

A national award-winning district
Schenectady City School District



Spotlight ON Schenectady

Everybody counts.
Everybody learns.



2017-18



August 2018

On behalf of the Schenectady City School District, I am pleased to present you with our first "Spotlight on Schenectady," which is packed with a variety of information, highlights from 2017-2018 and gives you a look at the many district initiatives that are designed to help our students be successful learners.

This report not only highlights the many extraordinary opportunities available to Schenectady students, but also provides insight to our commitment and effort toward serving the "whole child." This school year brought a heavy focus on the development and expansion of programs and resources that are designed to ensure that our students are healthy, connected, supported and that they feel safe and ready to learn.

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of the SCSD team and the unwavering support of the Schenectady community, we have taken significant steps forward.

This was a year of many firsts. Among other things, we designed and implemented new programming, launched a crisis prevention team, offered new and extraordinary summer programming and provided unique opportunities for professional development by offering our own Urban Schools Conference.

In 2017-18, we dug deep into the cause of disproportionate outcomes and are in the process of implementing strategic plans to ensure that race, economics and disability no longer serve as predictors of student achievement. To this end, I am pleased to report that we have narrowed the opportunity and outcome gap between racial subgroups, according to some of our measures. We still have work to do, but we are making progress.

While we are still significantly underfunded by New York State, we worked diligently during the budget process, to again, provide taxpayer relief by decreasing the tax levy.

We are honored and grateful to all of the members of the Schenectady community for your support and partnership in the education of our city's children. It is a privilege to serve you and educate your children.

Thank you for reviewing our report. We welcome feedback through "Let's Talk," which is available – all day, every day – on the district website.

**Sincerely,
Laurence T. Spring
Superintendent of Schools**

**"Our district is
committed to
ensuring that
race, economics
and disability
are never
predictors
of student
achievement."**

» Larry Spring





A national award-winning district
Schenectady City School District

Schenectady

About us and Our schools

The Schenectady City School District serves nearly 10,000 students in grades pre-K through 12, making it one of the largest school districts in the Capital Region.

Our incredibly diverse population of students speaks more than 30 different languages. Our schools, filled with culture and richness, foster awareness and tolerance. Students not only learn to value and respect people of all races, backgrounds and cultures, they appreciate the differences and are prepared to be citizens in a multicultural world.

The district is comprised of 11 elementary schools (pre-K through fifth grade), three middle schools (grades 6-8), one high school

DIVERSITY RATE OF NEW HIRES

	OCTOBER 2015	OCTOBER 2016	OCTOBER 2017
FACULTY	6.4%	12.2%	21.2%
ADMINISTRATION	14%	11.1%	25%

(grades 9-12) and an adult education center.

The neighborhood school that a student attends is based on residence.

Staff

The 2017-18 SCSD workforce was made up of over 1,600 staff members, of which 925 were teachers. The district is committed to growing a more diverse workforce and has taken steps to address the need to recruit diverse candidates. Moving forward, the SCSD is adding an Assistant District Director of Recruitment, Retention & Diversity.

"SCSD has taught me not only to find my voice, but to use my voice to invoke change wherever I go."

Trevor Luciani, '18

Contents:

4. This is Schenectady
5. High School Opportunities
7. Pupil Personnel Services
- 8-9. Serving the Whole Child
10. My Brother's Keeper
11. Literacy
13. Professional Development
14. Summer Enrichment
15. Capital Project/Finances

10,000

students

30+

languages

National Board Certification

SCSD features 40 National Board Certified Teachers.

That is more than any other district in the state, with the exception of New York City.



National Board Certification is considered the gold standard in education.



Students who remain in the SCSD are **successful**

THE GRADUATION RATE OF STUDENTS WHO REMAIN IN THE DISTRICT FROM KINDERGARTEN THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL IS

96%

Graduates continue their education at some of the most prestigious colleges and universities. Schenectady High School graduates currently attend more than **100 colleges and universities** throughout the world.

>100



Follow Schenectady City School District



Check us out @SCSchools



4 Everybody counts. Everybody learns.

This is Schenectady...

"Schenectady is a place where you grow up. It's a place, despite the differences and diversity surrounding us, people are taught acceptance and tolerance of other cultures. It's the place where hard workers and motivated students are made. It might not be perfect, but no place really is. SCSD is a machine, where hundreds of staff work their butts off to help students like me flourish both academically, athletically and socially. As I graduate and look back at my high school career at Schenectady, I appreciate all that SCSD has done for me, from the time I joined first grade to the time I graduated."

**Faith Williams,
Schenectady Class of 2018**

"The diversity at Schenectady has shown me how to interact with different groups of people and that we are all the same inside."

-Maazin Ahmed

"I came to America six years ago from Pakistan. I was born in Afghanistan. I wear a hijab to school every day and I have never heard a bad comment. No one has ever judged me by that. Everyone is really welcoming to new and different students."

-Khadija Rafiai

"I came out as gay to 200 people through the bravery Schenectady High School has taught me to have. SHS taught me it's okay to get knocked down, but never let yourself get knocked out."

-Trevor Luciani

"I cherish SHS and all it has taught me and would not change that experience for the world."

-Alyssa Harryninan

"I came to this country from Guyana in 2009. SHS has taught me to be my own person and I received the full high school experience."

-Shamar Persaud

Student: Maazin Ahmed, '18
College: Georgetown University
Major: Biology/Pre-med

Student: Shamar Persaud, '18
College: Purchase College
Major: Screenwriting/
Playwriting

Student: Alyssa Harryninan
(2018 valedictorian)
College: Union College
Major: Undecided

Student: Trevor Luciani, '18
College: American University
Major: Political Science

Student: Khadija Rafiai, '18
(16-year-old graduate)
College: Sage College of
Albany
Major: Biology

Student: Faith Williams, '18
College: SUNY Oneonta
Major: Biomedical Science



High School Opportunities

IB

- » The International Baccalaureate program is a rigorous pre-university course of study for highly motivated juniors and seniors. The aim of the IB program is to develop internationally-minded people who help to create a better world as reflective, balanced, knowledgeable learners. The IB Diploma commands global recognition and is acknowledged course credit at many colleges and universities. Schenectady is a lead IB school for the surrounding area.

Fab Lab

- » Courtesy of a GE Power donation, the Brilliant Career Lab or "Fab Lab" rolled into the Schenectady City School District in the fall of 2017. A first-of-its-kind, the interactive, mobile technology lab is filled with high-tech equipment and programming tools. It's designed to prepare students for the innovative digital industrial jobs of the future. Hands on and virtual experiences allow students to explore STEM career options.

AVID

- » AVID, Advancement Via Individual Determination, focuses on helping students overcome challenges, develop skills and prepare for college. In June 2018, junior AVID student Julie-Ann Gowie, graduated a full year early and was accepted to SUNY Adirondack. The program, which started with just 30 students three years ago, grew to 163 students during the 2017-18 school year.

Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC)

- » 101 cadets in the AFJROTC completed almost 2,028 combined community service hours during the 2017-18 school year. Among several projects, they completed a massive street cleanup beautification process of on Van Vranken Avenue and continued the Vale Cemetery. Their Thanksgiving Basket program benefited 10,000 people. AFJROTC is a citizenship program designed to instill leadership, respect, discipline, responsibility and character. Chief Master Sgt. Jayne Thompson has been nominated for Woman of the Year in Schenectady because of her work with the corps.

"People throughout the community have mentioned that we are everywhere and actually making a real difference where we live."

-Chief Master Sgt. Jayne Thompson, AFJROTC

"Through the Brilliant Career Lab we will advance students' understanding and ability to pursue STEM careers. It's critical we invest in future generations to help feed the pipeline for skilled workers."

- » Steve Bolze, former president and CEO, GE Power

CLASS OF 2018 IB DISTINCTION

24

IB diploma candidates
(completed full IB program of study)

94

IB certificate candidates
(completed IB subject course of study)

Class of 2018 Top 10 Students

- » Alyssa Harrynanan
Union College
- » Mary Liebers
Macalester College
- » Elizabeth Mattice
Clarkson University
- » Serena Wells
St. Lawrence University
- » Shayla Kerr
The University at Buffalo
- » Angelo Gaminde
Boston University
- » Narine Ramdihall
The University at Albany
- » Kathy Tran
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- » Maazin Ahmed
Georgetown University
- » Joseph Giordano
Colgate University



A national award-winning district
Schenectady City School District

Schenectady



#ProjectBeHere

The path to graduation starts with good attendance

The SCSD rolled out the attendance campaign #ProjectBeHere, to bring awareness to the impact of chronic absenteeism, 18 or more school days missed in a year. It serves as a springboard for a district-wide attendance initiative, designed to ensure students are in school every day.

**2017-18
3rd
Quarter:**

15 out of 16 buildings saw an **INCREASE** in the number of students with perfect attendance.

#ProjectBeHere, branded by the district, is not only a robust social media campaign, but a comprehensive effort that also provides resources and tools to educate teachers, administrators, students and parents about the effects of attendance, good and bad.

The campaign launched in early March 2018. District data from the 2017-18 third quarter showed attendance improvements.

CircleUp!

"We can CircleUp! around any topic to validate people's feelings."

In 2017-18, Schenectady High School held 265 classroom community and informal circles. (attendance circle, right). To bridge the equity gap, these restorative circles are used to give

all students an equal opportunity to participate and voice their opinions. The majority of students and teachers surveyed agreed that the circles immediately benefited classroom culture and improved teacher-student relationships.



Lebel receives prestigious NYS teaching honor

As she ushered her ninth-grade students to their seats in the cafeteria, Schenectady English teacher Lori Lebel thought they were settling in for a scheduled assembly in May, 2018.

That is until New York State Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul approached the podium to present an Empire State Excellence in Teaching Award and read one simple statement.

"This teacher says, 'It's not my job to give you answers. It's my job to teach you how to think.'"

Instantly, after hearing that well-known motto, about 100 ninth-graders and Lebel knew she was being recognized.

Schenectady Superintendent Larry Spring and board of education members, helped Hochul surprise Lebel with the award. The honor, which is only given to 60 teachers statewide, comes with a \$5,000 check for professional development.

"I choose to teach in Schenectady because my kids are the best and not everyone has the best understanding of the kids in Schenectady," Lebel said, who has been teaching in the district for 18 years. "Schenectady is amazing and our students are awesome, so this is their win as much as it's mine."



District Teacher of the Year

The Schenectady City School District named Kathleen Wylie, a seventh-grade social studies teacher at Central Park Middle School (center above), the 2017 Teacher of the Year.

"Teaching is my passion," Wylie said. "Teaching in Schenectady is my calling. "It is my pleasure and joy to be a part of the lives of our kids and have the opportunity and responsibility to make a difference in my community."

Pupil Personnel Services

Addressing the social-emotional needs of our students

Trauma Sensitive Schools

- The Schenectady City School District has taken huge strides toward becoming better trauma-informed and developing trauma-sensitive practices to ensure that all staff is equipped with the skills, resources and tools to understand, recognize and respond to children impacted by trauma. The district hosted the first-annual Trauma Sensitive Institute for three days in July 2017.

Diversion

- Diversion is an alternative pathway in response to serious or extreme behavior. Diversion, is a team approach, therapeutic in nature. It aims to assess needs and diagnose treatment, planning and interventions that address risk and protective factors. As a result of diversion, in 2017-18, the total number of superintendent hearings were reduced by 70 percent, when compared to the previous year.

Restorative Practices

- Restorative practices, aimed at building a relationship-based culture, started with the implementation of community-building circles.

SHS Restorative Circles Impact:

- **81%** of students surveyed believed circles benefited the classroom culture immediately.
- **79%** of staff surveyed believed circles improved teacher-student relationships.
- **96%** of teachers surveyed would recommend the process to peers.

SHS relationships are improved and altercations and conduct violations have decreased.

General Education Continuum (GEC)

- The General Education Continuum of intervention support services, implemented in 2017-18, is designed to address the academic, attendance, behavior and social emotional needs of students in grades K-12 who are at risk of failing or are failing. 31 teachers supported the GEC across the district.

Universal Breakfast and Lunch

- Through the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), all SCSD students receive free daily breakfast and lunch, which for some is their only or primary source of nutrition. The SCSD believes providing adequate nutrition, for healthy minds and bodies, is one of the most important ways we can help our children perform better academically.

Universal Breakfast and Lunch

Average number of daily meals served in 2017-18:

- **4,880 breakfasts**
- **6,470 lunches**

2017-18 GEC students served:

- 530 elementary school students
- 300 middle school school students
- 238 high school students via Operation Graduation/Check and Connect

A Van Corlaer Elementary student practices yoga.

TSS practices implemented across the district include restorative circles, mindfulness routines, use of sensory spaces, book studies, turnaround rooms for de-escalation, community collaborations and more.



A national award-winning district
Schenectady City School District

Schenectady



Serving the **WHOLE** child

Issue: Food insecurity, or lack of access to enough food for a healthy life

Support and Service:

» Universal Breakfast and Weekend Backpack Program

Definition: All students in the SCSD are served breakfast and lunch at no cost, regardless of household income. When all children are offered a meal at no charge, more children participate and the stigma, associated with low-income children, is eliminated. Additionally, every Friday afternoon, - thanks to a community collaboration - approximately 1,000 SCSD students are handed a backpack full of nutritious food to take home for the weekend.

"SHS has given me opportunities I am not sure I would have received anywhere else."

» **Shamar Persaud '18**

Issue: Adverse childhood experiences and chronic exposure to trauma

Support and Service:

» Trauma Sensitive Schools

Definition: District staff fosters an understanding and awareness about the importance of promoting resiliency, recognizing signs and symptoms of trauma and integrating this into procedures and practices. In a trauma-sensitive school, staff thinking shifts from "What's wrong with you?" to "What has happened to you?"

Issue: Achievement gap

Support and Service:

» General Education Continuum

Definition: The General Education Continuum (GEC) is a systemic pattern of intervention support services designed to address the needs of general education students who are at-risk of failing or are failing. The design mirrors the supports provided in the special education model, offering a broad range of supports and services including respite, Operation Graduation, targeted and tiered support and case management.

Issue: Students with unmet behavioral and mental health needs

Support and Service:

» Diagnostic and Prescriptive Approach

Definition: We work to identify the root cause of student behavior and provide interventions and trauma informed treatment that addresses behavioral health needs. It's a collaborative approach that aims to assess student need, provide treatment planning interventions that address risk and protective factors. The goal is to ensure that the student and family are being met with appropriate service and treatment planning.


Issue: Connecting students with their passions

Support and Service:

» Long menu of co-curricular clubs and activities at all grade levels

Definition: The SCSD offers co-curricular options in drama, art and music. New in 2017-18, middle school students had the opportunity to participate in SeaPerch Robotics. Schenectady High School offers more than 50 co-curricular options including Arabic Club, Global Ambassadors, Peer Mediation, Robotics, Roots Club, Science Bowl Team, Students for Peace and Working Girls Group Circle.





“Schenectady High School is not what people think it is. It’s the best place to get your diploma.”

» **Khadija Rafiai**
‘18

“Through the friends I have gained, I have learned there are often a lot of problems hidden underneath the surface and this has helped me open my eyes and be more understanding and accepting of the world.”

» **Alyssa Harrynanan** ‘18

Issue: Disproportionality, racial academic and discipline disparities

Support and Service:

- » Addressing disproportionality through training and transformation.

Definition: This past school year, district administrators and educators have explored the root causes and have begun the implementation of district and school-based plans to address disproportionate outcomes. Multicultural awareness, culturally responsive teaching, student-centered instruction, critical thinking, problem-solving, and complex higher order thinking are a few of the many strategies being implemented to close the opportunity gap and improve outcomes.

Issue: Students reading below grade level

Support and Service:

- » Focus on reading fluency

Definition: Fluency work, to help SCSD students make gains in reading, took place in all elementary school classrooms across the district. Reading fluency is a child’s ability to read a book or text correctly, quickly and with expression – with no errors. Teachers are tracking and monitoring fluency. In response, appropriate supports and tools are used in the classroom.

Issue: Need for community engagement and feedback

Support and Service:

- » Community Conversations

Definition: SCSD community liaisons have brought parents and community members together to discuss a variety of issues including how we can work together to create opportunities, work toward similar goals and help our students overcome challenges. Community conversations have led to partnerships and mentorships that help build trust and opportunity for our students to grow.

Issue: Summer slide, the tendency for students to lose some achievement gains made during the year

Support and Service:

- » Summer Enrichment Program

Definition: SCSD launched a four-week summer enrichment program for elementary school students in the summer of 2017. It served about 650 students. The all-day program offered students three full meals each day. It included English, reading, mathematics, social skill development, projects, games, physical activities and more.

Issue: Students in crisis

Support and Service:

- » Crisis Prevention Team

Definition: In the 2017-18 school year, the district expanded services by adding dozens of social-emotional and mental health positions, including a psychiatric nurse practitioner, to form a crisis prevention team. The goal of the team is, not only to respond to the increasing number of mental health emergencies, but to also work closely with school staff to identify and intervene, so that a potential crisis can be prevented.



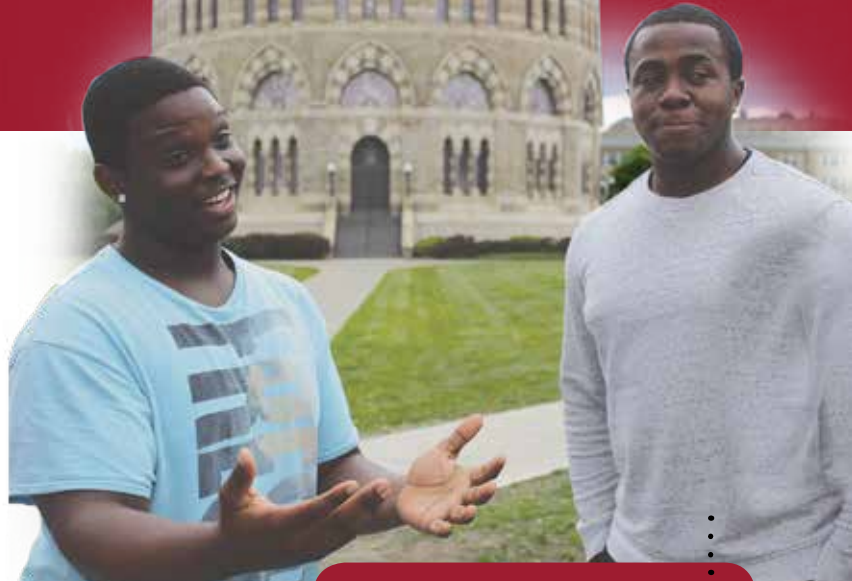
A national award-winning district
Schenectady City School District

Schenectady



Schenectady, Union students bond through mentorship program

My Brother's Keeper Success Mentorship initiative works toward improving the achievement gap among male minority students



Antonio Rivera has big plans for his future.

The Central Park Middle School eighth-grader daydreams about playing basketball at Duke University. However, for many of his peers, attending college wasn't in their plans. That is, until Rivera and about 15 other Schenectady students joined My Brother's Keeper Success Mentorship program (MBK), at its launch in February, 2018.

"When we first started this program, kids didn't raise their hands when asked if they wanted to go to college," Rivera said. "We were asked again at the end and everyone raised their hand."

Funded through a federal grant, the MBK program unites multicultural Schenectady students in seventh, eighth and ninth grade, with 15 Union College men of color, who serve as their mentors. The students commit to meeting on Union's campus for three hours, twice a week, February through June.

"We're showing these kids the jump from high school to college is possible as a person of color," said Stevie Tchako, a 2016 graduate of Schenectady High School. He is currently studying biochemistry at Union.

The MBK program concentrates on improving the achievement gap among young male minority students, with the focus of increasing high school graduation rates and college admission.

Each session begins with an hour-long discussion known as a circle conversation. Schenectady mentees said they felt the circles gave them an outlet to open up on a range of topics from male responsibility to law enforcement.

"We talk about how we feel," Central Park Middle School eighth-grader Jaheim Copeland said. "Like if we feel safe, especially after Parkland. The mentors understand you. You can tell them everything."

» *Jaheim Copeland*

"We talk about how we feel," Central Park Middle School eighth-grader Jaheim Copeland said. "Like if we feel safe, especially after Parkland. The mentors understand you. You can tell them everything."

The district's program specialist, Brian Ledbetter, highlights

"I don't see it as being a mentor, but more like being a big brother."

» *Stevie Tchako*

the restorative communication circles, which is part of evidence-based practices found to improve bonding, communication and decision making among participants. Other aspects of the program, like campus tours, pick-up basketball at Memorial Fieldhouse and eating together in the dining hall, help the Schenectady students envision themselves flourishing in a college atmosphere.

Tchako values his role as a mentor and hopes his guidance helps his young mentees learn from mistakes he may have made growing up.

Commitment to Equity

The Schenectady City School District remains steadfast in its commitment to equity. Work over the last year has brought a laser focus to the importance of awareness and understanding of our students and their cultures, removing learning barriers, adopting culturally responsive curriculum and practices and ensuring that every student has the opportunity to be educationally successful.

The district continued its work with the New York University Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools to understand disproportionality and how it relates to student outcomes, specifically for special education and

non-white students. District leaders have studied data, explored root causes of disproportionality and have designed multi-year plans that are inclusive of all district staff.

The district also partners with the Institute for Learning (IFL) to build teacher capacity, grow stronger instructional leaders and practice two-way accountability to help improve student outcomes with a focus on culturally relevant curriculum and responsive teaching.

The work has pushed educators to think differently in order to be responsive to student needs and ensure that race, economics and disability are never predictors of student achievement.


Literacy

Meeting students where they are

Fluency

A focus on reading fluency, across all 11 SCSD elementary schools, continued in 2017-18. Fluency is a child's ability to read any text correctly, quickly and with expression, making little to no errors. Fluency work in kindergarten through sixth grade is monitored weekly, by tracking how many words students read correctly on a given text. Teachers and students review progress together and students are excited to see their growth and graph their own data. In response, appropriate supports and tools are used in the classroom.


Students who are reading at grade-level by the end of third grade are four times more likely to graduate on time.



New York Times bestselling author, Kwame Alexander held a literary pep rally at the Schenectady Armory for hundreds of SCSD students in grades 3-8. More than 2,200 students read the popular author's books as part of voluntary book clubs, before and after school or during lunch. (November 2017)

Book Mobile


The Book Mobile made six stops during the summer of 2017, including the Schenectady YMCA and Central Park. The program checked out 302 books, while 36 teachers, administrators and tutors talked with Book Mobile students. The Book Mobile is a #SchenectadyReads initiative designed to ensure every SCSD student has access to diverse reading material during the summer months. www.schenectadyreads.com



Children who are given access to books over the summer perform 40 percent better on reading achievement tests than those who do not have access.

English as a New Language (ENL)

English as a New Language (ENL) served 500 SCSD students during the 2017-18 school year. The district is developing a strategic plan to enhance the program over the next three years. ENL is educational programming provided to students whose native language is that other than English. SCSD is committed to providing English Language Learner (ELL) students with equity and excellence in education and to ensuring that all students become college and career ready.



"I came to America in 2012 with very little English. I was in ENL classes for two years. It was a hard journey and I faced many obstacles, but I am proud that I overcame them."

» *Khadija Rafiai, Class of 2018, born in Afghanistan*



A national award-winning district
Schenectady City School District

Schenectady



Przybylo: By the Numbers

46
Game Winning
Streak

270-96
Career Record

3
Decades as SCSD
physical education
teacher

2
Undeclared Teams



2
future NBA
players
(Barry
Kramer,
Pat Riley)

ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS

NYS Champions

- Maazin Ahmed
(1600m indoor)

Section II Champions

- Maazin Ahmed
(cross-country,
1,000m, 1,600m)
- Keegan Cochrane
(400m, 800m)
- Trebor Davis
(55m, 100m)
- Colin James
(triple jump)
- Mary Liebers
(1,500m race walk)

- Aaliaz Mack
(outdoor pentathlon)
- Adrian Sanders
(shot put)
- Lamont Walters
(300 meter indoor)
- Billal Zamani
(132-pound
wrestling)
- Boys' 4x100
meter relay team
(outdoor)
- Girls' 4x200 meter
relay team (indoor)
- Girls' 4x100 meter
relay team (outdoor)

**find more athletic
highlights on our website*

Maazin Ahmed



Schenectady High School senior distance star, Maazin Ahmed graduated as an IB academic certificate candidate with a 3.8 GPA, and six school records in cross-country and track. A two-time Section II Sportsmanship Award winner, Ahmed leaves behind a legacy of groundbreaking performances.

"I want to be remembered as the first kid to do something nobody else could do, but definitely not the last,"

said Ahmed, who will run at Georgetown University, while studying biology with a pre-med concentration.

In November 2017, he became the first-ever Schenectady High School runner to win the Section II Class A cross-country

championship, the first cross-country crown for any SCSD runner, since Mont Pleasant's Ike Weston in 1979. Ahmed is the first Patriot to ever qualify for the state meet in an outdoor distance event and cross-country, and the first to run the mile at the prestigious Millrose Games in New York City.

Hoops Court Named

In January 2018, the basketball court at Schenectady's Pat Riley Sports Center was named the Walt Przybylo Court, in honor of the former Nott Terrace and Linton High School boys varsity coach. The Mont Pleasant High School grad is a member of the district's Athletic Hall of Fame inaugural class. Przybylo's family attended the ceremony in his honor.

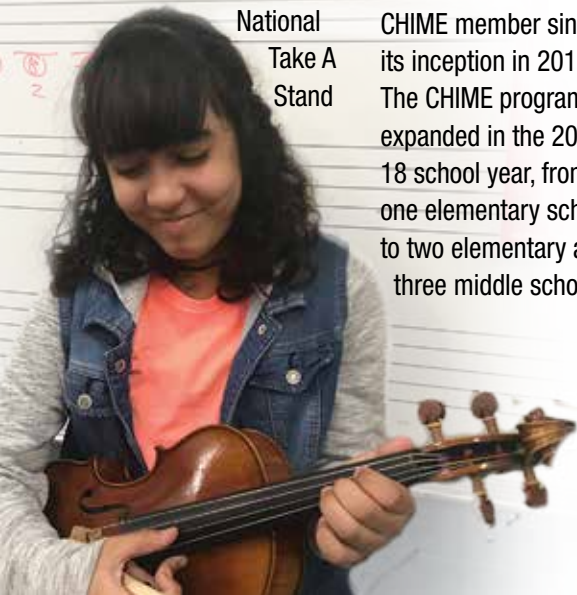
(Court painting by artist Tony Cristello)

Fine Arts

Oneida Middle School sixth-grade viola student, Taina Melendez, was accepted to attend the L.A. Philharmonic's National

Take A
Stand

Festival in Los Angeles. She performed (July 2018) as part of a top-tier national youth orchestra. Melendez has been an Empire State Youth Orchestra CHIME member since its inception in 2015. The CHIME program expanded in the 2017-18 school year, from one elementary school to two elementary and three middle schools.



Fine Arts Highlights

- » 50 groups of SCSD students attended shows at Proctors & Capital Repertory Theatre
- » Several art residencies were offered across the district
- » Middle school orchestras performed with Trans-Siberian Orchestra violinist, Mark Wood
- » Blue Roses Theatre Company presented four major productions
- » Student artwork was featured in a variety of local art shows



Professional Development

Developing our educators and increasing our capacity

Urban Schools Conference

The Schenectady City School District and Capital Region BOCES collaborated in the fall of 2017 to offer the inaugural Urban Schools Conference that provided professional development to educators across New York State. The conference focused on the many challenges urban schools face.

The conference featured Dr. Christopher Emdin, founder of the #HipHopEd movement, and New York Times bestselling author, as the keynote. It offered a variety of speakers, presentations and Edcamps.

Participants also had the opportunity to choose from a long list of breakout sessions covering topics such as growth mindset, coaching, project-based learning, instructional strategies, trauma sensitive schools, restorative practices, culturally responsive education, family and community engagement and more.

Many educators commented that it was the best professional development that they have ever attended.

Dr. Christopher Emdin, founder of the #HipHopEd movement, speaking at the Urban Schools Conference.



Summer Literacy Institute

The SCSD Literacy Institute expanded in the summer of 2017 to include approximately 220 teachers from kindergarten through sixth grade. The focus of the institute was to provide teachers with strategies, resources and supports to boost student literacy and reading skills.

Teacher Leadership Academy

41 teachers across the district participated in the Teacher Leadership Academy, debuting in 2017-18. They learned how to coach their professional colleagues with a focus on improving instruction.

Instructional Coaches Academy

SCSD implemented an instructional coaching model in 2017-18. Nine coaches worked with seven different schools, for a period of eight weeks each, providing intensive instructional professional development. Instructional Coaches, school principals and the coach coordinator were trained by the Center for Educational Leadership from the University of Washington on a new intensive training model.

» The SCSD Educational Foundation awarded \$10,083 in grant funding, to 18 Schenectady educators in 10 schools in the spring of 2018. Since 2006, the foundation has awarded 310 grants to SCSD teachers worth more than \$230,000.



A national award-winning district
Schenectady City School District

Schenectady



14 Everybody **counts.** Everybody **learns.**



Summer Enrichment Program

SCSD pilot program mixes learning and fun to combat 'summer slide'

It was not your typical summer school schedule. Story time and swimming. Web-based math and hip hop.

In the summer of 2017, the Schenectady City School District launched the inaugural Summer Enrichment Program. Patty Paser, assistant to the superintendent of SCSD, said it was important to blend academics and activities.

"We wanted this to be different than just coming to school every day," Paser said about the opportunity made possible through the use of federal funds.

After the first year, evidence shows that students who attended the program experienced positive educational outcomes. The district will continue to track data and the impact on learning.

The program was designed to help stop summer slide, where students lose academic gains made during the previous school year. Another goal was to provide students a safe, fun, and educational environment for part of their summer.

The program was so popular there was a waitlist, as is the case for the 2018 program, where enrollment nearly doubled.

140

Staff members

553 Students: K-6

Paige, Pleasant Valley, Martin Luther King
Elementary Schools

**10-hour
days**

Monday-Friday

LET'S TALK!

The Schenectady City School District is dedicated to fostering positive relationships, building trust and effectively communicating and engaging with our parents, staff, students and community members.

In order to do this, we always maintain an open line of communication and want to hear what you have to say about important topics and current initiatives.

We are listening.

Let's Talk! provides you with an opportunity to share what's on your mind anytime, from anywhere. We are here to listen 24/7 and will respond to your questions, comments and concerns. There is a team behind each specific topic, ready to assist you.

We want to hear from you 24/7!



Capital Project

- During 2017-18, the SCSD closed Phase I of the long-range renewal plan, which included \$70 million worth of work approved by voters in 2014. The four phases of work, planned through December 2026, include ongoing maintenance, moderate reconstruction, renovation and updates to all of the district schools.
- Planning for Phase II, which includes \$64.5 million worth of work to nine elementary schools and the high school, was launched in 2017-18.

Due to strategic planning, high building reimbursement rate, EXCEL aid and Capital Reserve funding, the capital projects have not impacted the tax rate.

Finances

Fiscal Health

- Despite being a high-need district, and one that is significantly underfunded by New York State, Schenectady has taken steps to manage the challenge and gain good financial standing. Within five years, the district improved from a designation of "significant fiscal stress," to one of no designation or "good standing."

Tax Levy

- Over the years, Schenectady taxpayers have supported the district, even when it meant shouldering the burden of higher taxes. SCSD has been committed to providing taxpayer relief. In five of the last seven years, SCSD has presented budgets that have either reduced or kept the tax levy flat. Over the last two years, the levy has been decreased by 0.21 percent and 2.41percent, respectively.



» Mont Pleasant Middle School bus loop under construction-FALL 2016



» Mont Pleasant Middle School bus loop renovations completed-SUMMER 2017

In 2017-18:

- » Howe Elementary School expanded with addition of a new second floor wing, opening as a pre-K through fifth grade elementary school in September 2017
- » Front exterior of Mont Pleasant Middle School transformed with addition of a bus loop
- » New flooring installed and cafeteria painted at Mont Pleasant Middle School
- » Central Park Middle School library renovated
- » A new elevator installed at Van Corlaer Elementary School
- » Van Corlaer Elementary School site work, classroom and gymnasium renovations completed

2017-18 Budget Summary

\$186,289,260

General Fund Budget

5.14%

Change from Previous Year

-2.41%

Change to Tax Levy

21st Century Community Learning Centers

The Schenectady City School District offers the exciting 21st Century Community Learning Centers program after school and in the summer. It allows students to experience new

things, grow, learn and have fun.

Funded by a federal grant for five years annually, starting in 2017, the 21st CCLC provides students tutoring, project-based and service learning, STEM projects, college and career explorations, the arts, reading, guest speakers, as well as field

- **2017 summer:**
112 students
(grades 6-12)
- **2017-18 fall:**
740 students
(grades 3-12)

trips that complement the program's goals.



A national award-winning district
Schenectady City School District

Schenectady



Schenectady City School District

108 Education Drive

Schenectady, NY 12303

518-370-8100 Fax: 518-370-8173

www.schenectady.k12.ny.us

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Albany, NY
Permit No. 765
ECRWSS

2017-2018 Board of Education

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| » John Foley,
President | » Cathy Lewis |
| » Mark Snyder,
Vice President | » Ann Reilly |
| » Dharam Hitlall | » Bernice Rivera |
| | » Katherine Stephens |

Postal Patron

- » Karen Corona, Editor
» Lindsay Quackenbush, Editor

*Produced by the Schenectady City School District in cooperation with
the Capital Region BOCES Communications Service. 8/18*



A national award-winning district
Schenectady City School District



Spotlight ON Schenectady

2017-18

“Everything
I’ve done and
everything
I will do,
will always
lead back to
Schenectady.”

» **Maazin Ahmed**
Class of 2018

