



Fonda-Fultonville

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

FFCS Outdoor Club is back in a big way

At FFCS, the Outdoor Club is back, and in a big way! Students are experiencing some of the best outdoor opportunities in the Northeast, especially with our district sitting at the foothills of the Adirondack State Park and just a short drive from Sacandaga Lake.

The Outdoor Club, which is being led by Steve McGrattan, is delivering some unique opportunities for students to gain access to the outdoors. This school year, the club has explored the Northville Placid trail with a local woman who completed the entire 138-mile trail, learned how to start a fire without matches, had a professional photographer teach classes on a mountain peak, and learned valuable leadership skills. Some students were able to participate in a free, statewide two-day conference at The Wild Center in Saranac Lake.

In February, students will be participating in Snowbound 2025, a new, uniquely designed FFCS winter camping adventure in partnership with the ADK. Snowbound 2025 will be a fully immersed Adirondack experience led by ADK staff. Students will stay two evenings camping in a yurt in Lake Placid. They will participate in everything from a snowshoe hike, and campfires to backcountry cooking lessons.

"We are thrilled to open the possibilities of the outdoors to students," shared FFCS Outdoor Club Advisor Steve McGrattan. "We live in a uniquely beautiful area that offers many opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, whether it is camping, hiking, watersports, or more. The options are endless, and we are excited to share those opportunities with district students."

The Outdoor Club is now moving ahead and bringing different opportunities for today's students to celebrate the outdoors and the access it affords our community.

Interested? Want to join FFCS Snowbound? Contact Steve McGrattan at **(518) 772-9096** or smcgrattan@ffcsd.org.



Fonda-Fultonville High School students are engaging in the outdoor conversation and experiencing new ways to get outside and play! Through this program, students are learning the importance of the outdoors and what it means for our community. The FFCS Outdoor Club is bringing new perspectives to experiencing the outdoors and understanding the impact of stewardship in preserving nature. Photos courtesy of the McGrattan Family.



Building experience to enrich students' ability to read



Each year, we identify new methods to increase learning opportunities for our students. At FFCS, teachers and faculty continue to explore new programs and approaches so that our students can learn and succeed in the classroom. Whether through professional development, training, or revisiting curriculum to reflect the needs of our students - our teachers go above and beyond for our school community.

Each year, we identify new methods to increase learning opportunities for our students. Our teachers and faculty continue to strengthen their backgrounds, whether that is through professional development, training, or revisiting curriculum to reflect the needs of today's classroom.

Recently, 12 middle school staff members, including the entire English Language Arts (ELA) department, special education teachers, social studies teachers, and the curriculum director, completed the Lexia Aspire® Professional Learning program. The program is based on the science of reading, which explains how our brains learn to read and how we can teach reading in the best way possible.

Fonda-Fultonville teachers learned strategies for recognizing new words, vocabulary, spelling, listening, reading, and writing. The ELA department

continued on pg. 2



continued from pg. 1

has implemented new strategies for word recognition and vocabulary across grade levels. Beginning in January, the fifth and eighth grade ELA department will have started a new non-fiction classroom unit. Fifth-grade students will read *Kids at Work* and sixth through eighth-grade students will read *Children of the Dust Bowl*.

"We are fortunate to have a group of dedicated educators committed to their students and their growth," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. DeMallie. "Their willingness to learn and implement new strategies into their classrooms ensures that our students are receiving the highest quality education based on the latest research."

"The Aspire training in The Science of Reading has been a rewarding experience for the Language Arts department and all teachers involved. It has provided an opportunity for our educators to revisit the concepts surrounding the foundations of reading and enhance our practice to provide the best possible learning environment for our students," shared fifth-grade ELA teacher and Department Chair Ann Mahon.

Today, we share some additional background on this important topic with a Q&A featuring our district's Director of Curriculum and Instruction Mrs. Radez:

How does the Aspire program benefit today's students?

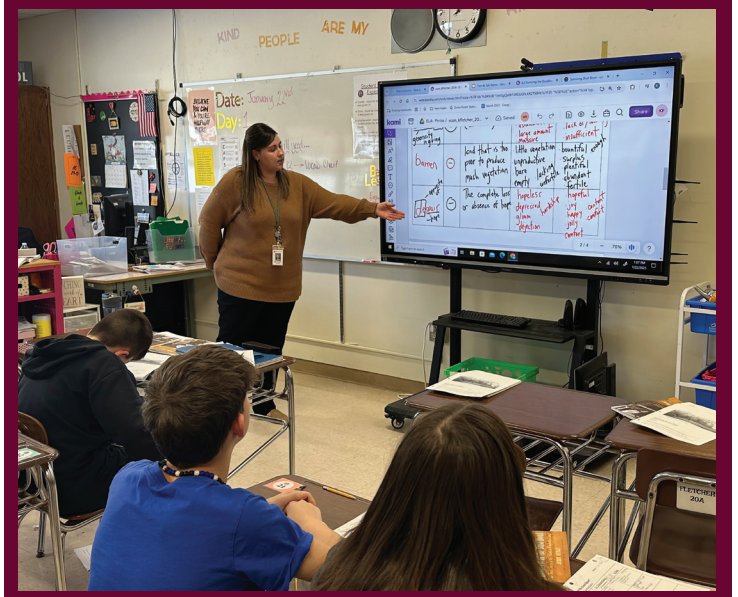
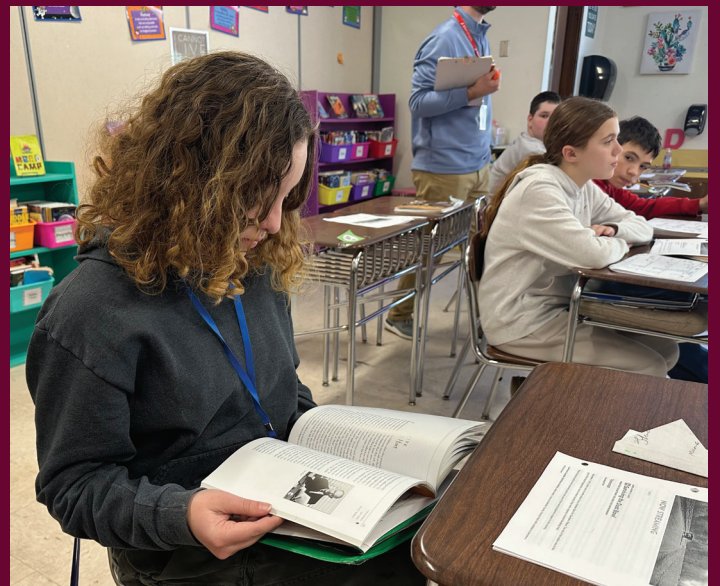
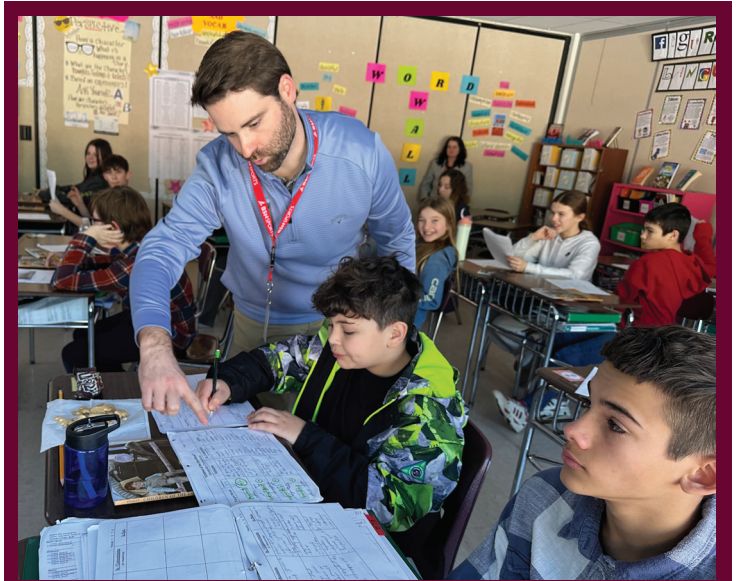
We are helping students learn to think critically, solve problems, and communicate effectively. The Read Side-by-Side program teaches students how to actively engage with the text by using strategies like the "Collect, Interpret, Apply" (CIA) approach to analyze and interpret information effectively. Consistent strategies are used to introduce new vocabulary and decode words. The "Turn and Talk" encourages students to talk to each other.

What is the impact of this training on FFCS teachers?

The teachers have been amazing! They have added these new strategies and resources to their teaching toolkit and thought about what each student is good at and what they struggle with. They use all of this to work together and create fun and inclusive lessons using the Read Side-by-Side resources as a base.

Moving forward, what is the overall goal for students as they continue receiving this instruction?

Our goal is to help students learn how to find and understand information to make good decisions, stand up for themselves, and make a positive difference in the world.



Camera, Lights and Action: Morning announcements take on a new perspective

Each Friday, students in the high school's Student Government take a new approach to engaging with classmates to share news and updates. This year, green screen technology has been introduced to allow students to put their daily announcements into a newsroom format that rivals area television newscasts. It not only brings a fresh look for students to deliver the news, but also allows additional high school classes and activities, from journalism, student government, and the yearbook club, to expand their experiences through this unique format. It is preparing them to experience opportunities they want to pursue.

"This is a great opportunity for students to share information about what is happening in the school and to help increase attendance at events and participation in activities," said F-F High School Social Studies Teacher Mrs. Sullivan. "There is room for growth and I think it will keep improving to add some levity and fun to the day while also sharing pertinent information with the student body.

The possibilities are endless, and this is a great addition to our high school."

"It's a great opportunity and not many schools get to do this type of outreach," said senior Theresa Stewart. "It is a great opportunity to deliver our news during the morning announcements and is a unique way to catch people's attention."

Ms. Stewart's co-host, and FFCS junior, Colin Pickering shares his sentiment on the program.

"It's pretty cool and many schools don't do it live, and we're able to do fun stuff that allows students to watch our announcements and get more involved in our school community."

The broadcasts occur each Friday and allow students to find new opportunities for growth. Also, stay tuned to our district website as we look to share a few of the broadcasts for families and friends to see first-hand how students are learning a new perspective on how to communicate within the school community.



Each Friday, students in the high school's Student Government take a new approach to engaging with classmates to share news and updates. This year, green screen technology has been introduced to allow students to put their daily announcements into a newsroom format that rivals area television newscasts. From left to right: senior and President of the Student Government Theresa Stewart and junior and Vice President of the Student Government Colin Pickering.

FFCS students getting a hands-on perspective with new science curriculum

This year, students in grades 3-5 are gaining first-hand experience through a new science curriculum called New York Elevate Science. This curriculum focuses on preparing and getting student involvement through "doing science." The concept is simple and allows today's students to learn scientific lessons through items in day-to-day life.

In fact, students are learning about topics ranging from weather to electricity, which is giving them insight into learning the ins and outs of being an actual scientist! Recently, through the support of a United States Department of Agriculture grant, all fourth-grade elementary classrooms were equipped with egg incubators to learn how baby chicks develop.

In addition, students can access a digital eBook that displays interactive activities that can adjust to each student's skill level. The new curriculum aligns with New York State Education Department standards and helps prepare students for the new fifth-grade science exam.

"The teachers are creating opportunities for students to think like scientists who ask questions, explore new ideas, and engage in research. These skills will prepare students for our technology-driven world and all the new careers rooted in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)," said Director of Curriculum and Instruction Mrs. Radez.



This year, students in grades 3-5 are gaining first-hand experience through a new science curriculum called New York Elevate Science. This curriculum focuses on preparing and getting student involvement through "doing science." The concept is simple and allows today's students to learn scientific lessons through items in day-to-day life. Pictured are students from Mrs. McClarren's fourth-grade classroom participating in various science-based activities.





Fonda-Fultonville

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

112 Old Johnstown Road
PO Box 1501
Fonda, NY 12068-1501

Board of Education

Matt Sullivan, *President*
Bonnie Couture, *Vice President*
Adam Sullivan
Dennis Egelston
Michelle Isabella
Jessica Munson
John Wiltey

Richard R. DeMallie, Ed.D.,
Superintendent of Schools

Richard Meddaugh, Jr., *Editor*

*Produced in cooperation with Capital
Region BOCES Engagement & Development
Services.*

www.FondaFultonvilleSchools.org

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Fonda, NY
Permit No. 25

POSTAL CUSTOMER

WINTER 2025 NEWSLETTER

In this EDITION

- 1 ▪ FFCS Outdoor Club is back in a big way
- 1 ▪ Building experience to enrich students' ability to read
- 2 ▪ How does the Aspire program benefit today's students?
- 2 ▪ What is the impact of this training on FFCS teachers?
- 2 ▪ Building experience to enrich students' ability to read (continued)
- 3 ▪ Camera, Lights and Action: Morning announcements take on a new perspective
- 3 ▪ FFCS students getting a hands-on perspective with new science curriculum
- 4 ▪ Superintendent Snapshot: A birds-eye view of the district

Sign-up for ParentSquare

 ParentSquare

Stay up-to-date and connected with important communication from FFCS! If you are not receiving email notifications from us through ParentSquare, please be sure to update your contact information at www.parentsquare.com or with your child's school.



Superintendent Snapshot: A birds-eye view of the district

This school year marks our first "Superintendent Snapshot," giving our community a first-hand perspective of Dr. DeMallie in his day-to-day interactions with students, coaches, faculty, F-F school community, and staff. The superintendent shares the highlights of our student-athletes, budding musicians, classroom activities, community events, and more. So, stay tuned for future updates and items from Dr. DeMallie as he shares the great work done in our district!