

GOOD NEWS



SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT



Summer School Students Make an Impact with Civic Readiness Projects

HW Smith students in **Raylinn Minghillo's** class raised more than \$70 for The Water Project; **Bellevue** students in **Elizabeth Carbone's** class collected cat food and toys for Wayward Paws, Inc.; **Bellevue** students in **Amber Tolone's** class made a donation to In My Father's Kitchen; **McKinley-Brighton** students in **Teresa Zollo** and **Maggie Tabor's** classes sold snacks to honor fallen police officers.

Through bottle and can collections and other fundraising efforts, students and staff throughout the Syracuse City School District worked together this summer to make a positive impact in the community.



Through iCivics, a digital civics library and curriculum

founded by Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, students engaged in activities that taught reading through the lens of civics.



In kindergarten through 5th grade, students learned 21st Century civics skills including solving problems together, making decisions, and more. They learned about

elections, voting, global citizenship, the Constitution, media and the sharing of information, and other important topics. At the middle school level, students studied these topics more in-depth.

"My students collected change, bottles and cans, and took online donations to support The Water Project" Ms. Minghillo shared. "They were working hard and learning that, even as kids, they can make a difference!"



Bellevue students in **Ms. Carbone's** class learned vocabulary words like charity, fundraiser, flyer, and organize.

"We're organizing a fundraiser to help kittens and cats," **Amollia Messier**, an incoming 3rd grader who normally attends school at Meachem, shared. "It feels good to be able to help them. I always like to help people!"

"It makes me feel great to help people," **Shacoya Ricks**, an incoming 4th grader at Meachem, shared. "We came up with the name 'Helper Bees' for our collection, since we're doing summer school here at Bellevue where their mascot is a bee. We learned that you don't even have to give anything to help... we can help every day just by being kind."

We're so proud of the ways **#SCSDGivesBack**, including all of these wonderful contributions that our schools made to the greater Syracuse community and beyond this summer!

STAY CONNECTED
STAY INVOLVED



syracusecityschools.com

MAILING ADDRESS

1025 Erie Boulevard West
Syracuse, NY 13204

PHYSICAL ADDRESS

725 Harrison Street
Syracuse, NY 13210

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Families & Staff,


Welcome to the new school year! Our team has been hard at work preparing for this year, and we look forward to partnering with you to help lead your child to success.

Please remember that in order to help your child succeed, their attendance is critical. If there are factors preventing your child from being in school regularly, please contact your school's main office and they can connect you with a member of our attendance team.

This year, we are also proud to launch our five year strategic plan, called "On the Rise." This plan centers around establishing a culture of learning and high expectations – which also means we are aiming to see improvement in students' reading and math skills. To help make this happen, we are placing a focus on engaging families and communities and improving a sense of belonging for all members of our community. We are also working to ensure that we use our district resources most efficiently and that we are recruiting highly effective staff that are reflective of our diverse student population. To learn more about this plan, our goals, and how we plan to accomplish them, please visit www.syracusecityschools.com/strategicplan.

Finally, I encourage you to dive into this newsletter, where you'll learn about the engaging #SCSDSummerLearning that took place throughout the district this summer. Our students led community service projects and fundraisers, expanded their academic skills, made new friends through our various camps and experiences, and of course – prepared for their future. Here's to a new year watching our students achieve #SCSDSuccess!

Sincerely, Tony



IMPORTANT DATES

September 2024

- 20 BOE Audit Committee Meeting
- 22 First Day of Autumn
- 23 Board of Education Work Session
- 24 BOE Policy Committee Meeting

October 2024

- 9 Board of Education Meeting
- 14 Indigenous Peoples' Day/
Columbus Day— No School
- 15 Superintendent's Parent Council
- 16 BOE Quarterly Finance Work
Session
- 21 All City Jazz Concert— 1:00 PM
- 23 Elementary and Middle School
Marking Period 1 End
- 28 Board of Education Work Session
- 30 High School Marking Period 1 Ends

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Summer Bridge Students Engage with Micron STEM Educator

BACK-TO-SCHOOL 2024



We love to see #SCSDSummerLearning preparing students for their future! As part of a summer bridge program, incoming freshmen at **Corcoran** and **ITC** enjoyed a special visit from a Micron educator, Dr. Kim Cherry Burnett. Dr. Burnett spoke with students interested in ITC's P-TECH programs, as well as the Corcoran Semiconductor and HVAC programs, talking to them about her own educational experience, Micron, and careers in a high tech world. She led students in activities where they were invited to build simple circuits as well as rubber band race cars!

"It's pretty fun," incoming ITC Mechanical Technology freshman **Adaya Gunn** shared as she completed the activities. "I can't believe I was one of the first to finish making a circuit... it makes me feel smart! All the Micron opportunities sound pretty good, so I want to see where this field takes me... I want to see if I'm good at it and if anything sticks out to me."



Summer School

Esports Camp Helps Students Game for Success Beyond the Screen



Gathered around a bank of large monitors, dozens of high school students sat in gaming chairs, immersed in competitive gaming at Elite Gaming in downtown Syracuse.

Around them, their peers were busy, too. In the front of the room, a small group of students gathered near a stage as mentors spoke with them about social emotional learning – discussions about social-emotional aspects of gaming and of life. Students comprising a production crew sat in a studio streaming a live interview conducted by their classmates. In a glass-enclosed meeting room, another group of students gathered in small groups around tables, writing out storyboards as they planned their own video game storylines.

Over the course of five weeks, the 90 high school students and 50 middle school students participating in the Esports Camp rotated through five different stations, enabling them to do so much more than stare at screens and play video games. The students worked on interviewing, writing, podcasting, production, Lego robotics, and more.

“I like video games, so I figured: why not get paid to do what I love?” incoming **PSLA at Fowler senior**

Avier Keith said. “My favorite part has been writing my own story for a video game... it’s the first time I’ve written my own original story, and I’ve really enjoyed it. I hope to pursue a career in computer programming, where I can work on video games – but I might also dabble in writing, too! This experience is definitely preparing me for my future.”

In addition to the skills students are learning from each other and their Elite Gaming mentors, they have also enjoyed visits from a nutritionist, as well as representatives from Syracuse University and the University at Albany. The Herkimer College Esports team even stopped by one day, speaking with the students about the esports program at their school and competing against students.

Upon completion of the program, including meeting attendance and participation guidelines, the students are paid, thanks to the Bea Gonzalez Fellowship Program!



ENL Students Visit SUNY-ESF For Hands-On Science Learning

Talk about a cool **#SCSDSummerLearning** opportunity: close to 100 English as a New Language (ENL) students from the SCSD visited the SUNY ESF campus this summer to learn about sustainability, pollination, hydrology, and chemical engineering.

The K-12 students have been in the U.S. for less than six months and have been improving their English language skills, their native language skills, and their awareness of the local community. While on campus, they participated in hands-on science activities - including a chance to make a food web, build their own animal based on characteristics for survival, and more!

Huntington Students Receive Free Laptops through Digital Ambassador Program



Fifty SCSD students in 4th and 5th grades enjoyed a week at **Huntington Pre-K-8 School** this summer learning about digital literacy, online safety, how to use tech for social good, and more. Through the ‘Cuse Digital Ambassador Program, in partnership with AT&T, Tech4Kidz, and Syracuse University, the students engaged in lessons focusing on cybersecurity, robotics, social media, computer coding basics, keyboarding skills, artificial intelligence (AI) and ethics, and more. They each worked on their own digital projects, which they presented at a concluding showcase. There, all participating students were recognized as Digital Ambassadors – and were each surprised with a free laptop to keep!



Building Men Program Builds Character through Summer Programming

SCSD students participating in the Building Men Program enjoyed some exciting enrichment opportunities this summer. In addition to academic refreshers and tutoring, young men also hosted special guest visitors,

ranging from Mayor Walsh to Superintendent Davis and others; participating in districtwide athletic competitions; and touring college campuses.

Mentors helped students learn about the importance

of cardiovascular health and mental health while creating spaces for the students to be vulnerable and communicate feelings and emotions. They encouraged community service through making bagged lunches to donate to Clear Path for Veterans – and then taking a trip to visit the organization, delivering care packages to veterans in need and letters to soldiers.

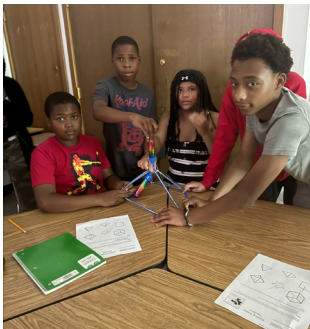
To wrap a fun summer of activities, Building Men students from **Frazer, Huntington, and Roberts** traveled to the **Corcoran** stadium to participate in the Building Men Olympics – competing in throwing, running, and jumping activities – while also building camaraderie and supporting each other.

Building Men middle school students also had the ability to visit Onondaga Community College, where they heard from President Dr. Warren Hilton, talked about their futures, learned about finances, heard from Extraordinary Males of Distinction, toured the college, and enjoyed lunch in the campus cafeteria.



See more photos on our Flickr page

Collaborative Calculation: Summer Math School Focuses on Teamwork and Fun



The students stood together, pulling a piece of jump rope and manipulating it to make different shapes: a square, star, triangle, and triangular prism.

Thanks to an engaging math curriculum, summer school students based at **Roberts** enjoyed a lot of

hands-on learning like this.

Incoming **ELMS 7th grader Sanai Rower** said the teamwork – and math manipulatives – helped her see one of her least favorite subjects in a new way.

“I’m not a math person,” she said. “I do well in it – it’s a strong suit for me... but I’m not really fond of it. I wanted to do this math camp because I wanted to enhance my skills so I can do even better in school next year. This camp is helping me get ready for 7th grade, and it makes math more exciting because we get to use teamwork and props to help build our skills.”

Cultivating Creativity: Fine Arts Camp Inspires SCSD Students



Thanks to the annual SCSD Fine Arts Camp, over the course of three weeks, middle and high school students are invited to explore a variety of artistic pursuits – from world drumming, 2D art, digital media, drama, music composition, and – new this year – theatre tech and yoga.

Incoming **ITC sophomore Carla Brewer** consulted an image on her

phone as she worked to re-create it by hand.

“I hope to become a tattoo artist one day, so I like to practice drawing things people might want as a tattoo,” she explained. “Here at camp, there’s no time limit – I can just keep doing what I want to do [without having to move to another class].”

In addition to these daily offerings, about a dozen 5th through 12th grade students enjoyed a weeklong music camp, which offered daily field trips to the Syracuse Orchestra headquarters. There, students played alongside symphony musicians for an hour and then participated in small group workshops – where they learned about everything from the music business and DJing to audition prep, music production, and more.

Henninger Alumnus Receives First Say Yes to Education Medical School Scholarship

Henninger High School graduate Alex Guerrero ('18) has become the first recipient of a new Upstate Medical University Say Yes to Education scholarship!

After graduating from Henninger, Alex went on to earn his Bachelors degree from SUNY Cortland on a Say Yes to Education scholarship. He has since been serving as a researcher in a lab at Upstate, as well as an ER Technician at a rural medical center in Monticello, New York.

"I never imagined I'd be here," he said. "Say Yes to Education has made all of this possible. I'd tell other students that as long as you're trying your hardest, you keep your faith, you find your people, and you push out distractions, you can accomplish your goals!"



Alex's scholarship, valued at \$240,000, includes full tuition, housing, and a \$5,000 stipend for each of the four years of medical school. The scholarship will be awarded each year to a Syracuse resident who attends college on a Say Yes to Education scholarship.

Students and families interested in learning more about Say Yes to Education Syracuse should visit sayyessyracuse.org or text SAY YES to 315-562-7154!

Nottingham Students Become Environmental Experts through Hands-On Exploration



Nottingham students in the school's Natural Resources Career and Technical Education (CTE) program worked with environmental scientists, educators, and professionals from New York State Parks to collect data and explore real life environmental problems.

Through the Wet Nets watershed engagement program, in partnership with the New York State Park system, students were connected with colleges and careers in the natural resources fields through hands-on exploration.

Through visits to Fort Ontario, Green Lakes, SUNY ESF, Selkirk Shores, Fair Haven, Chittenango Falls, and Clark's Reservation, the students examined watersheds, forest ecology, invasive

species, stream ecology, and more. They had the opportunity to set plots to measure tree growth, test stream water, conduct a fish survey, and more.

Incoming Nottingham junior Sofia Calvert hopes to become an ornithologist one day – studying rare birds and working to help save endangered species.

"It's been very fun," Sofia shared of her summer field experience. "We've seen osprey and a great blue heron, and quite a few birds. When we went to SUNY ESF, it gave me insight on what to expect when I go to college. I definitely want to enter the field of forestry, and now I've had some experience in doing field work and going out somewhere to study the environment."



School Notices Student Information/ Emergency Card

It is extremely important that your child's school has up-to-date information on your child, including an emergency contact. Every family will receive a pre-populated Student Information/Emergency Card in the mail. Please review the information on the card and make any necessary changes before returning it to your child's school. Note that throughout the school year, photographs, audio and/or video may be taken of students for use in district publications, on the website and/or social media or by news media. Parents who do not wish to have their children photographed or recorded must check the appropriate box on the current Student Information/Emergency Card and submit it to their child's school.

STUDENT INFORMATION/EMERGENCY CARD		eschool	Student #	Grade
SCHOOL YEAR: _____		Other Use	Number	_____
Dear Parent or Guardian:				
Please PRINT all information requested below and return this form to your child's school. Changes should be reported promptly.				
Student's Name _____		Address _____		
City _____	Zip _____	Home Phone _____		
Guardian #1 Name _____		Where Employed _____		
Guardian #1 Home Address _____		City _____	Zip _____	
Work Phone _____	Cell Phone _____	Email Address _____		
Guardian #2 Name _____		Where Employed _____		
Guardian #2 Home Address _____		City _____	Zip _____	
Work Phone _____	Cell Phone _____	Email Address _____		
Every effort will be made to reach you in case of an emergency involving your child. Please list below the name, address and phone number of someone school personnel may contact in the event you cannot be reached.				
Name _____	Address _____	Phone _____		
Name _____	Address _____	Phone _____		
Release my child ONLY to the following adults. ID required.				
Custody concerns REQUIRE a Court Order, Order of Protection or legal documentation. Special Instructions/Restrictions: _____				

How to File an Appeal for Transportation



The School Board Eligibility Policy requires that a student reside more than 1 mile from school to qualify for bus transportation in grades K-8 and more than 1.5 miles from school for grades 9-12. This includes day care providers. A parent may fill out an appeal packet if they do not meet the district's policy. The appeal committee will only consider distance as criteria for filing an appeal. This includes day care providers. A parent may fill out an appeal packet if they do not meet the district's policy. The appeal committee will only consider distance as criteria for filing an appeal.

1. Appeal packets may be acquired at the student's school, online at www.syracusecityschools.com, or from the SCSD Transportation Center
2. The appeal packet consists of two forms: one to be filled out by the parent/ guardian and one to be filled out by the school principal
3. Submit packet to the Transportation Center by fax (435-5854) or mail (369 6th North St. Syracuse, NY 13208)
4. Transportation will notify parent/ guardian of the appeal hearing date and time
5. Parent/ guardian attends the appeal hearing
6. Committee meets and parent/ guardian is notified of the decision within a week

Notification for Pesticide Applications



New York State Education Law Section 409-H requires all public and nonpublic elementary and secondary schools to provide written notification to all persons in parental and guardian relationships with students as well as faculty and staff regarding the potential

use of pesticides periodically throughout the school year. The Syracuse City School District is required to maintain a list of persons who wish to receive 48-hour prior written notification of certain pesticide applications. The following pesticide applications are not subject to prior notification requirements:

- a school remains unoccupied for a continuous 72-hours following an application;
- anti-microbial products;
- nonvolatile rodenticides and insecticide baits in

tamper resistant bait stations in areas inaccessible to children;

- silica gel and other nonvolatile ready-to-use pastes, foams, or gels in areas inaccessible to children;
- boric acid and disodium octaborate tetrahydrate;
- the application of EPA designated biopesticides;
- the application of EPA designated exempt materials under 40CFR152.25;
- the use of aerosol products with a directed spray in containers of 18 fluid ounces or less when used to protect individuals from an imminent threat from stinging and biting insects including venomous spiders, bees, wasps, and hornets.

In the event of an emergency application, a good faith effort will be made to supply written notification to those on the notification list. If you would like to receive prior notification of pesticide applications at your school, please complete the form below and mail to the Syracuse City School District, School Service Center, 214 Park Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13204; fax to 315-435-4936; or you can return the completed form to your child's school.

SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT REQUEST FOR PESTICIDE APPLICATION NOTIFICATION

If you wish to be notified, please complete the form below and print clearly so we can notify you.

CURRENT SCHOOL/ BUILDING NAME				
NAME		ADDRESS		
DAY PHONE	EVENING PHONE	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE

Please contact the School Service Center for further information on these requirements at the above mentioned mailing address/fax.





Alumni Spotlight: MURJAN ABDI



NAME: Murjan Abdi

SCSD SCHOOLS ATTENDED (AND GRADUATION YEAR):

Dr. Weeks, Lincoln Middle School, ITC - 2019

COLLEGE AND MAJOR(S):

Suny Empire State University, Business Administration

CAREER PATH:

I currently work as a

Workforce Development Assistant, and my journey to this role followed the college path. I pursued higher education to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for a fulfilling career in workforce development.

THE COOLEST THING ABOUT MY JOB: Stepping into schools and preparing students for their future journeys.

THE MOST VALUABLE THING I LEARNED IN SCHOOL:

The importance of networking and cultivating relationships. It's a strategy that propels you toward success, showing that ascending to the top is not a solo endeavor but a collaborative effort.

I'M PROUD TO BE A SCSD GRADUATE BECAUSE:

The education and experiences I gained have shaped me into the person I am today. It provided a strong foundation for my future endeavors and instilled in me the skills and knowledge needed for success.

ONE PIECE OF ADVICE FOR SCSD STUDENTS: Don't allow fear to hinder you from reaching your goals. Embrace challenges, persevere, and let your aspirations drive you forward.

Learn more about Murjan and his impact throughout Syracuse in our YouTube series "Difference Makers."



Asbestos Annual Notification



Agencies of both the State and Federal governments regulate asbestos in the public schools. With the enactment of

the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) in 1987, all Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) are required to identify asbestos-containing material (ACM) in schools and to formulate a written plan to control and prevent the release of asbestos fibers in the future.

Buildings owned or leased by the Syracuse City School District have been inspected, and samples of suspect ACM have been analyzed by Environmental Protection Agency accredited laboratories. The results

of these inspections are available in school administrative offices. Included in these plans are specific operations and maintenance programs designed for each building for the control of asbestos.

Implementation of the response recommendations began July 9, 1989. Since the implementation of the AHERA Management Plan, the Syracuse City School District has conducted formal inspections at six-month intervals, and in compliance with the law, will complete two more in the 2023-2024 school year in October and April. State and Federal mandates require that a triennial reinspection occur sometime within three years of the first AHERA inspection. The Syracuse City School District conducted a triennial reinspection in April 2023. The results of this reinspection can be found in each building in the AHERA

Management Plan. As the District renovates buildings, ACM is removed to the extent practical.

Syracuse City School District school buildings including support buildings that have been identified to contain ACM may have had some response action work completed in their buildings during the 2022-2023 school year. The details of those specific response actions have been documented in writing and can be found in the AHERA Management Plan located in the administrative office of each building.

If at any time the status or condition of any ACM is changed or disturbed through alterations, renovations, or episodic release, it will be documented, and Management Plans will be updated. We will continue to implement our Management Plans and alert the public about the district's efforts to control asbestos.





SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
1025 Erie Boulevard West | Syracuse, NY 13204

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MISSION

To build, support and sustain school communities that provide all students with a high-quality education that prepares them to graduate as responsible, active citizens ready for success in college and careers and prepared to compete in a global economy.

VISION

To prepare and inspire all of our students to innovate locally and contribute globally.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Katie Sojewicz, *Vice President*

Twiggy Billue

Nyatwa Bullock

Karen Cordano

Dr. Mark D. Muhammad, Ed.D.

Dan Romeo

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Pamela J. Odom, *Deputy Superintendent*

Britt Britton, *Chief Academic Officer*

Robert DiFlorio, Ed.D., *Chief Operations Officer*

Laura Kelley, Ed.D., *Chief of Student Support Services*

Timothy Moon, *Chief Information Officer*

Scott Persampieri, *Chief Human Resources Officer*

Michael Puntschenko, *Chief Financial Officer*

Monique Wright-Williams, *Chief Engagement Officer*

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Syracuse City School District hereby advises students, parents, employees and the general public that it is committed to providing equal access to all categories of employment, programs and educational opportunities, including career and technical education opportunities, regardless of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, Native American ancestry/ethnicity, creed or religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, age, gender identity or expression, disability or any other legally protected category under federal, state or local law.

Inquiries regarding the District's non-discrimination policies should be directed to:

Civil Rights Compliance Officer
Syracuse City School District
725 Harrison Street • Syracuse, NY 13210
(315) 435-4131
Email: CivilRightsCompliance@scsd.us



>> Share your questions, comments or concerns 24/7 using the Let's Talk tool at www.syracusecityschools.com



Learn more and sign up for the Say Yes newsletter at SayYesSyracuse.org



SAY YES STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Trevor Giardine –
Nottingham High School
Class of 2019

What college are you going to & what is your major(s)/minor(s)?

Northeastern University in Boston, studying Mechanical Engineering and Engineering Management.

What are your goals after college (career, future plans, etc.)?

I recently accepted a Product Design Engineer role in Boston, and I hope to stay in the city for a few more years and continue to grow as an engineer. I may pursue an MBA sometime in the future, but I want to get some experience under my belt first.

How did you learn about Say Yes to Education Syracuse?

My older sister! As she went through the college application process in 2015-16, Say Yes to Education was repeatedly brought up by my parents to help better identify schools that we could afford. Understanding how it could help support our college aspirations became crucial when applying to colleges.

What does Say Yes mean to you?

Everything. My entire college experience can be attributed to Say Yes and the support they provided. Say Yes significantly reduced my educational costs, making college and the opportunities that came with it more accessible. Working with Say Yes ensured that I did not have to worry about the next tuition payment, and I cannot thank Say Yes enough for their generous support these past four years.

Important Say Yes Reminders for Seniors:

- Say Yes Syracuse Application Deadline: July 1 2025
- FAFSA Application Deadline: August 1 2025

Text SAYYES to 1-315-562-7154 to receive announcements, reminders and Say Yes newsletters.