



# BUZZ FROM THE HIVE

A newsletter of the Ferndale Area School District

FALL

“Big Enough to Challenge, Small Enough to Care”

2011

## Welcome to the Hive

We would like to welcome twelve new staff members to the Ferndale Area School District family.

### Elementary

*Dr. William Brotz, Elementary Principal*  
*Amanda Fetro-Woodruff, Special Education Aide*  
*Lori Himes, Personal Care Assistant*  
*Lori McGough, Cafeteria Dishwasher*  
*Susan Pellow, Kitchen Utility*  
*Jessica Taranto, Elementary Teacher*

### Secondary

*Dr. Brian McDermott, Jr.-Sr. High School Principal*  
*Latrace Dixon, Special Education Teacher*  
*Jonathan Freidhoff, Music Teacher/Band Director*  
*Crystal Keim, Mathematics Teacher*  
*Thomas Menna, Special Education Aide*  
*Tonia Mitchell, High School Cook*



Left to Right: Front Row: Lori Himes, Lori McGough, Jessica Taranto  
Back Row: Dr. William Brotz, Susan Pellow, Amanda Fetro-Woodruff



Left to Right: Front Row: Tonia Mitchell, Latrace Dixon, Crystal Keim  
Back Row: Jonathan Freidhoff, Dr. Brian McDermott, Thomas Menna

## New Chief Administrator

...at Greater Johnstown CTC



Mrs. Carole Kakabar, our FASD Superintendent, is the new Chief School Administrator for the Greater Johnstown Career and Technology Center. In this position, Mrs. Kakabar works with the Vocational Director, Mr. John Augustine, in the educational management and leadership of the vocational programs for high school students from an academic point of view. Mrs. Kakabar also

attends the Joint Operating Committee meetings, sits on the HealthTrust committee, and assists with other administrative duties, as needed.

Note: Ferndale Area High School has 55 students attending the GJCTC this school year. This is 24% of our high school student body. Ferndale Area supports vocational education!

**Ferndale Area School District**

**Board of Education**

**President**

Mr. Ridley Banks—Dale

**Vice-President**

Mrs. Barbara Penna—Ferndale

**Secretary**

Mr. Edward Jones—Middle Taylor

**Treasurer**

Mrs. Sandra Chobany —Dale

**Board Members**

Mrs. Susan Bailey—Dale

Mr. Greg Blue—Middle Taylor

Mrs. Melissa Garman—Ferndale

Mr. Wayne Meekins—Lorain

Mr. Stephen Thompson—Ferndale

**Administration**

**Ferndale Area School District**

**100 Dartmouth Avenue**

**Johnstown, PA 15905**

**814-535-1507**

**Superintendent of Schools**

Mrs. Carole M. Kakabar

**Business Manager**

Mr. John Kowal

**Ferndale Area High School**

**600 Harlan Avenue**

**Johnstown, PA 15905**

**814-288-5757**

**High School Principal**

Dr. Brian McDermott

**Ferndale Area Elementary School**

**100 Dartmouth Avenue**

**Johnstown, PA 15905**

**814-535-6724**

**Elementary Principal**

Dr. William Brotz

**What's Inside**

FASD Board Directors Honored..... 3  
 Cyber Charter Schools Costs Taxpayers Money ..... 3  
 PSSA and AYP ..... 4  
 Public Notices ..... 5  
 Public Notice of Special Education Services ..... 6  
 State & Federal Grant Programs..... 11  
 The Challenge Program..... 11

**School Board Meetings**

The Ferndale Area School District Board of Directors meets on the third Wednesday of each month in the Elementary School Board Room at 6:00 p.m. except for the months of May and December, unless otherwise advertised. Meetings are not scheduled for the month of July.

**MORNING DELAYS, SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS, AND EARLY DISMISSALS**

The Ferndale Area School District will announce any changes in the schedule on the following stations:

- |                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| WJHT (92.1 FM)  | WJAC CH. 6  |
| WFGI (95.5 FM)  | WWCP CH. 8  |
| WKYE (96.5 FM)  | WTAJ CH. 10 |
| WRKW (99.1 FM)  |             |
| WCCL (101.7 FM) |             |
| WNTJ (850 AM)   |             |
| WNTW (990 AM)   |             |

*\*Follow WJAC TV and WTAJ TV primarily. Also the district has adopted an automated phone call system as well that will notify parents by phone, if parents have signed up for this service. For more information, contact the Elementary or Junior/Senior High School Office.*

We will notify the stations as early as possible when a change in the schedule is necessary. Be sure to note the length of the delay.

## Ferndale Area School Board Directors Honored

Long-term school directors are being honored across the state by the Pennsylvania School Boards Association at local school board meetings. School directors are recognized for years of service ranging from 8 to 48 years.

**Ridley Banks** and **Barbara Penna** are recognized for 12 years of service and **Greg Blue** is recognized for 8 years of service. All were presented a certificate adding them to the PSBA "Honor Roll of School Board Service."

PSBA President Marianne L. Neel, West Jefferson Hills SD school director, spoke about the recipients and their years of dedicated volunteer service to children, the community and public education.

"School directors continually are spending more of their personal time on school-related activities," she said.

"Fifty-four percent of them devote 16 hours or more a month to school board business. That shows a real commitment on their part."

According to Neel, these individuals put in, on the average, about two-and-a-half working days per month of nonpaid, volunteer service as school directors.

"They exemplify leadership and dedication, giving unselfishly to their communities, students and the public schools," she said. "Their efforts, along with those of their fellow board members, reflect their dedication to giving our children the opportunity to

gain knowledge through the best educational system possible."



Left to Right: *Ridley Banks, Barb Penna, Greg Blue*

## Cyber Charter Schools Cost Taxpayers Money

In Pennsylvania, there are twelve approved cyber charter schools. Last year, approximately 27,000 students were enrolled in these schools, costing an estimated \$230 million dollars, which is charged to local school districts as tuition for cyber charter students. Last year, at Ferndale Area School District, there were 22 students attending cyber charter schools, which cost the district approximately \$138,000 of taxpayer money.

Yes, taxpayers are footing the bill. Advertisements and recruiters for cyber schools prominently use the word "free". They spend a great deal of money promoting cyber education through the media. Again, this money comes from public school district coffers. Imagine what we could have done last year for our students at Ferndale Area Elementary School and Ferndale Area Junior-Senior High School with \$138,000.

Cyber charter schools taking taxpayer dollars to fund their programs is a concern of all schools, and we are working together to address it. What we are finding is that most community members don't know that their taxpayer dollars are going to fund these cyber charter schools, through an act of Pennsylvania state legislation.

Additionally, cyber charter school education is not equivalent to public school education, neither academically nor socially. A 2011 Credo Study found that Pennsylvania cyber schools performed significantly worse than their traditional public school counterparts in reading and math. Numerous Pennsylvania School Board

Association studies as well as other studies also support no academic benefit of cyber charter schools. Students who return to public school after "trying out" cyber school for up to a year are typically behind their classmates and need to catch up. Some students, who come to public school after being in cyber school for two or more years, are significantly behind their peers. We are finding this to be true here at FASD.

Post-secondary education is recognizing this as well, and some colleges will not accept students who have a cyber school diploma. The United States Department of Defense reviews academic credentials for recruitment purposes, and has ranked cyber school diplomas lower than traditional diplomas. The Board shall require the cyber charter school to pay the cost of the expenses for its students' participation in the district's extracurricular activities or interscholastic athletic programs.

Cyber charter schools cost taxpayers money. They are not free, as advertisements would have you believe. Ferndale Area School District students enrolled in cyber charter schools in 2011-2012 are going to cost our taxpayers approximately \$190,000. Wouldn't you rather have that money in your wallet?

If you have additional questions about cyber charter schools or want to know what you can do to help get our money out of their hands, please call the district offices at 535-1507.

## The PSSA and Adequate Yearly Progress

The PSSA (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment) is a series of tests taken by all Pennsylvania public school students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11. The tests are based on the PA Standards of material content which all students are expected to know at a specific grade level in Reading, Writing, Math, and Science. Students take a Reading and a Math PSSA in each of the tested years. The Writing PSSA is taken only in grades 5, 8, and 11. The Science PSSA is taken only in grades 4, 8, and 11. Students are expected to pass these tests which would indicate that they have made adequate yearly progress (AYP) at that grade level. Scores are recorded as Advanced, Proficient, Basic, or Below Basic. In order to make AYP, the student must score proficient or advanced on the Reading and the Math PSSA. Students achieving low proficiency, basic, or below basic are required to receive additional education to help them improve. This could include enrollment in a remedial class, after school tutoring, etc. The goal is that every student is solidly proficient.

Schools are held accountable to make adequate yearly progress, depending on how the students in each grade perform as a whole (the “all” group in reports). Expectations for Math for 2011 are that at least 67% of students score proficient or advanced on the PSSA. Expectations for Reading for 2011 are that at least 72% of students score at least proficient or advanced on the PSSA. Additionally, various subgroups of students are also looked at and must make AYP. These subgroups include: ethnicity, gender, special needs students, economically disadvantaged students, students with English as a second language, and Title I students. In order for a school to be held accountable for AYP in a subgroup, there must be at least 40 students in the school

building who belong to that subgroup. Here at Ferndale Area School District, we are required to make AYP in subgroups for gender, ethnicity, special education students, and economically disadvantaged students. Additionally, schools are required to make adequate yearly progress with respect to student participation in taking the PSSA, graduation rate, and attendance rate.

Federal Law, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that school districts provide a report card annually that reflects Graduation Rate, Attendance at the Elementary School, and participation and results on the PA System of Student Assessment (PSSA) tests.

### High School Graduation Rate:

AYP Target = 85%

FASD Graduate Rate: 89%

### Attendance Rate:

AYP Target = 90%

FASD Attendance Rate: 95%

### Participation on the PSSA:

AYP Target = 95%

FASD Participation Rate on the PSSA: 100%

In 2011, FASD made AYP as a district. The Junior-Senior High School made AYP in all groups. However, the Elementary School did not make AYP in the IEP subgroup.

Administrators and teachers are analyzing all available data to address how we can improve the achievement of all of our students on the PSSA in 2012. Parents can help by fostering good study habits and completion of school work each night.

**2011 PSSA Mathematics Results for Most Recent Year Relative to NCLB/AYP Target (67%)**

| <u>Grade</u> | <u>All Students</u> | <u>IEP</u> | <u>Economically Disadvantaged</u> |
|--------------|---------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Grade 3      | 81%                 | 62%        | 77%                               |
| Grade 4      | 93%                 | —          | 92%                               |
| Grade 5      | 83%                 | 73%        | 75%                               |
| Grade 6      | 76%                 | —          | 74%                               |
| Grade 7      | 77%                 | —          | 78%                               |
| Grade 8      | 70%                 | —          | 68%                               |
| Grade 11     | 62%                 | 15%        | 66%                               |

**2011 PSSA Reading Results for Most Recent Year Relative to NCLB/AYP Target (72%)**

| <u>Grade</u> | <u>All Students</u> | <u>IEP</u> | <u>Economically Disadvantaged</u> |
|--------------|---------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Grade 3      | 72%                 | 46%        | 67%                               |
| Grade 4      | 78%                 | —          | 69%                               |
| Grade 5      | 64%                 | 27%        | 59%                               |
| Grade 6      | 56%                 | —          | 61%                               |
| Grade 7      | 63%                 | —          | 65%                               |
| Grade 8      | 68%                 | —          | 62%                               |
| Grade 11     | 71%                 | 25%        | 65%                               |

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## 2011-12 Annual Public Notices

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Federal Law, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requires that all school districts report the professional teaching qualification of teachers to the public.

The Ferndale Area School District's professional personnel are all highly qualified teachers (100%). This means that every teacher has a college degree in the courses they teach and are certified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education with a teaching license. Additionally, all paraprofessionals (teacher aides) in the Ferndale Area School District are highly qualified (100%). This means that every teacher aide has a college degree and/or is certified by the Pennsylvania Department of Education with a Paraprofessional Credential of Competency certificate. All of our teachers and teacher aides receive professional development annually in their areas of study to continually update their knowledge and skills.

All instructional materials, including teachers' manuals, audiovisuals, or other supplementary instructional material, used in the instructional program shall be available for inspection by the parents or students in accordance with Board policy. Instructional materials do not include tests or academic assessments. Parents and students (age 18 and over) have a right to access information about the curriculum, including expected student learning outcomes, instructional materials and assessment techniques.

If you would like to receive additional information about any teachers or paraprofessional aides who work with your child, please contact the Superintendent's Office at (814) 535-1507.

**To find out more about parent resources, check out the Ferndale Area School District's website at <http://www.fasdk12.org>**

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The Ferndale Area School District will not discriminate in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices, based on race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, ancestry, union membership, or any other legally protected classification. Announcement of this policy is in accordance with state and federal laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The Ferndale Area School District employees and participants who have an inquiry or complaint of harassment or discrimination or who need information about accommodations for persons with disabilities should contact Mr. John Kowal, Business Manager, Ferndale Area Administrative Office, 100 Dartmouth Avenue, Johnstown, PA 15905, telephone: (814) 535-1507.

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The Open Records Law, effective January 1, 2009, allows increased access to public records. Information can be requested from the Ferndale Area School District by mail, fax, e-mail or in person. The District has five business days to respond. If the District doesn't respond or denies your request, an appeal can be filed with the Office of Open Records. Copying fees, up to 25 cents per page, may be charged. The Ferndale Area School District has appointed Mr. John Kowal, Business Manager, as their Right-to-Know Officer, given the responsibility of answering information requests from the public. You can contact Mr. Kowal at Ferndale Area Administrative Office, 100 Dartmouth Avenue, Johnstown, PA 15905, telephone: (814) 535-1507. The forms for requested information can be obtained on our website at <http://www.fasdk12.org>

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### **Ferndale Area School District is a Smoke-Free District**

**It is the policy of the Ferndale Area School District that all buildings, property (including sidewalks and parking areas), outdoor fixed seating areas, vehicles owned or contracted and other designated areas of the Ferndale Area School District are designated to be tobacco free environments.**

**Your cooperation is appreciated.**

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## 2011-12 Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs

It is the responsibility of the Pennsylvania Department of Education to ensure that all children with disabilities residing in the Commonwealth, including children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated. This responsibility is required by a federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 2004 (IDEA '04).

The IDEA '04 requires each state educational agency to publish a notice to parents, in newspapers or other media, before any major identification, location, or evaluation activity. The IDEA '04 requires this notice to contain certain information. Another federal law, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), which protects confidentiality, requires educational agencies to notify parents annually of the confidentiality rights (FERPA regulations have been amended 9 times). Pennsylvania special education regulations require each school district to fulfill the IDEA '04 notice requirement by providing an annual public notice. To comply with the above requirements, following is the annual public notice for Ferndale Area School District.

School districts are required by the IDEA '04 to provide a free appropriate public education to children with disabilities who need special education and related services. (Note: The duty to identify, locate, evaluate and provide special education services to school age individuals incarcerated in local correctional institutions rests with the school district within whose boundaries such an institution is located.) School age children who need special education and related services are identified as children with disabilities. These students have been identified as being in need of specially designed instruction and have one or more of the following physical or intellectual disabilities under IDEA:

- \*Autism
- \*Emotional disturbance
- \*Deafness
- \*Hearing impairment
- \*Specific learning disability
- \*Intellectual disability
- \*Multiple disabilities
- \*Other health impairment
- \*Orthopedic impairment due to chronic or acute health problems
- \*Speech or language impairment
- \*Visual impairment including blindness
- \*Deaf-blindness
- \*Traumatic Brain Injury

### Early Intervention

The IDEA '04 requires the provision of a free appropriate public education to children with disabilities between 3 years of age and the school district's age of beginners. In Pennsylvania, a child between 3 years of age and the school district's age of beginners who has a developmental delay or one or more of the physical or intellectual disabilities listed above may be identified as an "eligible young child."

Eligible young children are afforded the rights of school age children with disabilities, including screening, evaluation, individualized education program planning, and provision of appropriate programs and services.

Potential signs of developmental delay and other risk factors that could indicate disabilities and the possibility that a child is an eligible young child could include: By the age of 3: not saying many words; not using 2 or 3 word phrases and sentences; not walking; awkward gait (walking); drooling; not able to answer "who" or "what" questions; not using utensil to feed self; By the age of 4 (all of the above included): not toilet trained; difficulty with directional words (in, on, under, out); not playing with other children; not able to draw a circle, cross or imitate a vertical line; not able to understand the child's speech most of the time; difficulty following simple two-step directions (pick up the paper and put it in the garbage); By the age of 5 (all of the above included): unable to answer "where" questions; unable to recall details from a story; not drawing a person with at least 6 parts; immature speech patterns (me instead of I); not able to hop forward with one foot without support; Other warning signs-at any age: little or no eye contact; over/under sensitivities to pain, light, noise; hand flapping; no awareness of space-always bumping into other people or things; awkward hand or foot positioning; won't touch or eat certain textures; child no longer can do things he/she used to do; developed normally, then stopped; echoes what is said; plays with toys inappropriately (watches wheels spin on the car but doesn't play with the car).

The Pennsylvania Department of Education is responsible for providing programs and services to eligible young children under Act 212 of 1990, the Early Intervention Services System Act. The Intermediate Unit 8 provides programs and services to eligible young children on behalf of the Pennsylvania Department of Education. For more information, contact the IU8 Preschool Office at (800) 228-7900.

### Screening

Intermediate Unit 8 and each school district in Bedford, Blair, Cambria and Somerset counties has established and implemented procedures to locate, identify, and evaluate students and young children suspected of being exceptional. These procedures include screening activities which include but are not limited to: review of group-based data (cumulative records, enrollment records, health records, and report cards); hearing screening (at a minimum of kindergarten, special ungraded classes, first, second, third, seventh, and eleventh grades); vision screening (every grade level); motor screening; and speech and language screening. In schools which have a Pre-Referral, Child-Study, Early Intervening or Instructional Support Team, the above screening activities may lead to consideration by the teams to move the next level of screening activities.

Intermediate Unit 8 and each school district has an established annual schedule to conduct screening activities. The screenings are conducted at specific times during the school year in designated school buildings and community sites. Screening may also be conducted in the student's home school unless other arrangements are necessary. Parents, guardians or surrogate parents may contact their local school district or Intermediate Unit 8 contact person if they wish to learn more, have questions, believe their child may need to be identified or to obtain specific information about the times and locations of screening activities. The contact person and phone number for Ferndale Area School District and the Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 is listed at the end of this notice.

Except as indicated above or otherwise announced publicly, screening activities take place in an ongoing fashion throughout the school year. Each educational agency has a system for annually evaluating the effectiveness of its screening process.

### Evaluation

When screening indicates that a student may be a child with a disability, the school district will seek parental consent to conduct an evaluation. Evaluation means procedures used in the determination of whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the child needs. The term means procedures used selectively with an individual child and do not mean basic tests administered to or procedures used with all children.

This evaluation is conducted by a multidisciplinary team (MDT) that includes the parent and a group of qualified professionals. The process must be conducted in accordance with specific timelines and must include protection-in-evaluation procedures. For example, tests and procedures used as part of the evaluation may not be racially or culturally biased.

The evaluation process results in a written evaluation report. This report specifies a student's eligibility for special education based on the presence of a disability and the need for specially designed instruction. The evaluation report also makes recommendations for educational programming. Once parental consent for evaluation is obtained, the school district has timelines and procedures specified by law which it must follow.

Parents who think their child is exceptional may request that the school district conduct an evaluation. This request should be made in writing to the contact person listed at the end of this notice. If a parent makes an oral request for an evaluation, the school district shall provide the parent with a form for that purpose. Pre-Referral, Child-Study, Early Intervening, or Instructional Support Team activities do not serve as a bar to the right of a parent to request, at any time, including prior to or during the conduct of instructional support activities, an evaluation.

Parents also have the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation. The school district must provide to parents, on request, information about where an independent educational evaluation may be obtained. Under certain circumstances, such an independent educational evaluation may be obtained at public expense.

### Educational Placement

The IEP team develops a written education plan called an IEP. The IEP is based on the results of the evaluation. Required members include at least one regular education teacher of the child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment), at least one special education teacher, or where appropriate, at least one special education provider, a local educational agency, the child, whenever appropriate, or beginning at age 14. Parents may agree, in writing, to excuse a team member or members.

An IEP describes a student's current educational levels, goals, objectives (when required), and the individualized programs and services that the student will receive. IEPs are reviewed on an annual basis. The IEP team will make decisions about the type of services, the level of intervention, and the location of intervention. Types of services include:

- Autistic Support
- Blind and Visually Impaired Support
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Support
- Emotional Support
- Learning Support
- Life Skills Support
- Multiple Disabilities Support
- Physical Support
- Speech and Language Support

Level of support options include:

- \* *Itinerant* – Special Education supports and services provided by special education personnel for 20% or less of the school day.
- \* *Supplemental* – Special Education supports and services provided by Special Education personnel for more than 20% but less than 80% of the school day.
- \* *Full-time* - Special Education supports and services provided by Special Education personnel for 80% or more of the school day.

Placement must be made in the least restrictive environment in which the student's needs can be met with special education and related services. All students with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with children who are not disabled.

#### Services for Protected Handicapped Students

The Ferndale Area School District must provide services to and may not discriminate against “protected handicapped students” in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Students who are not eligible to receive special education programs and services may qualify as “protected handicapped” students and therefore be protected by other federal and state laws intended to prevent discrimination. The school district must ensure that “protected handicapped” students have equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate for each individual student. In compliance with state and federal law, the school district will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be of school age with a physical or intellectual disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

These services and protections for “protected handicapped” students may be distinct from those applicable to exceptional or thought-to-be exceptional students. The school district or the parent may initiate an evaluation if they believe a student is a protected handicapped student. For further information on the evaluation procedures and provision of services to protected handicapped students, parents should contact the Special Education Contact listed at the end of this notice.

#### Confidentiality

Each school district protects the confidentiality of personally identifiable information in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

(FERPA) and other applicable federal and state laws, policies, and regulations.

Education records means those records that are directly related to the student, including computer media and videotape, which are maintained by an educational agency or by a party acting for the agency. Educational agency, for purposes of this notice, means the local school district and/or the Intermediate Unit 8. For all students, the educational agency maintains education records that include but are not limited to:

- Personally identifiable information - confidential information that includes, but is not limited to, the student's name, name of parents and other family members, the address of the student or student's family, and personal information or personal characteristics which would make the student's identity easily traceable.
- Directory information - information contained in an education record of a student which would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. It includes, but is not limited to, the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight and height of members of athletic teams, dates of attendance, degrees and awards received, and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age certain rights with respect to the student's education records. They are:

1. Parents have the right to inspect and review a child's education record. The educational agency will comply with a request to inspect and review education records without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an IEP or any due process hearing, but in no case more than 45 days after the request has been made. Requests should be submitted in writing, indicating the records the parents wish to inspect, to the school principal or other appropriate school official. Parents have the right to a response from the educational agency to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records. Parents have the right to request copies of the records. While the educational agency cannot charge a fee to search for or to retrieve information, it may charge a copying fee as long as it does not effectively prevent the parents from exercising their right to inspect and review the records. Parents have the right to appoint a representative to inspect and review their child's records. If any education record contains information on more than one child, parents have the right only to inspect and review the information relating to their child.

2. If parents think information in an education record is inaccurate, misleading, or violates the privacy or other rights of their child, they may request amendment of the record. Requests should be in writing and clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. The educational agency will decide whether or not to amend the record and will notify the parents in writing of its decision. If the educational agency refuses to amend a record, it will notify the parents of their right to a hearing to challenge the disputed information. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parents or student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. "Destruction" of information means physical destruction or removal of personal identifiers so the information is no longer personally identifiable.

Whenever information is no longer needed to provide educational services to a child or six (6) years after graduation, the information in their education record will be destroyed by the educational agency, if there is not a current request to inspect and review or a request for copies. However, a permanent record of a former student's name, telephone number, grades, achievement, attendance, classes attended, grade level completed, year completed, Evaluation/Re-evaluation Reports, last three (3) IEPs, and last Notice of Recommended Educational Placement may be maintained in an electronic form without time limitation.

Information no longer needed to provide educational services must be destroyed if requested by a parent. However, a permanent record of a student's name, address, phone number, grades, attendance, classes attended, grade level completed, year completed may be maintained in an electronic form without time limitation.

4. The educational agency will provide, upon request, a listing of the types and locations of education records maintained, the school officials responsible for these records, and the school personnel authorized to see personally identifiable information. Such personnel receive training and instruction regarding confidentiality. The educational agency keeps a record of parties obtaining access to education records, including the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records.

5. Parents have the right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. "Consent" means: the parent(s) have been fully informed regarding the activity requiring consent, in their native language or other mode of communication;

they understand and agree in writing to the activity; and they understand that consent is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. Information may be disclosed without consent to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the District as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); person or company with whom the educational agency has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Directory information may be released without parent consent unless the parent has exercised their right to opt out of disclosure of directory information. Parents have the right to refuse to let an agency designate any or all of the above information as directory information.

Upon request, the educational agency discloses education records (including disciplinary records) without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

6. Parents have a right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by an educational agency to comply with the requirements of FERPA. Complaints may be filed with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4605.

7. NDAA of 2002 also requires districts to give military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as provided to postsecondary institutions or to prospective employers; and provide students' names, addresses, and telephone listings to military recruiters, when requested, unless a parent has opted out of providing such information.

#### Mode of Communication

The content of this notice has been written in straightforward, simple language. If a person does not understand any of this notice, he or she should contact the school district or Intermediate Unit 8 and request an explanation.

The educational agency will arrange for an interpreter for parents with limited English proficiency. If a parent is deaf or blind or has no written language, the educational agency will arrange for communication of this notice in the mode normally used by the parent (e.g., sign language, Braille, or oral communication).

Rights Under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding the conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- *Consent* before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)—
  1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
  2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
  3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
  4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
  5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
  6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
  7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
  8. Income other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of—*
  1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
  2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
  3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- *Inspect*, upon request and before administration or use—
  1. Protected information surveys of students;
  2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales or other distribution purposes; and
  3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who has graduated from high school, or is 18 years old, or an emancipated minor under State law, or has reached the age of majority in Pennsylvania.

The educational agency will develop and adopt policies regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The educational agency will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. The educational agency will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation in the specific activity or survey. The educational agency will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the educational agency has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

A parent may file a written complaint alleging that the rights described in this notice were not provided:

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Bureau of Special Education  
Division of Compliance  
333 Market Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

SPECIAL EDUCATION CONTACTS

Ferndale Area School District  
Mrs. Jessica Maxwell  
100 Dartmouth Avenue  
Johnstown, PA 15905  
Phone: 814-539-6168

Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8  
Dr. Barbara V. Uncapher  
4500 Sixth Avenue  
Altoona, PA 16602  
Phone: 814-228-7900

## State and Federal Grant Programs

*B. Wayne Lohr, State and Federal Programs Coordinator*

The Ferndale Area School District participates in several state and federally funded grant programs to enhance our educational programs.

Consistent with most other school entities in Pennsylvania, federal monies generally represent the smallest portion of revenue for the Ferndale Area School District. In order to be eligible for grant funds, the district must complete the various applications each year and adhere to numerous mandates imposed with the grants. Historically, the amount of revenue has fluctuated over the years. A review of our federal and state entitlement grant programs follows. The projected amounts for the 2011-2012 school year are dependent upon passage of the governor's budget and subject to adjustments during the year.

Title I monies in the amount of \$310,175, a decrease of \$7,551 for the 2011-2012 project year, are used to improve the educational environment of the entire elementary school. The school wide Title I Program uses the money to support the salaries and benefits of two Reading Specialists, a Title I Instructional Aide and part of a State and Federal Programs Coordinator. Title I funds are also used for math and reading instructional supplies, to support an after-school tutoring program, pupil personnel services, staff, and community support services.

Title I, Stimulus, or American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) money was projected for FASD to be \$177,310. This amount was adjusted to \$175,035. The final year for ARRA money is 2011. It is to be

distributed over a two year period with the use of the money following all regular Title I regulations. The money was used in the elementary to purchase supplemental, intervention and assessment materials for both reading and math. We also purchased two computer carts, each with 25 student laptops. The elementary school was also made into a wireless building.

Title IIA, also known as Improving Teacher Quality, is the classroom size reduction initiative. The 2011-2012 projected grant amount of \$38,200 (decrease of \$10,243) pays part of the salary and benefits of one class size reduction teacher for grade four.

The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities grant will not be funded for 2011-2012. FASD applied and was successful for a \$5,000 mini grant that was used for our safe schools program.

This is the eighth year of the Accountability Block Grant with a projected amount of \$52,546 (decrease of \$83,786). The funds are used for part of the salaries and benefits for the K4 program's highly qualified staff.

Funding for the 2011-2012 Dual Enrollment program has been discontinued.

For the 2011-2012 school year we will again participate in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. This grant is for the period from July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012. The FFVP grant will help make fresh fruit and vegetables equally available to the elementary students at least three days a week.

## The Challenge Program

*Loraine Dodson, Guidance Counselor*

On Friday, October 28, Kathy Holtzman, representative of The Challenge Program, Inc., presented the 2010-2011 sophomore and junior Challenge Program Award winners with certificates of recognitions and a \$250 check. The 2010-2011 FAHS Challenge Program Winners were:

- For Academic Excellence:  
**Sam Clinger** and **Elizabeth Chobany**
- For Academic Improvement:  
**Elizabeth Ballow** and **Timothy Fitz**
- For Community Service:  
**Brett Pribulsky** and **Katie Orris**
- For Best Attendance:  
**Ian Helsel** and **Tyler Hileman**



Standing: Kathy Holtzman; Left to Right: Front Row: Timothy Fitz, Tyler Hileman, Katie Orris, Elizabeth Chobany; Back Row: Ian Helsel, Elizabeth Ballow, Brett Pribulsky, Sam Clinger

The Challenge Program, Inc.'s mission is to partner with businesses to motivate high school students both in and out of the classroom. This partnership creates good habits in students and provides businesses with tangible results for their investments. Ferndale Area School District's business partner for the 2010-2011 school year was Walmart.

The program achieves this mission by awarding 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students awards in four categories: Academic Improvement, Attendance, Community Service, and Academic Excellence.

Ferndale Area Administrative Office  
100 Dartmouth Avenue  
Johnstown, PA 15905

Phone: 814-535-1507  
Fax: 814-535-8527

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Ferndale Area School District is to be **“Big Enough To Challenge”** all students, but **“Small Enough to Care”** about each student. To accomplish this mission, the Ferndale Area School District will strive to provide a safe and nurturing environment for excellent teaching and learning experiences where students prepare for a life of continual learning, and acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to solve problems, communicate effectively and be a responsible citizen.

