



SUPERINTENDENT'S *Brief*



SUPERINTENDENT ANIBAL SOLER, JR.

WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 8 2021 | VOLUME 1 ISSUE NO. 12

It's hard to believe that we just finished our first month of school. I hope you and your family are healthy and that things are going well. I realize that it has been an adjustment being back in-person especially with all the protocols and the fluidity of the situation. While it's not always easy, we need to continue to be prepared to act, adjust, and respond, depending on COVID-19 community data, our own learning and changing needs, as well as the advice and guidelines provided by medical professionals, including our local department of health.

Winter and Spring Student-Athletes Must Be Vaccinated to Participate

At the board of education meeting on October 6, the board approved the requirement for athletes to be vaccinated for participation in upcoming winter and spring sports. Vaccinations (both doses) must be completed by November 14. (This does not apply to fall sports which are already underway.)



This was a difficult decision and came after much discussion, some debate, input from student-athletes and families and information from Keith Brown, the interim public health director for Schenectady County. Dr. Carlos Cotto, assistant superintendent of innovation, equity and engagement, presented an overview of the feedback he and Ms. Miranda, the director of athletics, received. You can review that [here](#). This decision comes down to doing what is best for keeping kids healthy and safe and able to attend school.

As we explained at the board meeting and Mr. Brown reiterated, **when an unvaccinated student is exposed to a person with COVID, he or she is at higher risk and is required to quarantine for 10 days**. There is no exception. There is no testing alternative or other means to avoid quarantine. That means, not only do the unvaccinated student-athletes have to sit out of multiple practices and games each time they are exposed, but they are also unable to attend school for the entire period. Unvaccinated players on our JV football team have been quarantined three times, each in response to a single positive COVID case. There are currently 19 players who are under quarantine. The players on the team who **are** vaccinated are not required to quarantine unless they exhibit symptoms.

Deciding to get the vaccination is a personal and family decision. Mr. Brown spoke about some of the reasons why families opt not to have their 12 and older children vaccinated and urged everyone to get the facts by asking questions and learning about the vaccination. He suggested talking to your doctor or a public health professional instead of getting information from social media. Mr. Brown also noted that accessibility to the vaccine is sometimes an issue.

We, along with our partners at the department of health, are going to help with both. We will be holding an information session where parents and students can learn about the vaccine and ask any questions. We will also be scheduling vaccination clinics for our student-athletes, who decide and get parental permission to receive the vaccination. There is a tight deadline so we will be holding these events very soon.

Again, any student who will be participating in winter or spring sports must be fully vaccinated (both doses completed) by November 14, 2021. There are two approved vaccinations for those 12 and older. If we look at the timeline and required wait time between doses, it means athletes must have:

- If getting the Moderna Vaccine: At least one dose by October 17
- If getting the Pfizer Vaccine: At least one dose by October 24
- Moderna or Pfizer: The second dose by November 14

Your child's coach will be discussing the vaccine requirement and upcoming events. We are currently working with the Schenectady Department of Health to schedule the information session and clinics. We will share that information as soon as possible.



Dennis Green is named acting principal of SHS. [More here.](#)

Schenectady High School. This week we put some things in place at Schenectady High School to help support students and staff. We recognize the transition back to school has been difficult for some and that there is a need for additional support and to expedite work to improve attendance, reinforce norms and boost morale following the challenging past year and a half.

Continued



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This week, the board approved the appointment of [Mr. Dennis Green](#) as acting high school principal at Schenectady High School, who will focus on these supports and making the climate and culture the best it can be. We are monitoring the culture and needs of all our schools.

Principal Recognition. I would like to give a huge shoutout and thank you to all of our school principals. This month is National Principals Month. Over the next weeks, we will highlight and celebrate our principals. Today we recognize Kerri Messler (Keane), Michele Manners (Hamilton) and Patrick Jean-Pierre (Paige). Thank you for all that you do.

I would also like to congratulate all who were appointed at the board of education meeting this week. If you are new to the district, welcome to our team. (See page 4)

Thank you to everyone in our school community for your continued partnership and support. We are in this work together.

Remember, no school Monday! Have a fantastic long weekend.

Anibal Soler, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools

THANK YOU TO OUR PRINCIPALS

This week's principal highlights

HAMILTON ELEMENTARY

Meet the Principal

Michele Manners

Hamilton Huskies 🐾

What do you love most about your job?



Working with the Hamilton students, staff, and families every day!

PROFILE

- In the district 5 years
- 🍎 Assistant principal for 2.5 years
- 🦋 First year as principal



Keane Elementary

Meet the Principal

Kerri Messler

Keane Dragons 🐉

What the students say...

You are a very nice principal. I see you every day when I come in with my brother. You are the best principal. (Click for more)



Profile

- 11 years in district
- 📖 Former ELA/Library Coordinator
- 🍎 2nd year as Keane Principal
- 📖 Passionate about reading



PAIGE ELEMENTARY

Meet the Principal

Patrick Jean-Pierre

Paige Panda 🐼

What the students say...

He's cool, funny, and smart. He also plays basketball at recess with us, and he comes to my football games. (Click for more)



PROFILE

- 4th year in the district
- 🍎 Former district director for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- ➡ Used to work in Denver
- 🐼 First year as Paige principal



COVID-19 UPDATE

Here is the report on COVID-19 positive cases for the period October 1 (10 a.m.) through October 8 (7 a.m.):

Total of 78 cases

70 students and 8 Staff members as follows:

- Hamilton Elementary School: 4
- Howe Elementary School: 4
- Keane Elementary School: 12
- Oneida Middle School: 8
- Pleasant Valley Elementary School: 2
- Schenectady High School: 30
- Van Corlaer Elementary School: 12
- Washington Irving: 4
- Zoller Elementary School: 2

Approximate Percentage of School Population COVID-19 Positive this week:

- Students: .0075%
- Staff: .0050%
- Percentage of Students and Staff: .0071%

IMPORTANT REMINDER

If you are experiencing any symptoms of illness or are waiting for COVID-19 test results, do not come to school or work. You should instead do the following immediately:

STAFF MEMBERS

THIS WEEK CONTACT

Stay home, contact your supervisor and email David Baroody at David.baroody@neric.org

STUDENTS

Parents please keep your child home and contact your school nurse.

If your child is exposed to a person who tested positive, you will receive a phone call immediately.

COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

Schenectady County offers vaccinations at several locations on a variety of days and times. No appointment needed. Just walk-in. The schedule is posted [here](#).

[New York State School COVID Report Card](#)

IMPORTANT

IS YOUR CHILD MISSING IMMUNIZATIONS?

Children will not be able attend school effective October 12.

As per NYS Public Health Law, if your child is missing any required immunizations, effective October 12, they will not be allowed to attend school until required proof of immunization is provided.

Please contact your healthcare provider, Hometown Health (518-370-1441) or Ellis Family Health Center (518-382-2260).

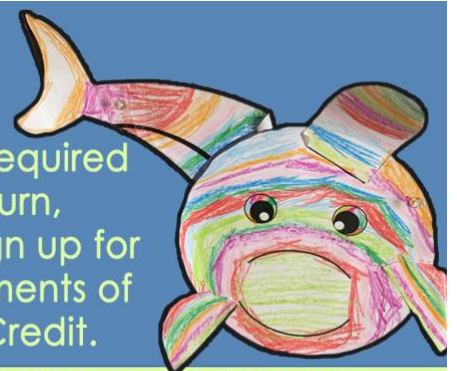
If you have questions, please contact your school nurse.

PARENT COMPACT

If you have not read the parent compact, signed, and returned the signature page to your child's school, please do so immediately. The compact outlines the agreement to follow COVID-19 protocols including screening your child for symptoms of illness. You can download the compact [here](#).



If your family isn't normally required to file a tax return, you can still sign up for advance payments of the Child Tax Credit.



irs.gov/childtaxcredit2021

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the following whose appointment was approved by the board of education at the meeting held October 6. Welcome to those who are new to our team.

Administrative Appointments

Tanya Delamater, Principal of Van Corlaer Elementary School
Dennis Green, Acting Principal of Schenectady High School
Carmella Parente, Director of Teaching and Learning
Terrence Sloan, Instructional Supervisor at Woodlawn Elementary School

Instructional Appointments

Rachel DeFelice, School Counseling & Guidance, MLK and Pleasant Valley Schools
Karen Scanlon-Fish, School Social Worker, MLK
Tyler Seeley, School Counseling & Guidance, Central Park Middle School

Secretarial Appointments

Rjawantie Sukram, Senior Payroll Audit Clerk, Central Office

PERMANENT APPOINTMENTS

Operations and Maintenance

Onkar Mohan, Cleaner, Yates and Zoller Schools

Paraprofessionals

Debra DiCocco, Hamilton Elementary School
Stephanie Donato, Hamilton Elementary School
Jessica Martin, Hamilton Elementary School
Taneika McCaskill, Zoller Elementary School

Lunch Monitors

Kimberly Branch, Lincoln Elementary School
Jennifer DeJohn, Howe Elementary School
Mercedes Fillmore, Lincoln Elementary School
Nivedita Lakraj, Paige Elementary School
Janet Maisonette, Lincoln Elementary School
David Pagan, Paige Elementary School
Kieron Sealy, Howe Elementary School
Melissa Wright, Paige Elementary School
Debra Yahusa, Paige Elementary School



[Tanya Delamater](#) was selected as principal of Van Corlaer Elementary School.



[Carmella Parente](#) is selected to serve as Director of Teaching and Learning.


Grout Run 2021



The Grout Run was held Saturday, October 2 in Central Park. The district has been participating for more than 80 years. Schenectady Cross Country runners from all levels participated.

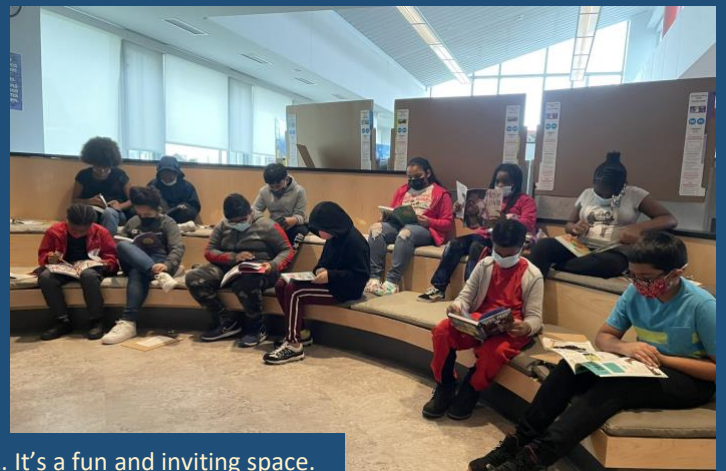


State Farm presented the \$25,000 check to the OSAR club at Oneida yesterday.

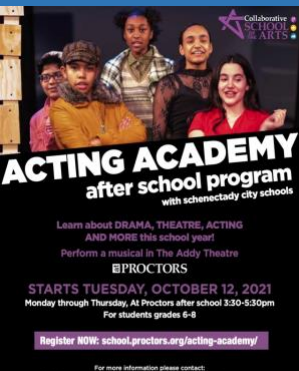
 [VIDEO ANNOUNCEMENT](#) made last week



October is National Farm to School Month. As part of our district's grant, we are bringing virtual field trips into classrooms across the district. Instead of bringing our K-2 students to the orchard, we brought the orchard to the students. Watch [this video](#) to learn about growing apples from a local family farmer who has been doing it for nearly 50 years. Thank you to Isabel Prescott and her family and the staff at Riverview Orchards for hosting us.



The new MLK Library Media Center is open to students. Check it out... It's a fun and inviting space.



Will your family need food for Thanksgiving Dinner? [Click here](#) for information and how you can sign up.

Are you able to donate and help others? [Click here](#) to learn how you can help.

#SchenectadyRising

