

**FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS**

**Combined Agenda Study Session
and Regular Business Meeting
August 10, 2026 – 7 p.m.
Fox Chapel Area High School LGI Room**

This meeting may be recorded and/or broadcast.

Attached Pages

I. CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL

III. GUESTS

Certificates of Recognition – Staff

•The Fox Chapel Area School District won 15 awards in the 2026 National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) Publication and Digital Media Excellence Awards contest.

The district received top Awards of Excellence for the “Little Lights” logo and supplemental entry materials in the branding/image package category, and for the League of Innovative Schools Spring Convening program in the special purpose publication category.

Fox Chapel Area won Awards of Merit for the “2024-2025 Fox Chapel Area School District State of the Schools” in the annual report category; for the stories “ ‘Peace Poles’ Serve as Powerful Reminder,” “eSports Program One of Only Two in U.S.,” “Robust Environmental Sustainability Efforts Put Into Practice in FCASD,” and “Shelf Care Club Goes Beyond Books to Support Students,” in the excellence in writing category; for the spring 2025 issue of IN Fox Chapel Area magazine in the magazine category; and for the photo “Too Cool for School” in the photo category.

The district won Awards of Honorable Mention for the summer 2025 and winter 2025 issues of the IN Fox Chapel Area magazine in the magazine category, for the Weekly Updates From the Superintendent in the newsletter category, for the photo “Welcome Back Teachers” in the photo category, and for the Fox Chapel Area School District website and the Fox Chapel Area Athletics website in the website category.

Entries in this year’s contest were given awards of Excellence, Merit, or Honorable Mention. The entries were judged by experienced, award-winning professionals, and each was evaluated for overall excellence and quality relative to other entries in the category.

Fox Chapel Area School District’s winning entries were coordinated by **Jill Leonard**, the district’s community engagement specialist, and **Bonnie Berzonski**, the district’s coordinator of communications.

•The Fox Chapel Area School District won 16 awards in the Pennsylvania School Public Relations Association’s (PenSPRA) 2025 Excellence in Education Communications Contest.

The district received Awards of Excellence in the writing category for the stories “ ‘Peace Poles’ Serve as Powerful Reminder” and “Shelf Care Club Goes Beyond Books to Support Students,” both of which appeared in the IN Fox Chapel Area magazine; for the League of Innovative Schools Spring Convening program in the special purpose publication category; and for the summer 2025 IN Fox Chapel Area magazine in the magazine category.

The district received Awards of Merit for the “2024-2025 Fox Chapel Area School District State of the Schools” in the annual report category; for the stories “Robust Sustainability Efforts Put Into Practice in

FCASD,” “School Resource Officer Surprised With Buddy Bench,” and “Triple Triumph” in the excellence in writing category; for the spring 2025 IN Fox Chapel Area magazine and the winter 2025 IN Fox Chapel Area magazine in the magazine category; for the Weekly Updates From the Superintendent in the newsletter material category; and for the Fox Chapel Area School District website and for the Fox Chapel Area School District athletics website in the website category.

The district received Honorable Mention awards for the Pittsburgh Voices flyer in the marketing material category, and for the photos “Too Cool for School” and “Welcome Back Teachers” in the photography category.

More than 200 entries from educational institutions throughout Pennsylvania were submitted for the contest. The winners were honored at the annual PenSPRA Symposium on March 5, 2026, as part of an awards luncheon in Hershey.

Fox Chapel Area School District’s winning entries were coordinated by **Bonnie Berzonski**, the district’s coordinator of communications, and **Jill Leonard**, the district’s community engagement specialist.

PenSPRA is a nationally recognized professional organization. The group strengthens the leadership role of the school communications profession, fosters the continual development of its members, celebrates student and teacher achievement, and promotes school and community partnerships in support of education.

IV. FOX LEADERSHIP COUNCIL STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE(S)

V. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Page 12

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

VI. SOLICITOR'S REPORT

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Approve the minutes of the regular business meeting dated June 8, 2026.

* **Motion:** Moved by _____ and seconded by _____,
that the minutes of the regular business meeting dated June 8, 2026, are approved as written.

Roll Call Vote:

- VIII. **FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD** – Public comment is limited to residents or taxpayers of this district. The first public comment period is for items that are scheduled for deliberation or official action on the agenda. To register to make a public comment, please contact the Board Secretary during business hours, but no later than 12 p.m., on the day of the meeting by email (boardsecretary@fcasd.edu), telephone (412-967-2413), or at the district office (611 Field Club Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238). Please provide your name, complete address, telephone number, the subject of the comment or topic to be addressed, and any group affiliation. During the meeting, the Board Secretary will call those community members scheduled to comment by telephone. Sign-in sheets will also be provided at each meeting for those attending who wish to offer public comment and did not register in advance.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

- A. **Academic Committee Report** (Mrs. Cooper)
- B. **Governance Committee Report** (Mr. Frank)
- C. **Projects and Planning Committee Report** (Ms. Zych)

X. NEW BUSINESS

- **The superintendent is recommending that action be taken on the following items of business:**

A. Facilities / Transportation (*Mrs. Lynch*)

1. School Bus Driver Approval – 2026-2027 School Year

- Approve the hiring of the ABC Transit, Inc., drivers from the attached list, subject to verification of all required licensing, clearances, and all other essential employment requirements for school bus operators under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The administration shall complete the verification prior to the first day of school for the 2026-2027 school year.

* **Motion:** Moved by _____ and seconded by _____,
that Facilities / Transportation item 1 is approved.

Roll Call Vote:

B. Finance (*Mr. Hamilton*)

1. Disbursements (Fund 10) – June 2026

- General fund disbursements (Fund 10) in the amount of \$14,561,595.85 from June 1, 2026, through June 30, 2026, are approved as attached.

2. Disbursements (Fund 10) – July 2026

- General fund disbursements (Fund 10) in the amount of \$12,121,906.14 from July 1, 2026, through July 31, 2026, are approved as attached.

3. Disbursements (Fund 31) – July 2026

- Capital reserves fund disbursements (Fund 31) in the amount of \$190,507.89 from July 1, 2026, through July 31, 2026, are approved as attached.

4. Finance Report – May 2026

- The finance report for May 2026 is acknowledged and filed for audit as attached.

5. Finance Report – June 2026

- The finance report for June 2026 is acknowledged and filed for audit as attached.

6. Student Activity Financial Reports – Fourth Quarter 2025-2026

- The fourth quarter 2025-2026 middle school and high school student activity financial reports are acknowledged and filed for audit as attached.

7. District Auditor Appointment

- Approve a three-year engagement with Hosack, Specht, Muetzel & Wood LLP for the audit of the Fox Chapel Area School District financial statements for fiscal years ending June 30, 2026, 2027, and 2028, at a cost of \$20,400; \$21,000; and \$21,600, respectively, as attached. **This is a renewal of services.**

* **Motion:** Moved by _____ and seconded by _____,
that Finance items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 are approved.

Roll Call Vote:

C. Instruction (Mrs. Cooper)

1. The Watson Institute – The Education Center-Sewickley – Letter of Agreement

- Approve the letter of agreement as attached between the Fox Chapel Area School District and The Watson Institute for two students enrolled in The Education Center-Sewickley for the 2026-2027 school year at an annual cost of \$69,148 per student beginning August 19, 2026, and authorize the superintendent to execute the letter of agreement on behalf of the district. **This is a renewal of services.**

2. The Watson Institute – WISCA-Sharpsburg – Letter of Agreement

- Approve the letter of agreement as attached between the Fox Chapel Area School District and The Watson Institute for four students enrolled in The Watson Institute Social Center for Academic Achievement (WISCA-Sharpsburg) for the 2026-2027 school year at a cost of \$67,412 per student beginning August 19, 2026, and authorize the superintendent to execute the letter of agreement on behalf of the district. **This is a renewal of services.**

3. STAT Staffing Medical Services, Inc. – Addendum

Approve the addendum as attached between the Fox Chapel Area School District and STAT Staffing Medical Services, Inc. to provide specialty nurse II (RN or LPN) services at a rate of \$85.88 per hour pursuant to the agreement that was effective June 20, 2024. **This is a new addendum.**

4. River Academy of Excellence – Master Student Education Agreement

- Approve the master student education agreement as attached between the Fox Chapel Area School District and River Academy of Excellence for the 2026-2027 school year. **This is a renewal of services.**

5. Navigate360, LLC – Hall Pass Plus+ Master Services Agreement and Software Services Addendum A

- Approve the master services agreement and software services addendum A as attached between the Fox Chapel Area School District and Navigate360, LLC for Hall Pass Plus+ subscription services, an add on to PBIS Rewards subscription services, for the period September 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, at a total cost of \$456.50. **This is a new service.**

- * **Motion:** Moved by _____ and seconded by _____, that Instruction items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are approved.

Roll Call Vote:

D. Legislation / Policy (Mr. Frank)

No action is requested.

E. Personnel (Ms. Zych)

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.

1. Resignations

a. Professional

- (1) The resignation of Miluska T. Lauterbach, elementary teacher at Kerr Elementary School, due to personal reasons, is accepted effective June 30, 2026.

b. Educational Support

- (1) The resignation of Christine R. Andrews, school counseling secretary at Fox Chapel Area High School, due to retirement, is accepted effective July 17, 2026.
- (2) The resignation of Sydney C. Boss, pupil services secretary for Fox Chapel Area School District, due to personal reasons, is accepted effective August 17, 2026.
- (3) The resignation of Anita L. Kucharski, library clerk at Fairview Elementary School, due to retirement, is accepted effective July 27, 2026.
- (4) The resignation of Aileen P. Miller, personal care assistant at Hartwood Elementary School, due to personal reasons, is accepted effective July 31, 2026.
- (5) The resignation of Elizabeth A. Schmidt, personal care assistant at Fairview Elementary School, due to retirement, is accepted effective June 17, 2026.
- (6) The resignation of Katharine S. Vavpetic, 10-month building secretary at Fox Chapel Area High School, due to personal reasons, is accepted effective August 5, 2026.

c. Food Services

- (1) The resignation of L. Christine Pfeffer, food services employee at O'Hara Elementary School, due to personal reasons, is accepted effective July 16, 2026.

d. Supplemental Contracts – Athletic

- (1) The resignation of Jonathan Berkowitz, softball, MS head, due to personal reasons, is accepted effective July 7, 2026.
- (2) The resignation of Lesley Cowles, Ed.D., interscholastic strength/conditioning 2nd assistant (12.5%), due to personal reasons, is accepted effective June 16, 2026.
- (3) The resignation of Domenica Delaney, basketball-girls, HS JV head (50%), due to personal reasons, is accepted effective July 11, 2026.
- (4) The resignation of Anthony DeNunzio, cross country, MS asst. (50%), due to personal reasons, is accepted effective June 16, 2026.
- (5) The resignation of Lynn DePellegrini, intramurals spring-girls, Hartwood (50%), due to personal reasons, is accepted effective June 29, 2026.
- (6) The resignation of Katherine Frederick, intramurals spring-girls, Hartwood (50%), due to personal reasons, is accepted effective June 16, 2026.
- (7) The resignation of James Hastings, baseball, HS head, due to personal reasons, is accepted effective June 15, 2026.
- (8) The resignation of Dr. James Jones, baseball, freshman asst., due to personal reasons, is accepted effective June 16, 2026.
- (9) The resignation of Eleni McGrath, field hockey, HS 1st asst., due to personal reasons, is accepted effective June 22, 2026.

2. Appointments

a. Administration

- (1) James I. Young, M.Ed., is approved as the program principal at Dorseyville Middle School. This position is available due to the transfer of Laura Miller, Ed.D.

Certificate: Administrative I
Education: B.S., Pennsylvania State University, 2008
M.Ed., Point Park University, 2013
M.A., Alverno College, 2016
Experience: 1-year, West Allegheny School District
2 years, School District of Brown Deer, WI
3 years, West Allis – West Milwaukee School District, WI
Effective: To be determined
Salary: \$134,000 (prorated)
Fringe Benefits: As per the Act 93 Agreement

b. Professional

- (1) Chelsea M. Boyd is approved as an elementary teacher at O'Hara Elementary School. This position is available due to the resignation of Dana Ferrari.

Certification: Instructional I
Education: B.S., Pennsylvania State University, 2024
Experience: Student teaching, Clearfield Area School District
Effective: August 17, 2026
Salary: \$58,738, based on Step 1, B+0
Fringe Benefits: As per the Collective Bargaining Agreement

- (2) Karly N. Keller is approved as an elementary teacher at Fairview Elementary School. This position is available due to increased enrollment.

Certification: Instructional I
Education: B.S., Grove City College, 2026
Experience: Student teaching, Grove City Area School District
Student teaching, Franklin School District
Effective: August 17, 2026
Salary: \$58,738, based on Step 1, B+0
Fringe Benefits: As per the Collective Bargaining Agreement

- (3) Emma M. Stankovic is approved as an elementary teacher at Hartwood Elementary School. This position is available due to increased enrollment.

Certification: Instructional I
Education: B.S., Slippery Rock University, 2024
Experience: 1 year, Fox Chapel Area School District
Effective: August 17, 2026
Salary: \$59,263, based on Step 2, B+0
Fringe Benefits: As per the Collective Bargaining Agreement

c. Educational Support

- (1) Hannah Shaheen is approved as a personal care assistant at Fox Chapel Area High School effective August 21, 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 Cherie Henry.

d. Food Services

- (1) Margaret J. Allen is approved as a permanent, part-time (4.25 hours per day) food services employee in the Fox Chapel Area High School cafeteria. Hourly wage is set based on the wage scale for food services employees, with no fringe benefits, effective August 20, 2026. This position is available due to a vacancy.
- (2) Rashel Harrera is approved as a permanent, part-time (5 hours per day) food services employee in the Hartwood Elementary School cafeteria effective August 20, 2026, pending the fulfillment of pre-employment requirements. Hourly wage is set based on the wage scale for food services employees, with no fringe benefits. This position is available due to the resignation of Sandra Strong.
- (3) Sandra M. Nowak is approved as a permanent, full-time (7.5 hours per day) food services employee in the Hartwood Elementary School cafeteria. Hourly wage is set based on the wage scale for food services employees, effective August 20, 2026. This position is available due to the retirement of Lynda Dugan.

e. Supplemental Contracts – Athletic

- (1) The following athletic supplemental contracts are approved for the 2026-2027 school year effective August 17, 2026:

Anthony DeMarco	Interscholastic Strength/Conditioning	
	2nd Asst., (12.5%)	\$1,168.57
Nathan Graham	Golf-Girls, JV Head	\$2,541.00
Carter Haid	Lacrosse, Boys, HS 2nd Asst. (33.3333%)	\$1,404.00
Lisa Hofmann	Field Hockey, MS Head	\$3,871.00
Katherine Hook	Intramurals Spring-Girls, Hartwood (50%)	\$ 804.50
Ruth Jean Kirk	Field Hockey, HS 1st Asst.	\$4,575.00
Sean Mawhinney	Track-Indoor, Boys / Girls Asst.	\$2,664.00
Rebecca Mousseau	Field Hockey, MS Asst.	\$2,566.00
Leah Rea	Intramurals Spring-Girls, Hartwood (50%)	\$ 804.50
Shane Simpson	Wrestling, MS Asst.	\$5,105.00

3. Leave Replacements

a. Administration

- (1) Paul S. Noro, Ed.D. is approved as an intermittent leave replacement program principal at Dorseyville Middle School effective August 11, 2026, at a rate of \$550 per day. If evening hours are required, the daily rate for that day will be \$650 per day. This position is available due to the needs of the district.

b. Professional

- (1) Amanda M. Bellish is approved as a leave replacement French teacher at Dorseyville Middle School. This position is available due to the retirement of Tera Clutter.

Certification: Instructional I
 Education: B.A., Ohio State University, 2023
 Experience: 1/2 year, Franklin Regional School District
 Effective: August 17, 2026, through the day after the last day for students for the 2026-2027 school year
 Salary: \$59,000.50, based on Step 1.5, B+0
 Fringe Benefits: As per the Collective Bargaining Agreement

- (2) Alexandra A. Czerski is approved as a leave replacement reading support teacher at Fairview Elementary School. This position is available due to the childrearing/adoption leave of Emily Hinojosa.

Certification: Instructional I
Education: B.S., Pennsylvania State University, 2023
M.Ed., Point Park University, 2025
Experience: 1/2 year, Pine-Richland School District
Effective: August 17, 2026, through March 19, 2027
Salary: \$67,300.50 (prorated) based on Step 1.5, M+0
Fringe Benefits: As per the Collective Bargaining Agreement
- (3) Sarah L. Giuffre is approved as a first semester leave replacement elementary teacher at O'Hara Elementary School. This position is available due to the educational sabbatical of Ashley Henny.

Certification: Instructional I
Education: B.A., University of Kentucky, 2026
Experience: Student teaching, Fayette County Public Schools, Kentucky
Effective: August 17, 2026, through January 15, 2027
Salary: \$58,738 (prorated) based on Step 1, B+0
Fringe Benefits: As per the Collective Bargaining Agreement
- (4) Isabella A. Madonna is approved as a one-year leave replacement elementary teacher at Kerr Elementary School. This position is available due to the resignation of Miluska Lauterbach.

Certification: Instructional I
Education: B.S., Duquesne University, 2025
Experience: Student teaching, Pine-Richland School District
Effective: August 17, 2026, through the day after the last day for students for the 2026-2027 school year
Salary: \$58,738 based on Step 1, B+0
Fringe Benefits: As per the Collective Bargaining Agreement
- (5) Landri L. Shannan is approved as a one-year leave replacement elementary teacher at Kerr Elementary School. This position is available due to increased enrollment.

Certification: Instructional I
Education: B.S., Ohio University, 2022
M.Ed., Ohio University, 2023
Experience: Student teaching, Alexander Local Schools, Ohio
Effective: August 17, 2026, through the day after the last day for students for the 2026-2027 school year
Salary: \$67,038 based on Step 1, M+0
Fringe Benefits: As per the Collective Bargaining Agreement

4. Changes of Status

a. Educational Support

- (1) Kristin L. Correll, personal care assistant at O'Hara Elementary School, is approved as an instructional assistant at Kerr Elementary School, effective August 21, 2026. Salary is set based on the salary scale for instructional assistants, Step 1, with benefits as per the Fox Chapel Area Education Support Professionals Association Collective Bargaining Agreement. This position is available due to the retirement of Jessica Albrecht.

- (2) Teresa F. Kieffer, personal care assistant at Hartwood Elementary School, is approved as an instructional assistant at Hartwood Elementary School, effective August 21, 2026. Salary is set based on the salary scale for instructional assistants, Step 1, with benefits as per the Fox Chapel Area Education Support Professionals Association Collective Bargaining Agreement. This position is available due to the resignation of Colleen Lazaro.

b. Supplemental Contracts – Athletic

- (1) Cassandre Conti, previously approved as cross country, MS asst. (50%), at a rate of \$1,239.50, is ratified as cross country, MS asst. (100%), at a rate of \$2,479.
- (2) Angela Tassari, previously approved as basketball-girls, HS JV head (50%), at a rate of \$3,107.50, is ratified as basketball-girls, HS JV head (100%), at a rate of \$6,215.

5. Employee Assignments

a. Professional

- (1) The professional employee assignments for the 2026-2027 school year are approved as attached.

6. Summer Programs – 2026

a. Middle School

- (1) Hannah E. Szalay is ratified as an instructor for the Dorseyville Middle School Summer Learning Academy at a rate of \$32.82 per hour with a maximum of 95 hours for preparation and instruction.
- (2) David A. Turnbull is ratified as an instructor for the Dorseyville Middle School Summer Learning Academy at a rate of \$32.82 per hour with a maximum of 95 hours for preparation and instruction.

7. Correction – Resignation

a. Food Services

- (1) Lynda M. Dugan, previously approved for resignation due to personal reasons, is ratified as resigning due to retirement, effective June 8, 2026.

* **Motion:** Moved by _____ and seconded by _____,
that Personnel items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 are approved.

Roll Call Vote:

8. Appointment

a. Supplemental Contract – Athletic

- (1) The following athletic supplemental contract is approved for the 2026-2027 school year effective August 17, 2026:

Michael Frank	Baseball, HS Head	\$7,717.00
---------------	-------------------	------------

* **Motion:** Moved by _____ and seconded by _____, that
Personnel item 8 is approved.

Roll Call Vote:

Personnel Information Item

9. Tenure – Information

- a. The following employees are eligible for a Professional Employee’s Contract (tenure) effective August 21, 2026:

Alyson De La Torre
Marissa Dent
Samantha Diamond
Bailey Katonka
Rachael Meder
Alexander Poellnitz
Julia Puntil
McKenna Robinson
Matthew Sasson
Mary Schluep
Deena Stipetich
Brendon Urso
Ethan Wagner
Abigail Wentling

F. Operations / Cooperative Services (Mr. Goode)

1. Public School Facility Improvement Grant – Authorized Official Resolution

- Approve the authorized official resolution as attached, requesting a Public School Facility Improvement Grant of \$5,000,000 from the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be used for the O’Hara Elementary School mechanical project.

2. Lancaster-Lebanon Intermediate Unit 13 (IU13) – Hosted Services Agreement

- Approve the hosted services agreement as attached between the Fox Chapel Area School District and IU13 for its Act 168 Tracking software (cloud) solution, effective September 1, 2026, through August 31, 2029, at a one-time cost of \$500 for setup and training, and \$5 per applicant thereafter. **This is a new agreement.**

3. Student Teaching Affiliation Agreement

- Approve the following student teaching affiliation agreement as attached:

Seton Hill University

**4. Row9 Systems LLC, d/b/a Skybox
Master Services Agreement and Data Protection Agreement**

- Approve the master services agreement and the data protection agreement as attached between the Fox Chapel Area School District and Skybox, effective August 11, 2026, through June 30, 2030, at a cost of \$8,000 per year. **This is a new platform to be used by the athletic department.**

- * **Motion:** Moved by _____ and seconded by _____,
that Operations / Cooperative Services items 1, 2, 3, and 4 are approved.

Roll Call Vote:

XI. SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – Public comment is limited to residents or taxpayers of this district. The second public comment period is for other matters of concern within the authority of the School Board. To register to make a public comment, please contact the Board Secretary during business hours, but no later than 12 p.m., on the day of the meeting by email (boardsecretary@fcasd.edu), telephone (412-967-2413), or at the district office (611 Field Club Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15238). Please provide your name, complete address, telephone number, the subject of the comment or topic to be addressed, and any group affiliation. During the meeting, the Board Secretary will call those community members scheduled to comment by telephone. Sign-in sheets will also be provided at each meeting for those attending who wish to offer public comment and did not register in advance.

XII. FOX CHAPEL EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE

XIII. BOARD COMMENTS

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

* **Motion:** Moved by _____ and seconded by _____,
 that the meeting is adjourned. Time: _____.

Voice Vote:

NOTE: Attachments cited within the agenda are available for the public on the district website. Anyone without access to the district website who wishes to review the attachments may do so by contacting the Board Secretary during regular business hours.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Information

•Fox Chapel Area High School Wins Second Place in Trib Cup

Fox Chapel Area High School received second-place for the 2025-2026 school year in WPIAL Class 5A Pittsburgh Tribune-Review High School Sports Network Trib Cup final standings. The award honors schools across the region for the most successful and well-rounded high school athletic programs. Rather than celebrating just one standalone team, the Cup rewards a school's entire athletic department.

Points are cumulatively awarded across all district team sports for achieving major milestones, including section titles and playoff berths, WPIAL playoff success, and state (PIAA) postseason berths and championships.

•FCAHS 2026 Grad Named National Winner in America's Field Trip Contest

Fox Chapel Area High School 2026 graduate **Michael Costello** was named a second-place national winner in the America's Field Trip contest. The competition is a nationwide scholastic contest and more than 10,000 students in grades 3-12 from across the country submitted original artwork or writing responding to the prompt, "What Does America Mean to You?".

The entries were judged by current and former educators who selected 250 students as first- and second-place winners from 42 states, three U.S. territories, and the District of Columbia. There were three age-related categories, and Michael, who submitted an essay, was one of 42 (only two were from Pennsylvania) to be named a second-place winner in the high school category which included grades 9-12.

The America's Field Trip contest is a program of America250, the national nonpartisan organization charged by Congress to engage every American in celebrating and commemorating the 250th anniversary of the United States.

Funding for the competition was provided by The Bank of New York (BNY) Mellon Foundation.

•Recent Grad Chosen for Prestigious Stamps Scholarship at Pitt

Fox Chapel Area High School 2026 graduate **Zinta Jacob** received a Stamps Scholarship through the University of Pittsburgh. The scholarship is one of the nation's most prestigious merit scholarships for undergraduate students. It is valued in excess of \$190,000 and is offered to five incoming first-year Pitt students and covers full tuition; mandatory fees; room and board; book allowances; and enrichment funds for study abroad, internships, leadership development, and conferences. Students are selected through a highly competitive process and are recognized for exceptional academic achievement, leadership, initiative, and service.

During high school, Zinta served as treasurer of the National Honor Society, outreach director for the Women in Science Club, and president of the Hiking Club. She was also recognized as a Top Scholar and earned recognition through Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) and Technology Student Association (TSA) competitions, advancing to state and national-level competitions. Zinta also volunteers as a tutor and camp counselor, performed with the high school orchestra, and competes in regional and national ski racing events. She has conducted research in quantum machine learning at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Zinta, who plans to study engineering, is looking forward to the opportunities that the scholarship will bring her.

"I am incredibly honored to receive the Stamps Scholarship," Zinta said. "I am deeply grateful to my family, teachers, and friends for their unwavering support and encouragement throughout my academic journey. Their guidance has helped shape who I am today, and I look forward to using this opportunity to grow as an engineer, researcher, and leader."

Founded in 2006 by E. Roe Stamps and his late wife Penny, the Stamps Scholars Program partners with leading universities to support students with extraordinary academic talent, leadership potential, and a commitment to making a meaningful impact in their communities and beyond. In addition to scholarship support, Stamps Scholars gain access to a national network of peers, mentors, leadership experiences, research opportunities, and enrichment programs designed to help them reach their biggest goals.

•**2026 Graduate Wins Honorable Mention Essay Prize**

Fox Chapel Area High School 2026 graduate **Laila Golla** was named an Honorable Mention winner as part of the Horizon Academic Essay Prize 2026.

The 2026 theme, “The Pursuit of Progress,” encouraged students to examine how humanity strives to move forward scientifically, socially, and ethically. It invited reflection on the challenges and choices that shape advancement, asking how innovation and reform can create a more just, sustainable, and compassionate world.

All essay entries were judged by an academic advisory board, a panel of distinguished professors and scholars leading global universities. Essays were judged on originality and creativity; analysis and critical thinking; use of evidence and research; clarity, structure, and coherence; and presentation and language use.

The Horizon Academic Essay Prize, open to all high school students from across the world, celebrates outstanding writers and critical thinkers. The objective of the Horizon Academic Essay Prize is to push young students to critically engage with the world around them. Through this essay prize, Horizon Academic aims to elevate student scholarship and foster critical dialogue on the ideas shaping our collective future.

•**Recent Graduates Win National Awards in PSA Contest**

Five Fox Chapel Area High School 2026 graduates swept first through fourth places in the high school division of the “America 250 and Counting!” Contest. **Maxwell Farber** won first place, **Steven Li** won second place, **Marin Airik** and **Joseph Shin** were awarded third place, and **Samuel Troutman** won fourth place. As part of the contest, students from across the United States created public service announcements about the Declaration of Independence and its importance to the ideals of democracy today.

The contest was sponsored by Teach Democracy. The organization provides programs centered around the core principles of research-driven, student-centered, standards-aligned, project-based – all focused on critical thinking. The programs deliver engaging, impactful learning experiences for students.

•**Recent Grad Named Finalist in National Stossel Essay Contest**

Fox Chapel Area High School 2026 graduate **Ulyana Kubini** was named a finalist in the high school division of the 2025-26 national Stossel Essay Contest. Students were asked to write an essay based on four topics, selecting one of their choice. Ulyana received a \$200 cash award.

Thousands of essays were submitted by middle school and high school students from the United States and Canada, with 56 chosen as prize winners. The purpose of the contest is to help students strengthen research, critical thinking, and persuasive writing skills.

This year, Stossel in the Classroom sponsored essay, video, and AI challenge contests.

•**Elementary Students Winners in WQED Writers Contest**

Two Fox Chapel Area School District students were named winners in the 2026 WQED Writers Contest. The second-place winner was O’Hara Elementary School 2025-2026 third-grader **Camden Lenz** for his story “Waffle and the Attack of the Terrible Toaster,” and Hartwood Elementary School 2025-2026 first-grader **Celia Chan** was awarded third place for her story “7 Years of Bad Luck.”

Nearly 3,000 entries were submitted and these Fox Chapel Area winners were two of 26 students who won awards in this year’s contest. The students competed against others in their own grade levels, and

the contest was open to students in kindergarten-grade five from the greater Pittsburgh area. The winning students were honored at an award ceremony at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh as part of Pgh Book Fest May 30.

All the winners' stories are available to see and listen to (read by the authors) through WQED's Writers Contest page at <https://www.wqed.org/education/writers-contest/writers-contest-2026-winning-stories/>.

• **FCAHS Grad Named Western PA Positive Athlete**

Fox Chapel Area High School 2026 graduate **Katie Siddons** was named the 2026 Western Pennsylvania Positive Athlete in field hockey and lacrosse. The awards, issued by the Western Pennsylvania Positive Athlete organization, are based on a student-athlete's character; positive attitude; and ability to lead, encourage, and respect everyone around them.

• **Graduate Named Lacrosse All-American**

Class of 2026 graduate **Caroline Grimsley** was recognized by USA Lacrosse as part of the Western Pennsylvania Region All-American team. Caroline was one of six players named to the team from the region.

• **Girls Lacrosse Players Named to All-WPIAL Team**

Two members of the Fox Chapel Area High School girls varsity lacrosse team were named to the all-WPIAL team. 2026 graduates **Caroline Grimsley** and **Caroline Leland** were named to the WPIAL Class 3A all-star team.

• **Boys Lacrosse Player Named to All-WPIAL Team**

A member of the Fox Chapel Area High School boys varsity lacrosse team was named to the all-WPIAL team. 2025-2026 junior **Tucker Cullen** was named to the WPIAL Class 3A all-star team.

• **Student Named to All-State Softball Team**

Fox Chapel Area High School 2025-2026 junior **Jillian Haigh** was named to the Pennsylvania High School Softball Coaches Association All-State Team. She was named to the Class 5A first team as a utility player. The students were selected by the members of the organization.

• **2026 Graduate Named to All-Star Softball Team**

Fox Chapel Area High School 2026 graduate **Ava Walmsley** was selected to play in the Western Pennsylvania Softball All-Star Game. The game, featuring the top 41 senior stars from the WPIAL and City League, was played June 16, 2026, at Plum High School.

• **Student Named to Post-Gazette All-Section Softball Team**

Fox Chapel Area High School 2025-2026 junior **Jillian Haigh** was named to the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette WPIAL Class 5A Section 1 softball team. The all-section softball teams were selected by the Post-Gazette, based on voting by the WPIAL coaches.

• **Students Named to Valley News Dispatch Softball All-Star Teams**

Five Fox Chapel Area High School students were named to Valley News Dispatch softball all-star teams. 2025-2026 junior **Jillian Haigh** was named to the first team, 2025-2026 sophomore **Giuliana Foley** and 2025-2026 freshman **Isabel Zober** were named to the second team, and 2025-2026 junior **Heidi Stiger** and 2025-2026 freshman **Lexi Stabile** received honorable mentions to the team.

• **Graduate and Students Named to Post-Gazette All-Section Baseball Team**

A Fox Chapel Area High School graduate and two students were named to the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette WPIAL Class 5A Section 3 baseball team. They are 2026 graduate **Blake Krushinski** and 2025-2026 juniors **Tristan Blum** and **Elias George**. The all-section baseball teams were selected by the Post-Gazette, based on voting by the WPIAL coaches.

• **Graduate and Students Named to Valley News Dispatch Baseball All-Star Teams**

A recent graduate and two Fox Chapel Area High School students were named to Valley News Dispatch baseball all-star teams. 2026 graduate **Blake Krushinski** and 2025-2026 junior **Tristan Blum** were named to the second team, and 2025-2026 junior **Elias George** received an honorable mention to the team.

B. Fox Chapel Area School Board Upcoming Meetings

September 14, 2026

7 p.m.	Combined Agenda Study Session and Regular Business Meeting	High School	LGI Room
--------	---	-------------	----------

October 5, 2026

7 p.m.	Agenda Study Session	High School	LGI Room
--------	----------------------	-------------	----------

October 12, 2026

7 p.m.	Regular Business Meeting	High School	LGI Room
--------	--------------------------	-------------	----------

November 2, 2026

7 p.m.	Agenda Study Session	High School	LGI Room
--------	----------------------	-------------	----------

November 9, 2026

7 p.m.	Regular Business Meeting	High School	LGI Room
--------	--------------------------	-------------	----------

December 7, 2026

7 p.m.	Reorganization Meeting & Combined Agenda Study Session and Regular Business Meeting	High School	LGI Room
--------	---	-------------	----------