



SUPERINTENDENT'S *Brief*



SUPERINTENDENT ANIBAL SOLER, JR.

WEEK ENDING OCTOBER 29 2021 | VOLUME 1 ISSUE NO. 15

WELCOME LYNNE RUTNIK

On Monday, Lynne Rutnik officially joined our district as deputy superintendent. We announced [Ms. Rutnik's appointment](#) in August. She is a fantastic addition and integral member of my leadership team. Ms. Rutnik has already hit the ground running. She's been visiting schools and has enjoyed taking her first Schenectady learning walks. She will continue to be out and about in schools next week. If you see her, please say "hello" and welcome her to Schenectady.



SAFETY

As you know, last weekend there was a threat to one of our schools posted on social media. We take any threats of violence to our students, staff, schools, and our community very serious and have policy and procedures for responding to them. I want to share a little about that process as it applied to this weekend.

The threat that was posted on social media last weekend did involve law enforcement. Once we learned about the post, we contacted the Schenectady Police, who responded immediately. From that point forward, the investigation was in their hands, and we followed their directives and guidelines.

While we did our best to communicate that we were aware of the threat as well as provide status updates throughout the weekend, not all information is available while the police investigation is underway. We shared as much information as possible.

Meanwhile the police did their work to identify the source, conduct interviews and do what they are trained to do to complete a thorough investigation. In this case, Schenectady Police were also working with the New York State Police because the same threat had been copied, altered, and posted in various communities throughout the state and country. Those were reported in the news too.

Upon completion of their investigation, the police then made the determination about whether the threat is credible, meaning whether the person has the intent to follow through and the ability to do it. They then reported their findings and advised us.

On Sunday afternoon, following the investigation, police reported to us that the social media threat was **not credible**, and advised us that our schools were safe and could open as scheduled on Monday. It was determined that additional measures were not necessary.

NOVEMBER REMINDERS

November 2 (Election Day/Superintendent's Day)
No School for Students

November 11 (Veterans Day)
No School/District Closed

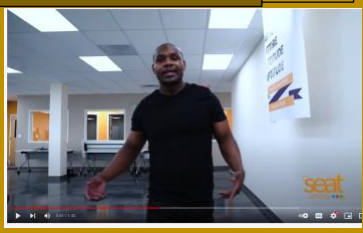
November 17 (Parent Teacher Conference)
No School for Students in Grades K-6

November 19 (Half Day Parent Teacher Conferences)
Half Day of School for Students in Grades K-6

November 24-26 (Thanksgiving Recess)
No School for Students
District Offices Closed on November 25 and 26



LEARN MORE ABOUT SEAT



Earlier this week, Superintendent Soler met with Jennifer Lawrence, Executive Director of [SEAT](#), one of our partners in the community. SEAT helps connect youth in our community to meaningful employment opportunities.

CONTINUED



www.schenectady.k12.ny.us
518-370-8100

The police shared with us that they determined it was a young person behind the post who did not intend to physically harm anyone. While we can't share who it is or what the consequences are, I will tell you that making a threat of any kind is serious. The police handle consequences from their end and the student code of conduct is enforced from our end.

I understand your concern and anxiety concerning any safety situation, but we would not open school, and show up on site ourselves, if the police did not assure us that school is safe or if there was ANY safety risk to students or staff in school because of this threat.

Please talk with your children and use this as an example of why they should be thoughtful and careful about what they post on their own social media accounts. Threats are never funny, and they can always be tracked.

SAFETY MEASURES

While on the topic of safety, I also want to touch on safety measures that are sometimes taken during the school day. Most often, safety measures are implemented as precautionary actions rather than in response to an imminent danger within the school. For example, a lockdown is often called when there is police activity or something happening in the community, outside of the walls of the school. The lockdown would be implemented because whatever is going on nearby might put someone at risk if they leave the building. The doors are locked so that no one can enter the school while this is taking place.

There is sometimes confusion over the different measures and what they mean. Here are few of the most referenced safety measures and what they mean:

Lockout: All exterior doors are locked. No one can enter or leave. Activity within the school continues as normal. This is most common when there is an incident occurring outside the school, on or off school property. The police will advise us when there is no longer any risk or threat in the community before the lockout is lifted.

Lockdown: A procedure used to secure the building and grounds usually when there is an immediate and imminent threat to the school. School staff and students are secured in the rooms that they currently in and no one is allowed to leave that location until the situation has been curtailed. There are also measures that take place within the space such as moving away from windows, pulling blinds or shades, and turning off cell phones. This is most used when there is an intruder. The lockdown remains in effect until law enforcement, or a school administrator opens the door and declares that it is safe.

Shelter In Place: A shelter in place is when there is not necessarily a safety issue but there is activity or something happening in the school that requires us to keep the halls clear. For example, if there was a medical situation and the paramedics were to be arriving, a shelter In place would be called to ensure that they have easy access to the sick or injured person and to protect the privacy of the individual.

Our communication with you about the implementation of any of these measures is often after they are lifted and not while in action. There are a few reasons for this. Sometime the facts leading to the measure are not evident while it is in process. The focus is first and foremost on making sure students are where they are supposed to be and remain safe. We also do not want parents coming to school when a safety measure is in process. The doors are locked which could potentially put you in harm's way while you wait outside.

We must work together to keep our schools safe. Please encourage your child to tell a trusted adult whenever they see or hear about something that is cause for concern. I applaud our students. They continue to be aware, vigilant, and often let us know when they suspect something is not right.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's safety in school, please contact your school principal.

Thank you for your patience and understanding. Remember, the safety of our students is always our priority.

Sincerely,
Anibal Soler, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools

PARENT INFORMATION

VACCINATION POD
NOVEMBER 1, 2021
MONT PLEASANT
BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF
SCHENECTADY

Vaccine appointments are open for **Monday, November 1** between 2-5 p.m. at the Boys & Girls Club next to Mont Pleasant Middle School. Students 12 and older are eligible.

Pfizer & Moderna Boosters are also available. Staff welcome to sign up.

Make your [appointment here](#).

COVID-19 TESTING FOR UNVACCINATED STUDENTS

We will be offering COVID-19 surveillance (pool) testing of students. Parent consent is required. Click [here](#) for more information, the consent form, and video resources.

PARENT UNIVERSITY NOVEMBER 4

We are very sorry for the technical issues Thursday evening. We have rescheduled the Parent University online meeting. It will be held **Thursday, November 4**. We will provide the link on social media and our website.



COVID-19 UPDATE

Here is the report on COVID-19 positive cases for the period October 22 (8 a.m.) through October 29 (8 a.m.)

Total of 51 cases

35 students, 14 staff members and 2 bus staff as follows:

- Central Park: 2
- Hamilton: 1
- Howe: 2
- Keane: 1
- King: 1
- Lincoln: 3
- Mont Pleasant: 8
- Oneida: 3
- SCLA: 2
- Schenectady High School: 11
- Van Corlaer: 8
- WIEC: 1
- Woodlawn: 2
- Yates: 2
- Zoller: 2
- Bus SHS: 1
- Bus Paige/Central Park: 1

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

- Students: . 37%
- Staff : . 88%
- Percentage of Students and Staff: .47%

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

Stay home, contact your supervisor and email Lindsay Baroody at Lindsay.Baroody@neric.org or call 518-312-8848

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 continues to offer free COVID-19 vaccinations at a variety of locations throughout the month. All PODS are open to walk-ins. The October schedule is available [here](#).

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

PARENTS: PLEASE COMPLETE THE DIGITAL EQUITY SURVEY

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) is asking all parents to participate in a [Digital Equity Survey](#). Digital equity is about making sure students have equal access to technology and technology tools. [Link to survey](#)

MESSAGE FROM U.S. DEPT. OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Medicaid & CHIP offer free or low-cost health insurance for children and teens up to age 19. Children can get regular check-ups, immunizations, doctor and dentist visits, hospital care, mental health services, prescriptions and more. Go [here](#) for more.

FARM TO SCHOOL RECIPES FROM OUR CULINARY STUDENTS

The end of October wraps up Farm to School Month and SCLA Culinary Students from Laura Macey's class created these three great recipes using fresh, in-season ingredients. Try them out for yourself at home. Click [here](#).



Earlier this week, Mr. DiCaprio, executive elementary school principal, read to classes at Keane Elementary School.



P-EBT

There is an FAQ that may provide answers your questions. Click [here](#).

THANK YOU TO OUR PRINCIPALS

MLK ELEMENTARY

Meet the Principal

Kristin Munrett

King Lions 🦁

What do you love most about your job?



"I love working with the PEOPLE! We are all working together for the common goals of happiness, safety, and academic growth."

PROFILE

- 19th year in the district
- 👤 2nd year as MLK principal
- 🏆 Former SCSD Teacher of the Year



ZOLLER ELEMENTARY

Meet the Principal

Desmond O'Connor

Zoller Bees 🐝

What do you love most about your job?



"I am constantly amazed by the resilience of our students and the passion of our staff."

PROFILE

- 16th year in the district
- 👤 Worked at 5 SCSD schools
- 🏠 First teaching job was in Spain
- 👤 2nd year as Zoller principal
- 🎿 Loves to ski



STAFF NOTES

CPR/AED TRAININGS NOV. 9

CPR/AED Trainings
Tuesday, November 9
6 – 8 p.m.
SHS Commons

Registration is required.
Please contact Anne Osborne
at 518-881-2044 Ext. 44801

CPR/AED Certification is
required for all staff who
work in after-school &
summer programs.

NOMINATIONS FOR TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Nominations are currently
being accepted for the 2022
SCSD Teacher of the year.
[Click here](#) for more.
Nominations are due by
November 5, 2021.

MONT PLEASANT MIDDLE SCHOOL

Meet the Principal

Nicole Biette

Mont Pleasant Mountain Lions 🦁

What do you love most about your job?



"Our kids and families! They are amazing humans, and I am so grateful that I get to be a part of their lives."

PROFILE

- 5th year in the district
- 👤 Cohort principal for SHS Class of 2020
- 🚤 Loves to boat and fish
- 🏆 Mont Pleasant Principal since January 2020



Students had a great time at the NY Giants game last weekend. They did a great job representing Schenectady as "Fuel Up to Play 60" ambassadors.



Learning Walks



What is a Learning Walk?

A learning walk is a brief classroom visit utilizing a researched-based tool that provides principals and teachers opportunities to reflect on what students are learning, strategies, student interaction with content, and engagement.

Members of our administrative team visited schools all week to speak with principals about unique goals and needs of schools.



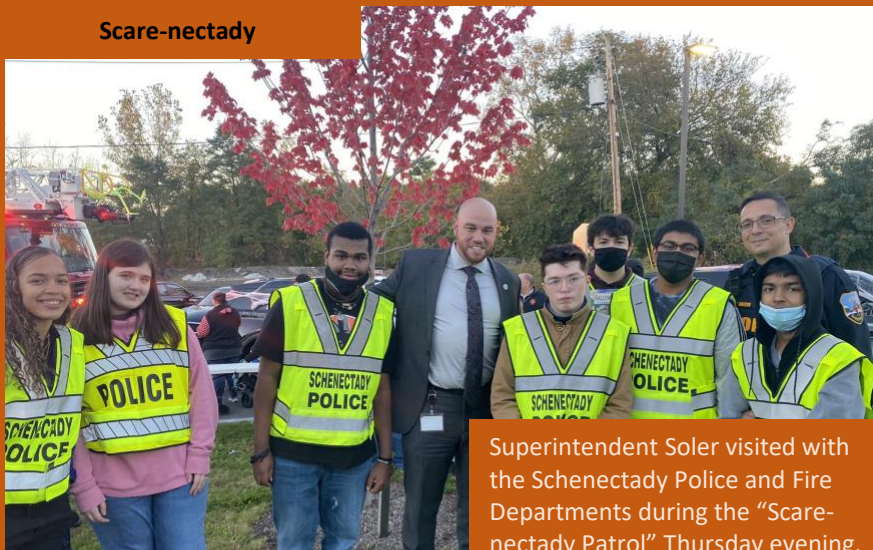
Lights on After School



On Thursday, October 28th, the district took part in the "Lights on After School" celebration. Since 2000, "Lights on Afterschool" has been celebrated nationwide to call attention to the importance of afterschool programs for America's children, families, and communities. Our district's 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) participated in the celebration. Each site had their own "Lights on After School" projects and the city of Schenectady joined by lighting up city hall.



Scare-nectady



Superintendent Soler visited with the Schenectady Police and Fire Departments during the "Scare-nectady Patrol" Thursday evening. The patrol made stops in each neighborhood and provided students and their families with coloring books, high-visibility trick or treat bags and candy. They were joined by the Schenectady High School Criminal Justice Club student volunteers.

