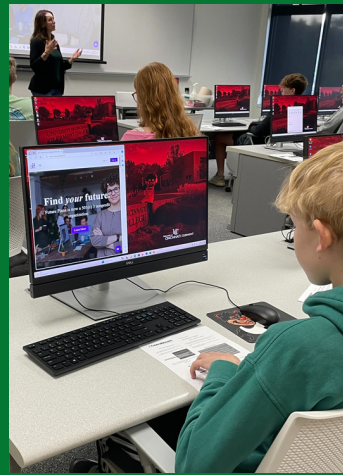


# COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Fall 2023



# Message

## FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

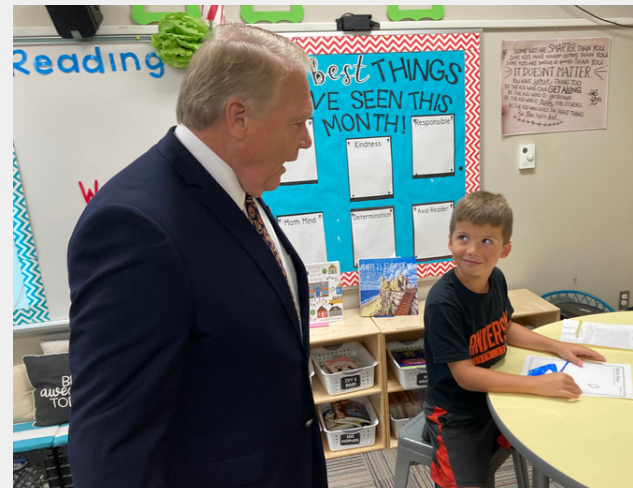
As we approach the end of the first semester of the 2023-2024 school year, our school district is celebrating many wonderful accomplishments. We are highlighting our talented students and staff, recognizing impressive improvements in key areas of the educational experience and looking forward to valuable educational opportunities to come.

The community's generous support of the combination levy in May provides a more secure financial footing for Forest Hills School District. Thank you to everyone who shared your voice throughout the process. All of us at FHSD have a deep appreciation for our duty to provide an excellent education at a reasonable cost to taxpayers. Although property values may go up with new valuations, it is important to clarify that the amount of this particular levy will not be impacted. The tax rate of voted school levies in Ohio is decreased in response to rising home values.

Without this critical funding from the community, FHSD would not be able to offer all of the fantastic learning experiences you will see highlighted in this Community Connection. We are among the highest performing school districts in the entire state, as shown by our recent five-star overall rating from the Ohio Department of Education. Our students are also empowered to become better students and citizens through community service opportunities, extracurricular activities and more.

I would like to thank our dedicated staff members for their continuing commitment to providing a world class education to the students in our community. We are fortunate to have the very best teachers, support staff and administrators working together to create a positive and enriching environment for our students.

I hope you enjoy reading this Community Connection and learn something new about what's going on in Forest Hills School District. We are constantly innovating and updating the way we educate students to better prepare them for life after school!



Sincerely,

**Larry R. Hook**  
**Superintendent**

[larryhook@foresthills.edu](mailto:larryhook@foresthills.edu)  
(513) 231-3600

# Excellent Education Empowers STUDENTS TO EXCEL

## National Merit Scholars

Fifteen students from Anderson and Turpin High Schools were recognized this fall for achieving either commended or semifinalist status in the National Merit Scholarship Program. Anderson Principal Kyle Fender and Turpin Principal Andy Jados presented each of the students with certificates to recognize their impressive accomplishments.

This small handful of students was selected from a pool of more than 1.3 million high schoolers who were entered into the 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program. This represents the top 1% of students across the United States.



## Sources of Strength

Student leaders at Anderson High School, Turpin High School and Nagel Middle School are embracing the Sources of Strength program, a mental health and suicide prevention program. The evidence-based model uses a peer-to-peer approach to support students in need.



## Spark Night Inspiration



FHSD elementary students were treated to an evening of science, innovation and more at the annual SPARK Night in November. High school science students put their talents on display in this event sponsored by the Forest Hills Foundation for Education.

## Taft Theatre Performance

Members of the Anderson, Turpin and Nagel orchestras joined the popular music group The Piano Guys on stage at the historic Taft Theatre this fall! The performers were selected via a competitive audition process.



## Five-Star Rating & Quality Profile

FHSD is proud to be one of just 75 school districts in the entire state to earn a five-star overall rating in the 2023 Ohio School Report Card. You can learn more about this major accomplishment and many other accolades and achievements in FHSD's 2023 Quality Profile, which was published this fall.



Five Stars



2023 QP



# Stellar Staff Members

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE



## Teacher of the Week Honor

Wilson Elementary School kindergarten teacher Mrs. Michele Hicks was selected as the Local 12 Educator of the Week this fall. The recognition comes as Mrs. Hicks prepares to retire at the end of the 2023-2024 school year after more than three decades in education. Countless students have benefitted from the caring approach and loving classroom Mrs. Hicks has become known for in the Wilson Wildcat community, and this honor is well-deserved.



## Hall of Fame Visit

The Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators chose to visit Maddux Elementary School on its Get on the Bus Tour in October. The tour connected educators from across southwest Ohio to share ideas and highlight schools that are setting high standards. FHSD is fortunate that all six elementary schools are considered Hall of Fame Schools by OAESA.

# School Safety Takes Center Stage

## FHSD Raises Awareness During School Safety Month

October is School Safety Month in Ohio and FHSD used the opportunity to share informational messages about a variety of topics related to overall school safety and security. Visit the District News section of [foresthills.edu](http://foresthills.edu) to read articles related to emergency plans, safety drills, traumatic event response and more.

The district was pleased to welcome aboard a second, full-time School Resource Officer this fall. SRO Ryan Wolf and SRO Jeremy Dwyer (pictured right) serve the students, staff and community diligently and offer expertise and guidance in crafting emergency response plans at all FHSD school buildings. This important part of the district's overall approach to safety is made possible through a partnership with Anderson Township to share the cost of these positions. The SROs are sworn deputies with the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office.



# Expanding Opportunities

FHSD's Community Partnership Program continues to build on its momentum to create new learning opportunities for students. The revamped program is finishing its second semester, and dozens of students have benefitted from valuable partnerships with The Christ Hospital Health Network (pictured right) and OrthoCincy Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine. Other career fields where students have participated in internships, job shadowing, mentorships or workshops include legal fields, aviation, construction, engineering, architecture and more.

New this fall, FHSD is partnering with the Anderson Area Chamber of Commerce to offer a comprehensive leadership development program for 10th grade students at Anderson and Turpin High Schools. The Aspire Youth Discovery Initiative is a monthly learning series that is designed to expand students' self-awareness, employability skills and leadership potential. The program's year-long itinerary focuses on topics including communication, problem solving, collaboration, financial literacy, career counseling and more.



## Students Serving Others



### All In Collection Drive

Students and families collected 11,500 pounds of food and supplies for IPM Food Pantry during this fall's All In Collection Drive! Special thanks to the Forest Hills Council of PTAs and PTOs for coordinating the efforts.



### 9United's Shop & Share

Elementary and middle school students supported 9United's Shop & Share event by collecting coins and donations to help purchase items for FHSD families in need this holiday season.

# Teacher Grants Enhance Educational Programs



FOREST HILLS FOUNDATION  
FOR EDUCATION

The Forest Hills Foundation for Education issued more than \$85,000 in teacher grants this fall to support a wide-variety of educational programs across all nine FHSD schools. These grants will impact the education of students in all grade levels and allow teachers the chance to introduce valuable activities that may not have been possible without the Foundation's support. The Turpin High School Spanish department received a grant to bring in a Latin jazz band for an interactive, hands-on lesson about the music, as well as the language and history involved (pictured right).

The Foundation also recognized the 2023 Distinguished Alumni and Staff Honorees at its annual luncheon in October (pictured bottom left).

Visit [fhfe.org](http://fhfe.org) to see the list of honorees and find ways to donate!



## SAVE THE DATE

# May 11, 2024 Forest Hills 5K

## Parent Academy Touches Important Topics

The 2023-2024 Parent Academy series welcomes a variety of featured speakers to discuss topics of growing importance and interest among families in FHSD. Artificial intelligence, social media usage, age-appropriate digital milestones, executive function skills, leadership and suicide prevention are just a few of the topics that have been or will be included in the helpful educational series. There are topics relevant to families with children of all ages!

Special thanks to FHFE for sponsoring this year's Parent Academy series! The final two events will take place on Jan. 24, 2024 and Feb. 28, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. at Nagel Middle School. Keep an eye on [foresthills.edu](http://foresthills.edu) for registration information on upcoming sessions.



# FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY



**Alana Cropper**  
Treasurer, CFO

alanacropper@foresthills.edu  
(513) 231-3600

Forest Hills School District is deeply committed to providing an exceptional educational experience in a fiscally responsible manner. We understand the investment our community has made in public education and our financial operations are carefully reviewed and examined to ensure that money is being spent in the most efficient manner.

I would like to thank the community for its support of the combination levy on the May ballot. This provides critical funding for both the day-to-day operations and the capital infrastructure needs of the school district. This is crucial to strengthening the overall financial position of FHSD to make it possible for our educators to continue offering unmatched opportunities in and out of the classroom.

Collections on the levy do not start until 2024, but the district is already working diligently to develop plans to prioritize necessary physical improvement to make the most of every dollar spent. FHSD has commissioned an independent, third-party evaluation of all district school buildings and facilities, which will provide relevant data to guide this process. The permanent improvement portion of the May levy is required by law to be spent on capital improvement projects, maintenance and repairs of school property and certain equipment items that are designed to last five years or more. This will allow the school district to better protect the considerable investment the community has made over the years in our school buildings.

In November, I presented the five-year forecast to the Board of Education. This document looks at the district's General Fund revenues, expenditures and cash balance. With the community's support through this additional funding, the forecast now projects an ending cash balance of more than \$16 million ending cash balance in fiscal year 2028.

While many of us deal with monetary challenges posed by rising costs of fuel, groceries, services and more, FHSD must also navigate a growing number of financial pressures. Please know that as we work to operate more efficiently and look for creative ways to reduce costs, your investment in the schools is making a big difference. Thank you.

Sincerely,

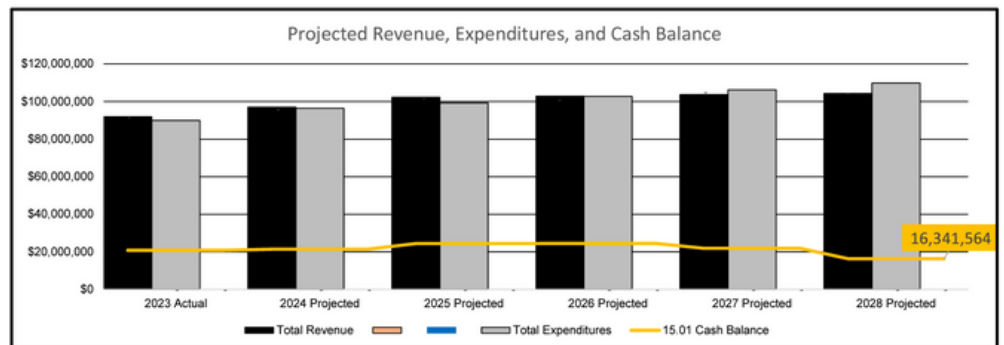
*Alana*

## FHSD Five-Year Forecast Summary

November 2023

| Total Cost Per Pupil |          |
|----------------------|----------|
| FHSD                 | \$11,513 |
| State Avg.           | \$11,916 |
| Hamilton County Avg. | \$12,600 |

Source: ODE Report Cards FY23



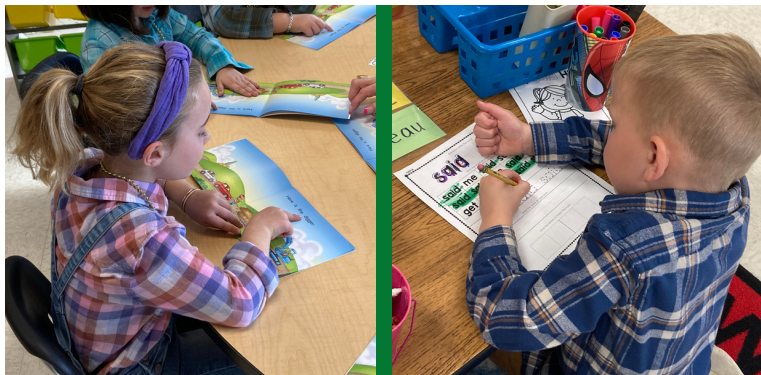
\*Note: The Five-Year Forecast includes General Fund data only.



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## 2024-2025 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION OPENS JANUARY 22, 2024



SCAN OR VISIT  
← [foresthills.edu/kindergarten](https://foresthills.edu/kindergarten) →

## STAY CONNECTED

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Forest Hills School District



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@FHSchools



## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Dec. 18 - Jan. 2**

**No School - Winter Break**

January 2, 2024 is a Teacher Work Day.

**January 4**

**Board of Education Meeting**

6:30 p.m., Mercer Elementary School  
2600 Bartels Road

**January 15**

**No School - MLK, Jr. Day**

**January 24**

**FHSD Parent Academy**

6:30 p.m., Nagel Middle School  
1500 Nagel Road

**January 27**

**Science Fair & Innovation Expo**

9:00 a.m., Nagel Middle School  
1500 Nagel Road