



We have a new high school! Building dedicated March 2

The new Franklin High School opened to students on Monday, March 4, after a March 2 ribbon cutting/dedication that included the Board, administration, staff, students, and members of the public, many of whom stayed to tour the new facility. In his opening remarks, superintendent Dr. Mike Sander said, "I've been an educator for a long time, 42 years to be exact. I have participated in many exciting events, but never the opening of a new school. There's something special about opening a new school building."

Some parts of the building (main gym and weight room) were still under construction and the district plans to offer additional tours this fall when everything is complete. Additionally, virtual tours will be offered so those living out of town can "see" the new space.

The high school is the first of the district's new classroom facilities to open; the construction project is possi-

ble thanks to district taxpayers overwhelmingly approving a bond issue in 2020 for construction of this new building, the renovation of the current high school into a 6-8 middle school, and construction of three new elementary buildings. The State of Ohio is paying 57% of this \$130 million construction project.



News from Franklin City Schools

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Dr. Michael Sander, Superintendent
Robyn Donisi, Assistant Superintendent
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Jim McFarland, Director of Student Services

District contact information

Superintendent's Office (937) 746-1699

Assistant Superintendent's Office (937) 743-8601

Business Manager's Office (937) 743-8600

Treasurer's Office (937) 743-8603

Transportation Office (937) 743-8670

Department of Special Services (937) 743-8602

Franklin High School (937) 743-8610 or 8611

Franklin Junior High School (937) 743-8630 or 8632

Anthony Wayne Elementary (937) 743-8640

Gerke Elementary (937) 743-8650

Hunter Elementary (937) 743-8655

Pennyroyal Elementary (937) 743-8660

Wm. C. Schenck Elementary (937) 743-8665

Welcome Center Central Registration Office (937) 743-8602

The latest district news

For the most up-to-date information about district news and happenings, follow our district on its social media pages.

Instagram: fcswildcatpride (District)

Facebook: facebook.com/FranklinCitySchools/

Website: franklincityschools.com

LinkedIn: Franklin City Schools

Twitter handles are:

@HunterElemNews

@PennyroyalElem

@AnthonyWayneEle

@Schenck_Elem

@GerkeElementary

@AdminsFHS

@FJHSOH

@FCSWildcats (District)

Kindergarten Registration

Kindergarten registration for the 2024-2025 school year is now open for all students turning five by August 1, 2024.

Step One: Online

Registration is available online at

<https://www.franklincityschools.com/departments/enrollment-5/kindergarten-registration-85/>

Online registration is required in order to select an appointment.

Step Two: In Person

Location: Welcome Center – located at 754 E. 4th Street.

All required documents must be brought to the registration appointment.

Not having documents at the time of the appointment will require a new appointment to be scheduled at a later date.

The following documents are required for registration:

- ◆ Original Birth Certificate
- ◆ Custody Papers/Court Ordered Placement (if applicable)
- ◆ Shot/Immunization Records
- ◆ Parent/Guardian Driver's License
- ◆ Proof of Residency

We strongly encourage families to complete the registration of their kindergarten students as soon as possible to assist in the proper placement of all students. If you have any questions, please call the Welcome Center at 937-743-8602.



Gerke Elementary hosted the district's Early Childhood Fair, Little Cats, Big Minds, on April 27. Children up to age five visited booths to learn about and practice important kindergarten-readiness skills. Franklin Area Historical Society brought their Mack the Moose mascot, who proved to be a huge hit.

News from Franklin City Schools

Around the District!

Board honors students for achievement

The Franklin Board of Education recently honored a number of students for achievement. Student achievement committee members include parents, community residents, board members, administrators, and students; they meet during the school year to evaluate nominations which may be submitted by students, teachers, administrators, or community members. The nomination form is available on the district website under Departments > Curriculum > Student Achievement.

Sophia Aldridge, a senior at FHS, was honored for her character and leadership qualities that led to her being chosen to attend both Buckeye Girls State at Bowling Green University and the Hugh O'Bryan World Leadership Congress in Chicago.



A number of students from Hunter, Schenck, and FJHS were honored for 10 quarters of straight A's: Easton McFarland, Audree Shannon, Malaylee Gebhardt, Cecelia Rebholz, Makella Oswalt, Lainey Dunn, Spencer Chamberlain, Carleigh Whitt, Tia Fedders, Kirtis Wolfe, Carson Burnett, Callie Steed, Cadence Fleshood, Carter Esposito, Cooper Turnmire, Natalie Wolfinbarger, and Ariana Conde.



Senior Citizen activity passes

Senior citizens (age 62+) living in the Franklin City School district may pick up a pass in the Superintendent's office (754 E. 4th St.) that will allow them to attend school-sponsored activities at no charge. Residents should take a driver's license with them to confirm their address. The pass never expires and is good for any home game (excluding tournaments) and high school plays.

FHS class reunion coming up?

If your class is having a reunion, the district would be happy to post your information on the district website's alumni page.

Send information to communications@franklincityschools.com.

News from Franklin City Schools

FHS students thrived at Miami University Regionals' Early College Academy

How do you measure the success of post-secondary education options? Grades? Money saved? New opportunities for students? By all three measures, the first semester of The Early College Academy for the 23 enrolled **Franklin High School** juniors was a resounding success. Miami University Regionals' Early College Academy (ECA) allows students to graduate with a minimum of 62 college credit hours; they simultaneously earn a Miami University associate degree and a high school diploma.

Fall semester, these FHS students attended college full time and earned 356 total credits, with a 3.07 average GPA. Of 142 courses, 97 were A's and B's. The best part: There was no cost to students and their families. An associate degree from Miami Regionals is usually \$15,500; the 23 students and families are on track to save \$356,000 over the two years.

"Miami Middletown's initial offer was a cohort of 12 to 14 students, but our student pool was so qualified that they accepted 23," said FHS principal Michael Voynovich. He noted that all 23 students planned to continue for the spring semester. Miami currently partners with six school districts: Franklin, Hamilton, Middletown, Winton Woods, New Miami, and Madison, and hopes to expand to other districts.

Students select a pathway that aligns with their interests: Humanities; Natural Sciences and Mathematics; Social Science; Education, Health, and Society; Engineering and Computing; Creative Arts; Liberal Arts and Applied Science. High school students have a counselor – a student success coach – dedicated to them, as well as a specific lounge and study area. Otherwise, they are high school juniors whose high school scaffolding is gone, and they experience the freedom, challenges, independence, and responsibilities

of college life: learning to navigate a college campus, learning to speak up in class; and being treated and addressed like the rest of the Miami students.

Students are selected based on grades (3.0 minimum), attendance; behavior, and co- and extracurricular activities. Priority is given to first-generation college students. FHS counselor Kelly Wright explained that last year, the high school counselors met with sophomores to gauge their interest. "We looked at students we knew would be successful, such as students in Honors English and accelerated math."

Voynovich added, "I feel that our teachers do a great job preparing our students; we work hard—not just at the high school—but

the foundational learning our students have had throughout their school career has prepared them for this step. They are well-equipped [for success]; our students are prepared to compete against other high schools. [The students' success] is a testament that we can put our kids up against anybody. The feedback from MUM is that our students are doing very well.

College Credit Plus is still offered to FHS students who want to take college courses on an a la carte basis; courses are online or are taught at FHS by district teachers who are

licensed through Sinclair. Sinclair helps students determine what classes to take to give them a head start on college, and while students earn dual credit, they generally don't earn an associate degree. In contrast, Miami's program is very structured.

Voynovich noted that the Board and district

administration are very supportive of this program. "Our board is so student focused; they support students any way they can. There is something special in the Franklin community."



News from Franklin City Schools

Around the District

Outstanding Alum: Karisa Steed

Karisa Steed, a 2001 FHS graduate, currently serves as the Assistant City Manager for the City of Franklin. She has a B.S. in Education from The Ohio State University, where she was a 4-year softball letter winner. She's also a member of the Franklin Hall of Fame.



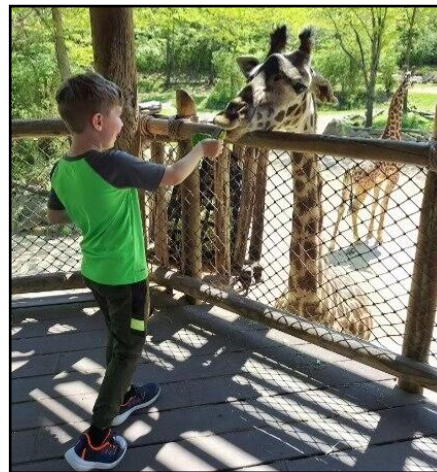
Steed spent 11 years at the Greater Dayton YMCA and the Great Miami YMCA Association as a program director and was the Executive Director of the Atrium YMCA prior to joining the City of Franklin as the Assistant City Manager in 2018.

When asked what led to her current role, she said, "My familiarity with Franklin, my education, and the relationships I have built over the years has helped lead to my current role. Sonny Lewis hired me as the Assistant to the City Manager focusing on Economic Development in 2018 and I was promoted to the Assistant City Manager position in 2022. Franklin is a small town that cares deeply about its community, schools, and people. I never envisioned myself working in city government, but the opportunity this position has provided me to work in the community that I grew up in and am now raising my family has truly been a blessing. Playing a small role in the transformation of our community is extremely rewarding."

Steed claims to have a bad memory but shared several school memories. She spent her elementary years at Hunter (grades 2 through 6). Her extracurriculars included soccer, basketball, softball, National Honor Society, and French Club. She said, "I was in drama and a few plays but did not like the stage at all! As much as I loved to make people laugh (some would say [I was] a class clown), I was not part of any wild and crazy school pranks. We did, however, have the infamous TP Crew my senior year which may or may not have wasted a lot of toilet paper. (Good thing it wasn't 2020!)"

Steed said, "I can honestly say I had a great education at Franklin. While Chemistry I and II were probably the hardest classes, Mrs. Brock (Rolfes) taught these classes in such a way that made you work even harder. She was always available before or after school for extra tutoring that I always somehow needed to take advantage of. LOL!"

She added, "While English was not a favorite subject of mine, I always thought Mrs. Patton was the smartest women alive. I can even recite vocabulary words and their meanings from her class today."



Anthony Wayne students enjoyed a busy April that included testing and field trips.

First graders made a field trip to the Cincinnati Zoo (left), and fifth and sixth graders (above) visited Great American Ballpark.



At **Schenck**, preschool students watched their tadpoles, Bubbles and Backpack, mature into frogs!

News from Franklin City Schools

Around the District!

FJHS NJHS inducts 27 new members

Franklin Junior High School recently inducted 27 students into the National Junior Honor Society, the tenth group tapped since the chapter's 2014 founding.

Inductees were from both the seventh and eighth grade classes. They included Addison Allen, Phillip Bess, Payton Faulkner, Jaylin Flynn, Easton McFarland, Violet Barcalow, Meryn Berry, Gunner Blevins, Elizabeth Carmack, Kellan Dunn, Tank Fedders, Eva Fleming, Evan Hildreth, Abram Hurst, Macie Keener, Emma Kellett, Lincoln Minor, Marilee Perkins, Marilynn Perkins, Han-



nah Persina, Urielle Sawadogo, Alexander Seidu, Paisley Steed, Troy Stephens, Holden Turnmire, Camden Voelkerding, and Rebecca Waughtal.

The inductees joined 15 students who were inducted last year as 7th graders and are still chapter members.

National Junior Honor Society was established in 1928. 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. Chapter advisors are Nicole Lamb and Eileen Ebeling.

Michael, Daniels 2024 PE Winners

Abby Michael and Holly Daniels are the district's 2024 Project Excellence (PE) winners.

PE, which operates under the Area Progress Council of Warren County, annually recognizes two teachers from each Warren County school district, the Career Center, the Greater Ohio Virtual School, and the Warren County ESC. Teachers are nominated by peers, parents, and students.



Michael is in her 13th year of teaching. She's taught Kindergarten – 6th grade Tier III classes at **Pennyroyal** and **Gerke**. She's an FHS grad who grew up in Hunter and has a bachelor's degree from Miami University Oxford as an Intervention Specialist K-12 Mild/Moderate and Moderate/Intensive.

The thing she most enjoys about teaching is "getting to celebrate with my students when they achieve a goal no matter how big or small" and noted her love of the Wildcat Olympics. "The Wildcat Special Olympics is one of my favorite days of school each year. The excitement on our students' faces and knowing they are surrounded and supported by family, friends, and community members will always be a part of my favorite memories."

She added, "I am honored and extremely grateful [to be selected as a Project Excellence winner]. It is a humbling feeling to know

that others believe in me and my abilities as an educator."

Holly Daniels has been teaching nearly 35 years, 33 in Franklin at **Pennyroyal** (5th and 6th grade math) and **FJHS** (7th and 8th grade science). She's an FHS grad, and has a Bachelor's in Elementary Education and a Master's in Science Curriculum, both from Miami U.

She enjoys "The 'ah-ha' moment when a student gets the concept I am teaching. Whether it is a nod of the head, expression, or verbal confirmation, it is still my favorite part of the lesson."



She noted a memorable moment involving the Michael Jordan Foundation program. Students submit plans, implement a community service project, and a report of their results is judged by a committee. Winning (Daniels won twice over the years) entitled a parent, the student, and Daniels to an all-expense-paid trip to Chicago, including a city tour, a banquet, and meeting Michael Jordan

and his mother, Deloris. "This was during his height as a basketball player for the Chicago Bulls. It was such a wonderful experience to enjoy with my students."

Daniels said, "I was pleasantly surprised and honored to be a PE winner, but I didn't get here alone." She noted mentors Jayte Howard and Dennis Dwyer, coworkers Maxine Fletcher, KJ Faulk, (continued on page 7)

News from Franklin City Schools

Around the District!

New elementary building configuration will begin Aug. 2024

The Franklin Board of Education approved a realignment at their meeting on Monday, April 22. The realignment is necessitated by the failure of the operating levy in March.

“We know that families are eager to know which building their children will attend, so we wanted to get this information out as soon as possible,” said Dr. Mike Sander, superintendent of schools.

The building configuration is in the chart below.

“Moving to grade-level buildings has a number of benefits,” said Sander. Those include:

- Evenly distributed class sizes.
- Consistency of curriculum across the grade level.
- Dedicated space for specials like art and music and a dedicated media center. (Media centers in several buildings are housed on the stage.)
- The ability for the district to maintain open enrollment.
- Every building will be a Title building, which means the district will receive additional money from the state.

Grade Levels	Building	# of Classrooms
PK	Schenck	2
K	Schenck	10
1	Gerke	10
2	Hunter	9
3	Intermediate Campus (Modulars)	8
4	Intermediate Campus (Modulars)	8
5	Intermediate Campus (Modulars)	8
6 - 8	Franklin Junior High (4th Street)	n/a

A playground will be installed at the modular campus behind the junior high to serve students in grades 3-5. The back gym and cafeteria at the junior high will be utilized for indoor recess, physical education classes, and eating lunch. Procedures are being developed to ensure that intermediate and junior high students

have no direct interaction.

Each elementary facility will include classroom space for tiered instruction and support services. Support services for the district include occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech services.

Bus routes and building start and end times will be released closer to the start of school; start times will not differ significantly from this year's times.

After the realignment, cost savings are estimated to be \$2.25 million annually due to staff reductions and removal of the modular buildings at Gerke and Hunter. The district will have 13 fewer teachers next year, with reductions accomplished via retirements and attrition.

In November 2020, district voters passed a bond issue for the construction of new facilities (new high school, three new elementary buildings, and renovation of the old high school into a middle school). While the district will eventually receive money from the state to construct new elementary buildings, no timeline has been given. If the district were to receive funds today, it would be a minimum of three years before a new elementary building could open.

The district website has a page of Frequently Asked Questions about the realignment:

It can be accessed from the green alert banner at the top of the home page: www.franklincityschools.com

Persons with questions should call the superintendent's office at (937) 746-1699.

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Beth Holtrey, Chris Harris, and Harry Applegate, and the years she's spent planning/teaching with Jayte's daughter, Katie Kinser.

She noted her great family support. “I'd like to thank my parents, Jim and Susie Mears, for instilling in me their work ethic and love for Franklin and my husband, Danny, who listens to my school stories and sometimes crazy ideas for new lessons. I've never regretted my decision to go into education. It has been an incredible ride and this award is the icing on the cake as I am retiring at the end of May.”

“My greatest accomplishment is my kids!” said Daniels. “I taught all four of my children and am proud to say they will ALL be college graduates by the end of the school year! Kristen and Cooper are both teachers, Blake is a construction business manager and Cayce is a digital media specialist.”

Daniels added, “Winning awards and accolades was never my focus as a teacher. I have been asked why I didn't want to go into administration. My home is in the classroom. I never wanted to be anywhere else.”

News from Franklin City Schools



Supporting Military Families

FCS schools again earn Purple Star designation

All seven of Franklin City Schools classroom buildings have again been named Purple Star Schools; 600 Ohio schools have earned this designation. Per the ODEW website: "Purple Star schools show a significant commitment to serving students and families connected to our nation's armed forces."



In honor of April being Purple Star Military Student month, **Hunter** had an assembly with Pete LuPiba, the creator of Purple Stars, and Geri Maples with Blue Star Families. It was Purple Up! Day for all of Ohio.

From the site veteran.com, "April is the Month of the Military Child and this year, April 15 is designated as Purple Up Day! This is a day of special recognition for military children where communities are encouraged to wear the color purple as a symbol of support for military kids and their families."



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