

# Wildcat Community News

News from Franklin City Schools | May 2020

## News from Franklin City Schools

### Board to hear new facilities recommendation

In May, the Franklin Board of Education will hear the recommendation of a team that's worked for nine months to create a plan for new facilities for the district. Once the Board has approved the plan, the official process for getting a bond issue on the November ballot begins.

The 56-member Community Advisory Team narrowed 16 proposed building configuration plans to just three; those three plans were presented to the public on the district's website and other social media, and residents have been surveyed to determine their preferences.

Cost of the three plans range between \$105 million and \$115 million, with the state having committed to paying 57% of the cost.

Plans consider an enrollment projection of 3053 students by the 2029-2030 school year.

**Plan One** (\$115 M, with district's share being \$49 M) calls for two new elementary buildings housing approx. 700 students, a new junior high school housing 700 students, and a new high school housing approx. 953 students.

**Plan Two** (\$105 M, with the district's share being \$45 M) calls for two new elementary buildings of 700 students each, a new high school of 953, and renovating the current high school into a junior high to take advantage of the existing auditorium and gyms.

**Plan Three** (\$107 M, with the district's share being \$46 M) calls for three new elementary buildings housing approx. 467 students each, and the same junior high and senior high as in Plan Two

The district currently operates eight school buildings (one Early Childhood Center, five elementary buildings, a junior high, and a high school. The youngest of the eight are Pennyroyal and Franklin High School, which are 51 years old.

The district's buildings are between 50 to nearly 100 years old. The state will pay 57% of the cost of new school buildings.

Follow our district on its social media pages for news, pictures, and updates. Twitter handles are:

@HunterElemNews	@GerkeElementary
@PennyroyalElem	@AdminsFHS
@AnthonyWayneEle	@FJHSOH
@Schenck_Elem	@FCSWildcats (District)

Instagram: fcswildcatpride (District)

Facebook: facebook.com/FranklinCitySchools/

Website: franklincityschools.com

### Distance learning: connections and content

When the 2019-20 school year began, it's a safe bet that no one had a clue how learning would shift during the last quarter of the school year.

With Ohio's stay-at-home order effectively closing schools starting March 16, students began classroom work at home, with lessons and guidance being offered by teachers through a range of on-line tools and resources. For district residents who have no children in school and who were in classrooms long before technology was so integrated into the curriculum, how this works is tough to picture.

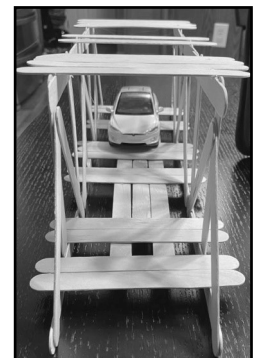
Amy Hudson-Estepp, the district's Educational Technologist, noted that in 2015 the Board of Ed approved Franklin becoming a Google for Education district. This move brought a range of integrated tools and resources to teachers and students. For example, the Google Classroom application allows teachers to organize their communication and assignments for each class they're teaching in one location. Students can view, complete, and turn in assignments all in the app. For those who are curious about how this might work, YouTube has videos that show what both teachers and students would see as the online "classroom."

What about lectures and face-to-face interaction that's so critical to the classroom experience? Classes can meet using Zoom, a tool to hold group video chats. Teachers may also use Screencastify (which creates a digital recording of a computer screen), to record short lectures and lessons, and FlipGrid, which allows students to record short videos of themselves. Staff are also using choice boards, an interactive grid that includes multiple activities; students choose from the available options and have to complete so many of them for the week. Hudson-Estepp said these are great for parents.

What's the feedback from students and families? Seventh grader Xandra W. completed an online STEM class assignment where class members were challenged to build a bridge approximately 1.5 feet long. She said, "My teacher used Google Classroom to communicate with me and other students. My goals were to make sure it was strong to where a toy car could go through it. I turned it in by taking a picture of the bridge with my school laptop and sent my teacher an email about my project. We had to answer some questions

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"One of the biggest components in the district's remote learning guide is to make connections wherever you can."



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## Backpack programs provide weekend meals

"I wish you could see [students'] faces when they walk in and see their bags." This comment from a Pennyroyal second grade teacher is typical of staff members describing the Kindness Backpack Program (KBP) that's been offered at Pennyroyal since October and expanded to Gerke this spring. One teacher noted that because the kids have had access to weekend meals, "The kids that receive them are coming to school on Monday ready to work. This is huge! They are ready to learn."

The KBP, the brainchild of Alison Dunaway, is designed to provide weekend meals for a child including two breakfasts, two lunches, and two snacks. The program is offered with no stipulations to any child who wants it. KBP is funded through grants and donations, with food purchased from Shared Harvest under a contract to purchase at \$1.50/bag.

KBP has several community partners, including the Franklin Fire Department, that offer logistical support, such as storing the food.

The group, composed of volunteers from Southwest Church, Grace Pointe Fellowship, and Southbrook Church is a 501c(3), and received a \$5,000 grant from the Warren County Foundation Women's Fund.

Additional volunteers are welcome; their website [www.kindnessbackpacks.org](http://www.kindnessbackpacks.org) has a volunteer sign-up portal. Monetary support is welcome, too, and donations are handled through Warren County Foundation. Those with questions may contact KBP volunteers at [adkindnessbp@gmail.com](mailto:adkindnessbp@gmail.com)

Pennyroyal principal Jeremy Ward said, "It is a good feeling knowing that we are serving our kids and community with [this] partnership." He noted that with the schools being closed, the program has been expanded to include weekly food boxes for families. Ward said, "Personally I deliver to a handful of families weekly and it has been a blessing; to see the smiles on their faces is well worth it."

Ward added, "The Kindness Backpack program has not only helped to feed those in need but also has built relationships with our families in the community."

Anthony Wayne also has a backpack program, which is organized by the Franklin First United Methodist Church. The program, in its third year, provides weekend food to approximately 100 students. The church funds the program with congregational donations, grants from the church's Ohio River Valley District, and donations from outside groups such as the Ruppert Family Foundation. Those with questions may contact the church at (937) 746-5232.



KBP volunteers Cheryl Bender (left) and Sandy Massa distribute Kindness bags at Gerke.

## School meals continue during shutdown

On Thursday, March 12, Gov. DeWine ordered Ohio's K-12 schools to be closed for at least three weeks. By Monday, March 16, Franklin City Schools (FCS) was serving meals to students. By the end of that first week, the district had served 5753 meals to approximately 25% of the student body. As of lunch on April 22, the daily percentage being served holds steady between 25 and 28%, with 40,311 meals served. The district has five walk-up locations, and is delivering meals to apartment complexes in the city and at designated stops in the Hunter and Pennyroyal areas. Students receive a lunch for the day and a breakfast for the next day.

Business manager Rodney Roberts said school districts received no guidelines from the state on providing meals, and districts are using a variety of approaches. Franklin's program is an extension of the Seamless Summer Lunch program, which serves meals during summer break to anyone under 18. Some districts are serving meals twice/week, but Roberts noted that FCS preferred to have daily contact with the kids.

"We're doing this to serve our kids. The real heroes are the front lines preparing and serving the food," said Roberts. "The excitement is genuine; the kids are excited to see staff members and staff are excited to see them. Kids are writing letters and thank you notes to the staff; we are so proud of that. I couldn't be more proud of the staff," said Roberts

When asked how quickly the district started planning, business manager Rodney Roberts said, "The moment that [the order] came out," and noted that planning team brought together members of food service and transportation to develop details. Each building is cooking meals either for pick-up or delivery; the ECC kitchen is preparing meals for the apartment complexes.

Monday, March 16 — the first day — was the only one with real uncertainty about how much food to prepare; staff uses two-way radios to communicate if a route or pick-up location is running short or has excess.

Roberts added, "The awesome part of this has been our kitchen staff has been getting letters, and handmade cards, and pictures—it reaffirms to us that we are making a difference and our staff members feel it. People are SO thankful! A man who lives in Miamisburg — he doesn't even live here — left Dr. Sander and me messages about how great it is that we are still taking care of our folks. This isn't about us; it's never about us, but especially now it's about kids and taking care of kids."



# News from Franklin City Schools

## Strong, Credit 2020 Project Excellence winners

Stephanie Strong and Stephanie Credit are the district's 2020 Project Excellence winners.

Project Excellence, which operates under the Area Progress Council of Warren County, annually recognizes two teachers from each of Warren County's eight school districts, plus the Career Center, the Greater Ohio Virtual School, and the Warren County ESC. Teachers are nominated by peers, parents, and students. Project Excellence was established in 1988 to honor teaching excellence throughout Warren County.

Stephanie Credit has spent her entire 27-year career at FCS, teaching 10 years at Anthony Wayne and 17 at FJHS, where she teaches reading. She has a Bachelor's from Cumberland College and her Master's from Wright State. She said she's honored to receive the Project Excellence Award." She said, "The most enjoyable part of teaching is the relationships that I've built. When students come back to see you and tell you that you made a difference in their lives, there is no greater feeling."

Credit noted memorable career moments include the annual 8th grade Washington, D.C. trip. She said it's an amazing experience to watch students and see their reactions to the wonderful places that the group visits. She added that there is no greater feeling than when a student has an "a-ha" moment in class.

"I always knew I wanted to be a teacher," said Credit, and said she's so lucky "to have spent [her] entire career" with FCS. "All of the teachers in our district work tirelessly to ensure success for our students, and added that she'd "like to thank Dr. Sander and Robyn Donisi for always supporting me and for always doing



what's best for our students."

Stephanie Strong has been with FCS for six years; she taught elementary art at Hunter and one class at Gerke. She moved to FHS where she teaches Art 1, Painting and Drawing, Crafts, and Ceramics. She attended The Ohio State University for a Bachelor's of Art Education.

She said the most enjoyable part of teaching is "the passion students have for art at all ages. [Art] is a class where I get to see students learn to create projects they love or that they never thought they could do on their own. I love watching them learn to master a skill and see the pride they have in themselves after all their hard work."

Strong noted several memorable career moments. "When I taught elementary, 2nd graders at Hunter made love bugs out of clay. It wasn't anything above and beyond, but to watch them have so much fun making their own neon-colored bugs out of clay and pipe cleaners still leaves me with happy memories." She added, "At FHS, thanks to a SPARK Grant, I [took] my ceramics class to Queen City Clay in Cincinnati; they learned to use the pottery wheel from experts and came home with several handmade pieces of pottery."

Strong said, "It is an honor to be named a Project Excellence winner. I work alongside some amazingly talented and caring teachers who all deserve the same recognition. Thank you to everyone who makes the Project Excellence award possible. Good teachers are always striving to be better, often thinking they aren't doing enough, so to have an award that recognizes their hard work and dedication is welcome and much appreciated."



## NTHS inductees include 8 FHS students

Warren County Career Center inducted 63 seniors, including eight whose home school is FHS, into the National Technical Honor Society. Students must have a 3.5 GPA for 3 semesters during the 2 years at WCCC; and no grade lower than a "C" at any time. Students must meet attendance and behavioral guidelines and have no credit deficiencies toward obtaining a high school diploma. The students were (left to right): Madison Woods, Dental Assisting; Emily Garner, Pre-Nursing; Reya Gast, Veterinary Science; Dylan Kindla, Info Tech; Madison Meadows, Legal Office Tech; Ben Buckingham, Heavy Equipment/Site Construction; Parker Crawford, Advanced Manufacturing & Robotics. Not pictured: Tyler Dishun, Project Lead The Way Pre-Engineering.

## Distance learning continued from page 1.

about our project. We found out that my bridge held up to 8 lbs. with my mom's hand weights. It didn't hold the 12-lb weight."

A parent noted that her child, "...loved the STEAM activities: he's built a Rube Goldberg machine and his own musical instrument out of items at home. It required no use of technology outside of using a phone to video his machine/playing the instrument. It's been interesting to see the activities kids have been enjoying aren't always so technology dependent."

Using these tools is dependent on technology being available. Hudson-Estepp said with the 1-to-1 Initiative (one laptop/student in grades 7-11), cycling older devices to grades 5 and 6, and issuing devices to seniors who needed one, students in grades 5-12 were fairly well positioned for online learning. She noted the transition has been more challenging for younger students using whatever technology is available at home. Paper packets of lessons have been available if requested. Hudson-Estepp added, "One of the biggest components in the district's remote learning guide is to make connections wherever [teachers] can. Staff are meeting with their students in various video conferencing tools, so they can physically see each other. That's what kids miss more than anything. It's not about content. It's about connecting."

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## National Junior Honor Society inducts 36

On March 4, thirty-six Franklin Junior High students were inducted into the FJHS chapter of the National Junior Honor Society, the sixth group tapped since the chapter's 2014 founding.

Inductees included both seventh and eighth graders. Those inducted were Eli Alanis, Kailee Alcorn, Kendra Allen, Annie Bales, Alyssa Balsley, Alex Bates, Chris Bond, Sarah Brooks, Olivia Clifford, Carson Coffey, Alyssa Cooksey, McKenna Craycraft, Kylie Day, Landon Dye, Lexi Earach, Paisley Elliot, Maddy Green, Hailey Hitte, Blake Hoffman, Philip Huff, Brooke Hurst, Luke Jackson, Ava Johnson, Destiny Kidwell, Harlee Lamb, Trent Lewis, Nathaniel McGee, Grace McGuire, Christian McGuire, Jacob Saunders, Madilyn Smith, Lily Snider, Audrey Sove, Mason Spurlock, T.J. Stephens, and Angel Wooten.

The inductees joined 35 students who were inducted into the chapter in 2019.

The National Junior Honor Society was established in 1929. According to its website, NJHS is "one of the nation's premier organizations established to recognize outstanding middle level students."

NJHS is built on five pillars: scholarship, service, leadership, character, and citizenship.

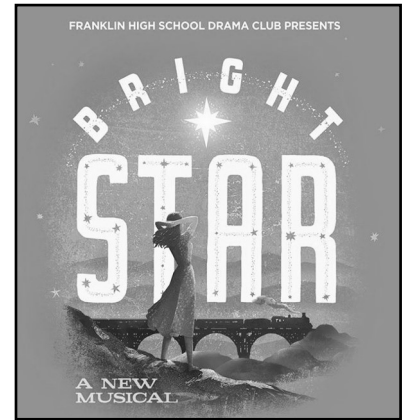
## Franklin High School musical rescheduled

The Franklin High School Drama department has tentatively rescheduled its annual spring musical to July 24, 25, and 26.

*Bright Star*, set in the American South in the 1920s and 1940s, is inspired by a true story. The score by Steve Martin (yes, that Steve Martin!) and Edie Brickell, was nominated for a Tony® award. The show had its world premier in 2014, and FHS is one of the first schools in the area to stage it.

Tickets are \$10/adults, \$8/seniors, and \$5/students; they'll be available at the door and for pre-sale at [www.fhsdrama.booktix.com](http://www.fhsdrama.booktix.com)

The show is presented through special arrangement with and all authorized performance materials are supplied by Theatrical Rights Worldwide. The show will be under the direction of Jeff Sams.



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