

Franklin City Schools breaks ground on new high school

Wearing hard hats bearing the new Wildcat logo, and holding ceremonial gold shovels, the Franklin City Schools Board of Education and administration turned the dirt to kick off the construction of a new high school, the first new building for Franklin since 1969.

In his remarks at the Sept. 12 event, board President Andy Fleming emphasized that this has been a community project. “From day one of the new building journey, this project has been driven by this community, for this community. This community provided great insights into what they wanted in new buildings, countless hours of support in Community Advisory Team meetings, and feedback through surveys that shaped and molded the project moving forward. And ultimately, with overwhelming support at the polls, this com-

munity voted for new buildings, and in the process unlocked a whole new potential for Franklin students.”

The groundbreaking kicked off the construction of a new high school (see picture above for the architect’s rendering of the front entrance), renovation of the current high school into a middle school, and the construction of three new elementary buildings.

The high school and renovated middle school are slated to open in the fall of 2023. SHP, the district’s architect, has presented detailed building plans and exterior and interior color schemes to the board; they’ve also created a phased timeline for the middle school renovation, much of which will be done while school is in session.

See the district website for construction updates.



News from Franklin City Schools

Outstanding Alum: Stephanie Ahern



Brigadier General Stephanie Ahern, FHS Class of 1991, has served as the Director of Concepts, Futures and Concepts Center, Army Futures Command, in Austin, TX, since August 2020. As the Director of Concepts, General Ahern has the responsibility for the U.S. Army to develop its vision of future conflict and leads concept development and assessment in order to provide the foundation for the design and development of the Army's future force.

As an Army Engineer, she served in Germany, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. As an Army Strategist, she

taught at the U.S. Military Academy, spending summers in Iraq and the State Department; was a Council on Foreign Relations fellow at Treasury; served in HQDA G-3/5/7, Arlington National Cemetery, OSD-Policy, National Security Council, and for the Secretary of the Army; and was an MSFS and SSP adjunct professor at Georgetown University.

She has a B.S. in Engineering Management from the U.S. Military Academy, a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College, and a Master and Ph.D. in Political Science from the University of Notre Dame.

Ahern attended Hunter Elementary and named several memorable teachers from her school years: Mrs. Spears (1st Grade), Mrs. Redmon (2nd Grade), Mrs. Charles (Grades 3-5), Mrs. Fletcher (6th Grade), Mr. Holland (OH studies 7), Mr. Ellison (Science 8), Mrs. Cramer (French), Mrs. Hensley (English), Ms. Holbrook (English), and Mr. Benjamin (to name a few).

In high school, she was a class officer and attended both Buckeye Girls State and the Hugh O'Brien Leadership Seminar. She lettered in three sports (soccer, basketball, and softball) in all four years in high school plus had another letter for cheerleading in her junior year.

Regarding her military career: "[It] was completely unexpected,

and based exclusively on the outreach and appeal of West Point (who sent me an invite to an info meeting after we took the PSAT). I'd always loved history and our country, and frankly I didn't know anything about the military nor the opportunities it offered. However, when the US Military Academy reached out about the opportunity to go to college, remain physically active, travel the world, be presented with real challenges, and continue serving in leadership roles, including in ways I could give back to the country, it seemed like a great fit for me. I've stayed in because I love what I'm doing, I get to work with super people, and I know I'm helping make a difference. Each job and assignment has also been so different, and so I continue to be challenged and learn new things daily.

Jerry Arnold, Ahern's dad said, "She thrived at West Point and really loved it – she was always getting into trouble as a plebe (freshman) because of her smiling too much. I have a montage of all the people in her company of about 40 cadets at the end of the year. Everyone had a sober, serious expression – except for Stephanie who had a big smile." Stephanie and her dad completed a marathon together in 2010.

Ahern said, "I'm where I am now based on the foundation that Franklin and my family (who's still there) provided, and so I appreciate being able to share and give back in whatever way that I can."

"Franklin — my family, friends, teachers, teammates, community — provided me so many great experiences and leadership examples from which I continue to draw today. Sometimes unexpected opportunities arise — I've been lucky to have so many in that category! — and I'd really encourage everyone to have the confidence to take some of these chances and pursue paths you hadn't previously considered. I am also humbled and really appreciative of the opportunity to come back home for Veterans Day!"

Ahern was class valedictorian, and honored as a recipient of an honorary Armco Sons and Daughters Scholarship since she planned to attend West Point. In 2008, she was inducted into the FHS Hall of Fame. She has two children, Claire (16) and Liam (12), who keep her well grounded.

FCS receives Purple Star designation

The district received word from the Ohio Department of Education that ALL of our district's buildings have been designated Purple Star schools. The Purple Star Advisory Board, formed by the Ohio departments of Education, Higher Education, Veterans Services, and the Adjutant General, helps decide a school's eligibility for the award.

The Purple Star Award for military-friendly schools recognizes schools that show a major commitment to students and families connected to our nation's military.



A school will be honored with the Purple Star Award if it completes all of the *required* activities and one optional one.

Required activities include 1. having a staff point-of-contact for military students and families who serves as the primary liaison between them and the school and 2. maintaining a dedicated page on its website featuring resources for military families.

Franklin's info can be found on the website under the Resources Tab > Parent / Student Resources.

News from Franklin City Schools

Franklin City Schools rebrands with new Wildcat, paw, and wordmark

A modern, red, black, and white wildcat with alert ears and open eyes is part of Franklin City Schools' new district brand that was unveiled at the September 12 groundbreaking.

The updated Wildcat — one that's unique to the district — along with a new paw and wordmarks are part of a branding package that the district is rolling out. The district currently uses a variety of wildcats, most of which are borrowed from other schools including colleges and universities. Those will gradually be phased out and replaced with the district's new trademarked Wildcat and paw.

At least four other Ohio high schools use the same wildcat that Franklin has used for many years," said Fil Anastasio, Marketing and Business Development Manager at the District's architecture firm SHP. He led the team of parents, staff, administrators, alumni, a board member, and community members who met multiple times since April to work on the brand refresh.

The new Wildcat has a W (for Wildcats) built into the lines on its face, and with a nod to Franklin's geography, the curve around its cheek mirrors the curvature of the Great Miami River as it flows through the city.

The board approved the new branding package in August, but the district chose to unveil the new look at the public celebration

on Sept. 12.

"Updating the Franklin City Schools' brand was a natural complement to the complete rebuild of the district buildings and the revitalization efforts in Franklin. The rebranding team struck a perfect balance between a traditional, yet modern, version of the Wildcat that is unique to Franklin," said Board of Education president Andy Fleming. He added, "The proud tradition of the Wildcat will continue on with this timeless design."

As the rebranding committee worked, they had the benefit of more than 1000 community survey responses that clarified what was important to the residents and what they wanted the brand to represent. The new Wildcat honors the traditions of the old Wildcat mascot, with a ¾ face, the red and black colors, and the use of both "Wildcats" and "Cats."

The new logo contains both school colors, a change from the current black and white Wildcat.

Rebranding discussion began in early spring with the goal of ensuring that the district's brand is as fresh and up-to-date as the new buildings will be. The new Wildcat mascot

will be unique to Franklin City Schools, and the red and black colors will be standard across all buildings and school properties, all uses, and all platforms, both print and digitally.



Wildcat Marching Band and Color Guard earn top honors in competitions

The Franklin Wildcat Marching Band and Color Guard grabbed first place honors at two competitions this fall.

On Sept. 11, they earned first place in Class AA (bands are classed by size; AA has 30 to 44 playing members) at the Kings High School Invitational. What's more, they were named overall grand champions, taking top honors among all 10 of the bands who competed!

In the AA Class, the band was awarded Best Color Guard, Best Music, Best Visual, and Best General Effect. That same week, the band was named the WDTN Channel 2 Band of the Week and played at the FHS groundbreaking ceremony.

As far as can be determined, this was the first time the FHS Band had ever earned the Grand Champion Title.



The band repeated its success at the Mason invitational, winning overall first place in the AA class, plus Best Auxiliary/Color Guard, Best Music, and Best General Effect in AA

The band competed in the AA Regional Championships in Miamisburg on Nov. 6, where the Color Guard placed second.

The band is directed by Josh Long; Missy Townsend directs the Color Guard and Kendra Parker-Humphrey is the percussion instructor.

The band will be honored for Student Achievement at a November board meeting.



News from Franklin City Schools

Welcome, new staff members!

The district welcomed many new staff members this year. This article profiles new staff who were not introduced in the August newsletter.

Gavin Crase joined the Wildcat family to teach social studies at **FHS**. He is a 2016 FHS grad and was raised in Franklin. Retired FHS social studies teacher Steve Peters inspired Gavin to be a teacher by his passion for his subjects, his ability to be relatable, and the way he made students feel welcome and important. On Aug. 2, Gavin married his wife Anna in Glacier National Park, Montana. They own an energetic 9-lb Cavapoo, Rory.



Martha Janik-Landgraf joined the staff at **FJHS and FHS** to teach Spanish. Her husband Mike is an engineer; she has two children and a new puppy, Griff. Her son, Dylan, is finishing his computer science degree at Wayne State in Michigan; her daughter, Riley, works in marketing in Chicago. Martha received her undergraduate degree from U. of Michigan-Dearborn and her master's from Xavier. She loves teaching languages and connecting with students by introducing them to the Spanish language and culture.



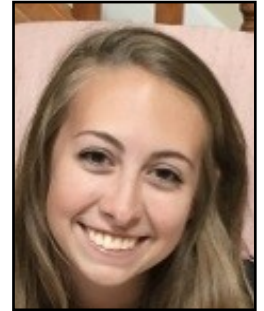
Jennifer Hillard is a 2009 graduate who joined the **FJHS** staff to teach English/Language Arts. Jennifer married her high school sweetheart (also a Franklin graduate) and has two children, Brayden and Amy. They love to go camping. She chose to work in education because she wants to make a difference in the lives of students just as teachers did for her. She strives to build students up and show them the value of hard work.



Ryan Welt joined the **FHS** social studies department this year. He looks forward to being able to share his excitement about social studies with students to change the way they look at the world. He's excited to join the Wildcat family, getting to know the community and his students, and to experience Wildcat pride!



Addie Foelt joined the **Schenck** staff to teach sixth grade math and science. She grew up in a family of educators; her summers consisted of preparing classrooms and writing new name tags, so she knew early that she belonged in education. She loves seeing her students develop and becoming the best versions of themselves. She's excited to join the Franklin team and become a Wildcat.



Sarah Witzeman has joined the staff at **Pennyroyal Elementary** as an Intervention Specialist. She is recently married and has a Pomchi puppy named Cooper. She loves spending time outdoors and exploring new places. Her reason for teaching is to show students that they're capable of anything. Sarah wants to help them find their potential. She is looking forward to getting to know the Wildcat community.



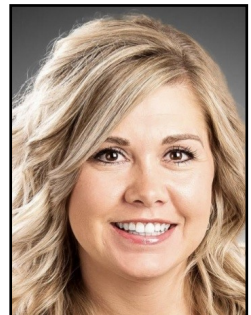
Khenady Leonard has joined the **Gerke** staff to teach kindergarten. She has a son, Knox, who is 9 months old, and two dogs. Due to both her positive and negative experiences in school, she has always known she wanted to be a teacher. She wants to take what she learned from her own experiences to help students enjoy school. She is a lifelong Wildcat who graduated from FHS and looks forward sharing the Wildcat pride with her students and their families.



Sabrina Raisch joined the **Hunter** staff to teach third grade. She loves to travel with her husband, John, and their dogs, Semper and Harley. She's wanted to be a teacher since she was young. Sabrina loves STEM-related activities and enjoys students being able to achieve new skills. Fun Fact: Sabrina speaks Japanese. She's excited about working in the district where she already lives. She is also going to be a Girls on the Run Coach here as well.



Katrina Hillard recently joined the district staff as the Assistant to the Treasurer. She is married with three children, two current and one future Wildcats. Katrina has worked in school finance for over seven years and recently earned her Public School Treasurer's license from the Ohio Department of Education. She loves making memories with her family at the campground and enjoys serving the community where she grew up.



News from Franklin City Schools

Schenck Elementary students reviewed and practiced Schenck's PBIS expectations in all areas of the school, focusing on Schenck's G.R.O.W. theme, that is, being "Geared Up," "Respectful," having "Ownership" of learning and behaviors, and being "Willing" to always try to do our best. Teachers focus on promoting the positives to teach and reinforce appropriate and desired behaviors. Many classes are using incentives and Class Dojo to award individual and group points and work toward rewards. Mrs. DeHart recently obtained a candy machine for her classroom for which the students may earn points and use as one of their choice rewards.

Schenck also reports that Kindergarten students have transitioned well to being in the building and that the staff and students are enjoying their addition to the building. Sixth graders settled into their modular classrooms (trailers). Many of the students have volunteered to be sixth grade ambassadors for the kindergarten and first grade students at lunch, helping them find their assigned seats in the cafeteria, helping open packets that can sometimes be difficult for smaller hands, and showing their kindness to the younger students in a variety of helpful ways.

Two **Schenck** students won awards at the end of last school year: Lanee Imfeld received the Eli Nardi Award (6th grade) and Aleeyah Montgomery received the Ronnie Charles award (4th grade). The awards are named for Schenck students whose lives made a positive impact on others; winners exemplify Eli's and Ronnie's positive traits.

Anthony Wayne second graders' kick off a fall project with the story *Animals Building Homes*. Students chose an animal and its habitat and environment to focus on. At the Cincinnati Zoo, students do primary research by photographing their animals and then studying the zoo's information. They use that info plus *National Geographic for Kids* material to prepare a poster display that includes a written report, headings, pictures, photographs, captions, diagrams, and the location of their animals on a world map.

Families help students prepare a diorama that matches the animal's environment. Students present to each other and the presentations are displayed during conferences. Teacher Debbie Parker said, "It is an awesome project, and the students love it. They are very engaged, while accomplishing so many new skills. The best part is how proud the kids are



of themselves with their final projects." She noted that students return years later and say how much they remember about the project.

Anthony Wayne 5th and 6th graders visited Great American Ball Park, a trip that gave students a chance to experience the atmosphere of a major league ball park. It also covers a range of learning objectives including how baseball relates to science and mathematics (statistics), social studies (history and Civil Rights), and college and career readiness. Students researched baseball-related careers, the history of the stadium, and practiced finding reliable sources.



Franklin Junior High art students collaborated a commemorative piece (above) in honor of the 20th anniversary of 9/11 and service men and women.

The **FJHS'** PBIS program (Positive Behavior Intervention and Support) is called ROAR (Respect, Ownership, Attitude, Responsibility). At a recent assembly, students were honored for showing outstanding respect during the first grading period: 8th grade: Callen Johnson, Lilly Mills, Austin Hurst, Luke McNally, Sarah Wallace, Sophia Johnson, Payne Davidson, Ronnie Harris, Braydon Isaacs, Gracie Clifford, Peyton Riley, and Evelyn Ponder. 7th grade: Dakota Carter, Diego Torres Ramos, Asly Tobias, Jeffrey Reyes-Guiza. Ellie Whaley, Alyssa Spears, Jessly Posada, Bryant Ferguson, Brayden Dunn, Cooper Harris, and Mya Hurst.

News from Franklin City Schools

Gerke's Coffee Cart

At **Gerke Elementary**, Miss Bell's Tier III class continues their awesome work with the Wildcat Café: Coffee Cart. Staff members order coffee or hot chocolate drinks via a Google Form.

The process has many roles for students:

- **Manager (6th Grader):** Sets up everything Friday morning with Ms. Michele or Ms. Darlene and helps Miss Bell put labels on cups.
- **Order Picker:** Uses the label to put the right coffee/sugar combo into the cups.
- **Barista:** Uses the Keurig machines to make the drinks.
- **Creamer:** Uses the big creamer pumps to pump creamer into drinks that need it.
- **Stirrer:** Stirs the hot chocolate and coffee drinks.
- **Syrups:** Uses the syrup pumps to add flavor to drinks that need it.
- **Delivery:** Delivers drinks!
- Students also count money, schedule deliveries, and keep up with their inventory.

Last year, the Coffee Cart covered their expenses and had enough money left over to treat all of their classrooms at Gerke to a year-end pizza party. They were also able to purchase water bottles for every Wildcat Olympics athlete (and Miss Bell put the students' names on their bottles).



Hunter students create Little Free Library

If you visit the website <https://littlefreelibrary.org/>, you'll learn that the Little Free Library (LFL) program is the world's largest book sharing organization, with a mission focused around building community, inspiring readers, and expanding book access for all. The non-profit organization, founded in 2012, has over 100,000 little libraries around the world. Their concept is simple: Give a Book; Take a Book.

A quick zip code search shows one LFL in 45005 (on Manchester Road). Actually, there are two LFL's, as **Hunter Elementary's** LFL opened this fall (adjacent to the Franklin Library book drop on the building's west



driveway) to serve students and the school's neighborhood. Mrs. Current's and Mrs. Long's classes (second grade), with the help of the technology specialist, Mrs. Kramer, initiated the Project Based Learning (PBL) project last school year, with the goals of helping students improve their reading skills and getting more books into students hands. Students compared the costs of purchasing a ready-made LFL versus buying the materials. Ultimately student Sophia Mullins and her family finished the LFL over the summer.

PBL provides opportunities for students to collaborate, drive their own instruction, and learn problem-solving and critical-thinking skills.

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](https://www.instagram.com/fcswildcatpride/) (District)
Facebook: [facebook.com/FranklinCitySchools/](https://www.facebook.com/FranklinCitySchools/)
Website: franklincityschools.com

Twitter handles are:
[@HunterElemNews](https://twitter.com/HunterElemNews)
[@PennyroyalElem](https://twitter.com/PennyroyalElem)
[@AnthonyWayneEle](https://twitter.com/AnthonyWayneEle)
[@Schenck_Elem](https://twitter.com/Schenck_Elem)

[@GerkeElementary](https://twitter.com/GerkeElementary)
[@AdminsFHS](https://twitter.com/AdminsFHS)
[@FJHSOH](https://twitter.com/FJHSOH)
[@FCSWildcats](https://twitter.com/FCSWildcats) (District)

News from Franklin City Schools

Board honors students for achievement

At its October 25 board meeting, the Board honored students for achievement. Franklin City Schools established the Student Achievement Award in 2001; hundreds of students have been honored since its inception. Award criteria and the nomination form may be found on our website, www.franklincityschools.com under Departments > Curriculum > Student Achievement.

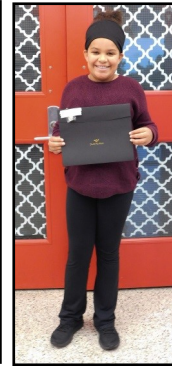
Students honored for earning 10 quarters of Straight As were **Gerke**: Donaven Butler and Wil Truesdell; **Schenck**: Adrien Bonar, Lanee Imfeld, Christian Knipper, and Jenna McGuire. **FJHS**: Lillian Cook, Tyler Denison Drake, and Canon Skinner.

Honored as the 2021 **Ronnie Charles Award winner**, **Schenck**: Aleeyah Montgomery

The **FHS Principal's 30+ Club** (Scoring 30 or above on one or more subject areas of the ACT): Victoria Brown, Liliana Cooke, Lucinda Curry, Kennedy Draper, Kyle Lawson, Nathaniel Paarlberg, Braden Rogers, Alex Russell, and Domanic Tomlin.

Three **students were honored for achievement in music/fine arts**: Callie Imundo (Class of 2021) won the President's Award at the 2021 Miamisburg Art Gallery Student Show; Arebella Lloyd (FHS), won Best of Show in the 2021 Miamisburg Art Gallery Student Show; Kyle Lawson (FHS) was chosen to be a percussionist in the Dayton Philharmonic Youth Orchestra.

Three students were honored for **testing out of the TESOL Program** (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages): Mateo DelPrete Castaneda (**Gerke**), Isidora Guinez Alvarez (**Hunter**), and Ricardo Paredes (**FHS**)



Picture far left: Mateo DelPrete Castaneda (left) and Isidora Guinez Alvarez. Picture immediate left: Aleeyah Montgomery



FHS inducts 39 into NHS

Franklin High School recently inducted 39 students into the National Honor Society. NHS membership is one of the highest honors that high school students can achieve. Five seniors and 34 juniors were tapped for the honor.

NHS recognizes students for outstanding character, scholarship, leadership, and service. Students must have a minimum grade point average and are nominated by teachers.

Seniors tapped were Demi Barnthouse, Aubrie Lake, Brady Liette, Ellie Mullins, and Adam Osborn.

Juniors tapped were Jacklyn Alcorn, Braydin Bales, Tyler Bond, Ashley Booth, Brenna Clifford, Savannah Coomer, Aiden Creech, Cadence Crocker, Megan Deaton, Andrew Emerick, Jared Erwin, Alexandria Fleshood, Tressel Gibson, Emma Green, Donovan Holweger, Madison Johnson, Cheyenne Jones, Ella Kittel, Maria Koss, Camille Lafferty, Cameron Mills, Rylan Monk, Patience Moss, Mackenzie Mullins, Alivia Peters-Fryer, Caleb Powell, Liam Rarden, Andrea Richards, Victoria (Tori) Snider, Jessica Sprout, Bryce Swoll, Maddox Taulbee, Sarah Waughtal, and Rocky Williams.

The chapter's 2021-22 officers are Nina Lin, President; Hayla Gadd, Vice President; Braden Rogers, Secretary; Kierra Harris, Treasurer; Kaitly Dalton, Historian.

The group's advisors are Emily Rudy and Kelly Brock.



Above, from left: Lanee Imfeld, Tyler Denison Drake, Wil Truesdell, Christian Knipper, Jenna McGuire, Adrien Bonar. At left, from left: Kyle Lawson, Braden Rogers, Lucinda Curry, Arebella Lloyd.



FHS students at the Munoz Leadership Conference in November.

News from Franklin City Schools

Pennyroyal students enjoy family fun night, dress-up days

Pennyroyal's Family Fun Night was a drive-through event, with 175 people attending. Attendees learned about community resources available to students and families from organizations including the Freedom Worship Center, Character Effect, the Kindness Backpack Program, and the Franklin-Springboro Public Library.

The event included a book fair, and every student (even those

who were unable to attend), received math games, dice, playing cards, and a book with activities.

Families offered positive feedback about the convenience of the drive-through event; and teachers noted that students enjoyed seeing teachers outside of school hours.

During Spirit Week, Pennyroyal students enjoyed dressing up!



150 E. Sixth St.
Franklin, OH 45005