



# SUPERINTENDENT'S *Brief*



SUPERINTENDENT ANIBAL SOLER, JR.

WEEK ENDING APRIL 14 2022 | VOLUME 1 ISSUE NO. 37

Good afternoon,

I hope this note finds you well. I know this is the day many of us have been counting down to and that everyone is ready to get on to a well-deserved break so I'll be as "brief" as possible.

Last night the board of education approved a spending plan of \$239,167,067 which is a \$20 million or 9.29% increase over the current year without any increase to the tax levy. I am extremely proud of this budget and grateful to the board of education for the thoughtful dialogue throughout the process and careful consideration before approving the plan last night.

There were no changes from the previous presentation and the approved plan includes all of the outlined positions and increases services and supports for our students including additional clinicians, enhanced safety and security, additional athletic and extracurricular opportunities, extended learning time, community schools initiative, facility improvements, secondary school redesign, new literacy curriculum, increased professional learning and partnerships with community-based organizations. The plan also serves to ensure that every school has an instructional media specialist, a counselor and parent liaison.

A public hearing will be held on May 4 at 7 p.m. Residents will head to the polls on May 17 to vote on the spending plan as well as the proposition to create a capital reserve fund for financing improvements to our schools.

Thank you to Mr. Gillooley who joined our team at the start of budget season and hit the ground running. He worked hard to seek input from our school community and met multiple times with school leaders to discuss the budget process and each school's needs. I also appreciate that he proposed changes that led to efficient processes. The final budget presentation is available [here](#).

I want to also extend a huge "thank you" to our parent liaisons who serve such a critical role in our district. They work closely with families to help problem-solve issues and concerns and help connect them with resources from the community. Our parent liaisons are compassionate, sensitive, and offer knowledge and understanding of situations and circumstances that impact our families. We were pleased to introduce them to the board of education last evening as well as present each of them with a certificate of appreciation. I sincerely appreciate them and all that they do.



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## SPRING RECESS

**No School**  
**April 15 – April 22**

*District Offices are closed on Friday April 15.*

## WITH OUR PARTNERS AT GIRLS INC.



Superintendent Soler and members of our Innovation, Equity and Engagement Team spent some time with the team at Girls Inc. earlier this week.

## THANK YOU TO OUR PARENT LIAISONS



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Congratulations to Carrie White, who was named our 2021 Teacher of the Year, in December. School board president Cathy Lewis, on behalf of the board, presented Mrs. White with a plaque. Many of Mrs. White's colleagues and students were on hand to support and cheer her on. She is now eligible to enter the New York State Teacher of the Year contest.

2022-2023 Pre-K information and the application is now available. Our Pre-K openings are filled through a lottery process. The application deadline is May 11 and the lottery will be held May 12. For information on the Pre-K application and lottery process, visit [here](#). To go to the application, click [here](#).

I had the great pleasure of visiting [Girls Inc.](#) earlier this week. Girls Inc. is another fantastic partner that provides mentoring, opportunities, programming, advocacy, and empowerment for girls in our community. I'm grateful to them for all that they do and am proud to partner with them.

Yesterday the New York State Education Department (NYSED) announced grant funding awards for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Programs. Our district is being funded with an award of \$565,000. As many of you know this extended learning program is very important to our district and families. We are pleased to receive funding that will continue to support the program. Thank you, Simone Miranda, project manager, and Tracy Angelini, assistant director of grants and title funding, for their hard work.

I wish our students, families, faculty, and staff a wonderful spring recess. I recognize that everyone has been working tirelessly and that you are ready for this break. I sincerely appreciate the dedication, commitment, hard work and giving that provide daily. Please unplug and enjoy time with family and friends. Relax and have some fun. I look forward to seeing you on April 25.

Sincerely,

Anibal Soler, Jr.  
Superintendent of Schools

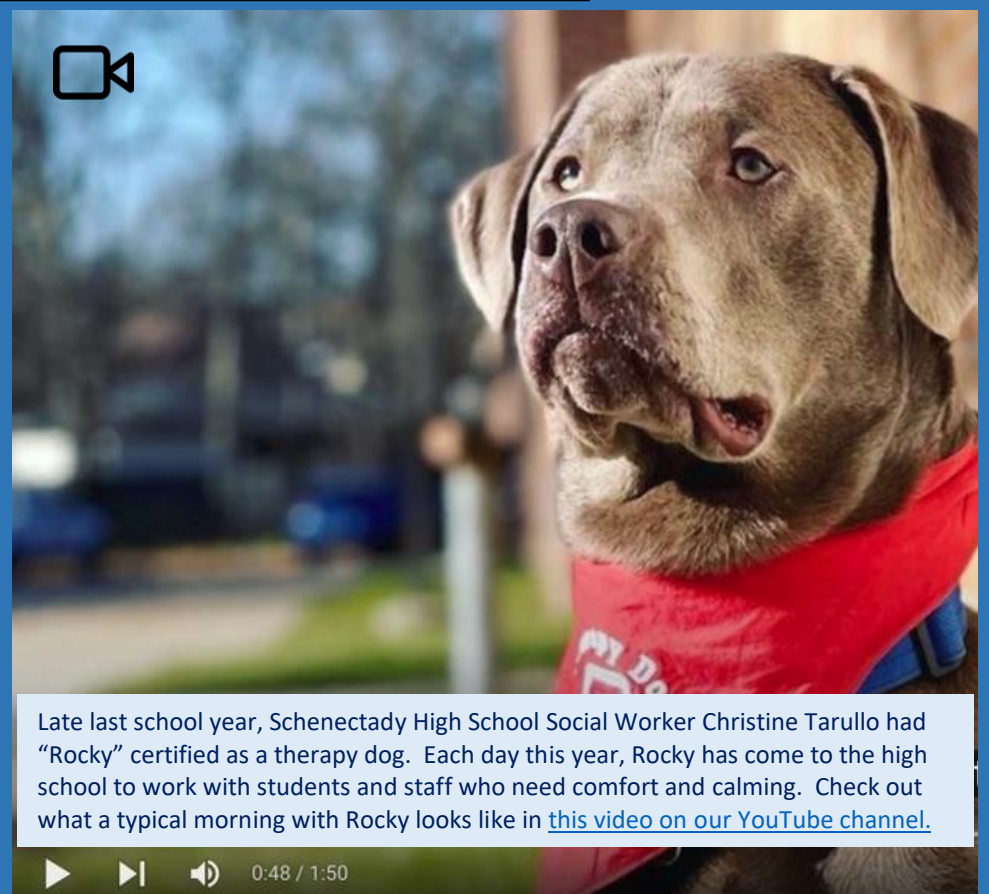


2021 Teacher of the Year Carrie White with Board of Education President Cathy Lewis, and Yates Principal Rob Flanders



[Watch the moment](#) in December when Mrs. White was surprised with Teacher of the Year honors.

#### ROCKY THE THERAPY DOG



Late last school year, Schenectady High School Social Worker Christine Tarullo had "Rocky" certified as a therapy dog. Each day this year, Rocky has come to the high school to work with students and staff who need comfort and calming. Check out what a typical morning with Rocky looks like in [this video on our YouTube channel](#).

#### 2022-2023 PRE-K

We are now accepting applications for Pre-K.

[More Information](#)

[Pre-K Application](#)

If you need assistance completing the application, please call 518-881-3405



**GIRLS INC. OF THE CAPITAL REGION Summer Fun Program**

[Here](#) for more information or to register





# Alumni Profile

**"Schenectady High School prepared me for this work by helping me to communicate with individuals of all backgrounds and showing me the value that diverse viewpoints can have in the workplace."**

**Amanda Hoffman**

**Chief HR Officer, NYS Office of General Services  
Schenectady High School Class of 1999**



This week's featured alumnae Amanda Hoffman, a 1999 graduate of Schenectady High School, is the Chief HR Officer at the NYS Office of General Services. She credits teachers she had while attending SHS with preparing her for her role with the state of New York.

"Ms. Huth and Ms. Johnson, my high school English teachers, really encouraged my critical thinking ability and helped me improve my communication skills."

## Did you graduate from Schenectady School?

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

## Are you interested in running for a seat on the board of education?

Two seats on the board of education are up for election on May 17, 2022. Each seat is for a three-year term.

For more information on how to get on the ballot and to download the petition, visit [here](#).

Petitions are due to the clerk of the board by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, April 27, 2022.

If you have questions, please contact Martha Morris at 518-370-8100 Ext. 40105 or email [morrisma@schenectady.k12.ny.us](mailto:morrisma@schenectady.k12.ny.us)

The 2022-2023 School Year Calendar will be available soon. It will be on the agenda for the board to consider at an upcoming board of education meeting. Once the calendar is approved, it will be posted and shared with the school community.

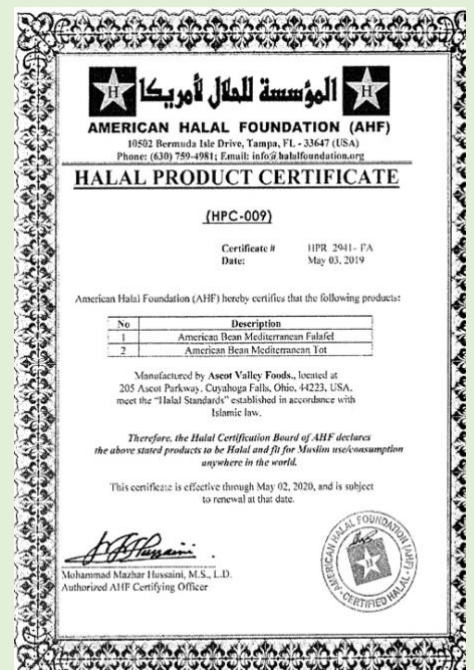
**2022-2023  
CALENDAR  
COMING SOON**



## Food Services

### New Halal options being added to menu

We are excited to share that after Spring Recess, we will be offering additional Halal options for your child. These hot lunch options will include chicken nuggets, beef hamburger, beef hotdog, chicken patties and Falafel. All items are certified Halal by The Islamic Services of American (ISA).



## COVID-19 UPDATE

Here is the report on COVID-19 positive cases for the period April 8 – April 12 (8 a.m.)

**Total of 22 cases**

**10 Staff | 12 Students**

- Central Park: 2
- Howe: 7
- Lincoln: 1
- Paige: 1
- Pleasant Valley: 3
- Schenectady High School: 4
- Van Corlaer: 1
- Woodlawn: 1
- Yates: 1
- Zoller: 1

[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 April 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](#)

## COVID-19 RESOURCES

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

## PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Based on Schenectady County's community level, prevention strategies at this time are:

- Stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines
- Get tested if you have symptoms

## 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.

## COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

### ATHLETE VACCINATION NOTE

Only athletes who participate in high-risk sports are required to be vaccinated for COVID-19. This change was approved by the board of education on April 6 and is in accordance with the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH). The change goes into effect immediately.

**SCHENECTADY COUNTY SCHOOLS DISTRICT  
COVID-19 PROTOCOLS  
MARCH 23, 2022**

The following is a summary of the updated guidelines and protocols provided by the New York State Department of Health on March 15, 2022.

**UNIVERSAL MASKING NOT REQUIRED**

The general mask mandate for schools ended on March 1, 2022. As such, masks are no longer required to be worn in schools or on school buses but are still encouraged in certain situations. This applies to all members.

Please use the following guidelines when wearing masks or when exposed to COVID-19.

The Department of Health recommends students, teachers, and staff wear masks when:

- They feel unwell or symptomatic.
- They have been exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19.
- They have been exposed to COVID-19 in a setting within the previous 10 days.
- They are moderate to severely immunocompromised and have discussed the need to mask with their healthcare provider.

**IF YOU ARE EXPOSED TO A PERSON WHO TESTED POSITIVE**

Regardless of vaccination status, we highly recommend that any person exposed to COVID-19 wear a mask for a full 10 days following their exposure and for the full 10 days following their exposure.

- Monitor yourself for symptoms.
- Any person who has been exposed or potentially exposed should be tested for COVID-19 as follows:
  - Consider testing immediately upon learning of the exposure or potential exposure.
  - At least 1 day after the last date of exposure to prevent exposure.
  - If asymptomatic, retest, and wear a mask for 10 days from exposure (start).

A person with lab-confirmed COVID-19 within the last three months does not need to get tested unless they develop symptoms. If you need a COVID-19 test kit, please contact your school nurse.

**IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS**

Regardless of vaccination status, any person with symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home from school/work and tested as if positive or test before school/work for the day, and other others are not for school attendance (i.e., vaccination or test) whenever it is longer.

If you have COVID-19 symptoms, you can return following a negative lab test, but anyone test or been negative over the course (CDC rapid antigen tests take 30 minutes apart from test kits such as the ones provided at school).

If you or your child have symptoms and are not sure what to do or if you need a COVID-19 test, please contact the school nurse.

**IF YOU TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19**

Regardless of vaccination status, any person who tests positive for COVID-19 must do the following:

- Stay home for 10 days.
- Stay away from others who are not fully vaccinated or test positive (if asymptomatic).
- Monitor yourself for symptoms (immunocompromised).
- You can return to school or work if asymptomatic or if symptoms are resolving.
- The last 10 following symptoms have a good chance for virus to be shed and pose the school bus.

## COVID 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](#).

### FREE TESTING SITE

To make an appointment at the Schenectady County Public Health testing site located at Ellis McClellan Campus (600 McClellan St.), click [here](#).

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.

### Administrator

Michael Kovall, Assistant Director of Mathematics

### Instructional

Anthony Sanchez, Physical Education, Central Park

### Operations & Maintenance

Johnny Almonte, Cleaner, Mont Pleasant

Michael Davis, Cleaner, Mont Pleasant

### Project Aide-Parent Liaison

Onika Thomas, Project Aide-Parent Liaison, Howe

Aleandro Torres, Senior Parent Liaison, Districtwide

### Paraprofessionals

Dalini Ballie Paige

Devin Hayes, Keane

Aquila Johnson, Schenectady HS

AJoalys Verdejo, Zoller

### Lunch Monitor

Alaika Jones, Lincoln

Charde Smith, Van Corlaer

## LINCOLN'S OUTDOOR LEARNING CENTER

Heather Rush, an art teacher at Lincoln shared work that her class did with Arts and Education funding. Brian Rush did a shop class residency last week during art class. Every student got to make and keep their own unique wood project. This week they finished building an outdoor learning center with seating and shade for classes to enjoy. There's still some landscaping to be done and plenty of space to add a garden area.



#schenectadyrising



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