

Foresthill Union School District

WHAT'S WHAT SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2023



SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

A message from Dr. Camille Taylor, Superintendent

Wrapping up 2023, my reflections include laughter and learning, challenges and opportunities, and a tremendous sense of community. While many of the accomplishments and growth of the year are just now becoming apparent, there is a sense of positive transformation, increased activity and involvement, and determination to continue to work together to bring outstanding and meaningful learning experiences to the students and community of Foresthill. I feel so honored and blessed to be a part of this process and cherish the opportunity to learn, grow, and create with extraordinarily generous, talented, and dedicated people. I wish you all peace, joy, and hope, and look forward to the adventures that await us in 2024!



REOPENING OF FES

FES Falcons are returning to the FUSD nest! At the December 12 meeting, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to proceed with Option A of the Facilities Master Plan, reopening the Foresthill Elementary School campus next fall! We want to thank our staff, students, and community for the valuable feedback and discussions on this subject over the past 3 months. Your participation helped our Board make a well-informed decision. We are thrilled about this new breath of life in and for our community. We will keep you updated and share opportunities for involvement as plans and details develop.

The return to the Falcons nest will include 7 classrooms in the main campus building and 4 classrooms in the upper building, 11 total classrooms. Estimating 2 classrooms per grade by serving TK - Second Grade students, a room to serve students with special needs, and adding a preschool program, the 11 classrooms on the FES campus are ideal!

Mr. Bryan will document the transformation of the FES campus in the coming months with a time-lapse video that we will share with everyone once the project is complete. While many in the community remember the FES campus as students or parents from bygone years, we know that folks would love to take a peek around - we will be opening the campus for community walk-throughs to share all the investment and hard work to return the campus to its former glory! We anticipate a couple of community work days in the spring or summer and hope folks will help when the time is right.

For more information on this project, review our [Facilities Master Plan](#) and check out our [FAQ](#).

EAGLES NEST AND WELLNESS WARRIORS



The Wellness Warriors at FDS provide needed behavior and mental health support to students inside and outside class. Our Wellness Warriors include Nancy Coppola, Kari Moore, and Shannon Kelly. As of December 6, Wellness Warriors have supported 859 student visits, providing 11,752 minutes (196 hours) of Tier I direct student support. Wellness Warriors support in classrooms, outside, and in the Eagle's Nest. Strategies to support students and teachers include walk-and-talks, art expression, check-in / check-outs, conversation with a trusted adult, safety and de-escalation, quiet time, sensory input activity, positive reinforcement, re-direction, and physical expression of emotions. Wellness Warriors also support students with Tier II needs that include sensory tools and alternative seating options. Our Wellness Program vision for 2024 is to cultivate purposeful preventative strategies with students, teachers, and families. The district is supporting a group of paraeducators, including our Wellness Warriors, in completing Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) training in the coming months. RBT training will increase the staff's ability to support students in developing self-regulation skills and healthy responses to life's challenges.

• Featurette on Jeni Boes

Speaking of wellness, our Mental Health Specialist is an integral part of positive culture-building and social-emotional wellness on our campus. Before working at FUSD, Ms. Jeni served in the United States Air Force for over 20 years. After completing her service to our country, she was accepted into California State University Sacramento's Master of Social Work Program. During graduate school, Ms. Jeni contributed to establishing the first Wellness Centers in Placer County school districts at Granite Bay High School. She also provided psychotherapy at WEAVE. Her thesis focused on the need for mental health supports in rural



school systems. After earning a master's degree in social work with an emphasis on children and families, Ms. Jeni served at an intensive outpatient program supporting individuals with substance use and mental health challenges. She then served at River Oak Center for Children and Families, supporting children and their families in their homes and at school. Recently, Ms. Jeni supported the establishment of targeted case management supports for Rocklin Unified School District, setting up the program and training for case managers and school staff.

Ms. Jeni moved to Foresthill in the summer of 2021 when she was given the opportunity to serve at Foresthill Divide School as our Mental Health Specialist. Since joining FDS, she has worked with the team to design and implement a robust mental health program that includes training/support for staff, group therapy, and skills building, individual therapy, targeted case management, short-term counseling, collaboration with families, in-class trainings such as Anti-Bullying, emotions, and education on mental health. Ms. Jeni mentors and collaborates with our Wellness Warriors in the Eagle's Nest, developing preventative and restorative strategies for students, teachers, staff, and families. She was recently honored by the Foresthill Union School District Board of Trustees with a certificate of appreciation for her leadership, innovation, and dedication to developing sustainable systems to meet our students' and staff's mental health and wellness needs. Ms. Jeni's six core values are integrity, competence, diversity, service, dignity/worth of the person, and the importance of human relationships. Her most used phrase is "meeting people where they are instead of where you want them to be," which is essential in an educational setting.

If you ask Ms. Jeni about her success at our school, she will tell you, "I am only successful because of the amazing people I work with, our students, our families, and the community." Ms. Jeni's favorite quote is, "Words are, in my not-so-humble opinion, our most inexhaustible source of magic. Capable of both inflicting injury and remedying it." – Albus Dumbledore (J. K. Rowling), and she embodies these words through her leadership and work on our campus.



WINTER PROGRAM

After several years with no winter program, the voices of our TK-5th-grade students (and a few older students) rang in FDS gym, spreading holiday cheer as they sang songs celebrating this magical time of year. Under the direction of Adam and Alli Peres, students rehearsed their songs over the last six weeks. All that hard work and dedication paid off as students took the stage and sang their hearts out. Mr. and Mrs. Peres would like to thank the teachers and students for investing so much time in making the program a success. They would also like to thank the FUSD Administration, our amazing M&O Team led by Karl Johnson, our generous PTO sponsors, and our backstage crew of 7th-grade volunteers. The turnout of families was amazing...thanks to everyone who attended this year's Winter Program!





LIONS CLUB SENSORY PATH



What's a Sensory Path? A sensory path is a series of guided movements that engage different parts of the body and brain in ways that help students work through extra energy or distracting feelings so they can focus on learning activities. Sensory paths are especially effective for students who struggle with transitioning from one activity to another or experience frustration, anger, or other sensory overloads during a learning activity. Inviting students to complete the sensory path helps with working through some of those feelings so that they can re-focus and return quickly to class. The painted path includes gross motor activities like hopping, spinning, and wall pushes. Teachers often use sensory paths with their entire class as they walk through campus between activities. You'll find our sensory path in the schoolyard right outside the Library.

We want to thank our Lions Club, who volunteered their efforts to paint our sensory path. Countless hours and details went to their work. If you are on campus, go ahead and check it out, walk it, and ask your student to do it alongside you.





Our extraordinary PTO Team has been busy promoting a positive culture on our campus. A good example is **Popcorn Fridays**. Parents/Families can buy a popcorn treat for their student (or the whole class). On the third Friday of the month, students receive their freshly popped popcorn treat, delivered to the classrooms by our PTO volunteers during snack recess! Popcorn Friday is a fun and exciting treat that FDS students adore! It also raises money for the PTO to sponsor two 8th-grade students to attend the 8th Grade End-of-the-Year field trip.



As if that weren't enough, earlier this month, our PTO transformed Room 1 into a Holiday Boutique, designed and budgeted for FDS students to purchase high-quality donated or handmade gifts for their friends and family. Students in all grades selected and purchased the right items, which were gift-wrapped for them on location. It was a truly magical experience!

To everyone who volunteered and donated items for the Holiday Boutique shopping event, we want to say **Thank You!!!** We had many parents and grandparents volunteers, kids from 6th, 7th, and 8th grade helping the little kiddos shop and wrap presents. We had generous donations from local crafters, holiday overstock liquidation, and some estate sale donations. We were even able to offer a section of free handmade gifts. We hope everyone enjoyed shopping and went home with wonderful holiday treasures for their loved ones.



If you are interested in joining the PTO or helping with a PTO event, please consider attending our next meeting on Thursday, January 11, at 3 pm in Room 1.



REMINDER: BUSSING IS BACK

We've partnered with Mid-Placer Transportation for limited student bussing before and after school. It started Thursday, November 2, 2023.

Signing up to ride the bus is simple, go to www.midplacer.com and click on the **bus application** button. If you have questions, the Mid-Placer Transportation Team is available to help! Because the Mid-Placer system handles all aspects of student bussing, our district and school office personnel will be unable to answer your bussing questions.

Riding the bus is a privilege. Speak with your children about representing your family and our school district well by starting and ending the day with a pleasant greeting to your bus drivers and by always behaving respectfully, responsibly, and safely when riding the bus. Please also read the [FUSD Board Policy 5131.1](#) and [Administrative Regulation 5131.1](#) for information on student conduct on the bus.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Changes - Because bussing services are resuming, the FDS bus circle will no longer be available to vehicles for drop-off and pick-up purposes.



The next Coffee+Chat with Dr. Taylor is Thursday, January 18 at 7:45 am in the Staff Lounge on the FDS Campus. Bring your own mug and we'll provide the coffee!

