

FERNDALE AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

100 Dartmouth Avenue • Johnstown, PA 15905 • [814] 535-6724 • Fax [814] 536-6506

DATE: February 16, 2026

Dear Ferndale Area Elementary School Parent or Guardian,

We are writing to make you aware of the choices available to you based on the results of your child's school on the 2024–2025 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). The PSSA is an annual assessment given to Pennsylvania students at various grade levels to measure academic progress in specific subject areas.

The Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program (OSTCP) was created pursuant to Act 85 of 2012 (72 P.S. § 1701-G.1, et seq.) and amended by Act 86 of 2016 (24 P.S. § 2001-B, et seq.). This program enables eligible students residing within the boundaries of schools that are not performing well to apply for a scholarship to attend another public or nonpublic school.

Due to Ferndale Area Elementary School's PSSA scores on the combined Math and English Language Arts results from the 2024–2025 PSSA exam, Ferndale families qualify for the OSTCP for the 2026–2027 school year. It is important to note that this eligibility applies only to school districts, as charter schools, cyber charter schools, and area career and technical centers (CTCs) are not included under state law (24 P.S. § 20-2002-B). In addition, being included on this list does not reflect a federal accountability designation and does not indicate identification for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI), or Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI).

While we are greatly disappointed in these results, we believe it is important to share that PSSA scores do not fully capture the continued success and growth we witness daily in our classrooms. Throughout the school year, we see our elementary students working hard, making meaningful academic progress, and demonstrating learning in ways that extend beyond a single assessment. We are proud of our students and deeply appreciative of our skilled, talented, and dedicated staff who work tirelessly to support each child's academic and personal development.

We also want to emphasize how much we value and appreciate the partnership between our school and our families. Parent and guardian support plays a vital role in student success, particularly when it comes to the PSSA, which is a high-stakes assessment. The 2026 PSSA will be administered during the last two weeks of April, and now that the exam is given online, it can be tempting for students to rush through questions simply to complete the test. We respectfully ask for your support in encouraging your child to slow down, stay focused, and put forth their very best effort. Your encouragement and reassurance truly make a difference, and we are grateful for your help in reinforcing the importance of doing one's best.

Under the OSTCP program, Ferndale Area Elementary School is required to offer families the option to transfer their child to another school district or nonpublic school who elects to participate in the program. Please know that our staff values the strong relationships we have built with your child and remains committed to their success here at Ferndale. However, we respect that families may wish to explore other educational options and support your right to make the decision that best meets your child's needs.

If you wish to take advantage of this opportunity, you may visit the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) website at:

<https://dced.pa.gov/programs/opportunity-scholarship-tax-credit-program-ostc/>

The website provides a list of approved scholarship organizations and participating school districts and nonpublic schools, as well as information about the application process. Please note that scholarships are contingent upon available funding.

Additional information is also available on our school district website and on the Pennsylvania Department of Education website at:

<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/education/programs-and-services/schools/school-services/opportunity-scholarship-tax-credit-program.html>

We remain committed to continuous improvement and to providing a supportive, engaging learning environment where every child can thrive. Thank you for your continued partnership, encouragement, and trust in Ferndale Area Elementary School.

Sincerely,

Amy Mykut

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Principal, Ferndale Area Elementary School