

Forest Area School District Newsletter

2026 School Year

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT:

As we finally welcome Spring, I want to take a moment to thank our students, families, staff, and community for the warm support you've shown during my first year as superintendent. Over the past several months, I've spent a great deal of time listening, learning, and reflecting, meeting with stakeholders, visiting classrooms, and comparing and contrasting practices to better understand what makes our district strong and where we can continue to grow. If there is one constant in public education, it is change, and I'm proud of the thoughtful, student-centered way our district continues to evolve.

It is also important to note that our teachers and district leadership have been extremely busy this year analyzing our curriculum and aligning it to best practices, ensuring that every student, from our littlest learners to our graduating seniors, is well prepared to take their next steps.

As we look ahead to the next school year, I encourage all families to review several important updates that are on the horizon. These include adjustments to our high school credit requirements designed to provide greater flexibility and opportunity for students, a slightly later school start time to better support student well-being and readiness to learn, and a revised school calendar structure that reflects feedback from our community. These changes reflect a year-long effort of meeting with school and community stakeholder groups and are intended to meet the needs of our students, our educators, and our families. Each of these updates are rooted in careful consideration and a shared commitment to doing what is best for our students.

In that same spirit, that we have heard you, I am hoping you will hear me in a small request: please find a way to support our students. Whether it is by attending concerts, sporting events, school plays, our America250 House Events in May, a fundraising activity (or two or three...), or a ceremony, your presence matters. Showing up for our students is an investment in the future of Forest County. I encourage you to continue checking our Facebook page and the FASD website for opportunities to show your support.

Thank you for your continued partnership and commitment to our schools. Together, we are building something special for our students and our community.

Warm regards,

Mrs. Beers

SPRING 2026

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DISTRICT UPDATES



Credit Reduction

At a recent meeting, the Forest Area School Board approved updates to high school graduation requirements that will gradually reduce the total number of credits needed to graduate, from 28 to 27 for the Class of 2027, 26 for the Class of 2028, and 25 for the Class of 2029 and beyond. Forest Area's previous requirement of 28 credits was the highest among neighboring districts, and these changes bring the district more in line with regional expectations while also aligning with the revised school day schedule.

Families should know that these adjustments do not reduce the rigor of a Forest Area education. Students will continue to complete core coursework in English, math, science, and social studies and meet all Pennsylvania requirements, including college and career readiness activities, Keystone Exam expectations, and state-approved graduation pathways. The updated structure ensures students remain well prepared for postsecondary education, training, or the workforce while balancing a realistic and supportive academic workload.

Class of 2027 = 27 Credits

Class of 2028 = 26 Credits

Class of 2029 = 25 Credits

School Day Start Time Adjustment

Beginning in the upcoming school year, Forest Area School District will implement a revised daily schedule, with student arrival time moving from 7:45 a.m. to 8:10 a.m. This adjustment is designed to better support student readiness for learning while maintaining a full instructional day. Families can expect additional details regarding transportation schedules and building-specific routines to be shared prior to the start of the school year. We encourage parents and guardians to begin planning for this change as we work to ensure a smooth transition for all students.

Starting Fall 2026, the school day start time for students will be 8:10 am.

Changes to School Calendar

Forest Area School District will be transitioning from an hours-based calendar to a days-based calendar beginning in the upcoming school year. Previously, the district met state requirements through a minimum number of instructional hours (900 hours for elementary students and 990 hours for high school students). Moving forward, the district will provide 180 days of instruction for all students.

Later school start times are supported by research showing that adolescents learn best when they are well-rested, leading to improved focus, engagement, and overall academic success. This change ensures continued compliance with state requirements while providing greater consistency and predictability for families when planning around the school year. Additional details, including the finalized school calendar and key dates, will be shared with families in advance of the new school year.

2026-2027 School Calendars are available on "For Parents" page of the Forest Area website. [Click Here](#)

In Fall 2026, the Forest Area calendar will have 180 instructional days for all students.

KEY DATES & DISTRICT INSIGHTS



Mark your calendar!

Date	Event
May 26, 2026	America 250 events at West Forest
May 27, 2026	America 250 events at East Forest
May 31, 2026	WF Baccalaureate - 5:00 PM, Location: United Methodist Church
May 31, 2026	EF Baccalaureate - 7:00 PM, Location: St Ann Catholic Church
June 3, 2026	EF Commencement - 6:30 PM
June 4, 2026	Last Day for Students - Dismissal at 11:04 AM
June 4, 2026	WF Commencement - 6:30 PM

Just In Case You Were Wondering

Great things are happening in our schools, and we're excited to share that opportunity with even more families! Our district welcomes a limited number of out-of-district students each year through our non-resident enrollment program, based on available space and Board approval. From strong academics to vibrant extracurriculars and a supportive school community, we're proud of all we offer our students every day. Details are available in the school offices.



**Out of District
Student Opportunities
Available!**



CELEBRATING STUDENT SUCCESS

FCCLA Accomplishments

Students from East Forest and West Forest earned impressive recognition at the Pennsylvania Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) State Leadership Conference, held March 23–25 at the Kalahari Resort and Conference Center.

Participants competed in a range of STAR Events (Students Taking Action with Recognition), earning gold, silver, and bronze medals across multiple categories. Many projects also received national invitations, reflecting the high level of student achievement and preparation.

In addition to competition success, students demonstrated strong leadership at the regional, state, and national levels, contributing to conference planning, membership efforts, and organizational initiatives. Both chapters were also honored for their commitment to community service, outreach, and overall program excellence.

These accomplishments highlight the strength of the FCCLA program in developing leadership, career readiness, and real-world skills, supported by dedicated advisors, staff, families, and community members.

Pictured (East Forest): Front row, left to right: Alexandra Carroll, Abigail Potter, Hailee Oliver, Addyson Neill, Jonah Glass, Maya Shionis, Grace Cornman. Back row: Mathew Wonderling, Logan Stevenson, Garret Swineford, Vera Heferle, Nick Geraci, and Jacob Glass.

Pictured (West Forest): Front Row, left to right: Natalie Wagner, Kiarra Wagner, Alison McLaughlin, Macalie Hoffmann. Back Row: Izzy Wagner, Kale Morrison, Esther Forker, Bobby Payne, Alanah Wagner, Ethan Beach.



East Forest



West Forest



Racing Into the Record Books

East Forest sophomore, Vera Heferle is making history this season, setting new records in both the 100-meter and 200-meter dash as part of the track and field co-op with North Clarion.

The achievement is especially notable within the cooperative program as she becomes just the fourth Forest Area athlete to become a record holder. Previous record holders include Caleb Kiefer (800m, 2015), Dalton Silvis (long jump, 2012), and Jarrett Kahle (triple jump, 2017).

This accomplishment highlights the impact of dedication and perseverance, and it's a great point of pride for our school community. Congratulations, Vera!

BRAVO!



Photo Credit: Matt Lerch from Explore Clarion

Rookie of the Year

Antonio Campbell, a freshman at Abraxas participating in Forest Area's basketball co-op program, made an immediate impact for the team. He averaged 19.1 points and 8.0 rebounds per game, scored 20 or more points in nine games, and topped 30 points three times, including a season-high 37 against Austin and 35 against A-C Valley.



STUDENT LIFE, ARTS & EXPERIENCES

East Forest Talent Show

East Forest elementary students recently took the stage for a fun and memorable talent show, showcasing a wide range of performances. From traditional acts like piano and singing to more creative entries, including a crowd-pleasing round of dad jokes, students demonstrated confidence, creativity, and a willingness to try something new. The event was a great opportunity to celebrate student talents and build a sense of community within the school.

TALENT SHOW!



(Dad jokes pictured)

Drama Productions

West Forest Drama Club recently presented *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, and students delivered an outstanding performance from start to finish. Their hard work, preparation, and dedication were clear in every scene, bringing the story to life for a captivated audience. The production was a true team effort, with students showcasing both talent and commitment throughout the show. A special thank you also goes to The Nutrition Group for providing a meal for audience members on both nights, which added to the overall experience and was greatly appreciated by those in attendance.

East Forest Drama Club presented *How to Get Away with a Murder Mystery*, a fast-paced, comedic whodunit that put students right at the center of the action. As the mystery unfolded, a cast of quirky characters kept the audience guessing with plenty of twists, surprises, and laughs along the way. Students brought the story to life in a performance that proved nothing is quite as it seems, and everyone is a suspect.

West Forest ↘



East Forest ↘



Forest Area Trap Team

The newly established Forest Area Trap Team is underway for the spring season, bringing together nine student-athletes from the East Forest and West Forest communities to compete in the Pennsylvania State High School Clay Target League. The program includes three weeks of practice followed by five weeks of competition and concludes with a fun shoot, with all team events held at the Allegheny Valley Sportsman's Association. Scores are submitted electronically each week, allowing the team to compete against similarly sized schools from across the state. Team members will also have the opportunity to participate in the state tournament in Elysburg on May 31st. The success of the program is made possible through the generous support of local businesses, organizations, and individuals, as well as the dedication of parent volunteers who assist with scoring and organization.



West Forest Olympics

West Forest High School students got a fun and engaging look at how their work in physical education connects to the real world. The Winter Olympics came to life in the gym through a vibrant visual showcase, sparking excitement and great conversations. Students made meaningful connections between their own effort and the dedication of world-class athletes. It was great to see their energy and enthusiasm throughout the activity.



Industry Club Trip to Erie

Students from both the West Forest and East Forest Industry Clubs concluded this year's sessions with a field trip to Erie. The group toured Penn State Behrend, where they explored the campus and learned about the wide range of academic programs, career pathways, and student activities available. Following the campus visit, students traveled to Splash Lagoon for a behind-the-scenes tour to gain insight into the business operations of the facility. The day wrapped up with time at the water park, providing a well-earned opportunity for students to relax and celebrate a successful year in Industry Club.



LEARNING & LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

National Honor Society Induction

East Forest ~ A sense of pride and accomplishment filled the auditorium on the morning of March 20th as students, families, and faculty gathered to celebrate the induction of new members into the Karl P. Seiffert Chapter of the National Honor Society (NHS) at East Forest High School. The ceremony recognized outstanding students who have demonstrated excellence in scholarship, leadership, service, and character.

Current NHS members led a traditional candle-lighting ceremony, symbolizing the four pillars of the organization. Each pillar was introduced with a brief reflection, emphasizing the importance of maintaining high standards both in and out of the classroom. The ceremony concluded with a pledge recited by the new members, affirming their dedication to upholding the values of the National Honor Society.

West Forest NHS induction will be held later in the spring.



Pictured from left to right are: Jacob Glass, Isaiah Alderton, Alexandria Carroll, Hailee Oliver, Jonah Glass, Aidan Faust, Nicholas Geraci, Zachary Walton, Addyson Neill, Logan Stevenson, and Maya Shionis. Missing from the picture is Vera Heferle.

Warren/Forest Career Day

The Warren and Forest County Career Day was a collaborative effort between the Warren-Forest Higher Education Council, multiple agencies, businesses, and school districts, specifically the Forest Area and Warren County school districts. The event was designed to bring together high school students from across the region for immersive, hands-on career exploration.

Over 50 employers were present, along with several banking institutions. The banks presented a "Financial Reality" challenge in which students simulated how earned wages are spent on expected and unexpected daily living expenses. Many thanks to the businesses that gave their time and financial support to this extremely valuable experience for the students of Forest County!



Read Across America

Read Across America Week was celebrated across the district with a variety of activities designed to promote a love of reading and strengthen literacy skills at all grade levels. Students and staff participated in themed days, classroom read-alouds, and engaging literacy-focused events that made reading both fun and meaningful. At West Forest, families were invited to a special Reader's Theater event, where each grade level performed skits that highlighted students' reading fluency, expression, and teamwork, followed by a shared meal that brought the school community together. At East Forest, daily themes inspired by well-known books encouraged creativity and participation, with younger students contributing artwork connected to their reading. Overall, the week served as a strong reminder of the importance of building lifelong reading habits while fostering connection between school and community.



COMMUNITY & STUDENT IMPACT



Donation from United Methodist Church

The Forest Area School District is pleased to recognize the generous support of the Tionesta United Methodist Church, which recently donated ninety backpacks and ninety pencil pouches to the district. The backpacks and supply bags were provided to help ensure that local students have access to essential school supplies that support their learning and academic success. Kelly Wellington is pictured delivering the donated backpacks to Mr. Alex and students at West Forest School. These supplies will help meet the needs of many students throughout the district and provide additional support for families in the community. The Forest Area School District extends its sincere appreciation to the Tionesta United Methodist Church for its generosity and continued commitment to supporting the students and families of our community. Partnerships such as this play an important role in helping our students succeed both inside and outside the classroom.



American Heart Association Pie in the Face

Mr. Wright recently proved he is a great sport when he was pied in the face by students who earned the opportunity through their hard work and dedication. The students qualified for this reward by successfully completing Finn's Mission as part of the American Heart Association Kids Heart Challenge. To accomplish this goal, students completed seven meaningful tasks focused on heart health and life-saving skills. These activities included learning and practicing hands-only CPR and identifying the warning signs of a stroke, empowering them with knowledge that could one day help save a life. Their achievement not only earned them a fun and memorable moment but also reinforced the importance of community service, health awareness, and being prepared to respond in an emergency. The event was a celebration of both their effort and their commitment to making a difference.

West Forest

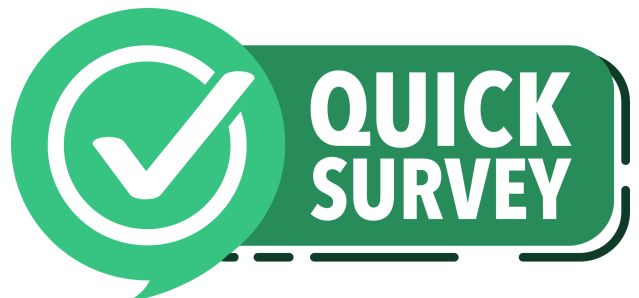


East Forest



ALUMNI SURVEY

If you are a Forest Area graduate and haven't already completed the survey, please [click here](#). We would love to know what you're doing and where life has taken you since graduation. Your update helps us celebrate your journey and stay connected as a community.





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