

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Neighbors,

To say that this has been a very unusual school year is an understatement. When the 2019-2020 school year started, we never could have imagined ending the school year like we did. Everyone was called upon to do things that they had never done before.

- Our teachers were called upon to devise a full online curriculum in a matter of days. And, while some other districts waited weeks to restart school, our educators were ready to go within a matter of days.
- Our students were called upon to get used to a completely new way of learning. They were educated at home with no socialization with their friends. They were expected to adapt to a great deal of change, again, with very little notice.
- Our parents and guardians were called upon to help with the online learning, all while keeping their own households running, as well as working from home. Some of our parents continued to work outside the home as essential workers in their industries.

This past spring presented a completely unprecedented situation, and I and my fellow School Board members could not be prouder of our entire school community. We know we are incredibly fortunate to live in the Fox Chapel Area School District, and the incredible work required because of the pandemic further proved this.

However, we still have a lot more work to do. Our Board hired a new superintendent, Mary Catherine Reljac, Ed.D., in April. Even prior to her official start date of July 1, she has been actively involved in the district. She has started a Return-to-School Coalition that is already meeting. These teams, which include stakeholders from all groups, including parents and district residents, are in the process of studying what the upcoming school year may look like. The coalition is devising several scenarios so that, as always, the Fox Chapel Area School District can be prepared for anything that comes our way. Make no mistake, we've had several challenges to date, and there are still unknown challenges that I know we will face in the future as our "new normal" becomes clearer. But, rest assured, as a team, we will be ready to face any of these challenges together, just as we always have.

I am so grateful that I can count on everyone associated with the school district to base all their decisions on one thing and one thing only – what is best for all of our students.

Throughout the pandemic and during online instruction, many of you reached out to share your thoughts about current and future programming. We appreciated hearing from you, and we applaud the efforts everyone put forth to continue our most important job – the education of our students.

Sincerely,

Somer Obernauer Jr.
School Board President



“This past spring presented a completely unprecedented situation, and I and my fellow School Board members could not be prouder of our entire school community. We know we are incredibly fortunate to live in the Fox Chapel Area School District, and the incredible work required because of the pandemic further proved this.”



FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT 2020-2021 FINAL BUDGET

The 2020-2021 Fox Chapel Area School District final budget calls for budgetary expenditures of \$102,008,293. The decrease in expenditures over the 2019-2020 original budget is projected at -\$1,794,781 or -1.73%. The final millage rate for 2020-2021 is 19.8686 mills which represents a 1.5% millage increase from the 2019-2020 school year. Each mill generates approximately \$3.5 million for the school district.

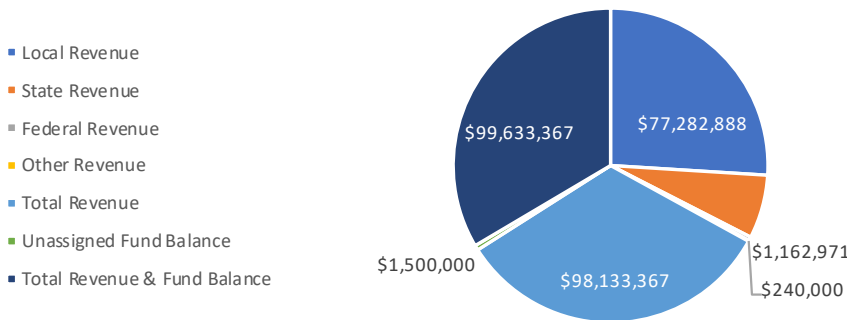
The School Board approved the 2020-2021 final budget at a special meeting June 29, 2020. The proposed final budget, passed at a special meeting May 27, 2020, was available on the district's website as per the state-required public review period. Final budget information

is available on the district's website at www.fcasd.edu.

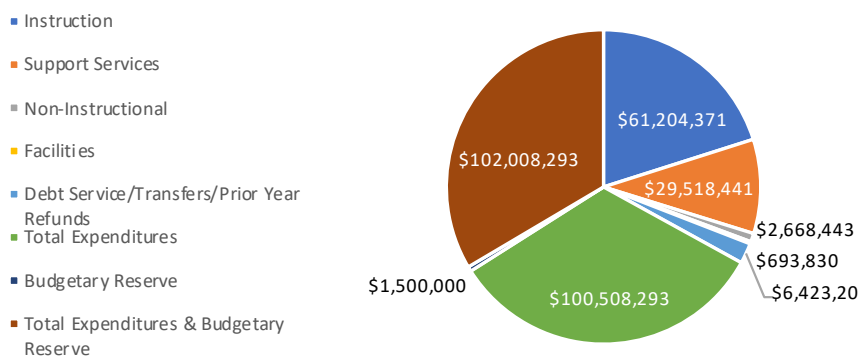
The 2020-2021 final budget reflects the following:

- Budget reductions due to reassignment and attritional savings:
 - Temporary reassignment of Act 93/administrative personnel to current O'Hara Elementary open administrative position.
 - Not replacing a retiring member of the technology team.
 - Realignment in staffing, specifically as it relates to the early retirement incentive from 2018.
 - The facilitator of the Creativity and Literacy Program (CLP) will be a classroom teacher, and the CLP facilitator will be paid via a supplemental contract.
- Budget reductions include the elimination of two municipal police officers who serve as school resource officers at Fox Chapel Area High School and Dorseyville Middle School. These positions will be covered by the officers who are part of the district's school police force.
- The district's Spanish Immersion pilot program will be paused for new students, and it will move forward with just the current class of rising second-graders.
- 6.2% increase in tuition costs (the amount the district pays for students to attend cyber schools, charter schools, and special education facilities, as well as the A.W. Beattie Career Center).
- Increase in facilities costs and an \$800,000 transfer to the Capital Projects Fund to cover the cost of capital improvement projects in line with the district's five-year capital improvement plan.
- Insurance premium increases of:
 - 2.5% for medical coverage
 - 6% for dental coverage
 - 7% for vision coverage
- The Public School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS) employer contribution rate is set at 34.51% for 2020-2021.
 - This represents a 1.1% decrease in costs from 2019-2020.
 - This accounts for 15.5% of the overall budget.
 - The state reimburses 50% of the costs, which is included under the revenue section.
- Reductions have been made in expenditure line items, such as meals and refreshments, as well as supplies and equipment, and a freeze has been placed on non-regional conferences that are not paid for with external funds, such as federal programs or grant funds.
- Reductions have been made in technology expenditures, such as

Breakdown of Revenues



Breakdown of Expenditures



temporarily reduced rates for various software licenses and changes in technology rotation plans.

- A reduction has been made to summer programs because of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the district's Summer Learning Academy will be online.

Future Challenges

- COVID-19 and its economic impact for the current and future budget years is still widely unknown. However, the 2020-2021 budget anticipates a 94% collection rate of real estate taxes, lower than previous years, and reduced revenue from the collection of earned income taxes.
- The contribution to PSERS continues to be a challenge for all school districts in Pennsylvania.
 - The employer contribution rate is set by PSERS trustees, not by the district.
 - The district anticipates paying nearly \$45 million in PSERS contributions over the next five years.
 - As of 7/1/2019, the district had \$8.7 million of the fund balance committed to PSERS.

- \$1.5 million was drawn down at the end of the 2019-2020 school year.
- \$750,000 is planned to be drawn down in 2020-2021 to go toward balancing the budget.
- Capital projects/construction:
 - As of 7/1/2019, the district had \$10.5 million of the fund balance assigned for capital projects.
 - \$1.8 million was drawn down at the end of the 2019-2020 school year to cover costs associated with paving projects, security improvements, and Kerr construction.
 - \$1.5 million is planned to be drawn down in 2020-2021 for projects relating to the five-year capital improvement plan and the Fox Chapel Area High School paving project.

Gaming Funds Distribution

- On May 1, 2020, the Pennsylvania Department of Education provided the Fox Chapel Area School District with the amount of the district's share of gaming funds available for distribution.
- The proposed final budget includes a distribution of \$1,473,016.15.

- The method of distributing these funds, as prescribed by Act 1, the Taxpayer Relief Act, will be via the implementation of the homestead exclusion.
 - Under this provision, any property in the school district that was approved by Allegheny County as a homestead will have the lesser of its taxable value, or an estimated \$9,468.74 of its taxable value, excluded for the purposes of calculating school district real estate taxes for the 2020 tax year.
- The owners of the qualifying properties in the district will receive the equivalent of a \$188.13 reduction in their property taxes.
- Property owners who currently do not have an approved homestead exclusion will have the opportunity to apply again when the district sends out letters to those homeowners in December 2020.
- These calculations are based on Allegheny County's certification that there are 7,844 qualifying properties in the Fox Chapel Area School District. The reduction amount may change if the county adjusts those numbers.

	2019			2020		
	\$100,000	\$215,000 (Median Home)	\$400,000	\$100,000	217,800	\$400,000
Assessed Value	\$100,000	\$215,000 (Median Home)	\$400,000	\$100,000	217,800	\$400,000
Homestead Exclusion	<\$9,602.30>	<\$9,602.30>	<\$9,602.30>	<\$9,468.74>	<\$9,468.74>	<\$9,468.74>
Net Assessed Value	\$90,397.70	\$205,397.70	\$390,397.70	\$90,531.26	\$208,331.26	\$390,531.26
Millage Rate		19.5750			19.8686	
Tax Liability	\$1,769.53	\$4,020.66	\$7,642.03	\$1,798.72	\$4,139.25	
Annual Increase				\$29.19	\$118.59	\$117.27
% Increase				1.65%	2.95%	1.53%
# of Properties		7,844			7,844	\$7,759.30

1. These amounts can be reduced by 2% if paid in full during the discount period.
2. Senior citizens may qualify for a property tax rebate program available through the state.



NEW SUPERINTENDENT ALREADY IMMERSSED IN FOX CHAPEL AREA

Though she's brand new to the Fox Chapel Area School District, Superintendent Mary Catherine Reljac, Ed.D., certainly is no stranger to the area.

A 19-year resident of Aspinwall, Dr. Reljac says she is thrilled to serve her community, as well as the five others that comprise the Fox Chapel Area School District, as the district's new leader.

"I am humbled and honored to have been chosen as the next superintendent of schools for the Fox Chapel Area School District and have the opportunity to serve the students, families, staff, and communities in my home school district," Dr. Reljac says.

She says her familiarity with the school district, as well as the district's stellar reputation, led her to apply for the position.

"At first, I honestly was not sure if the job fit me or not, but I always believe that you should look at every opportunity and consider it. The more I learned about the district during the search process, and the more I considered what my goals were educationally and what the district's goals and needs were, I saw a convergence of things that seemed to make sense to me.

"Fox Chapel Area, as a school district, has had many achievements, and that is something to be proud of. Those do not come easily. They are a testament to the strength of the students, families, staff, and the hard work that people have done over the years."

Many of the district's strengths also aligned with areas of study and programs that Dr. Reljac champions as an educator.

"Fox Chapel Area School District has strong academic programs, wonderful experiences in the arts for students, and it has great athletics with lots of extracurricular activities at all levels," she says. "I think those are huge strengths in any school district because they help children to have a really well-rounded education. I saw that was a value of the Fox Chapel Area School District, and it's a value of mine as well."

Dr. Reljac, a native of Hempfield Township in Westmoreland County, began her teaching career in 1996 as a middle school general music and choral teacher in the Hempfield Area School District, her alma mater. She has spent the majority of her career in the Gateway School District, where she worked in a variety of capacities from 1997 to 2011, as a music teacher, child accounting supervisor, federal programs coordinator, a middle school assistant principal, and an elementary school principal. From 2011 to 2013, Dr. Reljac served as an upper elementary school principal in the Pine-Richland School District before moving on to the Franklin Regional School District, where she had been the assistant superintendent since August 2013. Dr. Reljac has a total of 18 years of administrative experience.

"I've loved every spot that I've been in, in every single school district, and I've left pieces of my heart all over Western Pennsylvania when I've left those school districts," she says. "I am thrilled for the opportunity to work with the Fox Chapel



Area School District and help to imagine what we can be as we move forward."

Dr. Reljac already has set a number of priorities for her first year on the job.

"I think that a superintendent's goals really need to be reflective of a collaborative effort of many people in the district," she says. "Some of my first goals as superintendent are to get to know people, to get to know our students, to spend time with our staff, and to meet our parents and community leaders in our region. I want to be able to really hear what, to them, makes Fox Chapel Area a special school district and what they are very proud of in the district

"Another goal I have for the district is to really carefully look through what we are doing in our educational programs and how we are making sure students have access to high-quality and rigorous instruction, but how they are also supported. I frequently look at the safety nets we have for students to help them in their academics and their social and emotional development. A third goal that I have is to work collaboratively with the Board of Directors, with the administrative team, and with the staff to create some measurable goals that we can focus on and also to determine

what our priorities are as a team. I think that is going to be some of the most exciting work that I get to do.”

As if her work in the schools doesn't keep her busy enough, Dr. Reljac serves in a number of capacities for various educational organizations. She is facilitator for the Pennsylvania Inspired Leadership Program and works with administrators from across the state of Pennsylvania. She also regularly serves as a presenter at various workshops and programs. She also is a member of various state and national educational associations.

Dr. Reljac received her doctorate of education from the University of Pittsburgh in 2016. She received her superintendent letter of eligibility in 2008 from California University of Pennsylvania. She also has a master of science degree in educational leadership from Carlow University (2001) and a bachelor of science in music education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania (1995). Dr. Reljac resides in Aspinwall with her husband, Jason, who is a manager in the technology group at Schneider Downs & Co. Inc.

Dr. Reljac understands that she's joining the district in a time of uncertainty because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but says she's ready for the challenge, no matter if students are back in their schools, learning virtually, or a mixture of the two.

“This is going to be a constantly evolving story as we all learn together,” she says. “I am so excited about the opportunity to serve the students, families, and communities of the Fox Chapel Area School District. I think I am most excited about being able to help our team be the best it can be as well as help our students continue to amaze us.”

Mike - Run with photo Dr. Reljac and Reljac Still Shot (we are hoping there is room for this). Caption for Reljac Still Shot is: To learn more about Mary Catherine Reljac, Ed.D., you can view a short video produced by the Fox Chapel Area School District at <https://bit.ly/MCReljac>.



Mary Catherine Reljac, Ed.D., was sworn in as Fox Chapel Area School District's new superintendent by The Honorable Kevin G. Sasinoski, Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas judge.

SUPERINTENDENT FORMS BACK-TO-SCHOOL COALITION

One of the first tasks that Mary Catherine Reljac, Ed.D., undertook as Fox Chapel Area School District's new superintendent was the formation of the Return-to-School Coalition to help plan for the 2020-2021 school year.

The coalition, which comprises various stakeholders from across the district, including students, parents, administrators, faculty, staff, community members, and experts, is planning for four scenarios:

- Schools reopening with no limitations or restrictions;
- Schools reopening with social distancing guidelines resulting in changes to the school day, such as alternate schedules;
- A fully online instructional model and families uncomfortable sending students to school even if they're reopened; and
- Changing conditions and the need to shift the instructional plan throughout the school year.

The coalition is broken down into several workgroups: Facilities, Athletics, and Extracurriculars; Safety, Health Services, and Wellness; Instruction; Special Education; and Technology and Communications. The goal of these stakeholder groups is to harness the members' representative talents and voices as part of the planning process.

Each workgroup will meet multiple times during the summer and follow a four-stage process: Identify the Knowns and Unknowns; Build Scenarios; Recognize Consistencies and Prioritize; and Communicate.

“The Return-to-School Coalition planning process is one that is focused on planning for adaptation and change, not perfection,” Dr. Reljac says. “It is impossible to predict what exactly the future may look like for our schools. The goal of the return-to-school planning process is to provide some directional clarity so that the district explores where it should focus its attention and how it should make sense of situations.”

Following the completion of the workgroup meetings, district administrators will generate a written report based on the efforts of the workgroups and is expected to present that report to the Fox Chapel Area Board of School Directors in August.



SHARPSBURG RESIDENT EAGER TO SERVE COMMUNITY

Sharpsburg resident Amy Cooper welcomed the opportunity to serve on the Fox Chapel Area School Board and represent a portion of the district's population that historically has been underrepresented on the Board.

"There is a value in representation, and there was an identifiable population of our community not represented on our Board," she says. "When a Region I spot on the Board became open at such an important point in our district, the time to have that representation of our full community could not be missed."

Mrs. Cooper has been interested in public education for some time and, in fact, has a decade-long career in higher education, working in student affairs, most of that time with first-year college students, and also with university stakeholders. She has worked

in administrative roles and consultant positions. Mrs. Cooper currently works for Chatham University for a program that focuses on the quality of services provided to those with intellectual disabilities. Additionally, she is also a "very involved parent" at Kerr Elementary School.

"I mindfully make more time for being actively involved in our school and community. I am very involved with the Kerr PTO and now as a School Board member," she says. "It's a priority in our home to be present and involved when it comes to our daughters and our community. We are also active members of our church."

Mrs. Cooper is particularly proud to be from a district that offers many opportunities for its students.

"From our administration and talented teachers and staff, to the amazing innovative programs that we offer



students, to a diverse and growing community with many members committed to the success of our district, to the financial resources that we have, and being nestled so close to the city of Pittsburgh and all that offers – we are a district full of resources and the people that can turn those into endless possibilities for our students," she says.

Mrs. Cooper has a bachelor's degree in business administration with a major in marketing from the University of Pittsburgh. She has a master's degree in liberal and professional studies with a concentration/graduate certificate in management & leadership development from Towson University.

She grew up in the East End and Millvale, and went on to graduate from Shaler Area High School. She and her husband, James, have lived in Sharpsburg since 2008. Prior to that, they resided in Buffalo, New York. They have two daughters who both attend school at Kerr Elementary.

"Being able to serve a community that I deeply care for as their representative on the School Board is very humbling," Mrs. Cooper says.



In addition to being the newest member of the Fox Chapel Area School Board, Amy Cooper also is the president of the Kerr PTO and often volunteers at the school's events, such as Kerrtoberfest.

GRADUATES TO CONTINUE ACADEMIC & ATHLETIC ENDEAVORS

A number of Fox Chapel Area High School 2020 graduates recently signed and/or committed to Division I, II, and III colleges and universities.

According to Athletic Director Mike O'Brien, our student-athletes have excelled both in the classroom and on the field.

"Our student-athletes dedicate so much of their time to their sport, and yet they continue to excel in the classroom," he says. "Our students know that academics are a priority, yet they still compete athletically at the highest level."

Although the spring athletes never got to compete this year, the athletics office honored the seniors through a video and yard signs.

"We wanted to find some way to honor our senior spring athletes for their dedication to their sports. The situation was not ideal, and we wanted them to know that their dedication as student-athletes was to be respected and honored," Mr. O'Brien said.

FACTS AND STATS CLASS OF 2020 ATHLETES

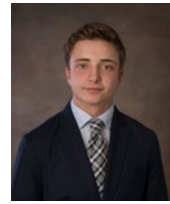
The student-athletes in the Class of 2020 racked up some impressive statistics during their four years.*

- Five state champion teams.
- Girls cross country and boys golf won the first state championships in school history in their respective sports.
- Teams qualified for PIAA playoffs 18 times.
- Individual athletes qualified for PIAAs 33 times.
- Teams and/or individuals won 12 WPIAL championships.
- Eighteen teams had perfect section records.
- Twenty-nine teams were named section champions.
- Boys basketball tied for best regular season record in school history.
- Boys tennis broke the school record for the most consecutive section and WPIAL championship wins, with three in a row.
- Girls doubles tennis tied the WPIAL doubles record for most WPIAL titles.
- Numerous student athletes participated/qualified for WPIAL playoffs and championship events.

**Athletic statistics for the spring 2020 season are not included, as it did not take place due to COVID-19.*



Avik Agrawal
Tennis
Mercyhurst University



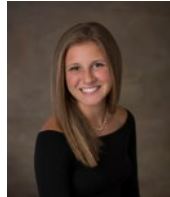
Scott Bitar
Golf
Miami University of Ohio



Samuel Brown
Football
Duquesne University



Amani D'Ambrosio
Golf
Johnson & Wales University



Claudia DeMartino
Soccer
Catholic University of America



Mary Ellis
Lacrosse
University of Maryland Baltimore County



Edward Farrell
Wrestling
Gannon University



Christian Fitch
Track/Cross Country
Temple University



Madison Heining
Volleyball
John Carroll University



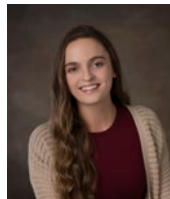
Charlotte James
Tennis
Davidson College



Abigail Kieffer
Track
St. Louis University



Evan Kieffer
Track
Marietta College



Madolyn Kieffer
Track
St. Louis University



Jessica Klein
Volleyball
Rochester Institute of Technology



Brooke Krally
Track/Cross Country
Duquesne University



Alex McRandal
Baseball
Heidelberg University



Caroline Redican
Lacrosse
University of Louisville



Leia Ross
Swimming
Edinboro University



Amanda Schilcher
Tennis
California University of Pennsylvania



Grace Sisson
Track/Cross Country
Davidson College



Branden Stipetich
Baseball
Penn State New Kensington



Abigail Troutman
Field Hockey
Ohio Wesleyan University



Brevin Urso
Golf
Saint Vincent College



Alexander Wecht
Wrestling
Trinity College



FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT DIRECTORY

District Administration

611 Field Club Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/963-9600
www.fcasd.edu
Superintendent: Mary Catherine Reljac, Ed.D.
Deputy Superintendent: David McCommons, Ed.D.
Business Manager: Kimberly Pawlishak

District Resource Staff

Executive Director of Elementary Education and Instruction: Ashley Constantine, Ed.D.
Executive Director of Secondary Education and Instruction: Matthew Harris, Ed.D.
Director of Special Education and Pupil Services: Timothy Mahoney
Executive Director of Instructional and Innovative Leadership: Megan Collett, Ed.D.
Director of Literacy: Dana Simile
Director of Student Achievement and Instructional Verification: G. Daniel DiDesiderio III, Ed.D.
Director of Ancillary Services: Daniel Breitreutz
Chief of School Police/School Safety and Security Coordinator: Joseph Kozarian
Director of Athletics: Michael O'Brien
Coordinator of Communications: Bonnie Berzonski
Community Engagement Specialist: Jill Leonard

FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOLS

Fairview Elementary School

738 Dorseyville Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/963-9315
Principal: Stephen Edwards

Hartwood Elementary School

3730 Saxonburg Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/767-5396
Principal: Rachel Fischbaugh, Ed.D.

Kerr Elementary School

341 Kittanning Pike
Pittsburgh, PA 15215
412/781-4105
Principal: Paul Noro, Ed.D.

O'Hara Elementary School

115 Cabin Lane
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/963-0333
Principal: Kristy Batis
Assistant Principal: TBD

Dorseyville Middle School

3732 Saxonburg Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/767-5343
Principal: Jonathan Nauhaus
Program Principal: Laura Miller

Fox Chapel Area High School

611 Field Club Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238
412/967-2430
Lead Principal: Michael Hower, Ed.D.
Program Principal (A-L): Daniel Lentz, Ph.D.
Program Principal (M-Z): John McGee, Ph.D.

For the latest information on school activities and weather-related delays and cancellations, visit the Fox Chapel Area School District website at www.fcasd.edu.

The athletic events calendar can be found on the Fox Chapel Area School District athletics website at www.fcasdathletics.org.

FOX CHAPEL AREA SCHOOL BOARD

Edith L. Cook, Ph.D., Assistant Secretary (2021 – Region III); Amy B. Cooper (2021 – Region I); Marybeth Dadd, Vice President (2023 – Region III); Ronald P. Frank (2023 – Region II); Adam G. Goode (2021 – Region III); Eric G. Hamilton, Treasurer (2023 – Region I); Vanessa K. Lynch (2023 – Region II); Somer Obernauer Jr., President (2021 – Region I); and Dharmesh Vyas, M.D., Ph.D. (2021 – Region II).

Region I covers all of Sharpsburg Borough and Wards 2, 3, and 4 of O'Hara Township; Region II covers Districts 2, 4, and 5 of Fox Chapel Borough and all of Indiana Township; and Region III covers all of Aspinwall Borough, Blawnox Borough, Wards 1 and 5 of O'Hara Township, and Districts 1 and 3 of Fox Chapel Borough.

School Board meetings are usually scheduled for the first and second Mondays of each month at 7 p.m. The public is invited to attend.

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

The Fox Chapel Area School District is an equal rights and opportunity school district. The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, or handicap/disability. The district shall make reasonable accommodations for identified physical and mental impairments that constitute disabilities, consistent with the requirements of federal and state laws and regulations.

Additional information pertaining to civil rights, school district policies, and grievance procedures can be obtained by contacting the compliance officers listed below between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday-Friday. This notice is available from the compliance officers in large print, on audiotape, and in Braille.

Title IX: David P. McCommons, Ed.D. (412/967-2456)
Section 504 and ADA: Timothy A. Mahoney (412/967-2435)
Address: Fox Chapel Area School District
611 Field Club Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238