

GOOD NEWS



SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Students Celebrate Culture and Language in New SCSD Summer Institute



Lion. Library. Lettuce. Lamp. Lizard.

High school students in a classroom looked at a picture book, noting items they saw that began with the letter 'L.'



Next door, middle school students created bead bracelets, carefully threading letter beads onto strings to spell out their names and other meaningful messages.

Down the hall, elementary students read 'Sandwich Swap,' a book about

two students from different cultures who at first expressed disgust over their different lunches at school, until they tried each other's food. The students then made the different sandwiches to try – and each Friday throughout the summer, the class made a recipe to share with the two older classes for a 'community snack time!'

At the Newcomer Academy, part of the SCSD Summer Institute for Culture and Language, about 60 students from kindergarten through 12th grade spent their mornings at Franklin Elementary School this summer, where staff worked to help them adjust and integrate into their new school community. Staff aimed to nurture, validate, and grow students' cultural

and linguistic identities while also leading students in a kind of orientation, preparing them for success in the SCSD.

Each week, students focused on a new activity surrounding the Academy's theme, "Wonderful Me" – exploring their names, their personal and cultural identities, their communities, and the ways they are similar to and different from their friends. Each week, students completed a project which became part of their "Wonderful Me" portfolio – a compilation of their work to be shared with families at a summer expo at the end of the program.

Hadia Kam War, a junior at **Henninger**, came to the United States from Afghanistan in 2021. This summer, she worked as a Teaching Assistant at the Summer Institute, helping students in kindergarten through 5th grade.

"I speak Farsi and some Arabic... some of them do, too," Hadia explained. "Their parents are happy I'm here to help them! This experience can help them a lot. They can share their stories and become friends. It's easier to learn when you're talking with each other!"

Grant 6th grader **Louai Shikh Ahmad** came to the United States from Egypt about a year ago and has been working to improve his English – he currently speaks Arabic.

"I've liked learning the alphabet and English a little more," he said of his experience at camp. "I've met other Arabic speakers and it's nice to talk with them!"

Each day, after students completed their core curriculum, they were invited to take part in an enrichment activity to help enhance their learning. Students painted affirmation rocks, crafted tissue paper flowers, made snack mix and a community meal, and more. They enjoyed discovery sessions with the MOST, took part in mindfulness sessions with Little Yogis, learned through visits from the Syracuse Police, Syracuse Fire Department, Sinbad Restaurant staff, and Syracuse Immigrant & Refugee Affairs Coordinator Adol Mayen. They even had the opportunity to experience field trips as they visited SUNY ESF, Barry Park, the SU Art Museum, and Light Work!

What a terrific [#SCSDSummerLearning](#) opportunity – and a great way to celebrate our [#SCSDDiversity](#)!

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,


Welcome to the 2023-24 school year! I hope your family has felt warmly welcomed back to your school community this fall. We look forward to engaging your child with valuable academic skills and meaningful enrichment activities. Please help us by ensuring that when your child is healthy, they are in school on time each day school is in session!

This year, I am proud to announce the launch of a one-year bridge Strategic Plan to help guide our decision-making this school year. The plan is focused on improving a sense of belonging for all members of our community; increasing student proficiency in reading and math; and establishing a culture of learning and high expectations. I am confident that in working together, we can achieve these goals! You can learn more about this Strategic Plan – and our timeline for seeking your input for a longer-term plan – by visiting www.syracusecityschools.com/strategicplan.

I also want to draw your attention to the innovative #SCSDSummerLearning that took place throughout the district this summer. Our summer offerings were diverse and truly offered something for everyone – from academics to the arts to athletics, from self-confidence building to engineering and more. I hope you enjoy reading about just a few of these wonderful summer initiatives.

Thank you for trusting us with the education of your child. Here's to a great school year!

Sincerely,



IMPORTANT DATES

September 2023

- 23 First Day of Autumn
- 25 Board of Education Work Session
- 27 Board of Education Work Session

October 2023

- 9 Indigenous Peoples' Day/
Columbus Day— No School
- 11 Board of Education Meeting
- 17 Superintendent's Parent Council
- 18 BOE Quarterly Finance Work Session
- 21 All City Jazz Concert— 1:00 PM
- 23 Board of Education Work Session
- 25 Board of Education Work Session
- 25 Elementary and Middle School Marking Period 1 Ends
- 30 Winter 1 Modified Athletics Begin

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CTE
CORNER

Thank you, Career Coaches!

The SCSD offers nearly 30 different Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs – ranging from Automotive Technology to Cybersecurity, Health Professions to Welding and more. But all of these programs have one thing in common: they are made possible thanks to the generous support of community partners!

Thanks to industry professionals who serve as Career Coaches, students in our CTE programs receive regular one-on-one mentoring from individuals who currently work in the fields of study they are looking to pursue. Career Coaches are there to help prepare students for the work world, working with them on interview techniques, offering job shadows, and so much more.

To learn more about Career Coaching and how you can get involved, visit our newly redesigned CTE page at www.syracusecityschools.com/CTE and click on 'Be a CTE Career Coach!'



“For me, working with these students is incredibly rewarding. They help bring a fresh perspective and help me remember why I joined this profession in the first place.”

Eli Feathers,
Physical Therapist at Upstate University Hospital

Summer School

Middle School Students Attend Leadership Academy at Wells College



At the Power of Youth Summer Leadership Academy, 16 SCSD middle school students traveled to Wells College in Aurora, NY for a three-night, four-day trip to help them develop their leadership, social, and emotional skills. Hosted by Higher Education Service Corporation (HESC) and Cool Speak, the program was offered to SCSD students who are part of the district's new GEAR UP program – aiming to help support students as they complete their schooling and

encourage them to pursue higher education.

Over the course of the Power of Youth academy, students toured the Wells College campus while completing a scavenger hunt; they participated in a variety of teambuilding activities to help them put their own leadership skills into practice; and they learned about the power their voices have to help them change their own lives and the lives of their families, communities, and the world.

To learn more about the GEAR UP program and how it's supporting students as they work toward their high school graduation and beyond, visit: www.syracusecityschools.com/gearup.

SCSD Students Participate in Prestigious Bank of America Internship Program



Through the prestigious Bank of America Student Leaders program ITC senior **Kira Forget** and **Corcoran** senior **Jasmine Williams** were selected as two of just 300 students nationwide to experience paid internships with nonprofits this summer. They were among more than 5,000 applicants nationwide! Through this experience, they were partnered with the Museum of Science and Technology (MOST) for an eight-week paid internship experience, including a one-week experience in Washington, DC. At the MOST, Kira served as a Marketing intern, while

Jasmine served as an Education intern.

"This has been such a great experience," Jasmine shared. "I have been working with 4- to 7-year-old children, teaching them about topics like weather, space, and animals. My favorite part has been being able to see science so embraced in the younger kids and aspects of STEM being seen as fun and interesting topics for them to learn!"

"I've always been interested in helping people, so I was immediately curious about this opportunity," Kira explained. "I've really enjoyed writing about the exhibits at the MOST and doing behind the scenes work. This has opened up a lot of interesting opportunities and has shown me what I really want to do one day."

Students Give Back and Plan Ahead through Bea Gonzalez Fellows Program



More than 850 SCSD students took advantage of the opportunity this summer to give back to their community through service-learning projects and enrichment – while also

learning about financial literacy and looking ahead to their future.

Through the Bea Gonzalez Fellows Program, funded by the Allyn Foundation, students learned through engaging lessons on financial literacy, mental health and social-emotional learning, nutrition, self-care, and work and life skills. Students at SCSD high school summer school sites, as well as **Clary, Huntington, HW Smith, Frazer, Oasis, Roberts, Dr. Weeks, Lincoln, and Brighton** Academy who completed the program and met required criteria were awarded \$350 (middle school students) or \$550 (high school students).

At **PSLA at Fowler's** summer school site, students learned about finances by completing an activity in which they selected a future job, researched a salary, and pretended they had housing and other expenses to pay – breaking down their monthly budget and determining how they would pay their bills.

"I had a completely different mindset going into that activity than I did coming out of it," **Nottingham** freshman **Jaylynn Brown** explained. "I want to be a lawyer, and I thought I'd have mad money. But I found that after all of my mandatory expenses, I have very little left. This experience has made me confident that I'll be able to be responsible with my spending."

Students also prepared for their future by practicing interviews, developing their communication skills, and more. Through a variety of enrichment and service-learning projects, students also had the opportunity to get involved in their communities.



Students Gain 21st Century Skills through SCSD's First-Ever Esports Camp



Thanks to a partnership with Elite Gaming, 40 middle school students and 40 high school students gathered for this Esports camp in a professional Esports arena, located in the MOST. There, they each had their own workstation, where they engaged with fellow gamers online and their classmates sitting just feet away.

And it's not all for fun – Esports is also a great way to help engage students in the 'soft skills' colleges and employers are seeking.

"Esports is a great tool to help get the kids where they need to be," Elite Gaming Co-Owner Rob O'Connor said. "We hear that oftentimes when it comes to higher education, students are missing the soft skills. Esports helps teach those soft skills – the time management, communication, and teambuilding. When you're gaming, you have to learn to delegate and work together. You have to learn to be a gracious winner – and loser. You have to learn to be coached and take instruction."

Over the course of the camp, students focused on two games: Minecraft (similar to digital Legos) and Rocket League (similar to playing soccer with Hot Wheels cars). They were faced with challenges to help them hone their skills.

Excell Holmes said he has seen firsthand the positive skills that

participation in Esports provides. He graduated from ITC in June 2023 and is now a professional video game player and coach. He also works full time at Elite Gaming, where he helped coach current SCSD students in the summer Esports camp.

"Esports has helped improve my communication skills, has given me a sense of leadership, and has really allowed me to feel a part of something bigger than myself," Excell said. "I'm pursuing something I'm passionate about while also being able to help other people. When I was their age, I only had Esports opportunities on a smaller scale... and I really had to seek them out. This level of gaming is something I would have valued at their age. Esports is a great opportunity for you to feel a part of something, even if you don't fit in as a traditional athlete."

Anyone interested in learning more about Esports or attending events at Elite Gaming is encouraged to check out their website: www.elitegaming.gg.

National Grid Brings Hands-On Career Exploration to NSBE Summer Camp



As part of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) Summer Camp at Syracuse University, National Grid employees led activities to help students get a sense for what the utility workers do and how they put their STEM knowledge to use daily.

Overhead and underground crews brought their trucks and equipment and talked about their day-to-day responsibilities, as well as safety procedures and precautions they take to keep their work environments safe.

"That truck is for underground work, and that one is for repairing electrical wires," **Clary** 7th grader **Alexis Hardee** explained as she pointed to trucks parked nearby. "It's interesting to learn how they're both so helpful to our city, when our power goes out and stuff like that. I might want to do this kind of work in the future... we'll see!"

For the last two years, National Grid has provided a grant to sponsor SCSD students attending the NSBE Summer Camp. **#SCSDGivesThanks** for their support and all they are doing to help our students become **#SCSDCareerReady!**

Students Learn Putting and Perseverance through First Tee Golf Experience



"Square your feet up! Look where you're facing."

Robert Dixon, a former SCSD Physical Education teacher, is now Head Coach for the First Tee Syracuse program. He regularly instructs golf beginners on the basics: the golfer's stance, how to hold a club, and how to putt.

This summer, Coach Dixon and his First Tee colleagues helped introduce 300 SCSD summer school students to the game of golf through their program at the Butternut Creek Golf Course. Students from **Franklin, Frazer, McKinley-Brighton, Meachem, Seymour, Dr. Weeks, Huntington, HW Smith, and Clary** all had the opportunity to experience the First Tee program. Together, they worked with coaches to engage in team building, warm up drills, and of course – golf.

"I've never played golf before," **Huntington** 5th grader **Brenden Skipp** said as he demonstrated his grip on his golf club. "They told me to hold the club a specific way, and now it's pretty easy!"



SCSD Musicians Start Up First-Ever SCSD Competitive Marching Band



A dozen students representing various SCSD middle and high schools came together this summer to be part of the District's first-ever marching band!

SCSD high schools including **PSLA at Fowler** and **Henninger** have offered 'parade bands' through the years – together marching in local parades. But as a marching band, the possibilities open for the students to perform on-field routines, as well as compete in a state championship each fall.

The SCSD marching band made its debut as a summer program this year, playing more complex music than a usual parade band, and with the goal of expanding to become a competitive marching band in the 2024-25 school year.

Henninger senior **Jamey Huynh** has been playing trombone since 4th grade.

"It's fun because we get to try out new movements that we don't get to do during the school year," he said. "It's a lot of pressure to be one of the first marching bands in the Big Five because we're setting the precedent, but it's exciting that I get to be a part of it!"

The group plans to perform at a handful of community and athletic events this fall, including parades, City vs. City football games, and more. We're proud of these groundbreaking **#SCSDArts** performers and teachers **Holly McCoy** and **John Chiamulera** for their leadership and guidance!

Building Men Program Hosts Community Violence Awareness Walk/Run

"As you run and participate in the events today, I encourage you to have conversations about how you can help prevent violence."

Matthew White, a **Nottingham** sophomore, shared this request as he greeted a group of middle school boys from **Frazer**, **Huntington**, and **Roberts** in his welcome remarks.

Matthew and his high school Building Men Program counterparts had spent the summer planning for this event: the Building Men 'Run for a Better Tomorrow' walk and run, intended to awareness about community violence... and put a stop to it.

"We spent the summer talking about how to be better people, and how to better our lives for the future," **Henninger** junior **Noah Ginty** explained. "These days, we see and hear about violence all the time. We want to do something – we want to make things better. The middle school students often look up to the high school students. They want to fit in. But so many of them don't have a positive influence. In the Building Men Program, we hope to be that positive influence for them. We hope we can really make a change."

The group of Building Men students came together and walked around the Corcoran stadium track. Then, they broke into groups to participate in the Building Men Olympics – where they competed in running, jumping, and throwing events. They wrapped up the day with ice cream sandwiches and a closing ceremony to reiterate the goal of the day: do the right thing. Help stop the violence. Be a positive force in our community.



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		SCHOOL YEAR	Student's Name	Grade
Dear Parent or Guardian:		Other Use	Home Address	Walker
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	State	Zip
Guardian #1 Name	Home Address	City	State	Zip
Work Phone	Cell Phone	Email Address	City	Zip
Guardian #2 Name	Home Address	City	State	Zip
Work Phone	Cell Phone	Email Address	City	Zip
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



Alumni Spotlight: JOANIE MAHONEY



SCSD Schools Attended:

Shea, Corcoran ('83)

College/trade school and

Major: Syracuse University Bachelor of Science in Marketing (1987) and Juris Doctor (1990)

Career Path: I am currently the President of SUNY ESF in Syracuse and my path here included time as an attorney in private practice, an assistant district attorney, a Syracuse City Councilor, and the Onondaga County Executive.

The coolest thing about

my job... I get to spend time with smart, passionate young people who are committed to

helping solve the planet's most pressing problems.

The most valuable thing I

learned in school is... Syracuse has some of the best teachers in the world and they can help you create a foundation for wherever you want to go.

I'm proud to be a SCSD

graduate because... When I see the kinds of people my classmates turned out to be, I'm honored to be among them.

One piece of advice I'd give to SCSD students is...

Put your best effort into whatever it is you are doing. People will notice your hard work and it will open doors for you.

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 2022-2023 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 2022. 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.

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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



SAY YES STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Chidi Okereke –
Nottingham High School
Class of 2021

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

Onondaga Community College (OCC)

First year – Chemistry; Second year – Computer Science

What do you like most about college?

The interaction and freedom that is offered to the students is on par with reality (general society).

What does Say Yes mean to you?

To start, Say Yes offers students, minorities, and the misfortunate the financial endorsement and opportunity to make a change in their life.

Read Chidi's full spotlight at sayyessyracuse.org.

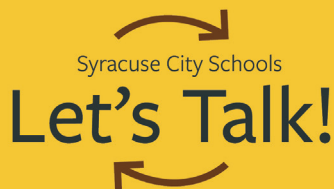
Learn more and sign up
for the Say Yes newsletter at
SayYesSyracuse.org



Important Say Yes Reminders for Seniors:

Students applying for early action or early decision will need to submit their college applications on or around **November 1**, depending on the school. Regular decision applications are generally due by **January 1**. Deadlines vary by school, so be sure to check dates for every college you are applying to.

All students seeking a Say Yes Scholarship must apply for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP). We highly recommend that you complete both applications prior to submitting your Say Yes Syracuse application, which is due by **July 1**.



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