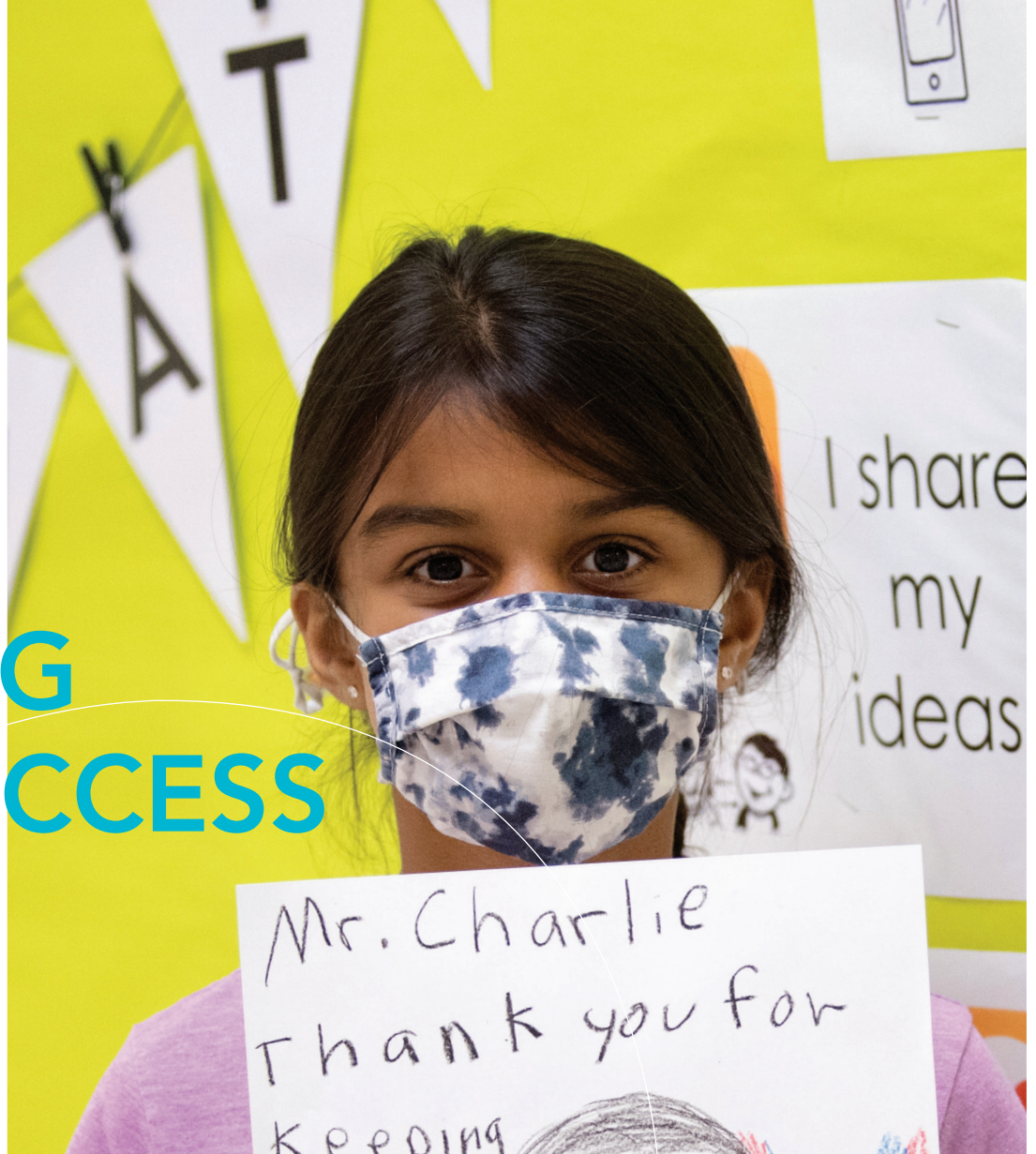
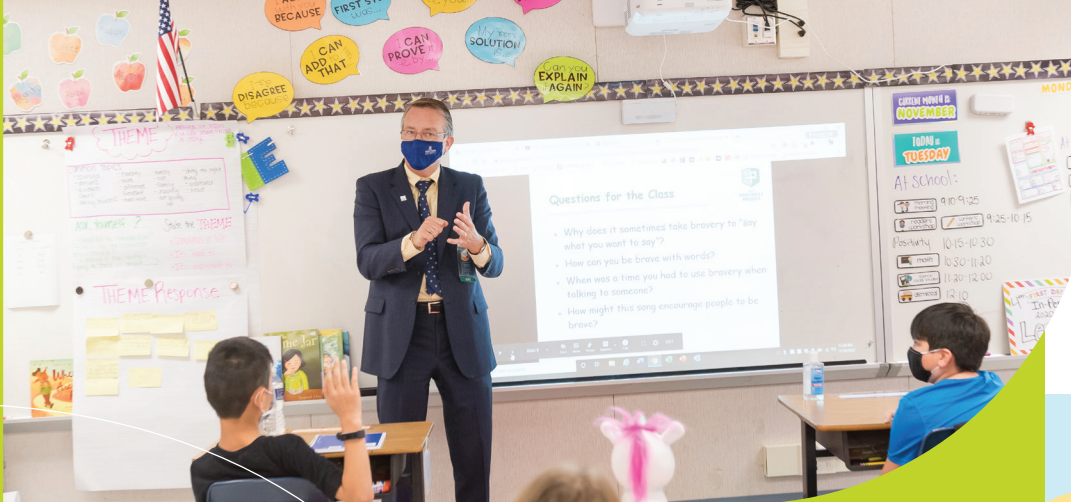


SHARING OUR SUCCESS



 SY 2020–21

Message from Dr. Brabrand



Welcome to our inaugural edition of FCPS: Sharing Our Success, an annual publication that I hope will help you get to know a little more about the mission and vision of Fairfax County Public Schools, one of the largest school divisions in the U.S.

While this past year has seen us face great challenges due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on education, it has also brought out the best in us with innovation and flexibility becoming part of our daily conversation. Take a look through these pages, and you will be amazed at the achievements of our students and educators.

The 2020-21 school year was also a time of great change and reflection, as we continued to grapple with challenging issues surrounding equity. In a diverse school system where our differing cultures and backgrounds are valued, it's important to ensure what we believe on the inside is reflected on the outside. To that point, we have changed the name of three of our schools that did not represent our inclusive philosophy. We have also made great strides to ensure that Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology is truly accessible to all, by implementing a new admissions process that has expanded opportunity for Fairfax students from all corners of our county.

As we return to our classrooms after 18 months, we know we have work to do to ensure our students have no gaps in their learning and can continue on their path forward. Rest assured that our administrators, staff, and Central Office leadership are committed to providing the world-class education that our community has come to expect from Fairfax County Public Schools. I very much look forward to seeing all that is achieved in this coming year.

Scott S. Brabrand, EdD
Superintendent



FCPS BY THE NUMBERS

2022  **189,944**
PROJECTED ENROLLMENT

STUDENTS FROM **204** COUNTRIES
200+ HOME LANGUAGES

93%
ON-TIME GRADUATION
Class 2020 graduated on-time, exceeding the state average rate

15,976
2020 ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMS TAKEN

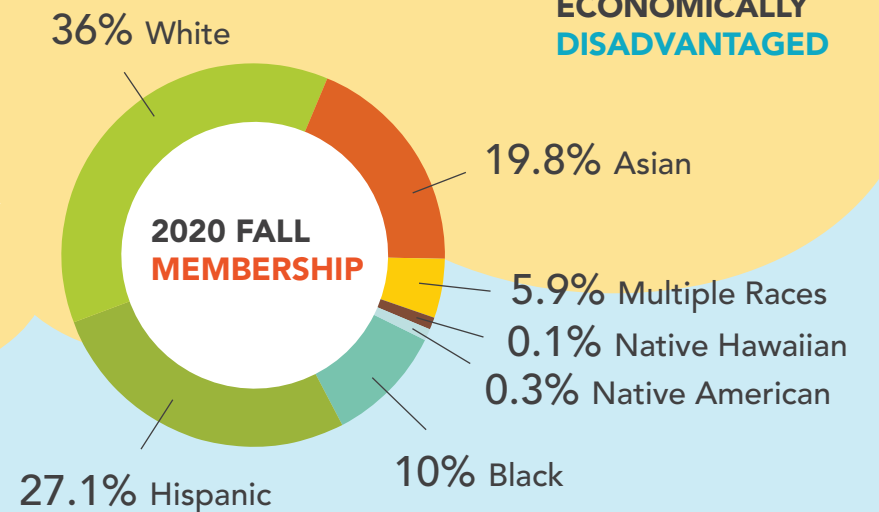
1211 2020 SAT SCORE
FCPS students outperformed their peers in VA and the nation

2021 ENERGY STAR'S PARTNER OF THE YEAR
SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE AWARD

19%
ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

15%
SPECIAL EDUCATION

31%
ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED



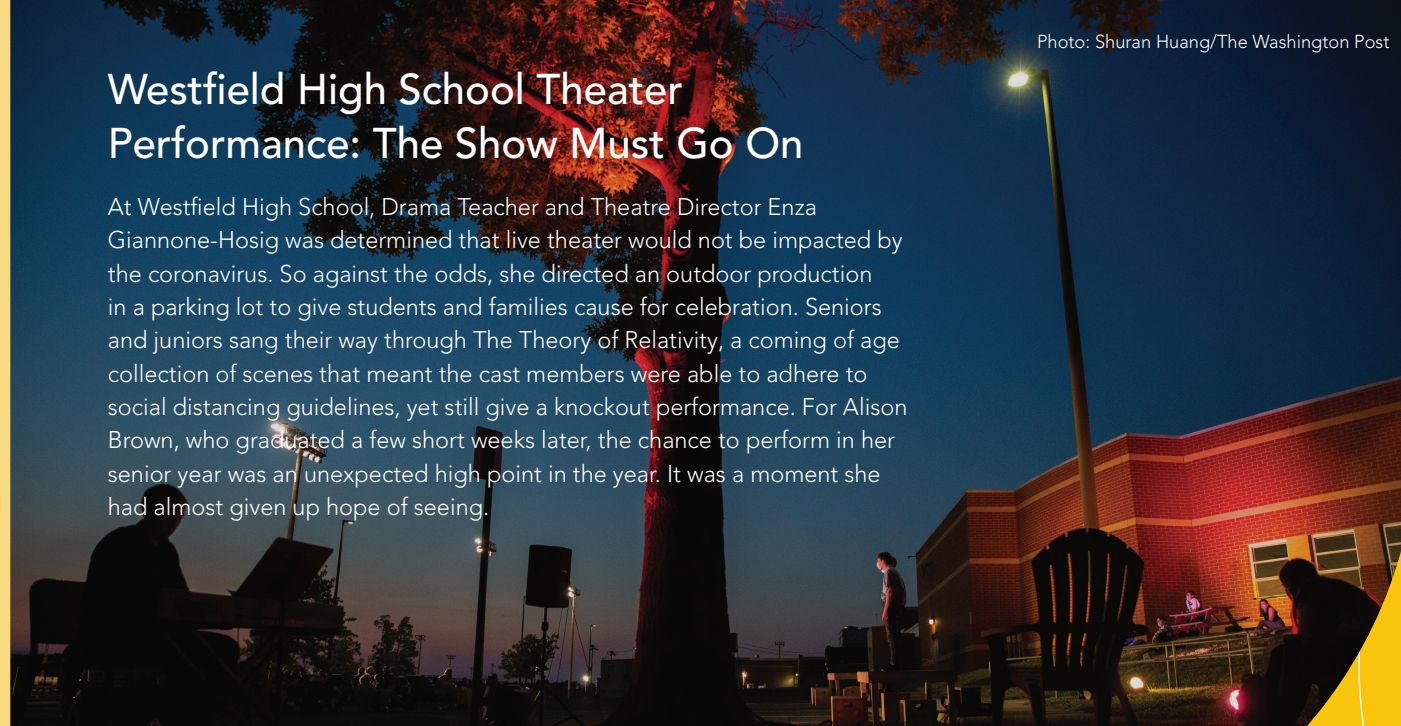
237
2020 NATIONAL MERIT SEMIFINALISTS



Westfield High School Theater Performance: The Show Must Go On

At Westfield High School, Drama Teacher and Theatre Director Enza Giannone-Hosig was determined that live theater would not be impacted by the coronavirus. So against the odds, she directed an outdoor production in a parking lot to give students and families cause for celebration. Seniors and juniors sang their way through The Theory of Relativity, a coming of age collection of scenes that meant the cast members were able to adhere to social distancing guidelines, yet still give a knockout performance. For Alison Brown, who graduated a few short weeks later, the chance to perform in her senior year was an unexpected high point in the year. It was a moment she had almost given up hope of seeing.

Photo: Shuran Huang/The Washington Post

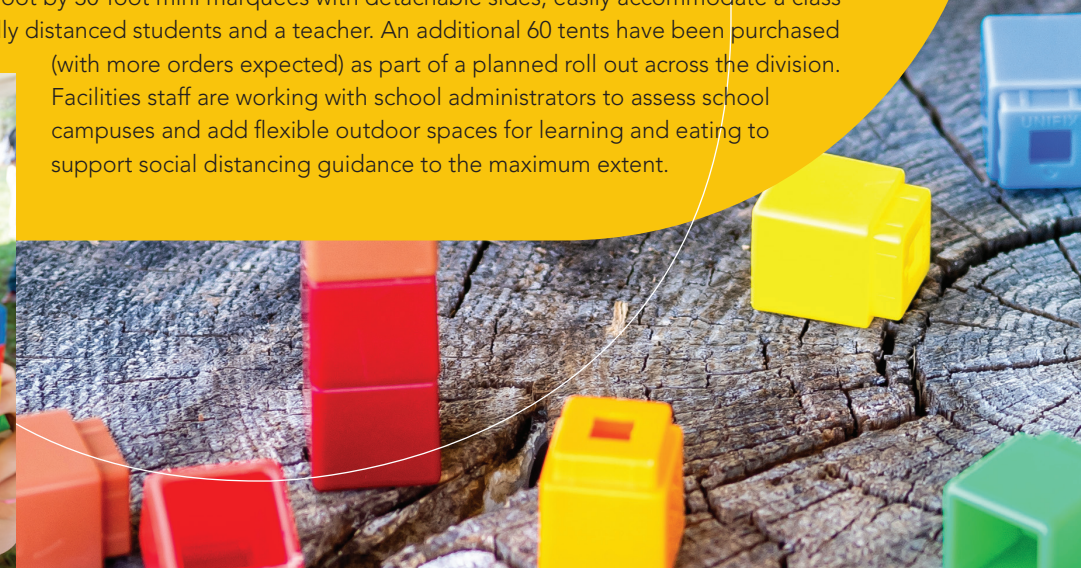


Outdoor Classrooms Bring Students Closer to the Environment

Centreville Elementary is one of five schools piloting a project launched in November 2020 to test out tented classrooms. The purpose being not only to add more floor space and accommodate more students, but also because transmission rates of COVID-19 are drastically reduced outdoors. FCPS Facilities Management staff worked closely with FCPS Get2Green to establish how to get the best use of our outdoor space during the pandemic.

Once spring arrived bringing milder weather, tents were erected and utilized at Belvedere Elementary School in Falls Church, Carson Middle School in Herndon, Hollin Meadows Elementary School in Alexandria and Mountain View High School, as well as at Centreville. Now 50 FCPS schools are using similar outdoor learning spaces.

The 20-foot by 30-foot mini marquees with detachable sides, easily accommodate a class of socially distanced students and a teacher. An additional 60 tents have been purchased (with more orders expected) as part of a planned roll out across the division. Facilities staff are working with school administrators to assess school campuses and add flexible outdoor spaces for learning and eating to support social distancing guidance to the maximum extent.



Our Innovation Shines— Rising Above the Challenges of COVID



Photo: Shuran Huang/The Washington Post

Treehouse Teaching Raises Smiles During Virtual Learning

For Haycock Elementary School teacher Nellie Williams, creativity took on new heights when she and her husband decided to upgrade their backyard treehouse into an outdoor classroom.

Williams, who is an Advanced Academic teacher at Haycock, had been teaching from a tent after schools shut down in the spring, but was inspired by the possibility of refurbishing her daughter's old treehouse. During the evenings over seven weeks this summer, Williams and her husband set out to upgrade the structure. "As you can imagine, having everyone working from home has its drawbacks and the thought of having my own space and being able to 'go to work' sounded pretty awesome at the time," said Williams. But the treehouse—



Photo: Sarah L. Voisin/The Washington Post

which hadn't been used in years—needed a lot of work. So the Williamses began by replacing the rope ladder with stairs, refurbishing the porch, laying down new flooring, insulating the treehouse, adding power, and burying ethernet cable so the treehouse could have Wi-Fi. The finished product has both heat and light, and Williams was able to teach during colder weather. Her students loved her unique surroundings.

In addition to having a short commute, Williams says her new teaching space is a perfect fit. "I think anyone that has the opportunity to create their own space, especially a unique one, should absolutely go for it," she said. "Being able to work in my treehouse has made my year!"

West Springfield Elementary School Principal Goes Door to Door

Before the school year came to an end, West Springfield Elementary Principal Kelly Sheers visited the homes of dozens of families who opted to stay virtual. She knew too well the importance of building a strong school community and the need to stay connected—and she also missed the students who she had been unable to see in person. So over several sunny mornings in May, she drove the neighborhood, stopping off to say hello and to answer questions that families had about the upcoming school year.

Students were excited to see their principal for the first time in more than 15 months. They shared what they've learned in the past year.

Kenneth Hays, father of then third-grader Finnian and second-grader Alexandra, noted one payoff of virtual learning was watching his children's technology skills explode.

"That is a huge difference actually, looking at how far they've come," Hays said. "I'm definitely better at typing," Finnian added. "It's been different. But I can't wait to go back."



Photo: Amanda Andrade-Rhoades/The Washington Post

Building Our Future: Capital Improvement Projects

Approximately two out of every three Capital Improvement Program (CIP) dollars are earmarked for renovations, additions of existing school facilities, and construction of new schools. This significant expenditure reflects the age of FCPS facilities and the School Board’s commitment to ensuring that all schools contain the facilities necessary to support current educational programs.



DID YOU KNOW?

FCPS earned the 2021 WELL Health-Safety Rating—an evidence-based, third-party verified rating for new and existing facilities that focuses on operational policies, maintenance protocols, stakeholder engagement and emergency plans.



DID YOU KNOW?

FCPS was named a 2021 ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year for Sustained Excellence, for the fourth year. FCPS’ contributions have led to Washington D.C. being named the top ENERGY STAR city in three out of the last four years.

For more information on our recently completed, ongoing, and planned projects, visit www.fcps.edu/about/Capital-Improvement-Project-Status



COMPLETED

Annandale Terrace Elementary

New classrooms, administrative offices, and a brand new library have been completed and are ready for our students. There are also upgrades to the overall site and parking.

Scope: Renovation with additions, totaling approximately 101,044 square feet.

Funding: 2015 Bond (Planning), 2017 Bond (Construction)

COMPLETED

McNair Upper Elementary School

Our latest new school welcomed its first students in August 2020. The new building, which will serve students from third to sixth grade, was needed to house the growing school population.

Scope: New school totaling approximately 105,652 square feet.

Sustainability: Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS) verified

Funding: 2015 Bond (Planning), 2017 Bond (Construction)



COMPLETED

Belle View Elementary School

Additions include classrooms, administrative offices, and a library.

Scope: Renovation with additions, totaling approximately 97,304 square feet.

Funding: 2013 Bond (Planning), 2017 Bond (Construction)



UNDER CONSTRUCTION: Robert Frost Middle School

Scope: Renovation totals approximately 206,000 square feet and includes the addition of classrooms, administrative offices, library, and site improvements.

Funding: 2017 Bond (Planning), 2019 Bond (Construction)

Current Status: Under Construction

Estimated Completion: Fall 2023

IN PLANNING: Falls Church High School

Scope: Renovation and additions totaling approximately 429,000 square feet. The addition includes science classrooms, administrative offices, library, music rooms, and site improvements.

Funding: 2017 Bond (Planning), Future Bond (Construction)

Current Status: In Permitting

Estimated Completion: Fall 2025

DID YOU KNOW?

80 FCPS schools are registered Eco-Schools, which means they meet effective “green” management criteria of the school grounds, facilities, and the curriculum as determined by the National Wildlife Federation. Of those schools, 12 have been designated Green Flag schools, the highest award an Eco-School can achieve.



Career and Technical Education— A Pathway to Practical Success

There are many paths to life success at FCPS. Our renowned Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs are second to none. From nursing and cyber security, to carpentry and marketing, our talented instructors bring real world skills and career qualifications that are in demand in today's workplace to the classroom. If they so choose, our students can graduate and walk straight from school into a valued profession. Or, they can take what they have learned and continue on to higher education with a flying start in their area of interest.

Have you heard about our home build program?

In June 2021, a “for sale” sign was erected outside 7425 Foundation Way—a brand new, million dollar home in Springfield. Right away, prospective buyers were drawn to the sparkling quartz countertops, designer bathrooms, and massive recreation room. But before it was a finished house, it served as an interactive classroom where FCPS students learned to build a home from the ground up.

Shane Bhatti is a 2021 graduate from South County High School in Lorton and is now working toward a career in carpentry. For the past year, Shane spent time installing hardwood floors, hanging drywall, and doing tile work at the 5,200-square-foot home. It's the tenth home in the Spring Village Estates to be built in part by FCPS students, with another home already under construction next door. This program is a partnership between FCPS and the Foundation for Applied Technical Education (FATE), and it's been around for 40 years.

CTE classes were some of the first to return to in-person as the COVID-19 pandemic eased.

Shane realized construction was something he wanted to pursue after graduation.

“This is something I could actually enjoy,” he said. “Something I'm not forced to learn. But something where I'm here because I

actually want to learn this.”

Shane's mom, Michelle Munday, says her son thrived in interactive learning environments. She said he worked hard to keep up, and even took advanced classes in high school. Munday says she watched with pride over the last year as her son discovered a new passion for building homes, and she credits instructor Ron Meinert for helping him along the way.

“Mr. Meinert wants to teach these kids everyday skills,” Munday said. “Just having that hands-on approach of somebody not judging, but teaching.”

Around 15 to 20 students, all over the age of 16, are involved in each house build. They work alongside subcontractors who do things like dig the basement and install the roof. This year, students weren't able to do as much hands-on work as normal due to limited in-person class time. But Meinert says students were still able to learn valuable skills, as well as “real world” lessons.

“I teach them to have pride in what they're doing,” Meinert said. “I take students and I tell them what to do and I walk away. I don't stand there and tell them ‘no no no.’ I let them do it wrong. I come back and say ‘you didn't listen.’ And I make them tear it out. And I teach them to be on time. Very important to

me. If you're late, I'm gonna fire you. So that's the kind of life stuff I teach them.”

The five-bedroom, four-bathroom house at 7425 Foundation Way listed for \$1,080,000, and sold quickly. It's built with Universal Design, meaning it has minimal steps and extra wide door openings, making it safe and accessible for everyone, regardless of age or physical ability. Realtor Greg Stiger has sold nine other student-built homes in Spring Village Estates. His company, Integrity Real Estate Group, gives \$5,000 in scholarship money to construction students each year.

“One of the things that's so rewarding about the program is seeing those parents, many who are not from means, come to the house, and see that their child helped create that beautiful home,” Stiger said. “That makes it all worthwhile.”

These homes are funded through FATE, and proceeds are used to fund future projects.



Meeka Williams, a McLean High School 2021 graduate who traveled to the Edison Academy to study Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration, won the Virginia State SkillsUSA Competition Gold Medal in June.



Special Education Instruction at Fairfax County Public Schools

Our instructional staff support the whole child from the beginning to the end of their academic career with FCPS. Utilizing best practices, we ensure an individualized approach tailored to the needs of each student.

"Even the Smallest Little Thing Can Have a Positive Impact on the Life of a Student."

When Logan De La Cruz was an infant, his mother Kolette kept track of every milestone he hit—sitting up, crawling, his first few words were all noted and checked off.

But at around 18 months of age, Logan started losing his verbal skills, and she recalled looking into his eyes one day and asking herself, "Where did my son go?"

"When he began to regress, I was very afraid. I felt he had left me completely. I knew something was wrong," said De La Cruz, an assistant principal at Crestwood Elementary School in Springfield.

It wasn't long afterward that her young son, who by then was completely nonverbal and self injurious, was diagnosed with autism. All of a sudden, the future plans that she had for her family shifted.

She added, "We didn't know what lay ahead for Logan, but we learned quickly that early intervention was critical, and we set out to do all we could to support our son."

For Logan, that meant on the day after his second birthday he took the bus to Deer Park Elementary School in Centreville where for the next three years he attended Fairfax County Public Schools' Preschool Autism Class (PAC) seven hours a day, five days a week.

Slowly but surely through intensive therapy, his speech began to return. His first new word? "Omosudis," a deep sea creature that piqued his interest in marine biology, a passion that has stayed with him throughout his 18 years.

Logan went on to attend both Centreville Elementary School and Colin Powell Elementary School. From first grade onward, he attended a mainstream class where he was bolstered by a special ed support assistant.

With the dedication of caring staff, Logan started to excel academically while continuing to receive additional therapeutic support in other areas of his development. Making social connections and learning life skills that should come naturally, presented a greater challenge.



“Every single teacher and staff member that he came into contact with, gave something to Logan. And it showed that even the smallest little thing you do can have a really positive impact on the life of a child.”

From case workers, speech therapists, and psychologists to teaching staff and administrators, all have played a role in his growth.

Logan progressed through Liberty Middle School in Clifton and then on to Centreville High School. His senior year was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, but virtual learning suited him and he made sure to take part in all the traditional rights of passage such as prom, all-night grad party, and the senior car parade.

Through his journey with FCPS, teachers and staff consistently worked to support Logan in the least restrictive environment while meeting his needs as a child on the autism spectrum who had a passion for science. FCPS teachers and staff "supported Logan socially with student buddies in the class and in the Boys Club Social Skills Group," De La Cruz said.

"They allowed him to be himself and encouraged him to build autism awareness within his classrooms," she said "They taught him how to express himself in appropriate ways and advocate for himself as a learner. Most of all, they loved him and encouraged him to be the best version of himself."

In June, Logan raised his hands in the air in celebration as he walked across the stage at the Jiffy Lube Live concert venue, graduating with a 4.0 GPA and wearing a Centreville Scholar Medal.

He was accepted into four universities and hopes to pursue a career in marine biology. This Fall, he will attend Northern Virginia Community College to allow him to work on the transition to independent living.

"He is where he is today because of a collective effort of all school staff who care deeply for the students and families they support," said his mother. "We are proud FCPS Parents."

Her son's hope for the future is simple: "Logan just wants to be accepted for who he is."

For more about Logan's story, watch the video on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/N4GsJboMmRc>

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Program—just one of the approaches we use to help neurodiverse children such as those with autism and related disorders.

ABA is the application of behavioral principles to shape behaviors and teach new skills. Behaviors are observed and analyzed to determine their function. The antecedents and consequences (events preceding and subsequent to the behavior) are analyzed and manipulated in an effort to shape or change behavior. Skills are broken down into small, discrete steps and taught systematically.

In designated classrooms, ABA is used to:

- Modify behaviors
- Teach new skills
- Prepare students to function as independently as possible

PreK-12 ABA staff provide ongoing training and direct support to school staff to enhance the delivery of services using ABA methodologies. This includes the development and implementation of individualized instructional curricula and behavioral programs.

What Diversity Teaches Us All

We support and welcome diversity in all forms at FCPS. Our students and staff bring with them differences of religion, race, geography, economic status, and gender identity.

Our students, who speak more than 200 languages, contribute to a wonderfully rich and diverse environment where we can grow and thrive together. Our global atmosphere helps students foster an appreciation and understanding of the world.

Our English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) services prepare students to be college and career ready by developing proficiency in the English language. ESOL services help students achieve academic success, develop critical thinking skills, and solve problems. More specifically, ESOL services:

- Develop English learners' language proficiency and communication skills.
- Support English learners' access to advanced academics or appropriate special services.
- Promote active participation of English learners and their families in the school community.



FCPS Pride

FCPS Pride was formed in July 2015 as an employees' group for Fairfax County Public Schools. It quickly expanded to include students and families and allies who came together to ensure a public school system in Fairfax County and City in which each person is welcome, safe, and respected regardless of their gender identity, sexual orientation, or gender expression.

In June 2021, the School Board shared a recognition in honor of Pride Month, which included,

"The Fairfax County School Board celebrates its LGBTQIA+ students and staff; recognizes the urgency of its charge to foster a responsive, caring, and inclusive culture where all feel valued, supported, and hopeful; and advances policies that seek to protect LGBTQIA+ students and staff and enhance their experience in Fairfax County Public Schools.



Furthermore, the Fairfax County School Board appreciates the many contributions made by LGBTQIA+ students, staff, and families to the vibrancy of the broader school community. Fairfax County has a richly diverse LGBTQIA+

community that includes people

from all walks of life who should be able to live without fear of prejudice, discrimination, harassment, or violence.

On behalf of the students, educators, and families of Fairfax County Public Schools, the Fairfax County School Board proclaims June 2021 as LGBTQIA+ Pride Month in Fairfax County Public Schools. In the spirit of One Fairfax, the Fairfax County School Board urges all to respect and honor our diverse community, and to build a culture of inclusivity and equity, not only during LGBTQIA+ Pride Month but throughout the entire year as well."

Celebrating Our Students



Madison High Musical Talent Taking on the World

Joshua Thrush, who played principal bass in Luther Jackson Middle School's chamber orchestra for two years, has gone international. The rising freshman at James Madison High School in Vienna won the International Society of Bassists Solo Bass Performance Competition in the 14-and-under age division.

In the contest, he played Capriccio from David Anderson's Four Short Pieces, the Allemande from Bach's First Cello Suite, and the first movement of the Dittersdorf Bass Concerto, in addition to a required piece.

Joshua, who has played the bass for nearly five years, is a youth fellow with the National Symphony Orchestra and, in 2020, was accepted into the Fairfax Symphony's All-Stars Youth Orchestra program. His FCPS musical resume includes playing double bass at Louise Archer Elementary School under strings instructor Patricia Trillet in fourth and sixth grades, as well as playing saxophone in the Louise Archer band in fifth grade and principal bass of the District 10 Honors Orchestra in seventh grade. Joshua, who also enjoys fishing, boating, and discussing the stock market, is spending time this summer at the Birch Creek Symphony Summer Music Academy in northern Wisconsin.

Making History, One Roadside Marker at a Time

Sullivan 'Sully' Massaro, a fifth grader at Kings Glen Elementary School in Springfield loves basketball and history. So when he joined the after-school History Hunters and History Makers Club and was asked to research the lives of little known Virginian African Americans, he saw his chance to combine both passions. And Sullivan's work led to the recognition of Dr. Earl Henderson, a Falls Church resident known as the 'Father of Black Basketball' who was also an educator and a prominent voice in the NAACP. With the support of club sponsor Maura Keaney, a school-based technology specialist, he nominated Dr. Henderson to Governor Ralph Northam's Black History Month Historical Marker Contest—and his entry was selected as one of just a handful of winners.

He said, "The Historical Marker Contest helped me learn more about Black Virginians who have made a difference, like Dr. Edwin Henderson."

"Dr. Henderson introduced the sport of basketball to Black athletes in Washington, D.C. and is a big part of why basketball is so popular today. As I researched him, I learned how much he did not only for the sport of basketball, but for civil rights in Virginia. I couldn't believe that he did not already have a historical marker, so I chose to nominate him for the contest."

Next year, the roadside marker will be erected in the City of Falls Church.

Queen Bee

Carson Middle School graduate Akshita Balaji, 14, won her first spelling bee at age six while visiting family in India.

At the time, her father, Balaji Kannan, says while he and her mother were impressed, they had no idea what the future would hold for Akshita.

But in June, their daughter competed on live TV as a semifinalist in the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

"I mean we thought ok, she won a competition, we moved on and had no idea that she could make it big," he said. Akshita was one of 30 students from across the country who went head-to-head, virtually, in the annual competition, which aired on ESPN platforms. She placed 21st in the entire competition

After her first victory in India, Akshita went on to win her third grade class spelling bee at McNair Elementary School in Herndon. She said she went over classroom spelling prep sheets at the time, thought she'd give it a go and, if she won, surprise her parents with the class honor. In fourth grade, she again won the class spelling bee and this time won the entire elementary school's competition, her father said.

"It was around then that we said, oh this is something she is doing consistently and enjoying it—without much preparation," Kannan said. "So we started working with her on the dictionary."

Celebrating Our Exemplary Staff

Each year we recognize exceptional employees from across the division at the FCPS Honors event. More than 700 employees in both instructional and operational roles are recognized through the Outstanding Employee Awards Program. This year, 74 finalists representing 12 categories were recognized in the special outdoor award ceremony.

Meet a selection of the staff members that make FCPS such a special place.



2021 Outstanding Elementary School Teacher

David L. Worst | Physical Education Teacher | Rose Hill Elementary School | Region 3

Dave's dedication and enthusiasm for teaching is shown in every interaction he has at Rose Hill Elementary. He builds meaningful relationships with his students to ensure that their social emotional learning needs are met. His background in Adapted P.E. makes him uniquely qualified to advocate for all students. He is at the forefront of new initiatives and serves as a model for his colleagues to ensure equity is kept firmly at the center of our interactions and instruction with students. Dave has an awareness to know when you're in need of a quick smile. He's even surprised his students by dressing up as Spiderman to keep things exciting. Dave is a trusted leader who is an inspiration to staff and students.



2021 Outstanding Secondary Teacher

Jenny Hay | English Teacher | Irving Middle School | Region 4

Her famous cookie dough cupcakes aren't the only thing legendary about Jenny Hay, a devoted teacher and Navy veteran. Whether welcoming students into her cozy classroom with flexible seating, collaborating on a Project Base Learning or cross-curricular lesson, or delivering a professional development session, Jenny is a leader who is passionate about teamwork and building authentic relationships in the community. Connection, with some southern sweetness, is her signature strength. "It is these personal connections," shared a colleague, "that inspire students to learn and achieve in Ms. Hay's class." What's most remarkable is her ability to think beyond the four walls of the classroom. She empowers her students to believe in themselves as impactful game changers who can make a difference in this world.



2021 Outstanding Operational Employee

Wanda V. Talford | Instructional Assistant | Burke School | Region 4

Students refer to Ms. Talford as the "Burke Mom," as her calm demeanor, equitable approach, and instructional skills help them to flourish. Ms. Talford is a unique and exceptional paraeducator who is recognized for her collaborative spirit, content knowledge, and behavior management skills. Her positive attitude, dedication to student success, and organizational abilities make her a regular candidate for positions of leadership, including After School Program Coordinator, new staff mentor, and Equity Team member. Ms. Talford strives to celebrate student diversity within Burke School and to enrich learning with responsive approaches. Trained in cultural proficiency practices, she provides critical support to staff in their efforts to ensure that equity is at the center of teaching throughout the school.



2021 Outstanding Non School-based Operational Employee

Maria J. Miller | Multilingual Registrar | Dunn Loring Center, Special Services

As a navigator facilitating enrollment since 2000, Maria builds rapport with families and assists them with their concerns while she ensures parents and students have their critical needs met, while working to instill a feeling of excitement about FCPS. She builds trust with her diverse team, creating a positive work culture while encouraging them to render "service above self." The team in the Student Registration Office nurtures and supports each other, celebrates successes, and strives to have fun along the way—and Maria is a big part of that team. She also goes the extra mile working with community members to connect families to additional resources available to them.



2021 Outstanding School-based Leader

Kathryn Crump Teague | Director, Student Services | Katherine Johnson Middle School | Region 5

"I have an idea," are the words most often uttered by Kathryn in meetings, conversations, or even when she is at home with family. She is constantly thinking of innovative ways to build a more positive and inclusive community at Katherine Johnson. You can often find her walking the halls, checking on students in passing, or having lunch with her mentees. As the lead singer of Katherine Johnson's staff band, "The Screaming Eagles," Kathryn has performed at school pep rallies and successfully delivered opening-of-school professional development through song. Her love of working with middle school students is matched only by her love of data and spreadsheets. She is equally happy helping students strengthen their social-emotional skills and working with her colleagues to analyze data.



The Class of 2021 graduation was a true celebration of achievement through resilience. Our seniors have had their final year disrupted in so many ways yet, despite the challenges, they succeeded. Congratulations to our amazing graduates. We wish you the best.

Class of 2021 Graduation— Farewell and Congratulations To Our Seniors



Increased Equity & Access

Providing an equitable education for all is at the heart of everything we do at FCPS where diversity in all forms is valued.

- In November 2020, we established a new leadership program—Student Equity Ambassador Leaders (SEALS)—to amplify student voices and provide an increased understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion through leadership development, projects, and relevant experiences of high school students.
- At Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST), an overhaul of the admissions process was implemented for applicants to the freshman Class of 2025.

This is the first class to apply under the revised admissions process, which eliminated the standardized admissions test for TJHSST, eliminated the \$100 application fee, eliminated teacher recommendations, raised the minimum GPA, included a Student Portrait Sheet (replacing previous Student Information Sheet), continued to use Problem-Solving Essay, included experience factors and expanded the freshman class from 480 to 550. Seats in the TJHSST freshman class were also allocated for the top 1.5% of applicants from every middle school.

For the first time in at least 10 years, every FCPS middle school has students who were offered admission to TJHSST. The students accepted for the Class of 2025 are high performers and are well prepared for the school’s academic rigor. At 3.9, the average GPA for applicants is higher this year than it has been in the past five years. The average GPA for students offered admission remains extremely high at more than 3.95.

Last fall’s changes to the TJHSST admissions process also resulted in a significant increase in access for groups who have faced barriers to entry, including special education students, students eligible for free and/or reduced-price meals, and English Learners.

The new admissions process continues to be merit based and is race blind.



The Names We Change

The summer of 2020 was a time of reckoning in the U.S. and, as the nation grappled with challenging questions surrounding race, so did FCPS. We took a long hard look at some of the people our schools were named after and felt we could do better.



After hearing from students, staff and community, we changed the names of three of our schools.

Robert E. Lee High School in Springfield became John R. Lewis High School.

The Fairfax County School Board voted to remove the name of the Confederate general and replace it with the late civil rights hero and congressman. Board member Ricardy Anderson said that the district wanted to choose a name that reflected the school’s multiculturalism.

Mosby Woods Elementary School in Oakton became Mosaic Elementary School.

Colonel John S. Mosby was a Confederate commander who led a guerrilla campaign against Union supply and communications lines during the Civil War. “We live in a county that speaks over 200 languages and has people from all walks of life,” member-at-large Abrar Omeish said at a School Board meeting in February 2021. “Mosaic is a way to bring everyone together under that name.”

Sidney Lanier Middle School in Fairfax became Katherine Johnson Middle School.

Sidney Lanier was a prominent American poet and private in the Confederate army. Katherine Johnson was one of four Black women whose work with NASA helped pave the way for the first American astronaut to successfully orbit Earth.



2021-2022 Fairfax County School Board Members

The 12 School Board members are elected for four-year terms; one member represents each of the County’s nine magisterial districts, and three members serve at large.

Stella Pekarsky	Chair, Sully District
Rachna Sizemore Heizer	Vice-Chair, Member-at-Large
Ricardy Anderson	Mason District
Laura Jane Cohen	Springfield District
Karen Corbett Sanders	Mount Vernon District
Tamara Derenak Kaufax	Lee District
Karl Frisch	Providence District
Karen Keys-Gamarra	Member-at-Large
Megan McLaughlin	Braddock District
Melanie Meren	Hunter Mill District
Abrar Omeish	Member-at-Large
Elaine Tholen	Dranesville District
Pranav Choudhary	Student Representative

Our Students, Our Strength. To learn more about the ways that your financial gift can support these programs and more, please visit fcpfoundation.org.



Get Connected to FCPS

Sign up for school newsletters at

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/VAEDUFCPS/subscriber/new>

Follow FCPS on Social Media:



@fcpsnews



@fcpsva



@fairfaxcountypublicschools

Spanish:



@fcpsES



@fcpsES

Watch School Board meetings by tuning in to Channel 21

Call us at 571-423-3000 (General Information)

