



**FARRELL HIGH SCHOOL**

# STEELER Nation News

**LIVE BLUE AND GOLD**  
Fall Issue 2021

## THE SCHOOL YEAR 2021-22: *Fall Term* IN REVIEW

BY Brylynn Kennedy

The 2021-22 School year got underway on Friday, August 20, 2021, with the return of *The Back-to-School Extravaganza*. It was a sure sign that the new school year would be getting off to a normal start.



Students and their families were in attendance, picking up schedules, meeting their teachers, enjoying food and games. Teachers had

just spent the week at in-service meetings, planning and anticipating a year of normalcy. Students were greeted by an enthusiastic faculty and staff, on Monday, August 23. Temperatures were still being scanned as a precautionary measure.

Social distancing was still being recommended and masks, were an option and not a mandate.

All seemed to be well until a spike in Covid 19 cases in the state of Pennsylvania that led the Governor to mandate the wearing of masks in schools for children in grades K-12. Fast forward to December, and the PA State masking mandate has been lifted, yet again.

### To mask or not to mask...

By Zoe Mishata

Masks, they're a very controversial topic, some say they're needed, others say otherwise. Some went away from them for a little, others wore them every day, all day.

Just prior to going to print, on the 10th of December, 2021, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court struck down the Acting Secretary of Health's school masking order. FASD, along with many other local school districts, have officially made mask wearing optional for students.

Earlier this year, *STEELER Nation News* sent out a survey to each grade's Google Classroom, it anonymously asked a few questions about how students personally feel about the mask mandate, and how they have handled them recently. Many students had similar answers varying from yes to no, and maybe to sometimes. One question asked, "Have you worn your mask daily since school started?" When asked this question, students had four answers to choose from: yes, no, sometimes, and most of the time. Once the results came back, the most common answer was most of the time, therefore meaning most students wore their masks most of



Homecoming King, Omar Stewart Jr. and Queen Sanaa Brodie (above) pose at half time of the Homecoming game in October 2021.

Social Studies Teacher, Mr. Burda (left) gives a thumbs up from the dunk tank as families (right) enjoy the skill games at the *Back to School Extravaganza*.



Farrell High Fall Book Fair was a success! Hear the details from Mrs. Tota on page 5!



the time. Following this, they were asked, "How do you personally feel about the state going back to the mask protocol?" This question received various answers, most ranged from not having an opinion on it, to ones that stated whether they believe they needed to be worn or not.

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# Farrell High Represents at Kennywood

By Jada Williams

Every year Kennywood has a Fall Fantasy Parade. Community marching bands, along with bands from all over America, come to play. Some bands that attended were Ambridge HS Band, Frankfort HS Band, California Area HS Band, Trinity HS Band, and Farrell Area HS Band. Under the direction of Mr. McCann, Mrs. Morrison, Mrs. Retone, and Mr. Fowler, the band, golden girls, and cheerleaders took a trip to Kennywood.



was short and only took a few minutes to complete but the parade itself was long. After the parade they stayed and enjoyed themselves until 8:00pm.

On August 13, at 12:00 pm, they arrived at Kennywood. They enjoyed their time playing in the arcade, riding rides and rollercoasters, and eating food. After a long and hot day in the park they finally performed in the parade around 6:00pm. The march



FASD extracurriculars shine at Kennywood Park this past summer (above). Tamera Slater, Nikasha Marcella and Chyna Butler pose on water ride (right) as they cooled off after the parade.

## LIVING BLUE AND GOLD

By Mya Coleman

Our High School Principal, Mr. Matthew Fowler has goals and plans for our 2021-2022 school year. His main goal for the school year is one that he has stated at the beginning of the year meetings, "Believe that YOU CAN achieve greatness, by striving to be better than you were yesterday!" Mr. Fowler believes that each and every student is capable of being more and better than they were the day before. He believes that we must simply believe it and do it.

Mr. Fowler also believes that we must strive to do better at "living Blue and Gold." He stated that, "We must be respectful, live responsibly, uphold integrity and encourage others. This will propel Farrell and the community into another level of greatness." Mr. Fowler believes that unfortunately other communities do not, at times, view us favorably. Yet, when Farrell students go into other communities, our students are well behaved and respectful. So, his advice to us is to continue to strive to be better than we were

yesterday. "I want our students to be held in the same regard and even at a higher regard than the rest of the Shenango Valley."

Fowler feels that it starts with small things such as, getting to school on time, helping others, not putting kids down on social media, not filming things that portray us in a negative light, etc. "We can turn it around and will do so TOGETHER!"



Caleb Skiljo shows winning Blue and Gold Poster. Contest, held by FHS Student Council, was open to all Elementary and High School students.

## Financial Aid Event

By Jada Williams

On September 9th, Farrell Area High School hosted a free financial aid event for seniors in the auditorium. Amy Sloan, the financial educator of this event, provided information regarding scholarships including FAFSA. This event was perfect for all of the seniors who are planning to pursue higher education. During this program students asked intricate questions ranging from life on campus to jobs and financial aid.

Mrs. Sloan went over the steps to good financial aid, websites for scholarships, FAFSA prep, and campus jobs. For those who attended the meeting there was a chance to win a \$1,000 Chromebook. If you were there and were a part of Penn State talent search, your name was entered into a raffle with a chance to win a Chromebook. The winner of the raffle was Tyree Odem.

CONGRATS TYREE (pictured below with Mrs. Titus and Mrs. Sloan) on winning the raffle!!





# HOMECOMING COURT 2021-2022



## Queen, Sanaa Brodie & Attendants:

DeMariah Burns, D'Eryah Stewart, Shawnte Bratten, Diamond Lewis

## Middle School and Elementary School Representatives:

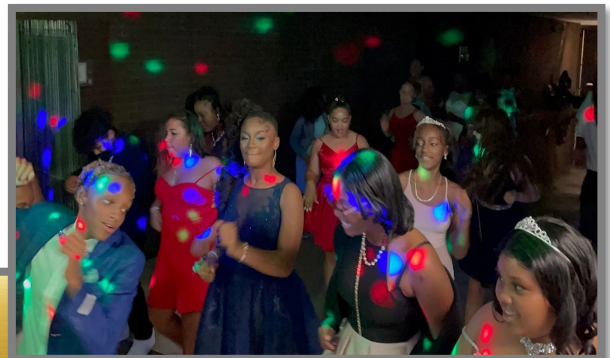
Zaniya Thomas, A'yanta Hilton

## King, Omar Stewart Jr. & Attendants:

Allen-Mychael Jackson, Taidon Strickland, Anthony Stallworth, Jaiman Holden

## Middle School and Elementary School Representatives:

Darnel LaCamera, Daishein Carthorn, Kevin Ulan





# Teacher spotlight



## Welcome to Farrell High School!

By Bryan Phillips and Raelen Phillips



### Welcome to The Farrell Area School District, Mr. James Gregory!

**What courses do you teach?:** I teach Algebra I, Robotics, Physics, and 7th Grade STEAM.

**Where did you go to school?:** I graduated from Wilmington Area High School. I went to Grove City College for my undergraduate studies and obtained my Master's in Education from Slippery Rock University.

**What made you decide to become a teacher?:** Back when I was an undergrad, I considered becoming a teacher, as I tutored a bit and was a teaching assistant for my department. I found a job working at a chemical plant in a laboratory after college. However, the hours were not good; I had to work a lot of overtime and in the middle of the night. After a couple of years of working at the plant, I decided to go back to school to obtain my teaching degree, which has ended up being a good move personally and for my family. I also enjoy what I do.

**Why did you decide to apply for a job at Farrell?:** At my previous job, I was only teaching mathematics. When Farrell advertised their opening, I realized it was a chance for me to share my scientific knowledge with students, which was a personal goal of mine when I originally decided to become a teacher.

**What are your goals for your students?:** Quite simply, my goals for my students are to learn. Students can demonstrate to me what they have learned in a variety of ways, so one strategy of achieving my goal is to recognize what works best for all my students.

**What are your hobbies?:** I really enjoy music. I play a couple different instruments and perform with a brother of mine in a band based in Pittsburgh. I also enjoy playing board games. In the future, I would like to start a chess club here at Farrell.

**Are you married, have any children?** I am and have a child on the way.

**Do you enjoy working at Farrell?:** Absolutely. I have really enjoyed being here so far.

### Welcome new Farrell High School Librarian, Mrs. Michelle Tota!

**What courses do you teach?:** 9th Grade Keystone Prep.

**Where did you go to school?:** Clarion University for undergrad, McDaniel College, currently YSU for Master's.

**Where did you work prior to Farrell?:** I worked as an English teacher in Maryland for ten years, at Keystone for two years, and at Laurel Technical Institute for three years.

**What do plan to bring to your job at Farrell High?:** I plan to open up the library and make it welcoming and resourceful for all teachers and students.

**What inspires you as a teacher?:** Watching students grow up to become great people and always being in a learning environment.

**How do you think the pandemic has affected high school students and their educations?:** I think Covid-19 was and still is very tragic and it has changed and impacted the way students learn. It has allowed everyone to embrace technology and appreciate it more but it has made people more socially awkward.

**Are you married, have any children?:** I have been married for 15 years and have two boys, ages 13 and 9.

**Do you have any hobbies or pets?:** I like to read, hike, spend time with family, and shop. I have one dog, a rottweiler.

**Do you enjoy working at Farrell High School?:** Yes, I enjoy working at Farrell.

### Steeler Nation News

#### Journalists and Photographers

Santana Bankston, Ky'Zere Campbell, Isaac Chapman, Mya Coleman, Jaden Howell, Allen Mychael Jackson, Brylynn Kennedy-Crockett, Diamond Lewis, Zoe Mishata, Bryan Phillips, Raelen Phillips, Aaliyah Stallworth, Zameere Thomas, Jada Williams



# Teacher Spotlight: Mrs. DeMartinis

BY Raelen Phillips

Mrs. DeMartinis is a very beloved educator by those who have been lucky enough to find themselves on her class roster. She has been with the Farrell Area School District since 2006. Some of the roles that "Mrs. D." (as she is known among her students) has performed in the district: Classroom Aide, Librarian, Long Term Substitute, Kindergarten Teacher, Title 1 Teacher, French Teacher, Preschool Teacher, Tutor, COOL Teacher, and Monitor of Student Behavior. In the first nine weeks of this school year, she was lucky enough to be in the high school teaching French I, II, III, IV, and Photojournalism, filling in for Mrs. Kotb, who was out on maternity leave. The job has allowed her to experience many different age groups and grade levels. Currently, she is back in the elementary where she is working with all grade levels Pre-K-6.

All of these experiences have been interesting and rewarding for her. Mrs. D. was also a teacher and principal at Our Lady of Fatima/Msgr. Geno J. Monti School, in Farrell prior to coming to FASD. Some advice Mrs. D. would like to share with all Farrell students is that in order to succeed, "listen to the wisdom of your teachers and trustworthy adults. They want the best for you. They want to see you succeed."

When asked her thoughts on the impact of the Covid pandemic on our schools, Mrs. D offered the following thoughts, "Covid threw all of us for a loop. Even though all educators did their best virtually, it wasn't the same as being in the classroom. Covid cheated students out of the classroom experience they need." Covid has also been the most frustrating thing Mrs. D finds about teaching during this time. She along with others are missing pre-Covid normalcy.

Mrs. D. has been married to her husband Ray for over 30

years. They have two children together, Gabrielle and Michael. She also has two pets, a dog named Maks, and a cat named Moose. In her spare time, Mrs. D. loves to cook. She also likes to craft, read, and watch football, baseball, and hockey. Mrs. D. loves to read and has many favorites. She also enjoys movies, classics being her favorites. There's always music playing in her house. She loves the Beatles, but she is a fan of many other types of music. Mrs. D. has many memorable moments while teaching at Farrell.

Having the opportunity to teach so many amazing kids, she is very grateful to have been working with the best educators ever, creating lasting friendships, watching kids become successful in the classroom, on the playing fields, and in life.

When asked to offer advice to any new teachers to our district, Mrs. D. said, "Get to know your students and love them for who they are. Be flexible, be a good communicator, be a team player, seek out the veterans and ask for opinions and advice. Love what you do!". Mrs. D. would like to know as much about her students that they will let her know, she wants them to feel comfortable coming to her with anything they need.

Mrs. D.'s plans after retirement are to spend more time with her children, and hopefully to find herself on a beach somewhere! Mrs. D. loves working at Farrell and is most grateful to the district for giving her the best years of her life doing what she loves and, in the opinion of many of her student, being great at it.

**A special THANK YOU to Mrs. D. for designing/editing parts of this SNN FALL ISSUE!!!**



## FHS Book Fair Sparks Student Interest

By Zoe Mishata

Recently, the Farrell Area School District held a Scholastic Book Fair, at the beginning of November. The fair was planned and organized by our librarian, Mrs. Tota, and the Scholastic workers.

I had the opportunity to interview Mrs. Tota and get an overall view of how she portrayed different aspects of the event. When asked, "What inspired you to bring the book fair to the high school?" She simply answered, "The high school I worked at before here had a book fair twice a year and everyone loved it. I also felt as if the library needed some new life and everyone needed something to get excited about."

When asked how she would portray the outcome and whether or not she would change anything, she describes the outcome as better than she expected. Following this, she explained that the library was able to raise over \$2,000, and could take \$600 out of that, for new books and items around the li-

brary. Mrs. Tota described some of the benefits to the students, explaining that

it got the students more interested in new titles, and a new librarian. Specifically, she noted that students expressed interest in young adult fiction, and graphic novels seemed to sell the most. Along with this, she explained how some of the most talked-about books were, "The Hate You Give", "Clap When You Land", and "The Unteachable".

The final question asked was one of reflection. She was asked, "Were they ideas you had but were not able to add within the fair? If so, what are they?" She said that she accomplished all of her goals, the only thing she had hoped for that wasn't met, was more parent involvement, and more volunteers.

Overall, the book fair seemed to be a great success. It seemed to have sparked unknown interest in both our new librarian and the students. With this, Mrs. Tota would like for everyone to look forward to the event returning during the spring months.





# Student Journalists INVESTIGATE

## TikTok Toilet Trouble

## CELLULAR DISCONNECTION

BY Mya Coleman

In the month of September, Junior High and High School bathroom procedures were changed because of several incidents of vandalism that occurred. The vandalism is a copycat trend that students heard about on TikTok called *Devious Licks*, according to TikTok. This trend involves students going into bathrooms and recording themselves taking soap dispensers, clogging toilets with toilet paper, removing stall doors, mirrors, and etc. Schools around the U.S have been hit with this trend, including our local schools like Sharon and even our own, Farrell High School.

The vandalism has students outraged. Our bathroom usage has been limited to the three minutes in between classes or our teacher has to call down to the office (or emergencies only) to let them know we are going to the restroom by the office. High schoolers feel that we should not all be held accountable for the selfishness and childish acts of some of our peers. We also feel that this is not enough time. We do not like the idea of being rushed to use the restroom. Everyone should not be punished, some of us are really trying to use the restroom and get back to class in a timely manner.

Colyar, Brock. "The Grown-up Hysteria Around TikTok's Devious Licks." *Curbed*, 22 September 2021, <https://www.curbed.com/2021/09/the-grown-up-hysteria-around-tiktoks-devious-licks-trend.html>. Accessed 3 December 2021

## Dress Code Dismay

BY Jada Williams

Dress code has been a hot topic of discussion ever since the decision to adopt one into our school policy. Students and teachers have a lot to say on the matter.

A few teachers and students were chosen to answer some questions. Most teachers felt like the majority of things were fine with the dress code. On the other hand, students had a lot more complaints and had a variety of disagreements with the dress code. All in all, everyone at least came to an agreement that some things need to be changed.

The thing that most people thought needed to be changed was the rule about wearing only dress pants. This rule creates a lot of difficulties for students. For example, finding pants that fit the shape of the student. Also, students find wearing this type of pants all day to be rather uncomfortable. D'Mario Norris, Maria Harrison, Preston Williams and many other students that were approached seemed to share the same conclusion that students should be able to wear any type of material as long as it's color coded and appropriate.

People pointed out things that they liked about the dress code as well. Most students like how there is now less of a potential for bullying based on their clothing. Mr. Cardamon, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Dye and a few other teachers like how kids look nice in school colors and how everything is appropriate. Miss Grills likes how following a dress code prepares students to enter the workforce.

BY Bryan Phillips Jr.

The cell phone policy at the high school came under scrutiny and as a result, clarifications as well as enforcement and consequences for non compliance have been changed. Many students are confused about why and how these changes were brought about and everyone is looking for answers.

Chief Smoot, head of district safety and security, explained that the main issues with phones were that they were causing distractions in the halls and in class. People were taking calls, texting, etc., in the middle of class. Also, there were inappropriate pictures taken of and by students, bullying was another reason, and threats were made in group chats.

*Steeler Nation News* decided to address Principal, Mr. Fowler, with some general student concerns. Mr. Fowler first clarified that, according to the student handbook, students were not permitted to have their phones out in the halls or at lunch. Teachers made specific classroom rules for their own classroom. The new rule is that students are either to have their phones locked up by their first period teacher, or else not in sight. Students should no longer need phones for academic use as our school is now 1 to 1, with each student having been issued a Chromebook for the duration of the school year.

The rule was not so much changed as tweaked, with stricter enforcement and clearly defined consequences. Not only can students rely on the district technology, but cell phones were a distraction in classes, there were issues with bullying and the TikTok bathroom challenge were also cited as reasons for the current rule status.

The administrative team as a whole agreed on the current set of consequences. The rule is if a personal cellular device is visible, and a teacher tells a student to put it away, and the student does not comply, then it is a violation. If a student is caught actively using their phone, the student will be written up and sent to ISS. Out of school suspension (OSS) is no longer a consequence, because the point of the rule is to keep kids focused in school, so sending them home OSS would be counterproductive.

If students can comply with current rules, Mr. Fowler has said that he would consider allowing phones back into the cafeteria. However, they would still be prohibited in the hallways and classrooms. That is not a guarantee, it would only be considered if the current rules work to increase focus on academics and reduce overall distractions in class.

Though the dress code has a good side, people pointed out the things that they found controversial about it. For example, many students feel that the dress code is not enforced equally. Some students feel like some athletes are not penalized for wearing sweatpants while some of their peers are consistently punished for the same offense. However, when approached for comments, many athletes feel as though they are actually targeted for stricter dress code enforcement. Essentially, saying the exact opposite.

Sexualization of females is another common complaint. Sexualization is focusing on body parts and specifying coverage of those body parts (mid drift, shoulders, legs, etc.). Even though many complaints were made about it, when pressed for details such as people, actions, and specific examples, students were not able to provide any. Mrs. Guth made a very strong point by saying that, "There is no sexualization in the dress code because all of the rules are the same for the boys and girls. The only difference is that girls have more things that they can wear therefore there are more things for them to get dress coded for."

Taking these observations into consideration, I interviewed Mr. Veccia, Vice Principal, in order to clear up some of the confusion. Mr. Veccia was asked about targeting when it comes to body shape and playing sports. He answered that he doesn't think that there is targeting and that if someone feels like they are being targeted then to talk to him so that he can address the problem. He also said that if students would want to propose a change to the dress code then to talk to administration.

FARRELL



## 2021 DISTRICT 10 FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS



Farrell High School Football Team, Coaches and Cheerleaders pose after winning D10 title on November 12, 2021. Athletes had a formidable season before missing a chance to play for the State Class AA title in Hershey, PA., in playoff loss to Serra Catholic on December 3.

## Boys' Varsity Hoop Coach, Lowe, talks Coaching & Mentoring

BY Zameere Thomas

Mr. Myron Lowe, Farrell 2002 Alumnus, has been coaching boys Junior Varsity and Varsity Boys' Basketball at Farrell High School for 4 years. Prior to Varsity Head Coach, he served as both As-

sistant and Head Coach to the 8th Grade Boys' team. He decided to become a coach because he felt it was time to give his knowledge of the game to the kids at this level. He attended the Community College Of Beaver County.

His goal for our boys is to get them ready for the next level in sports and in life. In addition to the sport of basketball, he often teaches his athletes how to conduct themselves in everyday life and how to be a good person off the court. In order to convey these lessons, he is sure to model his lessons instead of just talking about them. One of his proudest moments as a coach is when his 8th Grade team went undefeated.

This is his first year as the varsity coach so he hasn't had any great moments yet. His playing style is a full court man to man/trap most of the game. He coaches an athlete who is struggling to improve with effort. Coach stated, "If they are struggling, all I ask is to give effort." He disciplines his players with accountability. If they're doing drills and they don't box out, they run, if they don't talk on defense, they run, if they are turning the ball over, they run. If one of his players is down because they make a mistake, coach pulls them to the side and encourages them to do better, he lets them know they are better than that and to get it the next time. In the next three years, he hopes he's still coaching and is making an impact on these young men.

Coach Myron's favorite thing about coaching is watching kids develop into better players. His favorite aspect of the game is making an impact on kids' lives and teaching them to be better young men. Outside of basketball he spends time with his wife and kids or watches sports on the weekend. Coach's advice to the kids "If you want to be successful you have to work hard at everything you do. No days off when u want to be great."

## STALLWORTH SHATTERS RECORD!

On October 29, 2021, Anthony Stallworth made history. Stallworth broke the Farrell High School rushing record when he surpassed the record once held by Christian Lewis.

Stallworth is now the all-time leading rusher in Farrell football history. Congratulation to Anthony "Baby Boy" Stallworth!







# All I want for Christmas...

BY Aaliyah Stallworth



Christmas is a time for giving and spending time with friends and family. Everyone loves Christmas, but many people can't think of what to give their friends and family for Christmas. To help you out, STEELER Nation News asked, "What do you want for Christmas?" Here are your responses:

**Mya Coleman, 12:** Phone, clothes, shoes  
**Bryan Phillips, 11:** Game, shoes, clothes  
**Diamond Lewis, 12:** Money, clothes, boots  
**Jaden Howell, 12:** PS5, money, car  
**Zoe Mishata, 9:** Clothes, shoes, art supplies

**Makayla Wilson, 11:** Bath and body works, phone cases, clothes  
**Sihe Keller, 11:** Money, shoes, jet  
**Lamont Samuels, 11:** Money, car, shoes  
**Zaire Thomas, 11:** Money, shoes, clothes  
**Cheyenne Felix, 11:** Clothes, Bath and Body Works, phone cases  
**Tahj'Mere Gibson, 11:** Money, car, dog  
**Dynasty McClinton, 11:** Clothes, shoes, purse  
**Javon Bell, 11:** Game, shoes, game cards  
**Malachi Shepherd, 11:** Game, shoes, clothes  
**Chyna Butler, 11:** Clothes, cosmetics, food  
**Alan Wilder, 11:** Game, shoes, clothes  
**Mercedes Hall, 12:** Just to be around family and love

**Nikasha Marcella, 11:** Crocs  
**Gabby King, 11:** New Crocs  
**Jamir Guest, 11:** Jordan 4 Retro White Oreos  
**Tamera Slater, 11:** Hats  
**Sydney Peterson, 10:** Purple Uggs  
**Zion Scarbrough, 11:** a Pet T Rex  
**Chauvon Ousley, 10:** Money  
**TiMarr LaCamera, 11:** Shoes, new game  
**Omar Stewart Jr., 12:** Buffalo chips, Swedish Fish, Sour Patch, Gold Body Armor  
**Khaliya Venable, 10:** New phone  
**Jasean Boatwright, 11:** PS5, shoes, money

## Safe Shopping



BY Santana Bankston

Happy Holidays students and faculty! Here's a guide on how to practice Covid safety while hitting your favorite stores to pick up those last minute gifts. When out shopping, always remember to stay six or more feet apart from others at all times. Wear your masks while in stores even if you are vaccinated. A vaccinated individual, who experiences what is known as a breakthrough Covid infection may still be symptomatic, possibly more mild, but still symptomatic. Avoid big crowds while out and about. If a store has huge lines and a lot of people in the store, you should consider ordering online or curbside pick up to avoid any contact with others who may be sick.

Practicing social distancing while at home is very important too. Instead of having all family members over at once celebrate with the ones who live in the household. Virtual family dinner is highly recommended during this time

of year due to Covid 19. If you are to have a larger sized gathering try implementing some of the following:

- Improve ventilation when indoors, particularly when eating (open windows, turn on circulating air, etc.).
- Wash hands frequently, and avoid touching too many surfaces.
- Have plenty of hand sanitizer available for your guests.

We all enjoy spending time with friends and family around this time of year, but these last past years have been different. Covid-19 has been a huge problem causing family plans to change. The *Steeler Nation News* Staff encourages you to try to make the holidays the best that they can be. Mask up while around big groups of people even if they are your family, you can never be too careful. While you're out shopping keep your distance and be extra cautious to keep your family safe and healthy. Have a happy holiday!



FCS, Grade 8, Kayvan Evans, Jaquan Graham, Juelz Johnson, (left), Rashaud Dunbar, Lamel Payne, Morez Nixon, D'Angela Gilbert (right), cut out sugar cookies.

(Bottom left) Jaidyn Depuy, Kyasia Campbell, Maddy Harrison, Principal Fowler, Da'Sean Roye, Jemya Jackson and Khole Summers sport holiday sweaters.

