

Forest Area School District Newsletter

2024-2025 School Year

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

As we turn our calendars to November, we find that the school year is well underway. The start of a new school year is often one of the most enjoyable times of the year for students, parents, and the community.

This year has been exciting already since we have a number of new staff members who will be introduced to you in this newsletter. We believe that they are wonderfully talented and will add a lot to what we are able to offer to our students.

The safety of our students and staff will once again be our top priority for the upcoming school year. There is no room for complacency in terms of student and staff safety. Please know that everyone can help in keeping students safe by paying attention to detail and reporting things that seem unusual.

Along with our efforts to keep others safe, I truly believe Forest Area School District is a leader in terms of maintaining a student-oriented and student-centered culture as well. I believe our system focuses on students first. I am so proud of our staff for this and hope that our parents and community agree that the needs of students come first.

During the course of this school year, we will be completing summer projects that were started that will allow the schools to generate their own electrical power through solar panels that have been placed on the roof at East Forest and installed on one corner of the West Forest property. You'll learn more about the solar projects later in this newsletter.

I look forward to the great things that our students and staff will accomplish in 2024-2025! Thank you for your continued support of the Forest Area Schools.

Parent-teacher conferences will be held on November 7th from 3:15 pm to 6:00 pm and November 8th from 7:45 am to 12:00 pm. Call your school or contact your child's teacher to schedule a meeting. East Forest: 814-927-6688. West Forest: 814-755-4491.

FALL 2024

Newsletter Highlights

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

NEW HIRES

DISTRICT THERAPY DOGS

NEW READING SERIES FOR ELEMENTARY

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENGINEERING, ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY AND SUSTAINABILITY (STEELS) STANDARDS

STEPHEN HILL ASSEMBLY AND FOREST AREA RESILIENCY DAY

FOREST AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTNERS WITH MCCLURE COMPANY TO INSTALL SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS



NEW HIRES



Amy Beers - West Forest Principal

Mrs. Amy Beers lives in Warren with her husband, Jeff, and two children. After teaching Spanish in Jamestown, NY, for several years, Mrs. Beers began her administrative career with the Warren County School District. For 15 years at WCSD, she served as principal in Sheffield, Youngsville, and Eisenhower Schools. As each of these schools is the center of its community, she values and understands how a school is the focal point of the town in which it serves. It is those experiences that draw her to the Forest Area School District.

Mrs. Beers's goal is to support each member of our community by creating a school environment where students feel valued, inspired, and encouraged to excel academically, socially, and emotionally. She plans to collaborate closely with our dedicated educators to ensure that everyone provides the highest quality educational environment possible and with our families to provide a supportive atmosphere that values the school as an integral part of the community.



EDUCATION



Heather Stover District Special Education Supervisor

Heather is originally from the German Hill area and relocated to Titusville following the tornado in 1985. After graduating from Titusville High School in 1998, she continued her education at Edinboro University as a dual major: elementary education and special education. She moved back to Forest County in 2001. Following graduation in December 2003, she was eager to make use of her degree and accepted a position as a special education teacher at Warren County Schools in March 2004. After ten years in the classroom, she accepted a position as a special education supervisor in the Warren County School District. She is pleased to come home to the Forest Area School District as our new Special Education Supervisor.

NEW HIRES (CONTINUED)

James “Fritz” Brown West Forest Science Teacher

Fritz Brown was raised in Pleasantville and currently resides there with his wife, Maria, and son, Jayden. He graduated from Titusville High School and then attended the University of Pitt at Titusville, followed by Edinboro University. He graduated from Edinboro University with a Bachelor of Science degree in secondary education/biology. After graduating, Fritz worked for Bethesda Children’s Home and continued his education at Edinboro. He then worked for three years as a juvenile probation officer in Forest County. He began his teaching career working as a substitute teacher for several school districts in northwest Pennsylvania. His first permanent position was as a science teacher at Tidioute Community Charter School, where he worked for 3 years. He then accepted a position at Titusville High School, where he has taught for the last 16 years. At Titusville, he also served as the advisor for the Ecology Club and an assistant coach for the Trap Team. In his spare time, Mr. Brown enjoys hunting and fishing as well as participating in a variety of shooting sports.

Science



LuEllen Gibbons District Speech and Language Therapist

LuEllen Gibbons grew up in Forest County and is a graduate of West Forest High School. She attended Clarion University and graduated with an MS in speech-language pathology. For the past 10 years, she has worked in a pediatric therapy facility located in Mt. Wolf, Pennsylvania. She is delighted to have the opportunity to return to the area and provide speech-language services to students here. Mrs. Gibbons is happy spending time with her family and friends. In her spare time, she likes to kayak on the river, work in her yard, and take walks with her Pomeranians, Lily and Millie.

NEW HIRES (CONTINUED)

Difference Maker!

🍏 #TeacherLife 🍏

Emily Logue

East Forest Elementary Teacher

Ms. Emily Logue will be the new preschool/kindergarten teacher at East Forest Elementary. She taught first grade for the past 3 1/2 years at Woodland Elementary School in Cameron County. She just earned her Master's in Education-Reading Specialist, and she's currently working toward her Special Education Certification at Slippery Rock University. She was born and raised in Clarion and spent much of her childhood visiting Forest County at her family's camp. She enjoys spending time with her family and friends, especially her 8-year-old goldendoodle, Sparky. She is excited to be a part of the Forest Area Schools family!



TEACHING IS A WORK OF HEART



Emma Kovacs

East Forest Elementary Teacher

Mrs. Emma Kovacs-Saunders, originally from Brookville, PA, graduated from the Brookville Area School District before pursuing her bachelor's degree in middle school education at Pennsylvania Western University of Clarion, which she completed in 2023. During the 2023-2024 school year, she had the opportunity to gain valuable experience as a long-term substitute teacher at Clarion-Limestone Elementary School. In her free time, Mrs. Kovacs-Saunders enjoys reading, spending time with her family, and the companionship of her dog. She is thrilled to begin her new role teaching 4th to 6th grade English Language Arts at East Forest Elementary School.

NEW HIRES (CONTINUED)



Katelyn Smith
**District Elementary
School Counselor**

Mrs. Katelynn Smith graduated from North Clarion in 2011. She then attended Clarion University, where she obtained her undergrad in rehabilitative science with a concentration in substance abuse. Upon graduating, she began working at Venango County Children, Youth, and Family Services, where she continued working for the past 8 years. In 2022, she also obtained a Master of Social Work through PennWest University. For fun, she enjoys spending time outdoors (camping, kayaking, concerts, etc.) and spending quality time with her husband, family, and friends!



Sarah Huth
**West Forest English
Language Arts and Family
and Consumer Science**

Sarah Huth graduated from West Forest High School in 2004. She graduated from Clarion University in 2008 and then California University in 2016. Sarah has 16 years of teaching experience. She has two daughters, Maci, who is 9, and Rowan, who is 3. In her free time, she enjoys traveling, hiking, and racing vintage motorcycles with her fiancé, Brett. Sarah is looking forward to being home and working at her alma mater.



Renea Winger
**District
Art Teacher**

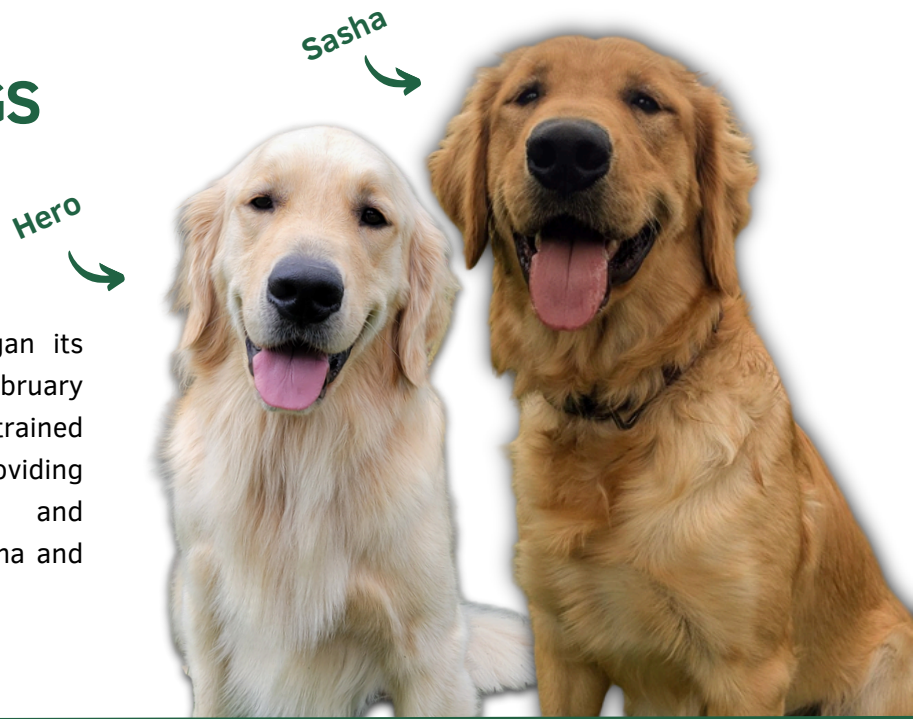
Renea Winger is a graduate of Cranberry High School. She attended Slippery Rock University, graduating in 2012 with a BS in Secondary Education. She worked for several years teaching within Cranberry and Titusville School Districts. To further her education, she is currently attending PennWest University. She hopes to graduate later this year with an MEd in Reading. She is excited to be joining Forest Area School District as an art teacher and reading specialist! In her free time, she enjoys working on her home renovation project, coaching gymnastics, and taking her dog for hikes.



DISTRICT THERAPY DOGS

Sasha and Hero

Last year, the Forest Area School District began its therapy dog program. Sasha joined our team in February of 2024, and Hero joined us in July. Our dogs are trained to assist in calming anxious students, providing companionship during stressful situations, and promoting a positive classroom atmosphere. Sasha and Hero are both golden retrievers.



NEW READING SERIES FOR ELEMENTARY

At the start of the 2024-2024 school year, elementary students were introduced to a new reading series. Into Reading by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt is aligned to PA State Core Standards for English Language Arts and based on the Science of Reading. The Science of Reading is a way of teaching reading that is based on how our brains naturally learn to read. It focuses on helping children understand the sounds in words (called phonics), how letters represent those sounds, and how they are combined to create words.

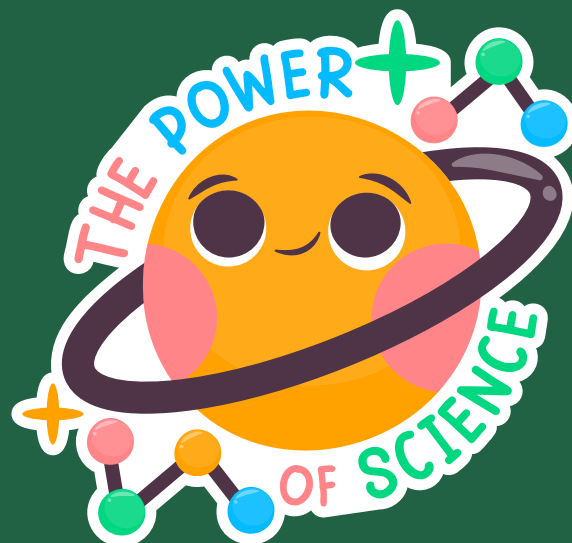
The new series includes a wealth of online resources for both students and teachers, as well as a traditional reading book featuring everything from non-fiction to poetry. It also offers a variety of high-interest fictional stories aimed at engaging students. Teachers participated in summer in-service training to ensure they are fully prepared to use the new series with their students.



SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENGINEERING, ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY AND SUSTAINABILITY (STEELS) STANDARDS



The Pennsylvania State Board of Education adopted new academic standards for Science, Technology & Engineering, Environmental Literacy & Sustainability in January 2022. These standards are designed to help students become science, technology, environmental, and engineering literate. The new standards cover many of the same topics as the previous science standards but prioritize deeper understanding and scientific practices over memorization of facts. They also include a new domain for environmental literacy and sustainability. Forest Area students are beginning to explore the new standards through the implementation of lessons from OpenSciEd.org and Mystery Science. Many students are also excited to be participating in STEM classes focused on the exploration of these new standards. The implementation of the STEELS standards will lead to changes in state assessments as well. Notably, beginning this year, 4th grade students will no longer take the Science PSSA. This test has been moved to 5th grade. All Forest Area 5th graders will take the Science PSSA beginning this year.



STEPHEN HILL ASSEMBLY AND FOREST AREA RESILIENCY DAY



LESS STRESS!

Q&A

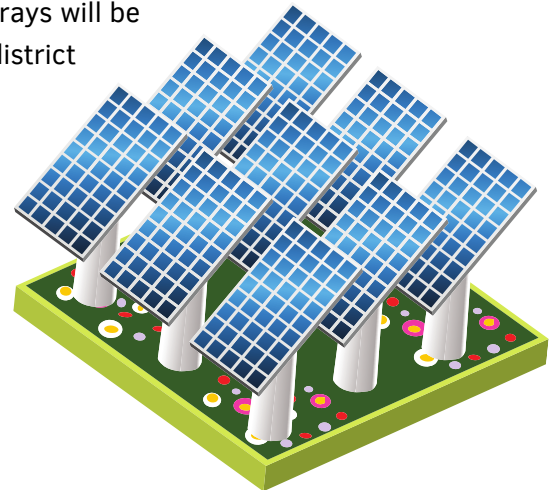
To kick off the school year, Forest Area students participated in an assembly featuring keynote speaker Stephen Hill. During his presentation, “Speak Sobriety,” Stephen talked about his experiences with opioid addiction, recovery, and the importance of making good choices and being resilient. After the assembly, students participated in small group sessions with Stephen where they had the opportunity to ask questions as well as sessions about stress management, growth mindset, and student services that are available through the district.

A special thank you to Forest County for supporting the Stephen Hill presentation through the Opioid Fund.

FOREST AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT PARTNERS WITH MCCLURE COMPANY TO INSTALL SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

In a move towards cost savings, sustainability, and educational innovation, the Forest Area School District has partnered with McClure Company to install advanced solar energy systems at both East Forest and West Forest schools. This initiative is designed to fully meet the district's electrical energy needs through clean, renewable power.

Amanda Hetrick, Superintendent of Forest Area School District, remarked, "Not only will this project significantly reduce our future energy costs, but it will also serve as an invaluable educational tool. The solar kiosks installed in each school will enable students to monitor the system's performance in real-time, making it a hands-on learning opportunity." At East Forest, solar panels will be mounted on the school's flat roof, with energy generation set to begin in fall 2024. Meanwhile, at West Forest, a solar field is being constructed in a secure, fenced enclosure, with energy production anticipated in late 2024 or early 2025. Both solar arrays will be integrated into the existing electrical systems, effectively allowing the district to function as its own energy supplier. McClure Company will manage the installation and ongoing maintenance of the solar systems at no cost to the district. In return, the Forest Area School District has entered into a transferable Power Purchase Agreement (PPA), which includes a 30-year rate guarantee. This agreement is projected to save the district approximately \$600,000 over the lifetime of the project.

A recruitment flyer for ESS (Every day counts.) for Forest Area School District. The flyer features the ESS logo and a photo of a smiling student. It lists various job roles and their rates: Substitute Teachers (\$125.00/day), Substitute Custodians (\$12.50/hour), Substitute Nurses (\$11.00-\$25.00/hour), Substitute Paraprofessionals (\$12.50/hour), and Substitute Secretaries (\$12.50/hour). It also includes a QR code and contact information for Jamie Zacherl at ESS.com.

Now Hiring!
Substitute Teachers & Support Staff

Forest Area School District

Join with ESS today to support student achievement! As the nation's largest education personnel and management company, ESS provides qualified candidates like you a fulfilling career in education and the opportunity to support schools in your local community.

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- Choose your own schedule, work when and where you want
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