Dear FHSD Community,

I want to take this opportunity to thank you all for working together during these extraordinary times; it has been truly inspirational to see our community come together to help others. Our students and hard-working teachers have done a great job of learning and teaching in this new reality. While we don’t know exactly under what parameters we will return, we do know our facilities have critical needs that might not be apparent to the casual observer.

Proposition S is the District’s no tax rate increase bond issue, which would allow the District to raise funds to fix a variety of priority problems at all Francis Howell schools. Maintaining quality school buildings is an important part of upholding the quality of life in our community. Francis Howell needs the bond money to address critical needs, such as safety and replacement of systems, that are beyond their lifespan.

In March, Governor Parson ordered the April 7 municipal elections be moved to June 2. Approval of Prop S will not increase the current tax rate, because the bonds can be paid off using our current debt service levy. Bonds are the way that taxing districts, like school, fire, and ambulance districts, finance large capital projects. FHSD has not asked our voters to approve a bond issue in 12 years. The other four school districts in St. Charles County have all passed a bond issue in the past three years, and Francis Howell has the second-lowest school district tax rate in the County.

This is an opportunity to help our students and protect the investment our community has made in our schools. If you have any questions about Prop S, please visit the District website or contact our Communications Department at 636-851-4013.

Sincerely,
Dr. Mary Hendricks-Harris
Superintendent
FHSD has 29 separate facilities, including three early childhood centers, ten elementary schools, five middle schools, three high schools, an administration building, and seven other sites. These facilities include over 2.7 million square feet of building space under roof, with miles of plumbing and wiring and hundreds of mechanical systems. Older buildings require significant repair and maintenance. The average building in the District is 30 years old, and the oldest is now more than 50 years old. Many of the District’s buildings were constructed in the late 1990s, and their systems, like HVAC, plumbing, and electrical, are reaching the end of their useful life.

The CFMP calls for major updates at the older schools in the District, including Henderson, Fairmount, Becky-David, Hollenbeck, and Barnwell. The plan includes the construction of a new Francis Howell North High School, and improvements and safety updates at all schools across the District.

Proposition S would pay for the construction, repair, and renovation costs outlined in the CFMP. The bond issue would NOT raise the tax rate, and funds from a bond issue CANNOT pay for salaries, benefits, supplies, utilities, or other operating costs. Passage of Proposition S would require a little more than 57 percent approval in the June election.

The District is at a critical juncture in terms of facilities. The CFMP is intended to help determine how best to address these important issues. Voter approval of Proposition S would allow the District to do the work necessary to adequately meet the learning needs of our students today and in the future. For more information about Proposition S, please visit the District website: www.fhsdschools.org.

FHSD has a variety of roof structures and HVAC systems serving all of those areas. The ceiling leaks despite our best efforts to continually patch the different roof surfaces, and the building has mold problems that have been mitigated multiple times. Many other major systems, like HVAC, plumbing, and electrical, have reached the end of their useful life and are so old that it is now difficult to find spare parts when systems break down.

Some have asked about renovating the current building. Repairing the existing structure would cost more than $40 million and displace students for 3-4 years and the maintenance costs would still continue to increase. A new high school can be built on the southwest part of the current property while students still use the old school.

Francis Howell North High School has ongoing maintenance issues.
The FHSD Board of Education has announced Dr. Nathan Hoven as the District’s new superintendent, effective July 1, 2020. Hoven has served as the District’s Deputy Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer for the past two years. He will succeed current superintendent, Dr. Mary Hendricks-Harris, who has announced her retirement after the current school year.

As the new superintendent, Hoven is looking forward to the challenge of leading the District. “Francis Howell has an amazingly rich history, and the students achieve at an incredibly high level,” said Dr. Hoven. “I am honored and humbled to be part of such a great district. I am excited to step into this role and am looking forward to working with our students, staff, and community to continue moving the District forward.”

Dr. Hoven started his teaching career in Hazelwood and then Pattonville, where he taught high school math and coached football, wrestling, and golf. In 2003, he became the assistant principal at Pattonville High School, and in 2008, he was named the principal of Rolla High School. In 2012, he moved to the Wentzville School District, where he served as the principal at Timberland High School. In 2015, he became Wentzville’s assistant superintendent for Human Resources. Dr. Hoven came to FHSD in 2018 as the Chief Academic Officer and added the additional title and responsibilities of Deputy Superintendent in 2019.

He has a balance of knowledge and experience in many areas, including instruction, personnel, finance, and communications. His career opportunities have enabled him to develop strong leadership skills built on relationships, trust, communication, collaboration, and sound decision-making.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Mike Parson signed Executive Order 20-03, ordering all Missouri municipal elections previously scheduled on April 7 to be postponed until June 2. In compliance with the Executive Order, Proposition S and the Board of Education candidates will appear on the June 2, 2020, ballot.

Per the Executive Order:
• In-person absentee ballots may be cast in the Election Authority office until 5 PM on June 1.
• Absentee ballots sent by mail must be received at the Election Authority by 7 PM on June 2.

To vote via absentee ballot due to COVID-19 concerns, voters may choose Option 2 on the absentee ballot application, which covers “Incapacity or confinement due to illness or physical disability, including caring for a person who is incapacitated or confined due to illness or disability.” A notary is not required for this option.

Polls open at 6 AM and close at 7 PM. The Election Authority is working to provide gloves, masks, and disinfectant wipes for election judges, and hand sanitizer for voters. To improve social distancing, judge tables and voting booths will be moved farther apart on Election Day. Voters are encouraged to wear face masks while in their polling places, and voters will be asked to observe appropriate spacing while in line to vote. More information is available on the St. Charles County Election Authority website: www.sccmo.org/410/ElectionAuthority

Proposition S would pay for the construction or updating of safety vestibules at all schools in the District, which would route visitors through a separate space for check-in and visitor screening, improving safety and security for everyone in our schools. Proposition S would also fund the addition of security film for the windows of “places of refuge” that would make the windows more difficult to break. For more information about Proposition S, please visit the District website at www.fhsdschools.org.
The 2020 U.S. News & World Report Best High School Rankings were recently released, and all three FHSD high schools were named to the prestigious list. The rankings evaluated almost 600 public high schools in Missouri and more than 24,000 nationwide to identify those schools that best serve all of their students and assess the degree to which their students are prepared for college-level coursework.

Francis Howell High, Francis Howell Central, and Francis Howell North are all in the top 30 in Missouri and were also ranked in the top 3,000 high schools from across the nation. FHHS is ranked #12, FHC is #23, and FHN is ranked #29, all in the top five percent in the state.

All three FHSD high schools scored well above the state average in math and reading proficiency, as well as college readiness. “We are incredibly proud of the work our students, teachers, staff, and administrators have done to achieve these results,” said FHSD Chief Academic Officer and Deputy Superintendent Dr. Nathan Hoven. “These rankings echo what other measures have shown us – that FHSD is one of the strongest school districts in the state.”

FHSD Industrial Tech Teachers Use 3D Printers to Make a Difference

Industrial technology teachers in FHSD are using 3D printers to help fight the spread of COVID-19. To help provide PPE for healthcare workers on the frontline of the pandemic, teachers Ricky Reeves (FHHS), Michael Green (FHN), and Don Barnes (FHC), are using 3D printing technology to print face shield brackets. The brackets hold clear protectors in place for healthcare professionals. They are being donated to the St. Charles Economic Development Center, who will deliver them to local healthcare workers. “We are employing the prototyping modeling skills used in the Project Lead The Way engineering classroom to create parts that are designed and tested by healthcare professionals,” said Green.

3D printers layer thin strings of extruded, hot plastic to build a physical object that was created in computer-aided design software. “Once we have the print file set-up and settings dialed in, the print takes about four and a half hours per mask,” said Reeves. “Once we get a good print, we pull it off the print bed, inspect and repair the surface, and hit reprint.”

While shortages may be happening, these teachers are doing their best to make a positive change during these uncertain times.

Finding Harmony While in Isolation

FHC seniors Emma Smallen and Lauren Marino recently held a fundraiser to support students in need who may have been additionally impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. These musicians used their talents and organized a virtual concert to raise money for the FHSD Backpack Meal Assistance Program, which distributes meals to students and families in need. Their virtual concert raised over $600. Even though we are not together, the FHSD community remains strong and together at heart.

The College Board has honored FHSD with placement on the Tenth Annual AP® District Honor Roll. FHSD is one of only seven school districts in Missouri, and one of only 250 in North America, to achieve this distinction. To be included on the Tenth Annual Honor Roll, the District had to increase the number of students participating in the Advanced Placement (AP) Program while maintaining or increasing the percentage of students earning scores of 3 or higher on an AP Exam.

Reaching these goals indicates that FHSD is successfully identifying motivated, academically prepared students who are ready for Advanced Placement. This is the sixth time that FHSD has been named to the prestigious list.

For the 2018-19 school year, 333 FHSD students were named AP Scholars, the most in District history. “We know that rigorous courses help prepare students for post-high school goals,” said Director of Secondary Education Dr. Lucas Lammers. “Because of that, the District is always striving to enroll more students in AP and other challenging classes. Being named to the AP Honor Roll is a direct result of these efforts.”

In 2019, more than 4,000 colleges and universities received AP scores for college credit, advanced placement, or both, and/or consideration in the admissions process. The complete AP District Honor Roll can be found at https://tinyurl.com/18-19APHonorRoll.