



SUPERINTENDENT'S *Brief*



SUPERINTENDENT ANIBAL SOLER, JR.

WEEK ENDING JANUARY 21 2022 | VOLUME 1 ISSUE NO. 26

Today I am kicking off my brief with some exciting news. When I arrived in the district last July, I promised to listen, look, and learn. It was important to learn about what is working well and where we should focus efforts for growth and improvement. What became evident during this process is that we need to take a closer look at our high school experience and explore how we can improve it by offering course, college, and career pathways of interest for our students. We are going to begin this work by launching a process for a secondary school redesign.

School redesign is no simple matter. It's about rethinking school ... how it is and how it should be so that our students are inspired, empowered, engaged, motivated and so that we are ensuring that they have the best opportunities to be successful.

Re-designing our high school is important work. It is not only an opportunity for us to innovate but it's also a time for us to rethink and explore the school experience with a fresh approach, relevance, and new pathways to success as part of a future-oriented framework. Our initial redesign focus will begin at the high school with a plan to eventually expand to middle school to provide a seamless secondary experience. Part of this will also be mirrored in the eventual introduction and rollout of the district-wide core instructional program.

The secondary redesign efforts will be led by Lynne Rutnik, deputy superintendent and Tyrone O'Mealley, executive principal of secondary schools. They will be working closely with the high school administrative team, school staff, students, and the school community.

The development of our plan will be done inclusively and collaboratively. We will be seeking input from all stakeholders including students, staff, parents, and community members. Engagement sessions with students and staff are scheduled for January 31 and February 1. Parents and community members will be invited to attend virtual sessions on February 2 and 3 respectively. Both sessions will be held at 5 p.m. The links to attend will be shared next week and posted on our website. There will also be a "Stop-In-Session" for anyone who wants to drop in and share thoughts and ideas as well as an opportunity to participate in a survey. As always, you can always share your thoughts and ideas through Let's Talk. We hope to have great participation from all stakeholder groups. The process will be transparent. The input and feedback that we collect, as well as next steps, will be shared. Please watch for updates.

Earlier this week, we were honored to have Randi Weingarten, President of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) who represents 1.7 million members, visiting our schools, and talking with our teachers. Thank you to Juliet Benaquisto, President of the Schenectady Federation of Teachers (SFT), for arranging Ms. Weingarten's visit. Ms. Weingarten spoke highly of our district and Schenectady educators. Links to interviews with Ms. Weingarten talking about our schools and teachers and news coverage of her visit is available on page 5.

Thank you to MVP Healthcare for hosting our elementary and secondary principals' meetings on Wednesday. The MVP facility, located in downtown Schenectady, is beautiful. It continues to be a pleasure visiting and holding our administrative meetings at the various venues throughout the city this school year. Our community partners are generous and serve as amazing hosts to us.

Congratulations to the Schenectady High School Girls' Bowling Team on their amazing season so far with a 10-1 record. [The Daily Gazette did a feature](#) on the team this week.

Just a reminder, the [second quarter marking period](#) closes next Friday, January 28.

Have a great weekend.

Anibal Soler, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools



Randi Weingarten, President of the American Federation of Teachers (center) visited Hamilton Elementary School and Schenectady High School Wednesday.



"I'm really glad I could be in Schenectady," said Weingarten during her visit. "This is one of the many success stories of educators helping kids recover. Educators and districts are working together to keep schools open and help kids thrive."

See page 5 for a list of links to the news interviews with more about her visit to our district.



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



Alumni Profile

"I love teaching here because I can relate to the students on so many levels. I also love that I'm giving back to my community by being here everyday."

Emoni Raysor

**Teacher, Schenectady High School
SHS Class of 2014**



This week's alumni profile is Emoni Raysor, a 2014 graduate of Schenectady High School who is now a teacher at the school. Emoni remembers her time as a student fondly, "especially my times in FA11, with Mrs. Los. She always showed us that she cared for us and that her room was a safe place for all students, and I want to provide that for my students too."

Did you graduate from Schenectady Schools?

If you are a graduate of Schenectady Schools, we would love to feature you in an alumni profile. To share your information, [click here](#).





At the Board of Education Meeting held on January 19, the Office of Student Support Services presented about Erin's Law and the 2nd Step Curriculum being implemented in grades K-5. These lessons provide a holistic approach to building supportive communities for every child through social emotional learning. Watch these lesson in action [here](#).

NEW EPISODE



On this edition, a recap of last weekend's Schenectady Invitational Wrestling Tournament with varsity coach Chad Languish. Plus, our Girls Varsity Bowling team was highlighted in the pages of the Daily Gazette this week.

 [Listen on Apple](#)
 [Listen on Spotify](#)



Come out and support our teams

Schedule of Athletic Events [Here](#)

COVID-19 UPDATE

Here is the report on COVID-19 positive cases for the period January 13 – January 22 (8 a.m.)

Total of 181 cases

65 Staff | 116 Students

- Central Office: 5
- Central Park: 16
- Hamilton: 5
- Howe: 6
- Keane: 9
- King: 4
- Lincoln: 8
- MPMS: 6
- Oneida: 20
- Paige: 4
- Pleasant Valley: 5
- SCLA: 7
- Schenectady High School: 41
- Van Corlaer: 7
- WIEC: 7
- Woodlawn: 3
- Yates: 12
- Zoller: 12
- Multiple Building Staff: 4

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

- Students: 1.2%
- Staff: 5.4%
- Percentage of Students and Staff: 1.7%

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

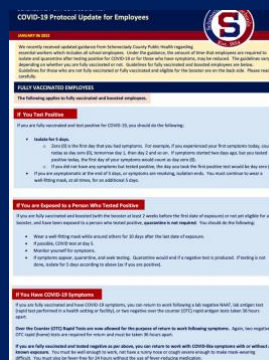
To better streamline communication with Lindsay Baroody, please follow the new guidelines AND self-report using this [link](#) when you have:

- have tested positive
- have COVID symptoms and need to test
- have been directly exposed and need to quarantine

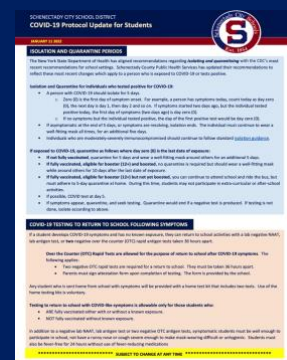
STUDENTS

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

PROTOCOLS (January 11)



EMPLOYEES



STUDENTS

CONTACT TRACING

[Update regarding Contact Tracing \(January 12\)](#)

New York State School COVID Report Card

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 January schedule is available [here](#).**

New York State [Vaccination Schedule](#)

VACCINATION RESOURCES

All you need to know about COVID-19 Vaccine and Children [English](#) [Spanish](#)

10 Questions about the COVID-19 Vaccine Answered [Here](#)

FREE TESTING SITE

Schenectady County Public Health opened a new COVID-19 testing site located at Ellis McClellan Campus (600 McClellan St.) for students, families, and district staff. Make an appointment [here](#).

COVID-19 Testing

Free Test kits from COVIDTESTS.GOV

Every home in the U.S. is eligible to order 4 free at-home COVID-tests. Order them now [here](#).

- [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)
- [New York State Department of Health](#)
- [Schenectady County Public Health](#)

RESOURCES

Please continue to watch for COVID-19 news and updates



WELCOME TO SCHENECTADY

Congratulations! If you are new to the district, welcome to our team.

Instructional Appointment

Lori Blosser, ELA, Mont Pleasant
Darcelle Jacobs, Social Work, Mont Pleasant
Tyler O'Connor, School Counseling & Guidance, Oneida
Kimberly Ramsundar, School Counseling & Guidance, WIEC

Management Confidential

Anthony Armstead, Student Engagement & School Attendance Specialist
Octavia Edmonds, Student Engagement & School Attendance Specialist
Jasmine Gibson, Student Engagement & School Attendance Specialist
Emalee Hall, Student Engagement & School Attendance Specialist

Security Monitors

Dorsey Brown, Central Park
Shamiek Jiles
Thakurdial Persaud

Secretarial

Alyssa Smith, Transportation Assistant, Central Office

Tutor

Patricia Burciaga, Tutor

Paraprofessionals

Joyce Cockerham, SHS
Raechel Mullin, Oneida
Jose Paris, Jr., Mont Pleasant
Brianna Seivwright, SHS
Brittini Valentino, Howe
Dasshane Williams, SHS

Lunch Monitors

Latisha Alexander, Paige
Afzeela Ishak, Pleasant Valley



New Date for the 2022

Education Celebration

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Tuesday, April 26th, 2022

5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Proctors GE Theater

Crystal Apple Award Winners:

Outstanding Graduate:

Anessa Waheed

Community Partner Award:

Hannaford Supermarkets

The Robert Ludwig Teacher of the Year:

Patty Wood – 2020 – Hamilton Elementary

Rick DeCarr – 2021 – Oneida Middle School

Catering by: SHS Culinary Arts Program

Music Provided by: SHS Students

Cost per Person: \$50 Teacher Rate: \$25

MC - Greg Floyd – CBS 6 News Anchor

STAFF UPDATES

Office of
Planning & Accountability
[January Newsletter](#)



2022-2023 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

2022-2023 Budget development is underway. The revised budget calendar is [here](#). The first budget presentation to the board of education will be held on February 2. The presentation will include an overview of the budget process, reserves, and fund balance.

**WE ARE
HIRING
TUTORS
NOW**

**TUTORING FOR
STUDENTS**

ALL CONTENT AREAS

ALL GRADE LEVELS

APPLY TODAY!

\$25-30 PER HOUR



TUTOR QUALITIES

Dedication and understanding of student needs
Exceptional interpersonal and communication skills
Ability to motivate

QUALIFICATIONS

Bachelor's Degree with several credits in education

**IMMEDIATE
OPENINGS**

GO TO
[SCHENECTADY.RECRUITFRONT.COM](https://www.schenectady.recruitfront.com)



www.schenectady.k12.ny.us

SCHENECTADY COUNTY CONNECTS **FEBRUARY 2022**
Virtual Workshop Series

	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
1-4			Civil Service 11am*	Resume Development* 10-30am	Individualized Services Including: Resume Development
7-11	Intro to Career Services 9am	Interview Preparation* 10-30am	Financial Aid for Training every Wednesday at 1:30pm		Interviewing Skills
14-18	How to Attend a Virtual Job Fair* 1:30pm	Completing Job Applications* 10-30am	(this workshop is for Schenectady County residents and is held in- person only)	Experience Matters* 1:30pm	Online Learning Financial Aid for Training and more!
21-25	Office Closed	Interview		Social	Call us to schedule an
28	SECCU Presents Budgeting Basics 4:30pm*				

Facebook Twitter Instagram YouTube Let's Talk!

Schenectady County Office of Economic Security

IN THE NEWS

WAMC: [American Federation of Teachers' Randi Weingarten visits Schenectady schools](#)

WNYT-13: [Schenectady teachers discuss pandemic's challenges as union president visits](#)

CBS6 NEWS: [Union reps tour schools to monitor COVID response](#)

SPECTRUM NEWS: [Educators discuss pandemic challenges with union leaders in Schenectady](#)



Above: Randi Weingarten talks with teachers at Schenectady High School. Bottom left: Ms. Weingarten is talking with Michelle Manners, principal of Hamilton Elementary School.



Potatoes are January's Harvest of the Month. Yukon Gold, Fingerling and Adirondack Blue and Red Potatoes are among the varieties grown in New York. Potatoes are fat free and a great source of potassium, fiber, niacin, and vitamins B and C. Choose fresh firm potatoes that are smooth and dry. Store them in a cool, dark, well-ventilated place for up to five weeks. Don't wash before storing or they can spoil. Kids love baked potatoes with fun toppings, or you can add unpeeled potatoes to soup or stew. Here are some yummy potato recipes put together by our talented culinary students.



RECIPES:

[Scalloped Potatoes](#)

[Fried Cinnamon Sweet Potatoes](#)

Photo of the Week



In honor of MLK, Pleasant Valley held a "Dress Like a Hero" Spirit Day. When the construction crew on site found out one of the students considered them heroes, they gave him a special tour of the new building updates.