fund 10) – November 2025

General fund disbursements (Fund 10) in the amount of \$10,448,644.10 from November 1, 2025, through November 30, 2025, are approved.

2. Disbursements (Fund 31) – November 2025

Capital reserves fund disbursements (Fund 31) in the amount of \$249,486.92 from November 1, 2025, through November 30, 2025, are approved.

3. Disbursements (Fund 10) – December 2025

General fund disbursements (Fund 10) in the amount of \$11,449,203.09 from December 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025, are approved.

4. Finance Report – November 2025

The finance report for November 2025 is acknowledged and filed for audit.

5. Budget Transfers

The budget transfers for 2025-2026 are approved.

6. 2024-2025 Audit Report

Approve the audit report submitted by Hosack, Specht, Muetzel & Wood LLP for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2025. **This report is available for the public on the district website.**

7. Resolution 2026-1 – Election Not to Increase the Tax Rate Above the Index

Approve Resolution 2026-1 electing not to increase the tax rate above the index in the 2026-2027 General Fund Operating Budget.

INSTRUCTION

C. Instruction

On motion by Mrs. Cooper and seconded by Mr. Frank, it was unanimously resolved to approve the following Instruction item:

1. Stipulated Adjudications

Approve the stipulated adjudications as presented.

LEGISLATION/POLICY

D. Legislation/Policy

On motion by Mr. Frank and seconded by Ms. Findley, it was unanimously resolved to approve the following Legislation/Policy item:

1. Policies – Revised – Second Reading and Adoption

Approve the second reading and adoption of the following revised policies:

- No. 100 – Comprehensive Planning
- No. 101 – Vision/Mission Statement/Beliefs/Shared Values
- No. 143 – Standards of Persistently Dangerous Schools
- No. 309 – Assignment and Transfer
- No. 312 – Performance Assessment of Superintendent/Deputy Superintendent
- No. 316 – Nontenured Employees
- No. 335 – Family and Medical Leaves
- No. 338.1 – Compensated Professional Leaves
- No. 706.1 – Disposal of Surplus Property and Obsolete Equipment
- No. 718 – Service Animals in Schools
- No. 907 – School Visitors
- No. 911 – News Media Relations
- No. 913.1 – Small Games of Chance

PERSONNEL

E. Personnel

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

On motion by Ms. Zych and seconded by Mr. Goode, and after a discussion, it was unanimously resolved to approve the following Personnel items 1 – 9:

1. Resignations

a. Professional

- (1) The resignation of Kristin L. Bashforth, elementary teacher at Kerr Elementary School, under the Retirement Plan as outlined in the 2023-2028 Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement that was approved on October 10, 2022, is accepted effective June 30, 2026.
- (2) The resignation of Daniel Z. Kirk, English teacher at Fox Chapel Area High School, under the Retirement Plan as outlined in the 2023-2028 Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement that was approved on October 10, 2022, is accepted effective June 30, 2026.
- (3) The resignation of Mary E. Loeffler, gifted support teacher at Dorseyville Middle School, under the Retirement Plan as outlined in the 2023-2028 Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement that was approved on October 10, 2022, is accepted effective June 30, 2026.
- (4) The resignation of Thomas D. Moul, science teacher at Fox Chapel Area High School, under the Retirement Plan as outlined in the 2023-2028 Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement that was approved on October 10, 2022, is accepted effective June 30, 2026.
- (5) The resignation of Noelle M. Noel, math teacher at Dorseyville Middle School, under the Retirement Plan as outlined in the 2023-2028 Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement that was approved on October 10, 2022, is accepted effective June 30, 2026.
- (6) The resignation of Peter J. Shiner, science teacher at Fox Chapel Area High School, under the Retirement Plan as outlined in the 2023-2028 Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement that was approved on October 10, 2022, is accepted effective June 30, 2026.
- (7) The resignation of Jill R. Tabis, business education teacher at Fox Chapel Area High School, under the Retirement Plan as outlined in the 2023-2028 Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement that was approved on October 10, 2022, is accepted effective June 30, 2026.
- (8) The resignation of Lawrence G. Thomas, science teacher at Fox Chapel Area High School, under the Retirement Plan as outlined in the 2023-2028 Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement that was approved on October 10, 2022, is accepted effective June 30, 2026.

b. Custodial/Maintenance

- (1) The resignation of Michael W. Ealing, 10-month, 8 hours per day custodian at O'Hara Elementary School, due to retirement, is accepted effective January 19, 2026.
- (2) The resignation of James C. Moore, 12-month, 8 hours per day maintenance employee for the Fox Chapel Area School District, due to retirement, is accepted effective January 6, 2026.

c. Supplemental Contracts – Athletic

- (1) The resignation of Amber Jones, cheerleading, MS head (fall), due to personal reasons, is accepted effective March 1, 2026.
- (2) The resignation of Amber Jones, cheerleading, MS head (winter), due to personal reasons, is accepted effective March 1, 2026.
- (3) The resignation of Eleni McGrath, lacrosse, girls, HS 1st asst., due to personal reasons, is accepted effective December 19, 2025.

2. Appointments

a. Educational Support

- (1) Jonathan Powell is approved as a personal care assistant at Hartwood Elementary School, effective January 13, 2026. Salary is set based on the starting wage for personal care assistants, with benefits as per the Fox Chapel Area Education Support Professionals Association Collective Bargaining Agreement. This position is available due to the transfer of Autumn Williams.

b. Custodial/Maintenance

- (1) James T. Berncic is approved as a 10-month, 8 hours per day custodial employee for the Fox Chapel Area School District for a probationary period, effective January 13, 2026, pending the fulfillment of pre-employment requirements, pursuant to the Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The salary and fringe benefits are set as per the CBA. This position is available due to the resignation of Benjamin Hilton.
- (2) Brad A. Gauthier is approved as a 12-month, 8 hours per day custodial employee for the Fox Chapel Area School District for a probationary period, effective January 13, 2026, pending the fulfillment of pre-employment requirements, pursuant to the Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The salary and fringe benefits are set as per the CBA. This position is available due to the resignation of Charles Milan.
- (3) Michael P. Ventrice is approved as a 10-month, 8 hours per day custodial employee for the Fox Chapel Area School District for a probationary period, effective January 13, 2026, pending the fulfillment of pre-employment requirements, pursuant to the Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The salary and fringe benefits are set as per the CBA. This position is available due to the medical leave of employee X.
- (4) Andrea M. Yorio is approved as a 10-month, 8 hours per day custodial employee for the Fox Chapel Area School District for a probationary period, effective January 13, 2026, pending the fulfillment of pre-employment requirements, pursuant to the Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). The salary and fringe benefits are set as per the CBA. This position is available due to an open position.

c. Supplemental Contracts – Athletic

- (1) The following athletic supplemental contracts are approved effective January 13, 2026:

Jeannie Kirk	Lacrosse, Girls, HS 1st Asst. (50%)	\$2064.50
Eleni McGrath	Lacrosse, Girls, HS 1st Asst. (50%)	\$2064.50

- (2) The following athletic supplemental contract is approved effective for the 2026-2027 school year:

Justin Patterson	Cross Country, HS Head	\$4,839
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d. Supplemental Contract – Non-Athletic

- (1) The following non-athletic supplemental contract is approved effective January 19, 2026:

Jennifer L. Cuda	English – HS Department Head	\$2,017
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3. Leaves

a. Professional

- (1) Heather R. Fontana, elementary teacher at Fairview Elementary School, is approved for a second semester medical sabbatical, effective January 19, 2026, with return scheduled for the first day of the 2026-2027 school year.
- (2) Ashley L. Henny, elementary teacher at O'Hara Elementary School, is approved for childrearing/adoption leave, under Article Eleven (D) of the Fox Chapel Educators Association Collective Bargaining Agreement, effective May 11, 2026, with return scheduled for the first day of the 2026-2027 school year.

4. Leave Replacement

a. Professional

- (1) Taylor R. Trasatti is approved as a second semester leave replacement elementary teacher at Fairview Elementary School. This position is available due to the medical sabbatical of Heather Fontana.

Certification:	Instructional I
Education:	B.S., Penn State University, 2022 M.Ed., Slippery Rock University, 2025
Experience:	1 year, Hampton Township School District
Effective:	January 19, 2026, through the day after the last day for students for the 2025-2026 school year
Salary:	\$67,373 (prorated) based on Step 2, M+0
Fringe Benefits:	As per the Collective Bargaining Agreement

5. Change of Status

a. Administration

- (1) Laura M. Miller, Ed.D., program principal at Dorseyville Middle School, is approved as principal at Dorseyville Middle School, effective July 1, 2026. This position is available due to the retirement of Jonathan Nauhaus.

6. Homebound Instruction

a. Teacher

- (1) Alison C. Francis is ratified as a homebound instruction teacher for the 2025-2026 school year, effective January 7, 2026, at a rate of \$32.17 per hour.

7. Extra Innings

a. Instructional Assistant

- (1) The following individual is ratified as an Extra Innings instructional assistant for the 2025-2026 school year at a rate of \$20 per hour for a maximum of 24 hours, including planning/instruction:

Hartwood Elementary School
Rebecca Apter

8. Substitute Athletic Trainer

- a. Jennell Wolfe is ratified, effective January 12, 2026, as a substitute certified athletic trainer a rate of \$32.13 per hour.

9. Volunteer

a. Athletic

- (1) The following athletic volunteer is ratified, effective December 10, 2025:

Brad Krushinski Wrestling, HS

Personnel Information Item

10. Tenure – Information

- a. The following employee is eligible for a Professional Employee's Contract (tenure) effective January 23, 2026:

Alexis Hurlbut

OPERATIONS/COOPERATIVE SERVICES

F. Operations/Cooperative Services

On motion by Mr. Goode and seconded by Ms. Zych, and after a discussion, it was unanimously resolved to approve the following Operations/Cooperative Services items:

1. Choral Program Accompanist – Agreement

Ratify the agreement between the Fox Chapel Area School District and Benjamin Bliss for choral program accompanist services at a total cost of \$3,000 effective September 8, 2025, through June 30, 2026. **This is a renewal of services.**

2. Student Teaching Affiliation Agreements

Approve the following student teaching affiliation agreements:

Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Pennsylvania Western (PennWest) University

SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no comments.

FOX CHAPEL EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE

Rachel Machen, Fox Chapel Educators Association president-elect, gave a report.

BOARD COMMENTS

There were eight comments. Mr. Hamilton, Dr. Haselkorn, Mrs. Lynch, Ms. Findley, Mr. Frank, Mrs. Cooper, Ms. Zych, and Mr. Goode commented.

ADJOURNMENT

It was unanimously resolved to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 p.m.



Kathleen Anuszek
Board Secretary