

2023-2024 Report to Parents

Fort Mill High School

School Achievements

Every year, Fort Mill High School earns local, state, and national recognition for the effort the students, faculty, and community members commit to the success of our school. The 2023-2024 school year was no different.

This year, the US News and World Report ranked Fort Mill High School as #7 in the state and #3 in traditional high schools in South Carolina.

Fort Mill High School students are focused on academics but understand the importance of giving back to the community and helping others. The FMHS community raised almost \$12,000 during the annual Pink Out, benefitting the Crucial Catch Campaign supporting breast cancer. We were the top raiser for the state and second in the nation! The FMHS faculty and students raised over \$10,000 to support our local students participating in Special Olympics. The fundraiser culminated in several staff members taking a dive into freezing waters during the Annual Polar Plunge and representing FMHS in the district-wide dodgeball tournament to support the Special Olympics.

CAROLINA PANTHER'S CRUCIAL CATCH GAME



On October 1, 2023,
Fort Mill High School Pink Out was recognized during the
Carolina Panthers annual Crucial Catch game as the
#1 fundraising high school in South Carolina for 2022.

In addition to the school's recognition, local breast cancer
survivors participated in a halftime presentation to
celebrate their survivorship.



Excellence in Athletics

This year approximately 810 of our students participated in athletics at Fort Mill High School. The school claimed four team state championships in Girls and Boys Swimming including three relay state champions, Girls Cross Country including Alivia Cleveland as the individual state champion, and in Wrestling which was their second straight title. FMHS Athletics also claimed two state runners up in Boys Cross Country and Girls Lacrosse. We also claimed nine region championships in Girls Swimming, Boys Swimming, Girls Cross Country, Boys Cross Country, Boys Volleyball, Wrestling, Baseball, Girls Golf and Girls Lacrosse. Fort Mill High School also had 120 senior athletes recognized by the South Carolina High School League as scholar athletes (3.5 G.P.A. or

higher and a varsity letter), and 21 have committed to play a sport in college. FMHS is also home to 134 multi-sport athletes.





Excellence in Performing Arts

The Fort Mill High School Performing Arts Department has represented our community, state, and country well this school year.

The Fort Mill Dance Team and the Fort Mill Colorguard had a successful marching band season with the opportunity to perform in a Disneyland parade in addition to competing in Bands of America competition in Utah. We performed in the annual Cabaret performance with the Concert Choir and multiple Holiday themed shows around the community. The Fort Mill Chapter of the National Honor Society for Dance Arts inducted 12 members in November and will induct an additional 5 in May. These students will be recognized at their graduation for their artistic merits and



achievements by their light blue & white graduation cord. Our dance instructor, Mrs. Elizabeth Hagen, was recognized as the 2023 Dance Educator of the Year at the annual SCAHPERD Conference in Myrtle Beach. During second semester, the Fort Mill High School Dance Team competed at multiple locations endorsed by the South Carolina Dance Association including Clover Classic, Capital City Dance Team Championship (Dutch Fork High School), Cougarette Classic (College of Charleston), and the SCDA State Dance Team Championship where we were awarded 2nd place in the state for our Game Day routine and 3rd place in the state for Pom. Auditions for the 2024-2025 FMDT will take place on Saturday, April 27th. All of our dance students have had the opportunity to take multiple field trips this semester to Winthrop University and the Charlotte Ballet. Dancers in 4th block will be performing with select members of the Concert Choir at the Fort Mill Rotary Literacy Picnic at the Greenway on May 1st. The very next week all dance students 2-4 will be performing in a district wide recital at Fort Mill High School, May 9th at 7 pm.

The Fort Mill HS Band grew to 176 members this year, including a performance partnership in the fall with the FMHS Dance Team. With a show entitled "Aphrodite," the marching band won Grand Championship titles at Gaffney's Reservation Tournament of Champions, Irmo's *Esprit de Corps* Invitational, Mooresville's Blue Devil Classic, and The Providence Cup at Providence HS. In November the band flew to California for a memorable parade performance at Disneyland, and then drove to southern Utah for the Bands of America Regional at Utah Tech. Of the 32 bands in competition, Fort Mill placed first in their class, winning the awards for Best Music and Best Visual. The three Wind Symphonies (concert bands) presented a holiday concert in December, winter concert in February, pre-CPA concert in March, chamber concert in April, and spring concert in May. The jazz band, winter guards, and percussion ensemble continued to be audience favorites throughout the second semester.



The Choral Department welcomed 56 new singers into the underclassman Choir program. These students performed in the annual Cabaret, Winter, and Spring concerts with the 90+ member Concert Choir. Singers of our department were recognized on state and regional levels this year. Nine singers were selected for the South Carolina Honor Choir and performed at Francis Marion Performing Arts Center in October. Seven singers were selected to represent FMHS regionally this past February as singers in the ACDA Southeastern Region Honor Choir. Pavni Chougule was selected as an All-State Choir member and performed at Winthrop University on March 2, 2024. Community performances for the group include the Festival of Carols at Unity Church, the Baxter

Tree Lighting, the Kingsley Winter Celebration, and the Literacy Picnic at the Greenway. Choir members also attended singing events with the 4K Lab students such as caroling at Wellmore. One of the highlights for the Concert Choir was performing in Florence and Venice, Italy over spring break. 54 singers performed at La Chiesa della Pietà (Santa Maria della Pietà) in Venice and the Basilica of Santa Trinità in Florence.



Excellence in Visual Arts

The FMHS visual arts department has had a very busy and successful school year. Several art students were selected to exhibit works in the juried York County High School Art Show. Out of 88 entries, FMHS accounted for 5 of 7 awards, including 1st, 2nd, 3rd, Honorable Mention, and the esteemed Herb Dumaresq Memorial Award.

Senior artist Elsie Ebrahimi was selected as the high school ArtPop artist! Her artwork, "On the Way to the Creek," was selected as 1 of only 20 winners. Her artwork was displayed on a billboard in our area as well as in other venues including Times Square in NYC!

This is a very prestigious honor, and we could not be more proud of her accomplishments!



The portfolio honors students who worked with the 4-year-old Kindergarten class on an art project for Dot Day. They assisted the little ones with painting dots inspired by the circle paintings of abstract artist Kandinsky. Little did they know, the circles glowed in the dark. Painting 1 and 2 students interviewed the 4-year-old Kindergarten class and created portraits of the students based on their interests. At the end of the unit, each 4-year-old Kindergarten student was presented with their painted portrait as a gift!

We held our 1st Semester Student Art Exhibit in December and our 2nd Semester Student Art Exhibit in April in the Learning Commons. The exhibits allowed all art students to showcase at least one artwork each. We had a great turnout for both events!

Approximately 45 student artworks were submitted to the Mid-Carolina Scholastic Art Competition in which 10 artworks received recognition!! This is a prestigious honor for our visual art students. 3 Silver and 5 Gold Key winners had their works on display at the Mint Museum of Art in Charlotte, NC for a month and were celebrated with a reception at the venue in April. Paige Rublee's sculpture, "My Grandmother's Angel," was chosen to be displayed on one of Adam's Outdoor Billboard in Pineville.

For the holidays, Ceramics 1 students created ornaments using the sgraffito technique. Their ornaments were displayed in the front office throughout the holiday season - a tradition we hope to continue for many years.

The AP Art and Design students rounded out the spring semester by exhibiting their entire art portfolios at the annual AP Art Show held at FMHS in late April.

In addition to competitions and art shows, our visual arts students stay involved in school and community events. Our National Art Honor Society participated in the Town of Fort Mill's Annual Scarecrow Crawl, creating "Frida Krowlo" out of recycled materials and art supplies. At the May Induction Ceremony, 19 new members will be inducted and 5 seniors will be honored with their graduation cords.

The revitalized Yellow Jacket Art Club welcomed 15 enthusiastic members, providing a supportive platform for budding artists to explore and refine their craft. The club fosters a nurturing environment for younger art students to experiment with new techniques without fear of failure.



Excellence in Extra-Curricular Activities

DECA prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality and management in high schools and colleges around the globe. The FM DECA team had an incredible year! Students competed at the regional and state level to advance to the International Career Development Conference (ICDC) which was held in Anaheim, California. Thirteen incredible students from Fort Mill advanced to the ICDC and represented our school with professionalism and excellence. This is a 100% increase of Fort Mill DECA members advancing to the international conference. The 2024 ICDC was the largest conference to date with 23,000 members in attendance from all over the world. The business department is beyond proud of the entire DECA team!



For the third year in a row, the Fort Mill FFA Chapter was honored to be recognized at the National Convention as a National Gold Star Chapter, among the top 10% in the nation. The chapter also received the Governor's Citation Award for being the top chapter in the state for growing leaders. Twelve delegates represented our chapter at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana. In state events our Veterinary Science and Floriculture Teams won state championships. The Forestry Team finished as state runner up and our agronomy team placed 5th. All Fort Mill Teams for other events placed in the top ten among the 140 state agriculture programs.





Fort Mill High Schools new Envirothon Team competed in a single day competition at the Clemson Sandhill Research and Education Center in Columbia. The team competed in 5 different categories involving local ecology and a current events topic: Wildlife, Aquatics, Soils, Forestry, and the current topic was "Renewable Energy for a Sustainable Future." The team worked together on all subjects and had to create a presentation prior to the competition and present it in front of a panel of 4 expert judges. Since they were registered as an FFA affiliated team they were also competing for the State level of the competition against 9 other FFA registered teams. The placements are as follows: **1st place among FFA teams** - This qualifies them for the National FFA competition in Indianapolis in October in the Environmental and Natural Resources Career Development Event category. This was the first time that Fort Mill HS has competed in this competition. We were the only York County team out there!



It should be noted that the York County Soil and Water Conservation District graciously paid our team registration fee.

The Fort Mill High School Marine Corps JROTC had another fantastic year. We started the summer at our leadership camp at Camp McCready on the Fort Jackson Complex. 16 of our cadets attended this rigorous camp along with three other schools. We had several of our cadets hold top leadership positions at the camp. Our cadets were also very active and excelled in other areas throughout the year. Our air rifle team won numerous matches this year. These matches culminated in the team qualifying for the Marine Corps Nationals in Sandy, Utah where we ended up ranked fourteenth in the nation. We had one team member qualify for the All JROTC Service Nationals at Camp Perry, Ohio who ended up as the number 8 shooter in the country for all JROTC services. The Air Rifle Team also was the South Carolina State Champions for the Junior Olympics. Our academic team was able to move onto the second round of the National Joint Leadership Academic Bowl (JLAB) which put them in the top 20 in the nation. The Color Guard was busy this year as they presented colors for most of the varsity sports teams and many community events. In addition, they were requested and presented the colors for the NASCAR Xfinity Race in the Spring. Our Raider team competed in two meets where they dominated the Piedmont Raider Meet by winning every event and thus took first amongst 14 schools. They followed this up with a Runner-Up finish at the Hopewell Raider Meet amongst 17 schools. The cadets gave over 1100 hours of community service time over the school year to the local community and veteran organizations. The program's four seniors amassed over \$215,000 of scholarship money. We conducted three successful and enjoyable field trips. Our first was to Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island. The cadets that participated here experienced two days of what Marine Recruits endure during their training. Our second was our annual ski trip to Winter Park in West Virginia, and our last trip was to Patriot's Point where the cadets were able to spend a night on a real Navy ship



while they also conducted tours and received simulator time to understand shipboard life and flight operations about air capable navy ships. All of our events and extra-curricular are totally voluntary and come with little or no cost. As you can see, we have a very active program where we have been recognized as a Naval Honor School for the past four years. Even with this we more importantly look to develop our cadets in Leadership, Character and becoming productive citizens, along with many soft skills that employers desire. Because our students often work closely together along with the many events that we participate in with a team mentality, many of our students develop close friendships within our program. Lastly, and probably most importantly, there is zero / no military obligation in taking this course. Your son and or daughter can be in our program one day or four years and again, there is no military obligation. We have additional information about our program on our tab that is on the school's website. We are looking forward to a great year with our cadets and parents.

The Forensic Science club joined with the Chemistry club this year to compete at Science Olympiad with a top-five finish in the state, and we joined with HOSA to compete at their state convention.



Model UN met weekly to work on public speaking skills, research, and practice debates. Model UN participated in their second annual Fort Mill Schools Model UN Competition held at Catawba Ridge in October 2023. This was excellent practice for our students participating in Winthrop University's 48th Annual Model UN Competition held over a period of three days in March 2023. Fort



Mill High School had 19 students that represented four countries: France, Paraguay, Hungary, and Tunisia. Our delegates brought home three Distinguished Delegate Awards and tied for the Silver Resolution Award. This was the first year Fort Mill has won for a student-written resolution.

The Esports Club kicked off its inaugural year this year! This is a club where students can take their love for video games and actually play video games competitively with the chance to earn college scholarships. They played a variety of games such as Super Smash Bros, Mario Kart, and Rocket League. The students have been able to work together as a team, get better at their gaming skills, and enjoy playing video games with their friends. They did not make playoffs, but we have high hopes for the future!

Fort Mill High School Mock Trial spent tireless hours this year after school 3 days a week with local lawyers preparing for competition. Students placed 2nd in the regionals competition and 9th at the state competition. Fort Mill had students place in both the regional and state competitions as most effective attorney and most effective witness.



About the Fort Mill High School School Improvement Council

The School Improvement Council of Fort Mill High School is a group of educational stakeholders that attempt to promote and support academic achievement and civic engagement at Fort Mill High School. This group of students, parents, teachers, and community members facilitate meaningful parent and community involvement at Fort Mill High School. The SIC meets monthly to discuss ways to support academics, athletics, visual and performing arts, and student body events. Also, they review the policies and set annual goals aimed at targeting areas of need specific to the students of Fort Mill High School.

The FMHS SIC goal for the 2023-2024 school year was crafted to focus on college and career readiness and parent involvement and understanding. The FMHS SIC established a plan to host a Next Steps parent night to provide parents with a resource fair featuring local SAT/ACT prep and college and career experts. The event also included a session presented by the FMHS counseling department to highlight student resources. The event went very well, and the SIC plans to continue and grow it moving forward!

The SIC parents also organized gift card collections to celebrate the FMHS teachers at Christmas and during teacher appreciation week. This is always a huge hit and very much appreciated by our teachers.

Lastly, we partnered with a local prom dress closet and donated the dresses we collected as a SIC last year to reach more students across the county.

The Mission of Fort Mill High School

Fort Mill High School's mission is to provide each student with the necessary skills and knowledge needed to become a lifelong learner and a responsible, productive citizen in a democratic society.

Additional Information

Fort Mill High School proudly recognizes Mr. Tim Pasour as the Fort Mill High School Teacher of the Year and Mr. Travis Caskey as the Fort Mill High School Support Staff of the Year.



The graduating class of 2023 contained 461 students boasting a 97.1% on-time graduation rate. The average SAT score was 1097 (reading and math). The average ACT composite score was 22.1. The class of 2023 collectively earned more than 15.2 million dollars in scholarships. During the 2022-2023 school year, Fort Mill High School coordinated 773 Advanced Placement exams to our students with 91.9% scoring a 3 or better on at least one AP test. This spring, our Teacher Cadet program had 13 students sign letters of intent to pursue careers in education in college.

Purpose of the Report

This report is issued by the Fort Mill High School, School Improvement Council in accordance with South Carolina law to share information on the school's progress in meeting various goals and objectives, the work of the SIC, and other accomplishments during the school year.

For more information regarding the Fort Mill High School SIC please contact Ellen Borland at borlande@fortmillschools.org

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