



SUPERINTENDENT'S *Brief*



SUPERINTENDENT ANIBAL SOLER, JR.

WEEK ENDING MAY 20 2022 | VOLUME 1 ISSUE NO. 41

Dear Schenectady Community,

I first wish to extend a huge "thank you" to all in our community who came out to vote on our [2022-2023 Budget](#) and the school board election. Our budget passed with 78% approval. Thank you for your support. This budget allows us to expand opportunities, programs, services, and supports for our students as well as make improvements to our schools, engage more with parents, and increase safety measures throughout the district. Planning on initiatives such as the secondary school redesign and community schools is already underway. We look forward to sharing updates and progress on this work. An update with recommendations for the secondary school redesign will be presented at the June 1 Board of Education meeting.

Congratulations to Cathy Lewis who was re-elected and Vivian Parsons who was elected to her first term on the board. She will be sworn in at the first meeting in July. I also want to say thank you to board candidates Kristen Holler and Emily Willey-Aulet for their passion and interest serving our district and putting themselves out there to run for board seats.

Earlier this week, two of our students earned well-deserved, amazing honors. Congratulations to Tashai-Monae Halton, a fourth grader at Lincoln Elementary School who was Girls Inc. of the Greater Capital Region's "Girl of the Year" for demonstrating most personal and academic growth. She was recognized at the Strong, Smart, and Bold Dinner held Wednesday.

The Boys and Girls Club of Schenectady presented the 2021-2022 "Youth of the Year" award to Alex Peters, an SHS Class of 2022 student-athlete. Alex is a star on the baseball team and holds a 3.2 grade point average which led to college scholarship offers as well as the prestigious Mary Ann Hogan Scholarship Award. Alex will be attending Siena College in the fall where he will be majoring in Sports Management.

On Thursday, I attended the Rotary of Schenectady's meeting and provided a presentation on our district, where things stand and our plans moving forward. I enjoyed meeting members and answering their questions. I am grateful to the Rotary for their partnership and interest in all that we are doing. I will keep them updated as we move forward. We are all in this work together. As a community, we are #schenectadyrising.



REMINDER

No School

Friday, May 27 and Monday, May 30
District Offices are closed both days

CONGRATULATIONS



Tashai-Monae Hatton, 4th grader at Lincoln, was named Girls Inc. "Girl of the Year."



Alex Peters (right), an SHS senior, was named 2021-2022 "Youth of the Year" by the Boys & Girls Club of Schenectady. Pictured with Shane Barge, Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Club.

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I am pleased to share that in early June we plan to launch our brand-new district website and our first district mobile app. We will be giving a sneak peek to board members at the next meeting. We are very excited about this and can't wait to make it live. Watch for more information regarding the launch and how to download the app to your phone.

At Wednesday's Board of Education Meeting, [a resolution](#) was passed naming the Black Box Theatre at Schenectady High School after long-time theatre teacher, director, actor, photographer, and co-founder of the Blue Roses Theatre Company, Bill Ziskin.

Mr. Ziskin inspired hundreds of students over a decades long career. He taught English and theatre, directed plays and musicals, and even coached football at Schenectady High School. The Board of Education unanimously approved the resolution. The William W. Ziskin Black Box Theater will be dedicated on December 24, 2022.

Today our Senior Smart Transfer students graduated from SUNY Schenectady. As I mentioned last week, these students began their journey over four years ago. Today, five weeks before their high school graduation will take place, they graduated from SUNY Schenectady with an associate degree. Yes, they have two years of college under their belts and at no cost to the students or their families. We are very proud of our students and grateful for the partnership with SUNY Schenectady.



The Black Box Theatre at Schenectady High School will be named after long-time teacher and theatre director Bill Ziskin. The dedication will take place in December.

To watch a reading of the resolution by Board President Cathy Lewis, visit our [YouTube page](#).

Read the story [from the Gazette](#) about the dedication.



Don't forget the Futures Championship Track and Field event will be held tomorrow at 10 a.m. at Schenectady High School. Students in grades 4-6 can still sign up to participate. Information is on the card [here](#).

Please see page 3 for important information regarding Pre-K registration and the Summer Enrichment Program.

Have a great weekend. Relax, unplug, and enjoy.

Sincerely,

Anibal Soler, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools

Class of 2022 SUNY Schenectady Smart Transfer Students



#schenectadyrising



Alumni Profile

"Working in the district makes me appreciate the opportunities I was afforded while attending here, and I hope to do my part to make a difference in our students' lives."

Dawn DeBraccio

**Secretary, SCLA Guidance Office
Mont Pleasant High School, Class of 1972**



This week's featured alumnae, Dawn DeBraccio, attended Schenectady City School District from Kindergarten through 12th grade and graduated from Mont Pleasant High School in 1972.

"There were many great teachers at MPHS that helped me make the decision to work in an office, we were given a NYS Civil Service test at MPHS (which helped me make my decision) and I was offered an immediate job for the State working as a typist/secretary upon graduation, scoring 100%, thanks to my teachers at Mont Pleasant High School."

Did you graduate from Schenectady Schools?

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](#).

REMINDERS FOR FAMILIES



We still have open seats and are accepting applications for PreK (for students 4-years-old on or before December 1)

You can complete the online application or pick up a paper copy at schools or central office.

If you have questions or need help with the application, call 518-881-3405.

The district sent an email to all families explaining the application process for our Summer Enrichment Program. Sign in through the district's Parent Portal and complete the Summer Enrichment Program Survey. The survey is found under the "Survey" tab when you log into the Parent Portal. If you have any issues, contact us through Let's Talk "Parent Portal"- or portal@Schenectady.k12.ny.us

PROGRAM DETAILS:

- July 11 - August 5
- Monday through Friday
- 8:30 a.m. - 2:30- p.m.
- Students are expected to be present for the duration of the program.
- Breakfast, lunch, and snacks are provided.



COVID-19 UPDATE

Here is the report on COVID-19 positive cases for the period May 13 – May 20 (8 a.m.)

Total of 90 cases

19 Staff | 71 Students

- Central Park: 2
- Hamilton: 4
- Howe: 2
- Keane: 5
- King: 2
- Mont Pleasant: 6
- Oneida: 19
- Paige: 5
- Pleasant Valley: 2
- SCLA: 1
- Schenectady High School: 36
- Van Corlaer: 3
- Yates: 1
- Zoller: 1
- Multiple Buildings: 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 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](#)

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 CITY 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 1, 2022.

UNIVERSAL MASKING NOT REQUIRED

The general mask mandate for schools ended on August 1, 2021. As such, masks are no longer required to be worn in schools or at other locations that are subject to the same mandate. This applies to all persons.

Please use the following mask requirements after testing positive or when exposed to COVID-19:

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

- They have COVID symptoms and need to test
- They were exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19
- They were 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, it is highly recommended that any person exposed to COVID-19 wear a mask for a full 10 days.

Persons that are exposed and not fully vaccinated:

- 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 week after the last date of exposure to prevent the spread
 - If asymptomatic, retest, and wear a mask for 10 days after 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, or until other criteria are met for school attendance (i.e., resolution of fever) whenever it is longer.

If you have COVID-19 symptoms, you can return following a negative lab test, lab antigen test or two negatives over the counter (OTC) rapid antigen tests taken 36 hours apart (three test kits with at least one brand used 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 in the first 5 days that you had symptoms or test positive (if asymptomatic)
- Monitor yourself for symptoms (re-emergence)
- You can return to school or work on day 6 if asymptomatic or if symptoms are resolving
- The last 5 days following symptom onset, a small number for work is allowed and go to school.

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





Superintendent Soler and Executive Director DiCaprio had a great time at the Scrabble-Rama tournament held last Saturday. Twenty teams competed. Thank you to the Reading is Fun Program for holding this event and all they do for our students. The event raised \$4,443 to purchase books to give to students.

Our Schenectady High School JROTC Color Guard presenting the flag at the Albany Patroons home game on Wednesday evening.



PHOTO OF THE WEEK

SAY YES TO THE DRESS

With prom just around the corner, Schenectady High School turned into a boutique full of brand new, donated prom dresses. These students are ready for a night of fun on June 3rd, for the SHS prom. Thanks to all who donated and worked to acquire such a variety of dresses.



WELCOME TO SCHENECTADY

Instructional

Lauren Lensis, Psychologist, Van Corlaer

Anasia Thompson-Lawrence, Social Worker, SHS

Management/Confidential

Simone Miranda, Assistant Director of Innovation, Equity & Engagement

Operations & Maintenance

Joshua Beals, Maintenance, Grounds & Courier Assistant

Justin Gleckner, Maintenance Mechanic Plumber

Paraprofessional

Michaela Selbe, Oneida

Security Monitors

Henry Henderson, SHS
Michael Medina, MPHS
Jonathan Palma, SHS
Iris Ramos, SHS
Maleke Robinson, WIEC

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

STAFF NOTE



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Click [here](#) to visit our new Professional Development Learning Site.



Hamilton had some friendly, furry visitors last week.

WORKFORCE CHALLENGE

Eight employees represented SCSD in the Workforce Challenge 3.5-mile race in Albany on May 19.



Pictured Above: Sue Daigneault, Jeanne Myers, Jenny Hayes, Laurie Hoyt, Ed Menis and Jen Crave

Pictured Above: Ed Menis, Jen Crave, Laurie Hoyt, Jeanne Myers, Jenny Hayes and Lori Blosser

Teammate Kamal Tyson is missing from the photos.