

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 2025

Volume LV, Number 2

Celebrating Fredericktown Since 1971

Mr. Chapman's Update

Dear Fredericktown School Community,

As we close out the first half of the school year, I want to express my appreciation to our teachers and staff for their incredible dedication, care, and commitment to our students and the learning experiences they provide at Fredericktown. In this issue, you'll see just how wide-ranging and meaningful our students' experiences have been as they explore future career pathways. At the elementary school, students engaged in hands-on learning at our annual Hobby & Career Fair, meeting community members, asking questions, and discovering new interests. Our middle school STEM students dove into the world of medical wearable devices, researching, designing, and prototyping solutions like real engineers. At the high school, learning becomes even more hands-on as our sophomores participated in the Career Pathway Showcase to learn about the opportunities awaiting them as upperclassmen.

Beyond the classroom, our Architecture and Design students partnered with Habitat for Humanity to study affordable, energy-efficient home design, while our engineering and FFA students teamed up to redesign and rebuild the village nativity scene showcased during the Village Christmas Walk in December. Combined, these experiences highlight the full K-12 experiences we are creating for our students at Fredericktown.

If you've driven by the stadium recently, you've likely seen the start of our track and field upgrades. Crews are completing drainage work, installing curbs, and removing topsoil. Later this spring, the field will be reshaped, irrigated, and covered with new bluegrass sod. A new polyurethane track surface, wider walkways, and a perimeter fence will follow to improve safety and accessibility for our community.

As you can tell, I am proud of our students and so grateful for our teacher and staff's dedication, and the ongoing support of our families and community partners who help bring these rich learning experiences to life. It truly takes all of us, working together, to create an environment where students can learn, grow, and explore their futures with confidence.

The strength of our school community is felt every day, and I am thankful for the many ways you contribute to the success of our students.

If your family needs assistance of any kind: academic, social, emotional, or basic needs, please do not hesitate to reach out. We want every student and family to feel cared for and supported, and we are committed to connecting you with the resources and help you may need.

From all of us at Fredericktown Schools, we wish you a Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year!



Thank You for Your Service!

Fredericktown Local Schools' annual Veterans Day assembly once again honored and celebrated the brave men and women who have served our country, including many who proudly call our community home. The program featured four guest speakers, including three of our own students —



Kyle Russel, Braylen Stone, and Reagan Blanchard — who each shared meaningful reflections on service, sacrifice, and gratitude. The featured guest was Fredericktown alumnus and U.S. Army veteran Aaron Alfrey (Class of 1999) spoke about his experiences in combat from 1999 to 2003 and emphasized the importance of veterans supporting one another.

We were honored to welcome dozens of veterans, many of whom shared how much the day meant to them. From Korean War veterans catching up together, to a veteran taking an Honor Letter to be delivered to a WWII veteran who could not attend, the morning was filled with moments of connection and reflection. The band and choir delivered beautiful performances that filled the gym with appreciation and respect. Thank you to the band and choir for their beautiful performances, to everyone who helped make this assembly possible, and especially to all our veterans, we are so grateful for your service.

Front: Jim Gerbasi (-Navy-1982-1990), Jim Singrey (Army-1972-1977), Paul James (Army-1952-1954), Herb Spearman (Army-1954-1956). **Row 2:** Ronald Hopkins (Army-2000-2020), Asa Clagg (Army-2009-2013), Rolando Sanchez (Army-1997-2023), Aaron Alfrey (Army-1999-2003), Joshua Stryker (Army, National Guard-2003-present), Jim Wagner (Army-1969-1970), Garry P. Wagner (Air Force-1966-1970), John Singrey (Army-1970-1975). **Row 3:** Rollie Kanavel (Air Force-1977-1979), Luke Kanavel (Air Force-2001-Current), Will Hartley (Army-1995-1997), Ed Morris (Air Force-1974-1994), Larry Andrzejewski (Army-1969-1970), Mike Blanchard (Army-1975-1977), Ron Riel (Army-1975-1978), David Merrin (Army-1971-2003). **Row 4:** William Martin (Navy-1963-1969), Kristina Mejia (Air Force-1995-2001; 2003-2014), Cindy Higgs (Army-1985-1989), Stephanie Broseus (Army-2006-2018), Tamara Hubb (Navy-1982-1994), John Stone (Army-1965-1967), Mickey Cochran (Navy-1965-1968; Army National Guard-1976-1983), Gary Short (Air Force-1966-1970). **Row 5:** Michael Link (Navy-1967-1971), Don Shaffer (Army-1966-1968), Steve Obert (Army-1971-1972; 1989-1992), Zach Kempton (Army-2006-2016), Mark Flint (Army-2021-Current). **Back:** Randy Miller (Army-1968-1970), Bill Whaley (Army National Guard-1971-1988).

Fredericktown to Celebrate Ribbon Cutting for New Manufacturing & Engineering Lab

Fredericktown Local Schools invites our community to join us on Friday, January 30, 2026, for the official ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the opening of our new Manufacturing and Engineering Lab, a cutting-edge space built to inspire innovation, hands-on learning, and career readiness for students across Knox County.

This project began nearly one year ago, when our dedicated STEAM teachers imagined what a true K–12 engineering pipeline could look like in Fredericktown. Their vision became reality through a successful grant proposal and the generous support of Battelle, whose investment in a regional K–12 STEAM initiative has given Fredericktown the opportunity to lead the way in workforce-focused education. As a result, Fredericktown Local Schools is now home to the first program of its kind in Knox County, designed to serve students throughout the region and strengthen the next generation of makers, builders, designers, and problem-solvers.

We extend our sincere appreciation to our incredible local manufacturing partners for their ongoing support, collaboration, and belief in what our students can accomplish



STEAM Learning in Action Across the District

Building Dreams in 3rd Grade STEAM: The spirit of innovation starts early in Fredericktown. Our 3rd grade STEAM students recently wrapped up their “Building Dreams” project, where creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving came to life. Each class designed a “dream park,” beginning with group brainstorming sessions to determine a name, theme, and purpose. Students then selected one feature to build from their individual ideas—ranging from bumper cars and tire swings to sandboxes, food stands, and even a unicorn slide.



After sketching their concepts, groups constructed detailed models using supplies like moss, cardboard, sand, foam, popsicle sticks, fake grass, pipe cleaners, and zip ties. The finished parks showcase not only imagination, but also the early engineering skills, planning, designing, revising, and building, that students will continue to develop throughout their STEAM journey.

Middle School STEM Launches Into Design Thinking. In the middle school, STEM students recently completed an exploration of the world of medical wearable devices. Acting as design engineers, students researched real-world challenges, brainstormed solutions, and created their own wearable concepts aimed at improving health or daily life. They built prototypes, tested their ideas, and refined their plans, experiences that mirror the problem-solving process they’ll encounter in future engineering coursework.



These hands-on challenges prepare students for the type of technical and creative thinking that will be amplified as they move into the high school pathways offered in our new lab.

High School Engineering & FFA Reimagine a Community Tradition: Innovation isn’t confined to the classroom. This season, high school engineering and FFA students worked together to update a beloved Fredericktown tradition: the Village Square nativity scene! Our engineering students put their Computer-Aided Design (CAD) skills to work in a meaningful, real-world project: redesigning the stable for the Village Square nativity scene. Using industry-standard CAD software, students analyzed the original structure, identified wear and weak points, and collaborated to create an improved design that was both structurally sound and visually appealing. With CAD, students were able to model the frame, test proportions, adjust joint placements, and determine how to optimize the materials for durability, all before a single piece of wood was cut. This digital design



process gave them hands-on experience with the same engineering workflow used in modern manufacturing and construction.

Once the design was finalized, students partnered with Kokosing to bring their plans to life. New figures were cut based on the digital files, ensuring precision and consistency, after, our FFA members took over and painted each piece.

As Fredericktown prepares to open its new Manufacturing and Engineering Lab, the momentum of STEAM learning across the district is stronger than ever. From elementary creativity to high school industry partnerships, our students are building confidence, skills, and futures.

We look forward to celebrating this exciting milestone with our community on January 30. Have a Merry Christmas, Fredericktown! We’ll see you at the ribbon cutting!

Roadmap to Tomorrow: Career Exploration

Career readiness is thriving across Fredericktown Local Schools, with students building their futures step-by-step from elementary through high school.

Our youngest learners recently kicked off their journey at the 4th Annual Hobby & Career Fair, where parents and community members shared their professions and hobbies. Students loved visiting each station, asking questions, and discovering new interests. Thank you to all the volunteers who made this event such a success!



Celebrating Excellence in Ag: FFA Honors

Fredericktown Local Schools is proud to celebrate Kacie Rook, who has earned the prestigious American FFA Degree—the highest honor awarded by the National FFA Organization. Often referred to as the gold standard of FFA, this degree represents exceptional dedication, leadership, and commitment to agricultural education.

Awarded to less than 1% of FFA members nationwide, the American FFA Degree recognizes students who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in their Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE), strong leadership skills, and meaningful involvement in their chapter, community, and state association.

Kacie's accomplishment reflects years of hard work and a truly impressive SAE program that spans paid placements, entrepreneurship, and agricultural research. Her effort, passion, and drive set a powerful example for younger FFA members and showcase the excellence of Fredericktown's agricultural education program.



Please join us in congratulating Kacie and her parents, Terri and Aaron Rook, on this remarkable achievement.

Update on State Legislation and Its Impact on Fredericktown Local Schools

Ohio lawmakers took action on several education-related property tax bills that could affect school funding across the state, including here at Fredericktown. Four major bills (House Bills 186, 335, 129, and 309) were amended by the Senate and later approved by the House, sending them to Governor DeWine for final consideration. These bills could still face vetoes, but if enacted as passed, they will bring notable changes to how schools receive local tax revenue.

Below is a summary of the most relevant pieces of legislation and how they **may** impact our district:

- **HB 129** adjusts how certain emergency and substitute levies count toward the state's 20-mill floor and allows older levies to be renewed as fixed-sum levies for up to five years.
- **HB 309** gives County Budget Commissions the ability to reduce voter-approved levies after just one year if they determine revenue is excessive.
- **HB 186** makes the largest changes. It caps property tax growth, creates new rollback structures for different types of property, and provides only a partial backfill to districts. It does **not** update the school funding formula to reflect reduced local revenue.
- **HB 335** limits growth from inside millage to inflation.

What This Means for Fredericktown Local Schools

Based on simulations from the Ohio Legislative Service Commission (LSC), Fredericktown stands to experience a significant financial impact from the combined effects of HB 129 and HB 186.

Projected School District Revenue (Selected Years):

Tax Year 2026:

Current law: **\$7,570,832**

With HB 129 & HB 186: **\$6,928,597**

Tax Year 2027:

Current law: **\$7,592,963**

With HB 129 & HB 186: **\$6,950,728**

These projections show that Fredericktown could lose approximately **\$640,000 per year** once the changes fully take effect.

This level of loss would require thoughtful long-term financial planning and could affect future district operations if no further legislative adjustments are made. Importantly, the bills do **not** fix the gap in the state school funding formula, meaning districts like ours may not receive additional state support to offset reduced local revenue.

What Happens Next: The four bills now move to the Governor's desk, where he will have until December 20 to sign or veto the legislation. If no action is taken, the bills will become law by default. We will continue to monitor the process closely and advocate for changes that protect stable, predictable school funding. As always, we remain committed to transparency and will keep our community informed. Ensuring Fredericktown students have the resources they need to thrive remains our top priority.

Track and Field House Upgrade Updates

Progress is underway at the stadium!

If you've driven by the stadium recently, you've likely seen the start of our track and field upgrades. Crews are completing drainage work, installing curbs, and removing topsoil. Later this spring, the field will be reshaped, irrigated, and covered with new bluegrass sod. A new polyurethane track surface, wider walkways, and a perimeter fence will follow to improve safety and accessibility for our community.

Planning is also moving forward for the Fieldhouse and potential stadium improvements. Triad Architects has been selected to help the District develop design criteria for a design-build project, including potential accessibility updates, renovations, or even new construction. This early work ensures our facilities remain safe, functional, and welcoming for all. Go Freddie!





Fredericktown Local School District

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- Mr. Chapman's Update
- Manufacturing Lab Grand Opening
- Celebrating Our Vets
- FFA Celebrations



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