Spotlight on Schenectady

Everybody counts.
Everybody learns.

2018-19

I will be here every day.

#projectbehere
attendance matters.
August 2019

I am pleased to present you with the second annual “Spotlight on Schenectady.” As we look back on the 2018-19 school year, it was nothing short of exciting. This publication offers insight to some of the challenges we tackled, areas where we continue to work, strides that we have taken and how the students of Schenectady are incredible role models who are shaping the future.

As you flip through the pages, you will see how our students discovered the power of their voices and, time and time again, used them to effect change.

I spent a great deal of time, throughout the school year, talking with students at all levels. I enjoyed learning about what they appreciate about our schools and where they believe we can do a better job. Their words did not fall on deaf ears. What we learn from the students helps guide the work that sits before us.

At the start of the school year, I spoke to all district staff about the work that we need to do to turn “our house into a home” (see the centerfold) and how it is up to all of us to ensure that students have what they need to be academically successful. Our staff members embraced their roles toward this end and made a huge difference.

You’ll also learn about how we grew the General Education Continuum, providing resources and targeted support to more students.

I am extremely proud that the Schenectady High School Class of 2019 had the highest graduation rate out of any class in the last 12 years. Many students demonstrated great resilience and persistence to overcome extreme challenges to achieve this. Throughout the year, our caring and committed staff remained relentless and worked tirelessly to ensure that our students came to school and received the support that they needed to stay on the path.

While we are still significantly underfunded by New York State, I remain true to my promise. As we receive increases in school aid, we will not only invest in much needed programs and services, but we will also give back to the taxpayers. In 2018-19, we again provided taxpayer relief by decreasing the tax levy to the lowest level since 2008-09.

Lastly, a little more than a year ago, we launched a strategic planning process. We spent months gathering input from stakeholders from all corners. Our guiding coalition held several meetings to collaborate and discuss data and input before laying down the framework for a district strategic plan. At the end of the school year, the board of education adopted a five-year strategic plan which will guide our work moving forward. We will continue to keep you updated on this work.

Thank you to all members of the Schenectady community for your continued partnership and support. I hope as you read this, you feel a sense of pride for our community and schools. While we have work to do, the Schenectady City School District staff and our students are truly amazing.

We remain steadfast in our commitment to equity and continue our work to ensure that race, economics and disability are never predictors of student achievement.

Thank you for reviewing our report. We welcome feedback through “Let’s Talk,” which is available – all day, every day – on the district website.

Sincerely,

Laurence T. Spring, Superintendent of Schools

“Our district is committed to ensuring that race, economics and disability are never predictors of student achievement.”

» Larry Spring
National Board Certification
SCSD features 66 National Board Certified teachers. That is the second most in any district in the state, with the exception of New York City. High school social studies teacher Chris Ognibene and second-grade teacher Angela Gozalkowski achieved National Board Certification on December 1, 2018. National Board Certification is considered the gold standard in education.

DIVERSITY HIRING RATE
In 2018-19, the SCSD workforce was made up of over 1,710 staff members, of which 841 were teachers. Superintendent Larry Spring is committed to growing a staff that mirrors the diverse student population in Schenectady. In July 2018, the district hired Dr. Patrick Jean-Pierre as Assistant District Director of Recruitment, Retention and Diversity. In his role, Jean-Pierre works toward hiring more diverse teacher and staff candidates.

About us and Our schools
The Schenectady City School District serves nearly 10,000 students in grades pre-K through 12, making it one of the largest school districts in the Capital Region.

Our incredibly diverse population of students speak more than 30 different languages. Our schools, filled with culture and richness, foster awareness and acceptance. Students not only learn to value and respect people of all races, backgrounds and cultures, they appreciate the differences and are prepared to be citizens in a multicultural world.

The district is comprised of 11 elementary schools (pre-K through fifth grade), three middle schools (grades 6-8), one high school (grades 9-12) and an adult education center. The neighborhood school that a student attends is based on residence.

### DIVERSITY RATE OF NEW HIRES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2015-16</th>
<th>2016-17</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
<th>2018-19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FACULTY</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMINISTRATION</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Institutional excellence in teaching and learning can only be achieved when every student can see themselves in administration and faculty district-wide. The Schenectady City School District understands that creativity and innovation is at its best when district-wide staff is racially, culturally and linguistically diverse.”

- Dr. Patrick Jean-Pierre
“Yes, our hallways are loud, but they’re full of life. It’s the sound of youth. The walls are covered in art, and the halls are filled with music. It’s a beautiful place to grow. What we have is a community based on growing.”

– Zia DiLella-Lewis, Class of 2019, Pratt MWP in 2020, Drawing/Painting & Illustration/Animation

“No matter how much pain, neglect, hate, or other factors that Schenectady has endured, we always continue to rise up. People have doubted Schenectady and it’s potential far too many times. Every day I try to prove those opinions and biases wrong. I’ve accomplished so much and gained so many opportunities here just to prove that you can BE something. You can thrive here if you put your mind to it.”

– Ja’Deana Cognetta-Whitfield, Class of 2019, The Sage Colleges, Visual Arts

“I’m proud to be from Schenectady because I can be a leading example that Schenectady High School isn’t a bad place. I can show underclassmen that they can push through whatever obstacles they find difficult whether it be academically or home life. All you need to succeed in high school and later in life is optimism, determination, and the comfort for asking for help when needed. Schenectady High School helps instill this into its students.”

– Luisa Sanchez, Class of 2019, St. Lawrence University, Biology (first generation high school grad)

“Schenectady High School has showed me how others live and what I take for granted in my life. I have had so many opportunities through the high school that have helped me grow as a person and open my eyes to the rest of the world.”

– Sam Goldstein, Class of 2019, Siena College, Applied Physics

“I am proud to count myself a member of such a diverse, talented and engaging community. I have learned so much from my peers and grown immensely as an individual from my experiences in the district.”

– Audrey Canty, Class of 2019, Tufts University, Mechanical Engineering (full IB diploma candidate)

“Schenectady High allowed me to embrace diversity and networking. I take that into consideration as I move into the next chapter of my life. I am confident in who I am and ready to take risks that could secure my future in all aspects.”

– Haki Lumpkin, Class of 2019, Morgan State University, Engineering
High School Vibes

Don’t ever call Blue Roses Theatre Company (BRTC) a drama club. You will be corrected quickly.

“We are a theatre company in its truest form,” Schenectady High School senior Elliot Stover said.

The company’s jack of all trades, Stover’s been involved with the stage since sixth grade. He used to watch his cousin in BRTC performances and fell in love with the atmosphere. However, as a sophomore, high school became overwhelming. Stover leaned on his BRTC family to pull through.

“BRTC has completely transformed my high school experience,” Stover said. “In tenth grade, I didn’t want to go to school here anymore. But rather than just being angry, I started putting all of my time and energy into Blue Roses and made myself want to be here.”

“I think for a lot of them it really is a home,” said Leia Depeche, BRTC company co-director alongside Peter Muste. “It’s a second home. Maybe even a first home. It’s a safe place, where they’re not going to be judged. They are going to come here and create something and do it in a really positive way.”

While most high schools complete one or two shows each year, during the 2018-19 school year, BRTC put on five full productions for a combined 24 performances. Stover had a different role in each.

“I’ve done everything,” said Stover, whose dream is to one day do lighting for a Broadway or nationally touring show. “I’ve done make-up. I’ve done lights. I’ve done stage management. I’ve acted as a lead and as a supporting role. I’ve built and designed the sets.”

In the fall, Stover will begin studying design and technical theatre as a freshman at the University of Connecticut. Stover said the skills he learned through BRTC have him prepared.

“We’re given the opportunity here to do anything we want. A lot of schools don’t have those opportunities and I really think that will help in my future endeavors.”

2018-19 Blue Roses Theatre Company performances:
- She Kills Monsters
- Alice of Roanoke (student-written)
- Sister Act
- For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the rainbow is enuf (student-directed)
- A Bright Room Called Day (student-directed)

“IT really truly is a family. We’re the most accepting of people. That is what I am going to miss the most.”

Elliot Stover on graduating and leaving BRTC

25 IB diploma candidates (completed full IB program of study)
88 IB certificate candidates (completed IB subject course of study)

Class of 2019 Top 10 Students

- Anna Blanchfield
  Harvard University

- Julia Smith
  Dartmouth College

- Audrey Canty
  Tufts University

- Rojan Karn
  Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

- Karishma Persaud
  University at Albany

- Ayla Kanciruk
  Bennington College

- Rania Shohatee
  Boston University

- Jordan Schmidt
  University of Massachusetts Amherst

- Alexis Cohen
  University at Buffalo

- Christine Persaud
  St. Lawrence University

BRTC company co-director Leia Depeche (right) with Elliot Stover (left). Stover will study design and technical theatre at UConn starting fall 2019.

Anna Blanchfield
Harvard University

Julia Smith
Dartmouth College

Audrey Canty
Tufts University

Rojan Karn
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Karishma Persaud
University at Albany

Ayla Kanciruk
Bennington College

Rania Shohatee
Boston University

Jordan Schmidt
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Alexis Cohen
University at Buffalo

Christine Persaud
St. Lawrence University

BRTC company co-director Leia Depeche (right) with Elliot Stover (left). Stover will study design and technical theatre at UConn starting fall 2019.
Everybody counts. Everybody learns.

#ProjectBeHere

The district-wide attendance initiative is designed to ensure students are in school every day. The campaign provides resources and tools to educate teachers, administrators, students and parents about the effects of attendance, good and bad.

Our social media campaign features students celebrating their stories of attendance success. Mont Pleasant Middle School eighth-grader Divena Ramessar improved her attendance habits with the support of her mom and the persistence of MPMS guidance counselor Kenia Bustillo.

“I started coming to school and I really improved my grades,” Ramessar said. “In the beginning of the year I would pray that I got a 65. Now, I have close to 90s.”

“If they are in the hallways, we just have to say ‘we are glad you are here. We would love to see you in that seat. Right now, it’s waiting for you,’” Bustillo said. “We have to listen. We have to hear our kids. It works.”

Graduation Voice

Blessin Green, who overcame extreme personal hardship, requested to speak at graduation to share a message of resiliency:

“I often think of the word persistence. Pushing through not knowing what I was gonna eat at night and where I was going to sleep. The Schenectady City School District provided me with a bunch of different resources, but I was the one who found and used them for what I needed. I try to never use my adversities as an excuse. I used them as a motivation to do better and so can you.”

In fall 2019, Green will sail the world (going to 21 countries) through a program called Class Afloat. She will attend Syracuse University in fall 2020 to study mechanical engineering.

District Teacher of the Year

The Schenectady City School District named Laura Macey, a family and consumer sciences/culinary arts teacher at Steinmetz Career and Leadership Academy, the 2019 Teacher of the Year. Macey was named one of four finalists for New York State Teacher of the Year (winner selected fall 2019).

“I am overwhelmed, surprised, very appreciative, very thankful,” said Macey, a veteran teacher of nearly 30 years. “Just to know that there is one person that I touched to further their career is just a great feeling.”

2018-19 3rd Quarter: All three middle schools saw an increase in the number of students with perfect attendance.

CLASS OF 2019

502 GRADUATES 67% GRADUATION RATE*

*Highest June graduation rate in 12 years, eight percentage points higher than 2018. Students with disabilities had the highest June graduation rate on record.

“I think the Class of 2019 is the start of an upwards trend in graduation rate. If you look at recent graduating classes, you start to realize the impact education cuts can have. Over the past few years the district has been able to add services and supports that provide better outcomes.”

-Larry Spring
Superintendent of Schools
Strategic Plan

On July 10, 2019, the board of education adopted a five-year district strategic plan.

The development of the plan came after more than a year-long process of collecting input and learning about what is most important to the Schenectady community.

Since the start of the 2018-19 school year, 23 focus groups were held, in which more than 200 parents, students, staff members and community groups shared what they considered hopes and dreams for Schenectady students.

More than 324 participants shared their thoughts about what the district should focus on through an online ThoughtExchange. Additional input was collected through interviews, the district’s community liaisons and the district’s online communication tool, Let’s Talk.

The strategic planning guiding coalition spent months collaborating to review the input and analysis which led to the development of core values and four pillars of excellence:

- Student and Graduate Success
- Passionate People
- Partnership with Families and Community
- Efficient Systems and Equitable Resources.

Roll-out of the 2019-2024 Strategic Plan will begin at the launch of the 2019-20 school year. The complete plan is available on the district website.

Strategic plan’s four pillars of excellence

- Student and Graduate Success
- Passionate People
- Partnership with Families and Community
- Efficient Systems and Equitable Resources.

LET’S TALK!

The Schenectady City School District is dedicated to fostering positive relationships, building trust and effectively communicating and engaging with our parents, staff, students and community members. In order to do this, we always maintain an open line of communication and want to hear what you have to say about important topics and current initiatives.

We are listening.

Let’s Talk! provides you with an opportunity to share what’s on your mind anytime, from anywhere. We are here to listen 24/7 and will respond to your questions, comments and concerns. There is a team behind each specific topic, ready to assist you.

We want to hear from you 24/7!
Superintendent of Schools Larry Spring kicked off the 2018-19 school year with a passionate opening day speech to staff. He emphasized that everyone has a role to ensure that all students have what they need to be academically successful. The five overarching ideals create the home of Schenectady.

**LITERACY AND GRADUATION**

“The framing of this house consists of two support columns and one central pillar. The two framing columns are the beginning and the end of our work—developmental literacy and graduation.”

» **LITERACY**: We focus our efforts intentionally and systematically on our students’ early years to make sure they are acquiring building blocks of literacy and reading on grade level by the time they reach third grade.

**IMPROVEMENT SCIENCE**

“The foundation on which we build is the notion of ‘getting better at getting better.’ This work is called improvement science. It is the foundation of our work because in every facet of the organization, from instruction to maintenance, getting better at what we do is no accident.”
LITERACY AND GRADUATION (cont.)

» GRADUATION: Graduation is the ultimate outcome we seek for every single student. The path to graduation begins as early as pre-K. Schenectady encourages a growth mindset and emphasis on regular school attendance. The district provides resources and supports to help students meet academic expectations and plan for the future. We intend for every student’s experience to include excellent teachers, principals, and other caring adults at all levels of education.

TR AUMA SENSITIVE

“The roof protecting our home is our work to become a Trauma Sensitive School district. Because SCSD teachers know their students so well, they have a tremendous power to ensure better outcomes for all children.”

» The Schenectady City School District has taken great strides toward becoming better trauma-informed and developing trauma sensitive practices to ensure that all staff members are equipped with the skills, resources and tools to understand, recognize and respond to children impacted by trauma.

“When thinking about the house, the final thing to do is to make it a home.

OUR TEACHERS AND STAFF – that is what makes this house a home. Every day students show up to classrooms where teachers have the power to stack another positive experience on each student’s scale.

EQUITY

“The central pillar of support holding up the entire house is equity. We work every day to ensure that race, economics and disability are never predictors of student achievement. Equity means that these things, that are outside our kids’ control, won’t determine their educational outcomes.”

» Our district is committed to ensuring equity, which is when everyone has access to opportunities necessary to satisfy their needs, advance their well-being and reach their full potential.
Student voice sparks change at Schenectady

Students galvanize district to move prom date to include Muslim peers

Schenectady senior Fatima Mohammed picked out her dress color years ago while watching The Disney Channel movie “High School Musical” and dreaming of the perfect prom night.

“I’ve been wanting to go to prom since I was a kid,” Mohammed said. All her expectations of a magical evening came to a screeching halt when she realized that Schenectady’s prom fell during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Mohammed’s not the only one missing out. She said over the past few years a lot of students haven’t attended the big event because it fell during Ramadan, which is a time for spiritual dedication.

“We aren’t allowed to eat until sundown, so basically we would be starving when we got there,” Mohammed said. “Most Muslim girls would wear a scarf, you wouldn’t wear makeup, your dress would be covered. You’re not really supposed to be around boys. No music and basically that’s what prom is about.”

Mohammed shared her plight with classmate Ja’Deana Cognetta-Whitfield. Although not Muslim herself, Cognetta-Whitefield rallied peers in Teen TAC-D, a student group of social justice advocates whose goal is to ensure everyone is represented.

“It kind of felt like we were being hypocritical and contradicting what we stand for as such a diverse community,” Cognetta-Whitefield said about Schenectady’s original prom date.

Mohammed shared her plight with classmate Ja’Deana Cognetta-Whitfield. Although not Muslim herself, Cognetta-Whitefield rallied peers in Teen TAC-D, a student group of social justice advocates whose goal is to ensure everyone is represented.

“I wish it didn’t take me so long to realize how beautiful, how powerful and how inspiring student voice is, if we work together.”

“I wish it didn’t take me so long to realize how beautiful, how powerful and how inspiring student voice is, if we work together.”

Schenectady scheduled its 2019 prom at Saratoga’s Hall of Springs three years ago. So, the students faced an uphill climb to find another option. After weeks of persistently working with faculty and administrators, the students’ efforts paid off when they discovered the Hall of Springs had an alternate date after the end of Ramadan.

“All of us students coming together, that’s what made this happen,” Mohammed said. “I love Schenectady,” said English teacher Colleen Wygal, who joined the students’ fight. “I wouldn’t teach anywhere else. I love that, when it comes down to it, these kids really do respect one another.”

“I wish it didn’t take me so long to realize how beautiful, how powerful and how inspiring student voice is, if we work together.”

Circle Up!

In 2018–19 Schenectady High School held 206 restorative and informal circles. To bridge the equity gap, restorative circles are used to give all students an equal opportunity to participate and voice their opinions.

“We discuss topics from race, to curriculum, to restoring relationships. We try to create opportunities for students to speak their truth and be heard in a safe space. In the circle everyone is created equal.”

- Philip Weinman, high school engagement supervisor
The Voice of Mhy-Shawn Gibbs

8-year-old uses class assignment to petition for wheelchair accessible playground

Mhy-Shawn Gibbs, a second-grader at Woodlawn Elementary School who uses a wheelchair, wrote a persuasive paragraph on the need for more wheelchair accessible playground equipment.

“If you’re in a wheelchair, you can’t get on most of the playground equipment,” Gibbs wrote.

“Wheelchair users need to have fun, play and get stronger at recess time. They need more equipment that they can go on.”

Mhy-Shawn’s teacher, Robbin Fragnoli-Heenan, shared the letter with the board of education.

Superintendent Larry Spring applauded Gibbs for bringing the matter to his attention and has since launched an audit of all the district playgrounds.

“Mhy-Shawn’s letter:
I think there should be more playground equipment for wheelchair users at school. If you’re in a wheelchair, you can’t get on most playground equipment. It’s not fair. Kids in wheelchairs need to play and have fun too. Play and fun is important for kids. It needs to be equal for all kids. Wheelchair users can get stronger by playing. Maybe they could get strong enough to walk someday. Wheelchair users need to have fun, play and get stronger at recess time. They need more equipment that they can go on.”

Mhy-Shawn Gibbs

District-wide reading growth vs. national reading growth

Data is based on a STAR assessment program comparison from fall 2018 to spring 2019

Academic peers are students in the same grade, who started the STAR assessment period at a similar reading level. A Student Growth Percentile (SGP) compares a student’s growth to that of his or her academic peers nationwide.

- SCSD students grades K-2 grew at a rate 44% greater than their academic peers.
- SCSD students grades 3-5 grew at a rate 42% greater than their academic peers.
- SCSD students grades 6-12 grew at a rate 48% greater than their academic peers.
Audrey Canty uses hockey to break down the gender barrier

Glance at the 2018-19 Schenectady/Niskayuna/Albany boys’ ice hockey team roster. Audrey Canty’s name is sure to stand out as the only female.

“It was scary at first, but I got used to it,” Canty said.

A defenseman for the Mohawks, Canty’s been playing hockey since she was four years old, so she relied on her experience to overcome the nerves, the doubters and the physical differences.

Canty is no stranger to tackling challenges both on and off the ice. She underwent spinal fusion surgery in 2012 and was told she would never play checking hockey. After a few years away from the game she loves, doctors cleared her to play. Now, she is an inspiration to a new generation.

“One time that really stands out to me is when I walked by this mom and her two daughters and I heard the mom say, ‘See you guys can play, too. That could be you someday,’” Canty said. “That moment really stuck with me. It made me really proud of what I was doing.”

Canty impressed her coaches and earned a starting role on the team. She was also named a Section II Honorable Mention All-Star. She captured the team’s Defensive MVP Award and the Hobey Baker Character Award, which is given to a player who demonstrates a positive attitude, coachability, sportsmanship, academic achievement and community spirit.

During her three years playing in the Capital District High School Hockey League, Canty said she’s excited to see an increase in the number of girls trying out.

“We are definitely starting to earn more respect in the league.”

ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS

NYS Champions
- Isaac Menis: Intersectional distance medley relay

Section II Champions
- Track and Field 400m relay team: (Corey Anderson, Jeremiah Davis, Malakai Myles, Trebor Davis.)
- Colin James: Indoor Triple Jump
- Trebor Davis: Track and Field 100m
- Corey Anderson: Track and Field 200m, 110 high hurdles

Suburban Council Champions
- Isaac Menis: Indoor 3200m
- Corey Anderson: 200m

Section II All-Stars
- Nicole Krauf: Soccer
- Cade Ponce-Williamson: Football

Suburban Council All-Stars
- Shazim Permaul: Cross Country

Scholar-Athlete Teams
- Girls’ Lacrosse: (individual scholar-athletes: Anna Blanchfield, Sydney Bernardi and Breanna Smith)
- 15 school visits from the Capital Repertory Theatre On-The-Go! program
- District art show at ViaPort
- Traveling art shows exhibited at Proctors, City Hall, SCSD Library, NYS School Boards Association and SUNY Schenectady
Urban Schools Conference

Nearly 1,000 educators attended the second annual Urban Schools Conference in November 2018. The Schenectady City School District and Capital Region BOCES collaborated to host the professional development event that focuses on the unique challenges urban schools face.

“I think the most important thing I want people to walk away with is a feeling,” Superintendent of Schools Larry Spring said.

Keynote speaker Dr. Jeff Duncan-Andrade, who specializes in urban education in Oakland, California, delivered a powerful and inspiring speech that left the audience energized.

“I don’t even want to call it professional development. It was kinda like soul development.”

» Oriana Miles, Schenectady High School English teacher

Duncan-Andrade’s transformational work in schools with children affected by trauma is recognized throughout the country. He addressed the difference between equity and equality in education, emphasizing the pivot to equity is difficult. He also discussed developing teacher-student relationships, community responsiveness and whether or not to write student referrals.

“We need more restorative practices within our schools, so when a kid does a bad thing it doesn’t define them,” Duncan-Andrade said.

In addition to Duncan-Andrade, the conference offered a variety of Edcamps and speakers, like Dr. Jamila Lyiscott - a social justice education scholar and nationally renowned presenter.

A variety of breakout sessions and workshops focused on how the district can meet the needs of students through the lens of social-emotional health, developmental literacy, pedagogy and instructional design, culturally responsive practices and data decision-making.

Professional Development

Second Annual Trauma Sensitive Schools Institute

Attended by 150 SCSD staff members, the district held this two-day institute to help all staff develop trauma-sensitive practices, in order to respond to students more therapeutically.

SCSD Teacher Microcredential Leader Badge

13 teachers met the qualifications to earn this badge. The requirements include attending specialized professional development, completing a case study and demonstrating mastery skills in instructional coaching.

Summer Teaching and Learning Institute

About 200 SCSD teachers attended the week-long program to learn effective strategies in literacy and math. The literacy skills were immediately implemented at the Summer Enrichment Program.

Teacher Leadership Academy

73 teachers across the district participated in the Teacher Leadership Academy. They learned how to coach their professional colleagues with a focus on improving instruction.

Instructional Coaches Academy

Instructional coaches, school principals and the coach coordinator received extensive training that included new strategies to increase reading comprehension and accountable talk. Nine coaches provided professional development to six schools.

“If we expect equity, justice and peace to be replenished in this world, it is up to us.”

-Dr. Jamila Lyiscott, Language, Race, & Power presentation
Popular Summer Enrichment Program expands in 2018

114% application increase from inaugural year

Summer school is the place to be in Schenectady. However, the SCSD is redefining that term altogether.

Students K-6 who attended the four-week program focused on fluency and took community-based field trips. They practiced computer-based math and then cannonballs.

“The summer enrichment design focuses on academics, social-emotional learning and that it is fun for kids,” Summer Enrichment Program director Sara Scheller said.

3.5%

The attendance rate for students who attended the 2018 SEP increased 3.5 percent more than students who did not attend the program. A study compared 2017-18 attendance data to the first quarter of 2018-19.

The SCSD Summer Enrichment Program is succeeding at blending academics and activities. The enrollment numbers prove it. In 2018, enrollment grew by nearly 450 kids to around 980 students (with 400 more waitlisted). The program made possible through the use of federal funds added a fourth elementary school site to accommodate the additional students.

After the first two years, a district comparison indicated that students who attended the Summer Enrichment Program demonstrated more growth than their academic peers on the STAR 360 assessment (early literacy and reading).

The program was designed to help combat summer slide, where students lose academic gains made during the previous school year. Another goal was to provide students a safe, fun, and educational environment for part of their summer.

Students are served three meals a day plus snacks.

The 2019 program received a record 1,567 applications and is set for yet another expansion to accept students in grades pre-K through 8.

SCSD Educational Foundation

» In 2018-19 the SCSD Educational Foundation awarded 57 grants totaling $44,457 in grant funding. Since 2005, the foundation has awarded 342 grants worth more than $276,560.
2018-19 Budget Summary

$194,437,849

General Fund Budget

4.37% Change from Previous Year

-1.0% Change to Tax Levy

2018-19 Tax Levy

As a result of careful planning and spending and $3.1 million more in New York State Foundation Aid, the SCSD passed a budget where the tax levy decreased for the third straight year.

Superintendent Larry Spring promised taxpayers that once the district started receiving more aid from the state, he would provide taxpayer relief. Although the district is still shorted millions in education funding, Spring is fulfilling his promise. The 2018-19 budget reduced the tax levy while boosting programs and services.

General Education Continuum

The General Education Continuum is a systematic pattern of tiered interventions and supports for general education students who need additional assistance. Respite, co-teaching, case management (new in 2018-19) and integrated and targeted programming are examples of services included.

In 2018-19, voters approved a budget which added more teaching positions to the program. Added interventions and supports are already making a difference toward closing the opportunity gap. Services, such as Operation Graduation and intensive case management, have directly increased the overall graduation rate. Operation Graduation provides students the opportunity to work with teachers, in a small-group setting, to get caught up on assignments. The GEC also focuses on students struggling with behavior or attendance.

53% Students in GEC co-teaching classes demonstrated accelerated growth

3,000 GEC students served in 2018-19

2018-19 COMPLETED PROJECTS:

- Exterior masonry renovations/improvements and a partial roof replacement at Central Park Middle School (Phase 1B)
- Boiler replacement at Lincoln Elementary School (Phase 2)
- Boiler reconstruction work at Schenectady High School (Phase 2)

Capital Project Update

Voters approved $70 million worth of work in 2014. The four phases, planned through 2026, include ongoing maintenance, moderate reconstruction, renovations and updates to all district schools. Phase I capital project work is finished. Phase II work has begun at the high school, Lincoln, Zoller and Woodlawn. Work in several other schools is expected to begin in 2020, including HVAC upgrades and electrical service.

Year-to-year Tax Levy

54,500,000 54,000,000 53,500,000 53,000,000 52,500,000 52,000,000 51,500,000 51,000,000 50,500,000 50,000,000

2015-16 2016-17 2017-18 2018-19

A national award-winning district

Schenectady City School District
```plaintext
Everybody counts. Everybody learns.

2018-2019 Board of Education

- John Foley, President
- Katherine Stephens, Vice President
- Dharam Hitlall
- Cathy Lewis
- Ann Reilly
- Bernice Rivera
- Mark Snyder

A national award-winning district
Schenectady City School District

“The people of Schenectady are down to earth. I love the city I was born in for its diversity and the potential of every individual I encounter.”
-Haki Lumpkin, Class of 2019

“Diversity is important here at the school because it represents Schenectady as a whole. What you see here is what you see out there in Schenectady.”
-Sham Persaud, Head Custodian, Schenectady High School

Produced by the Schenectady City School District in cooperation with the Capital Region BOCES Communications Service. 8/19

Karen Corona, Editor
Lindsay Quackenbush, Editor
```