



# Cardinal Communication

## Questions?

Did you know that our district app has a feature called Ask a Question? If you open the app, go to the menu and scroll down you will find it near the bottom of the list. The feature is provided for anyone who has a question about Felicity-Franklin School District. You can download the district app free of charge on the App Store or Google Play. We also have a district info email that anyone can use to ask questions. That email is [info@felicityohioschools.org](mailto:info@felicityohioschools.org)

## Sophomore Turkey Dinner a Huge Success!

Thank you for supporting the Sophomore Drive-Thru Turkey Dinner on November 12, 2023 that was hosted by the Class of 2026. It was a wonderful turnout! Thank you to all of our students, staff, raffle basket donors, everyone who came by to participate and a huge thank you to all of our amazing volunteers!



## Welcome New Felicity-Franklin Staff Members!

We would like to welcome the following new staff members for the 2023-2024 school year. Mr. Carl Pigman (back row, second from right) is the new High School Science teacher. Carl says that he is very impressed with the educators at Felicity and their dedication to help all students. He loves fly fishing! Ms. Mackenzie Ward (front row, left) is the new High School Music and Band teacher. Mackenzie loves reading books. Ms. Ward mentioned that she loves the community at Felicity-Franklin and how supportive everyone is here. Dr. Casey T. Smith (back row, second from left) is the new Junior High/High School principal. Casey is the first member of his family to go to college. Dr. Smith states that Felicity-Franklin schools are community minded, and it is great to see support for the schools and community from the residents. This creates a sense of connection between school and home. Mrs. Summer Kremer (front row, right) is the new Grade 8 English teacher. Summer loves animals and enjoys playing video games in her spare time. Mrs. Kremer loves how small and close the community is. Mr. Nic Junker (second row, second from left) is the new 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies teacher. Nic hopes to see the Bengals win a Superbowl in his lifetime. Mr. Junker loves the family dynamic of Felicity Schools. He states that the staff has been very supportive of him as a new teacher. Mr. Jeremy Hatfield (back row, right) is the new 5<sup>th</sup> Grade English teacher. Mr. Hatfield is excited to be teaching fifth grade in the same hallway where he attended fifth grade. Jeremy loves the small school atmosphere at

Felicity-Franklin Schools. Miss Ashlie Wilson (second row, second from right) is the new K-2 Intervention teacher at Felicity Elementary. Ashlie is a graduate of Felicity (Class of 2019) and it is very special to her that she gets to teach and coach in a district that means so much to her. Miss Wilson says that she loves building relationships with the students, families, teachers, and staff members. Ms. Tracie Jewett (front row, middle) is the new High School Mathematics teacher. Tracie taught in our district from 2006-2016 and says that when she wanted to return to teaching, she couldn't think of any school but Felicity to do so. Ms. Jewett likes the sense of community that she has experienced in Felicity. Miss Taylor Flight (back row, left) is the new High School Spanish teacher. In her free time, Taylor loves baking, reading, and trying out new crafts. Miss Flight feels that at our high school she can grow and learn as a new teacher in a welcoming environment. Mrs. Michelle Wilson (second row, right) is the new Grade 4 Intervention teacher. Michelle loves boating and watching her son's mud truck racing. Mrs. Wilson says that she loves Felicity-Franklin because of the compassion and support they show the students and staff. Mr. Nate Bogan (second row, left) is the new High School Social Studies teacher. Mr. Bogan enjoys spending time with his family on Lake Erie and he loves Ohio State football. He enjoys the small-town family feeling in our district. We are happy to welcome these new staff members to our Felicity-Franklin Family.

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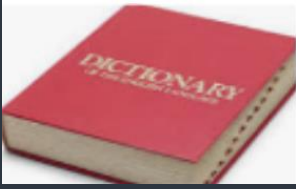
PTO & Connect Clermont **P.10**

**Community. Innovation. Excellence.**

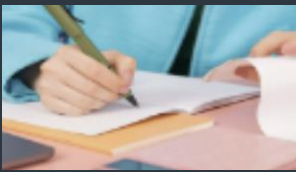
# Financial Update

## What's Inside

### Navigating Definitions



### Explore Our Milestones



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### Potential Changes



### Glimpse of Our Plans



## Navigating Definitions

### What is Deficit Spending?

Deficit Spending takes place when expenses are greater than Revenue.

### What are Fiscal Oversight Cash Balance Deficits?

The Ohio Department of Education will examine forecast submissions for the potential to incur cash balance deficits in the first three years of the forecast. Cash Balance Deficits are your “savings account predictions.”

### What is a Forecast?

According to the Ohio Department of Education, “the preparation of a meaningful five-year forecast is as much an art as it is a science and entails many intricacies, it is recommended that you contact the Treasurer/Chief Fiscal Officer or Board of Education (BOE) of the individual school district with any questions you may have.” It also says, “A forecast is somewhat like a painting of the future based upon a snapshot of today. That snapshot, however, will be adjusted and the further into the future the forecast extends, the more likely it is that the projections will deviate from actual experience. A variety of events will ultimately impact the latter years of the forecast, such as state budgets (adopted every two years), tax levies, and salary increases. The five-year forecast is viewed as a key management tool and must be updated at least twice a year. In Ohio, most school districts understand how they will manage their finances in the current year. The five-year forecast encourages district management teams to examine future years’ projections and identify when challenges will arise. This then helps district management to be proactive in meeting those challenges. School districts are encouraged to update their forecasts with ODE when events take place that will significantly change their forecast or, at a minimum, when required under statute.”

## Explore Our Milestones

The last year for Felicity Franklin Local Schools has been a year of change, but it has helped us get to where we are today, which is not on the ballot. Let’s review what got us there:

We approved an **Expenditure Reduction Plan** due to two failed levy attempts. This expenditure reduction plan included consolidating our Middle School into our High School and our Elementary School & eliminating staff.

When schools are unsuccessful in passing operating levies, it is not uncommon that teachers seek other employment elsewhere. Unfortunately, there is a teacher shortage right now so finding replacement teachers is not easy. Usually, a **savings** occurs when we hire new teachers depending on the grade level and/or subject they are teaching. However, this is not always possible during a teacher shortage.

# Financial Update

## Explore Our Milestones (continued)

The Governor's budget that passed in July **increased state funding**. We have been "On the Guarantee" meaning we have been getting the same funding since 2020, but with this budget bill we will no longer be "On the Guarantee." We will now be funded based on the State's funding formula. This means we will see small increases each year.

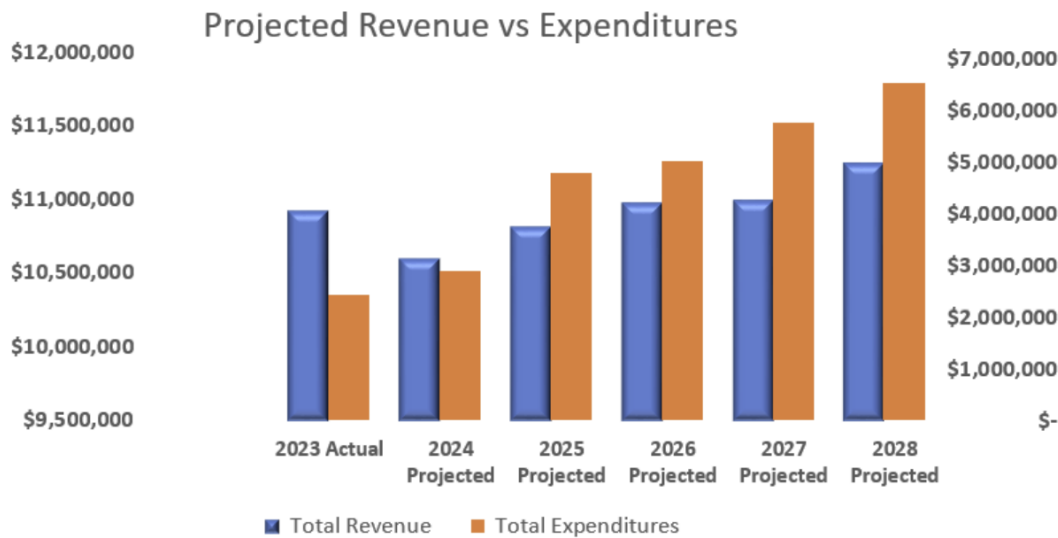
## Peruse Our Financials

### **Prior Year (Fiscal Year End 2023)**

With our changes made in the last two years, we closed the last fiscal year with an excess of revenue over expenditures of \$582,248. To put that into perspective, that is less than one month's expenditures. It takes \$1,000,000 per month approximately to pay all the bills for the district.

### **Current & Future Year Forecast Prediction (Fiscal Year End 2024-2028)**

We are also predicting a positive excess revenue over expenditures for this fiscal year end due to the expenditure reduction plan and savings mentioned above. It is our predictions that the savings only provided a two-year reprieve from the previous forecast deficit spending.

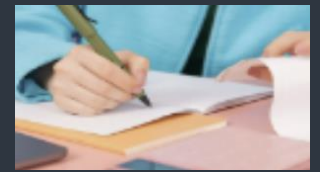


## What's Inside

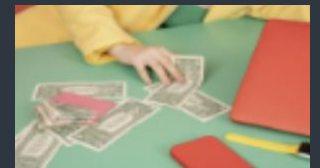
Navigating Definitions



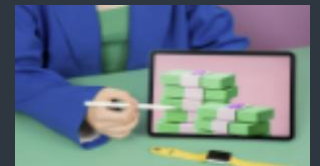
Explore Our Milestones



Peruse Our Financials



Potential Changes

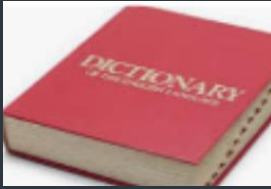


Glimpse of Our Plans

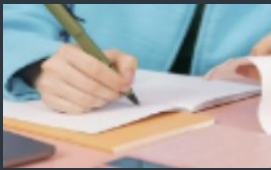


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## Potential Changes

### Unknown Changes

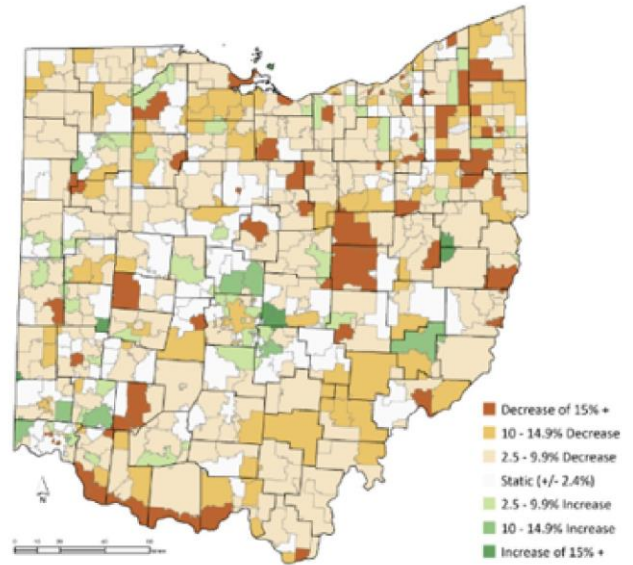
From the moment the Forecast is published, it is immediately outdated. The question is, to what extent, and is it significant enough to need a revision or resubmission. For example, the day after the forecast is submitted, a student could move in the district causing a required contract to educate a special education student in an out-of-district facility. These facilities can be costly but are the best placement for the student's education. Over a five-year forecast, the cost of one student in this scenario could exceed 0.5 million dollars.

### Enrollment Changes

We have also seen a decrease in students in our district, but as you will see in the chart below, it is a statewide issue. Enrollment is down across the state. With online schools being so popular and an easy option and just the economy in general causing parents to have less children, we are seeing very few districts having increases (shown in green below).

### Change in Enrolled ADM (attending population) by School District

**FY 2018 to FY 2023**



### Legislation/Negotiation Changes

One of the changes that was included in the Governor's budget was a minimum 12 step salary schedule for teachers. When we compared it to our salary schedule, it was determined that our salary schedule was below the state minimum. This is going to cause a future impact to our forecasted salary and salary-based benefit expenses once we finish negotiations in the spring and know exactly all other impacts to include.

# Financial Update

## Legislation/Negotiation Changes (continued)

There is also Property Tax Legislation that is currently being discussed in the House and Senate. Once those are finalized, we will determine the impact to our forecast and future revenue.

## Glimpse of Our Plans

Your current administration has always had an eye on where we've been, where we are, and where we will be, both if we financially stay status quo and if the "what ifs" happen. We are really good at thinking through the "what ifs." We have colleagues and we have forecast software experts we bounce thoughts and ideas off of (we even have them look at the forecasts when new budget bills are adopted, or new laws are implemented to ensure accuracy). We have professional organizations like OASBO, OSBA, & BASA that provide us with information to keep us up to date, and we use all of this when preparing the forecast to share with our Board of Education and the public to keep everyone informed.

Since 2016, the current administration has saved our district over \$8.4 million dollars. We have been fiscally responsible with the district's finances and will always be as long as this team is in place. The plan for the future is to continue to teach students every day, monitor expenditures, communicate with the community when the budget bills change state funding, and save for those large unknowns.

## Further Reading & Discussion

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the forecast, the District office is open 8:00-4:00 every day. Please call and make an appointment (evening appointments available). The Treasurer and Superintendent would be glad to sit down and answer any questions you may have.

Helpful Links:

[Forecast](#) Link

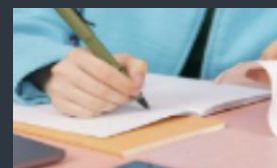
[ODE's How to Read a Forecast](#) Link

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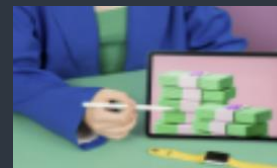
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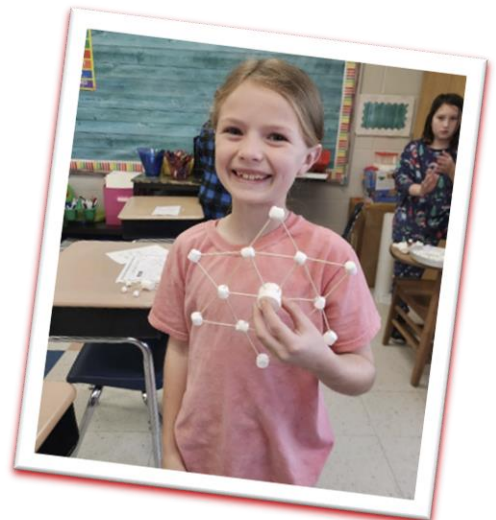
Potential  
Changes



Glimpse of Our  
Plans



# Looking Back at First Quarter & Second Quarter



# Looking Back at First Quarter & Second Quarter



# Looking Back at First Quarter & Second Quarter





# Felicity-Franklin FFA Update

## Focusing on Student Engagement

All K-12 teachers have been actively engaged in the five-day Kagan training in all academic subject areas to boost student engagement and learning. We completed Days #1 and 2 during the 2021-2022 school year and Days #3 and 4 during the 2022-2023 school year. We completed Day #5 in October 2023. We know that when students are engaged, they pay attention, they're motivated, they learn more, and the learning sticks. The biggest difference between the Kagan approach and traditional teaching methods is the ability to engage every student. Traditional classroom teaching captures the minds and attention of some students, but not all. Good teachers engage more students. But, even the best teachers who use traditional instruction don't necessarily require every student to participate. With traditional instruction, there is likely a subset of students who will fall through the cracks because they know other students will take care of engaging with the teacher and the content. As brain-research is proving, meaningful engagement is just a better way to reach and teach all students.

## Felicity-Franklin FFA Earns Top Honors in 2023

### The Felicity-Franklin FFA attends the 96th National FFA and Expo

by Faith Jennings, Felicity-Franklin FFA Reporter

In October 2023, 25 students left to compete in the National Knowledge Quiz at the National FFA Convention. There were 117 teams and 391 individuals who competed in this competition. The Felicity-Franklin FFA Middle school team was named the Reserve Champion Team. On the team was Lydia Hamilton who was 2nd, Braydon O'Hearn who was 3rd, Brayden Hazelbaker who was 4th, and Lilly Lane who was 7th in the entire nation. The Junior team A was 4th in the nation. On the team was Hailey Wendling who was 9th, Olivia Liming who was 18th, Abigail Masterson who was 19th, and Katelyn Brandenburg who was 34th in the nation. The Junior Team B was 8th in the nation. On the team was Lucia Taylor who was 21st, Liz Brumbach who was 29th. Jaxxon Johnson who was 34th, and Bre Idlett who was 56th in the nation. The Senior Team was 12th in the nation. On the team was Emma Brandenburg who was 29th, Andru Preston who was 37th, Eden Myers who was 40th, and Faith Jennings who was 60th in the Nation.

Felicity-Franklin FFA had 3 proficiency finalists who competed at Nationals. Audrey Pinger was in the top 4 in the nation in Agricultural Sales. Joanna Hamilton was in the top 4 in the nation for Integrated Agriscience. Mattilyn Griffith was also top 4 in the nation for Veterinary Science. They each won \$500 for their efforts.

The Milk Quality & Products Team worked and studied hard for months for the national competition. They placed first at the Ohio FFA State competition qualifying for Nationals. These four amazing members put in the work with the help of Larry Lokai who helped prepare them for this competition. The team competed at Nationals and were 9th in the nation out of 40 teams earning a Gold rating. These members were Joanna Hamilton, Kaylee Jennings, Ben Bracher and Lucjan Grider.

The Felicity-Franklin FFA had four members who competed with their Agriscience Fair projects at the national level. Kaylee Jennings and Joanna Hamilton were named National Champions in the Food Products and Processing Division 6 of the Agriscience Fair each earning \$1000. Elizabeth Lindsey and Briley Idlett placed 8th in the nation in Animal Science Division 6 of the Agriscience Fair.

The Felicity-Franklin FFA Chapter the greatest honor of having 2 students selected as Star American Degree Finalists. Luke Jennings was an American Star Farmer finalist and Audrey Pinger was an American Star in Agriscience finalist. Congratulations Audrey Pinger and Luke Jennings on this great honor. The dedication to your SAEs and all things FFA have not gone unnoticed. They each earned \$2000 for this honor.

We also had 8 members who received their American FFA Degrees. Less than one percent of FFA members achieve the American FFA Degree. This is the highest degree that a member can be awarded in the FFA. These members are Emily Hardewig, Emma Laubach, Landen Tull, Tate Liming, Connor Ninichuck, Luke Jennings, Audrey Pinger and Chase Jarman. We could not be more proud to add your names to the list of members that have achieved the highest degree in the FFA.

## Instructional Coaching Focus

English Language Arts and math teachers in grades 5-12 and science and social studies teachers at the high school level have been benefiting from instructional coaching through the Hamilton County Educational Service Center. Instructional coaching is a professional development approach that involves one-on-one support for teachers. It is designed to help teachers improve their instructional practices and enhance student learning. This approach allows coaches to focus on the specific areas where the teacher needs improvement. Ultimately, the goal of coaching is to improve student learning outcomes. By providing teachers with the support they need to enhance their instruction even more, instructional coaches help to create an environment where students are more engaged, motivated, and successful.



## Connect Clermont Grant Awarded to Felicity-Franklin PTO

The Felicity-Franklin School District is excited to announce that our Felicity-Franklin PTO, has applied for and received a generous grant from Connect Clermont. Due to the grant award, the PTO has been able to purchase many items to use in the classrooms for indoor recess (or other events). The Felicity-Franklin PTO would like to thank several people for their part in this endeavor. Thank you to Sabrina Schnarrenberg for applying for the grant on behalf of the PTO. Thank you to Johonna Douglas for shopping and labeling/setting up all items. Thank you to Connect Clermont for their contribution to our school district. Finally, thank you to Mr. Gibson for supporting the PTO at the ceremony as they received this grant. Even though there is more to come, the PTO would like for the staff members to feel free to start utilizing these items, all available for check out in the Elementary Library. PTO plans to add additional items and will be purchasing more in the near future. The Connect Clermont grant can be used for additional playground items, indoor recess items, and STEM items. Congratulations to the Felicity-Franklin PTO for applying for and receiving this grant and using it to benefit the students in the Felicity-Franklin School District.



Cardinal Communication Vol. 1 2023-2024

## Felicity-Franklin Local School District

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[www.felicityschools.org](http://www.felicityschools.org)



LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
*HOME OF THE CARDINALS*

David Gibson, Superintendent  
Christina Laubach, Treasurer