



Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES 2020 Annual Report



Our Mission Statement:

The Onondaga-Cortland-Madison BOCES exists to develop and provide educational programs and services of the highest quality for the component school districts and the community.

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Matthew L. Cook, Ed.D.
District Superintendent



Colleen Viggiano
Deputy Superintendent



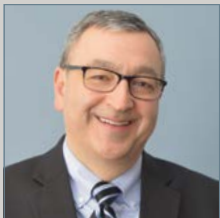
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Christopher DiFulvio
Assistant Superintendent for
Instructional Support Services



Phil Grome
Assistant Superintendent for
Administration

Our Journey in 2020

Message from the District Superintendent

A year ago, I was the superintendent of schools in a different BOCES region, and COVID-19 was something we were just learning more about. It is literally difficult for me to remember those two facts as I write this reflection on 2020 and think about all that 2021 has yet to bring. Since joining the OCM BOCES team in November of 2020, I can honestly report that the future is brighter, due in no small part to the hard work and dedication of the entire organization.

The global pandemic, building closures, building reopenings and all that meant for students and staff was the story of 2020 for everyone in public education. A tremendous amount of hard work and planning went on at OCM BOCES to allow every student in our K-12 programs to attend school in-person five days per week. This accomplishment and the commitment it represents is something our staff is incredibly proud of, as it was done in the best interests of our students. In addition, our Instructional Support Services team met tremendous challenges helping teachers shift to online instruction and pedagogical changes on a scale we had not previously contemplated. It was a total team effort throughout the region in supporting each other and looking for best practices.

Our Adult Education program also did an amazing job of providing programs and educational opportunities through the pandemic. While some of the work experience and hands-on learning had to be curtailed to meet COVID-19 safety requirements, the team was always looking for creative ways to provide the most authentic learning experiences possible.

Thrust into the forefront like never before, the team at the Central New York Regional Information Center (CNYRIC) performed miracles on a regular basis in 2020. The technological needs of the 50 component school districts served by the CNYRIC jumped overnight last March, as instruction shifted to remote learning while Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams meetings became a regular part of our daily lives. All the while, planning continued for a significant upgrade to our wide area network (WAN), and the need to ensure digital security intensified. The CNYRIC team met all of the challenges it was presented with and have been unsung heroes of the past year.

Organizationally, our work continued to help us gain a deeper understanding in the areas of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). This need was brought to light by the digital divide exacerbated by the pandemic and other national events such as the Black Lives Matter protests during the summer of 2020. Our team has committed to continuing our learning, while looking for opportunities for systemic changes that will bring our DEI work to life.

As we look to 2021 and beyond, we are excited about bringing new opportunities for our K-12 and adult education learners, while continuing to learn lessons from the pandemic and the unique and hopefully temporary situation we found ourselves in last year.

Sincerely,

Matthew L. Cook, Ed.D.
District Superintendent, OCM BOCES

OCM BOCES Board of Education



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Chittenango

Time of Transition

A Letter from the Board President

When the OCM BOCES Annual Report was published last year, the far-off threat of COVID-19 seemed like nothing that would challenge us in so many profound and unexpected ways. A year later, here we are — still facing challenges but also feeling optimistic about a gradual shift to normalcy.

At OCM BOCES, our staff has demonstrated a remarkable ability to be compassionate, flexible, and resilient as they tended to the needs of our students and our component districts. On behalf of the OCM BOCES Board of Education, I would just like to say “thank you” to the entire OCM BOCES community and our district and community partners for accomplishing so much, with such grace, during such a difficult time.

The year 2020 was certainly difficult because of the pandemic, but it was also difficult because of the passing of my good friend and fellow Board member, V. Ann Wright. Ann served an amazing 34 years on the Board of Education, including 26 ½ years as Board of Education president. Throughout that time, she was a tireless advocate for OCM BOCES and a true believer in the valuable work we do for thousands of students and educators across the region.

I will always miss Ann. I think she would have been excited about working with some new faces on the Board of Education as well as our new district superintendent, Matthew L. Cook, Ed.D., who started in November. Ann and the entire Board of Education devoted a large part of 2020 conducting a thorough and thoughtful search for this top position at OCM BOCES.

Quality leadership is vital, but, as we all know, we all have to work together to support each other and our students. Here's to continuing that work amid the uncertainties of 2021 with the same dedication we demonstrated last year. We will continue building on our successes.

Wayne Brownson
President, OCM BOCES Board of Education



2020 - Our Historic Year

January - February

The global spread of COVID-19 reaches the U.S., prompting efforts throughout the region and at OCM BOCES to keep the virus at bay through cleaning, frequent handwashing, and avoiding those who are sick. BOCES collaborates with component districts to plan for a crisis response and develops its own emergency plan in the event of positive cases and school closures.



March

OCM BOCES and its 23 component districts valiantly pivot to remote learning for 52,000 students in the region after the first cases of the virus emerge in Central New York.

Eventually, nearly all but a small group of OCM BOCES employees begin working from home, successfully keeping all of our operations running.



April - May

OCM BOCES is dedicated to supporting its own students and staff, as well as its component districts, through the switch to remote learning.

Delivering meals, laptops

Food service workers at OCM BOCES deliver thousands of meals so children can continue to have healthy meals at home.

Staff members bring Chromebooks and homework supplies to students to help ensure a continuity of learning. By the end of 2020, the CNYRIC had purchased 17,245 laptops/devices for districts in the region.

Arming educators, helping parents

Instructional Support Services quickly launches a new website with an abundance of virtual resources for teachers and parents and, within one month, provides 76 online workshops and sharing sessions that reach 1,469 educators.

Boosting spirits

OCM BOCES educators dedicate themselves to staying connected with students, boosting their social-emotional health with phone calls, songs and fun, creative videos with messages such as "Focus on the good!" and "Together is better!"



June

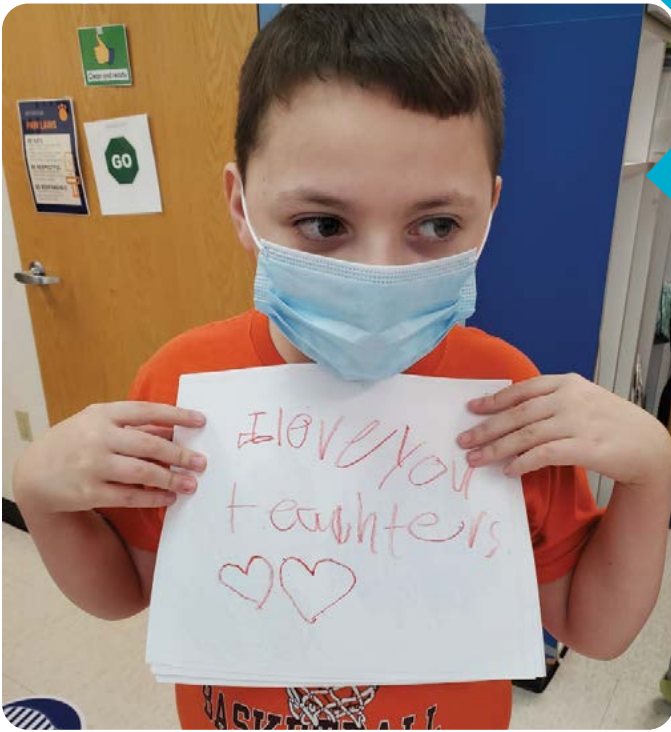
"Zoom" Culture

Zoom accounts at the Central New York Regional Information Center skyrocket from 60 accounts in March to 7,026 accounts by the end of 2020.



Celebrating the Class of 2020

Districts go all-out with drive-by parades and other virtual celebrations. At OCM BOCES, in ceremonies spread out over several hours and days, every graduate walks across an outdoor stage to the claps and cheers of their loved ones.



July

With COVID cases declining, attention turns to safely reopening schools. OCM BOCES spearheads collaboration with health officials and component districts on reopening plans and submits its own 54-page document to the state with plans to resume five-day, in-person instruction with a remote-learning option. Meanwhile, 1,246 students attend Virtual Regional Summer School through OCM BOCES.

December

A surge in cases after Thanksgiving requires more quarantines, but a resilient OCM BOCES staff keeps education and all operations moving forward as hope builds with the release of new and effective vaccines. In January, vaccine supplies roll out slowly, with educators starting to get vaccines.



September - November

Schools reopen! Students and staff quickly adjust to the new "normal" with masks, sanitizer, and social distancing. Later, with periodic positive cases requiring quarantines, OCM BOCES staff show amazing flexibility by offering both in-person and remote learning in all programs.

August

OCM BOCES staff clear out furniture, re-arrange classrooms, order signs and protective equipment, put tape and stickers on the floors, practice new procedures and communicate the new health & safety protocols with our school community through videos, letters, website updates, a newsletter, and several webinars.



Career & Technical Education

Looking ahead: New opportunity in Homer

OCM BOCES announced in January 2021 that a Heavy Equipment Repair, Operations and Diesel Technology Program will begin in the fall of 2021 at All County Collision & Repair in Homer. Students working on-site will learn about the maintenance and repair of heavy-duty diesel trucks, preparing them for employment or continuing their education at college and technical schools.



New program launches at Tracey Road Equipment

Jesse Wood spent much of his childhood tinkering with cars, four-wheelers, and dirt bikes — pretty much anything on wheels that needed a few repairs. That's why the junior from Cazenovia explored all sorts of Career & Technical Education options but eventually zeroed in on a new, business-embedded program at Tracey Road Equipment in East Syracuse.

OCM BOCES successfully launched the Heavy Equipment Repair, Operations & Diesel Technology Program in September of 2020. It allows students to have a dedicated classroom space at Tracey Road with access to a huge work bay that holds a decommissioned semi-truck for plenty of hands-on experience. During one morning in October, students worked in teams to disassemble a pair of Caterpillar C2.2 diesel engines and identify parts as they followed a schematic.

For Wood, the program makes him excited about school — and his future.

"Once I'm done with high school, I'd love to work for Tracey Road, further my education and be working in the shop with everybody else," he said.



"We have about 80 technicians in our locations and are looking for more all the time."

-Kevin Williamson, general manager at Tracey Road Equipment.



CTE Success Stories

Every year, OCM BOCES recognizes successful alumni from our Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs. Each is honored with a plaque housed inside the “CTE Alumni Hall of Fame” display cases at our Thompson Road and Cortlandville campuses.

Sweet Success

A 2001 graduate of Westhill High School, Sean Murphy attended the Culinary & Pastry Arts program at Thompson Road with long-time instructor Bob Canorro.

Today he is the co-owner of Murphy’s Specialized Pastry, a bakery in Fayetteville that offers a wide range of delectable creations, from cream pies to cakes to cheesecakes to cookies.

Murphy’s journey in the pastry arts continued from BOCES to the Pennsylvania School for Culinary Arts, where he earned an associate’s degree. He later worked at a five-star hotel in Colorado Springs and a fine-dining restaurant at the Turning Stone Resort & Casino.

“All those decades I’ve worked have taught me a lot,” he said. “But the No. 1 thing I’ve learned is teamwork.”



“When you get to the stage where you are able to teach, don’t hold back — never hold back.”

— Sean Murphy



“We’ve been able to continue with what we’ve learned to set goals and meet our dreams.”

— Troy Beckwith Sr.

Building a Future

A father-and-son construction team from Calibro Properties in Cortland received the CTE Alumni Hall of Fame honor for the Cortlandville Campus.

Troy M. Beckwith Sr., a building superintendent, was a 1984 graduate of the Construction Technology program. Troy M. Beckwith Jr., a foreman, graduated from the same program 27 years later, in 2011.

Both were honored for their extensive knowledge of the trade, their business expertise and their contributions to the community, including their help with the Hospice Foundation of Cortland County’s “Light of My Life” fundraiser on Homer’s Village Green.

In a speech to the 2020 OCM BOCES graduates, Troy Beckwith Sr. said the growing demand for skilled employees in the booming trade industry should be shared with as many young people as possible.

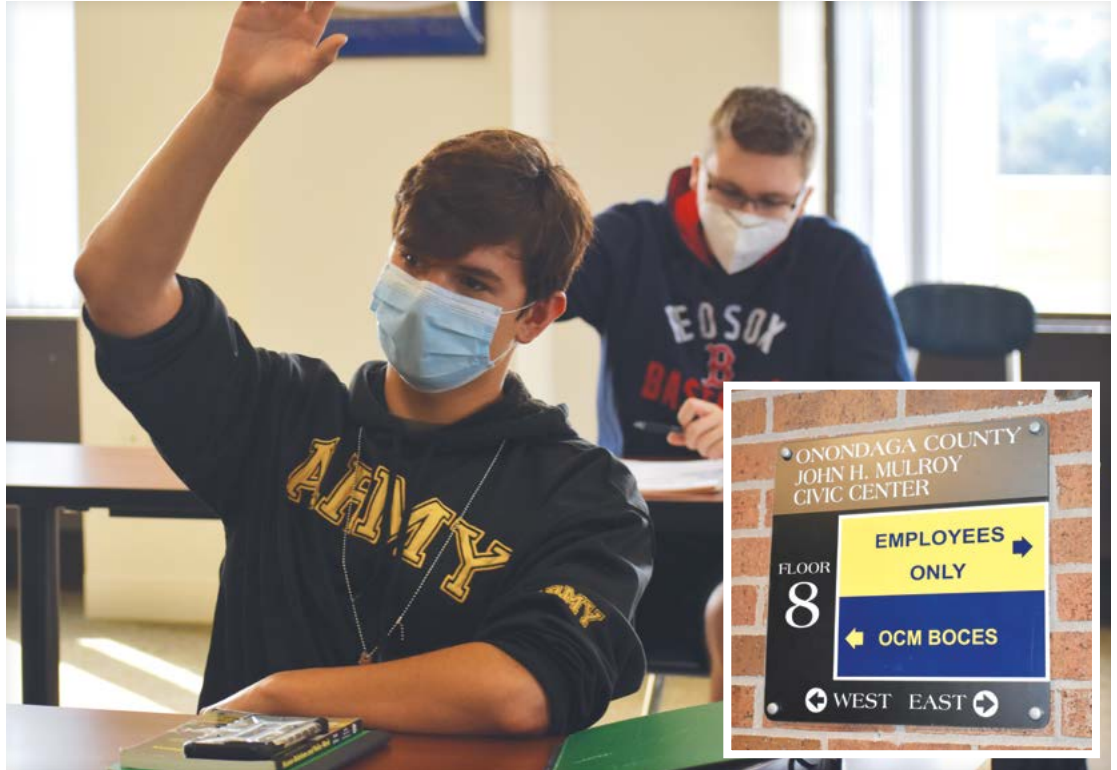
“I can’t emphasize enough how much you should be encouraged to go into a trade,” he said.

Career & Technical Education

By the Numbers

1,136
students
enrolled in Career
& Technical
Education
programs in the
fall of 2020

97%
CTE students who
graduated with
a high school
diploma in 2020



New Vision Criminal Justice enjoys new, spacious location

A new, central location at the downtown Civic Center for the New Vision Criminal Justice Program came just in time in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. A wide-open space on the eighth floor offered plenty of room for students to sit at desks at least six feet apart. As a bonus, students and staff enjoy panoramic views of the Syracuse skyline.





Lockheed Martin program goes virtual

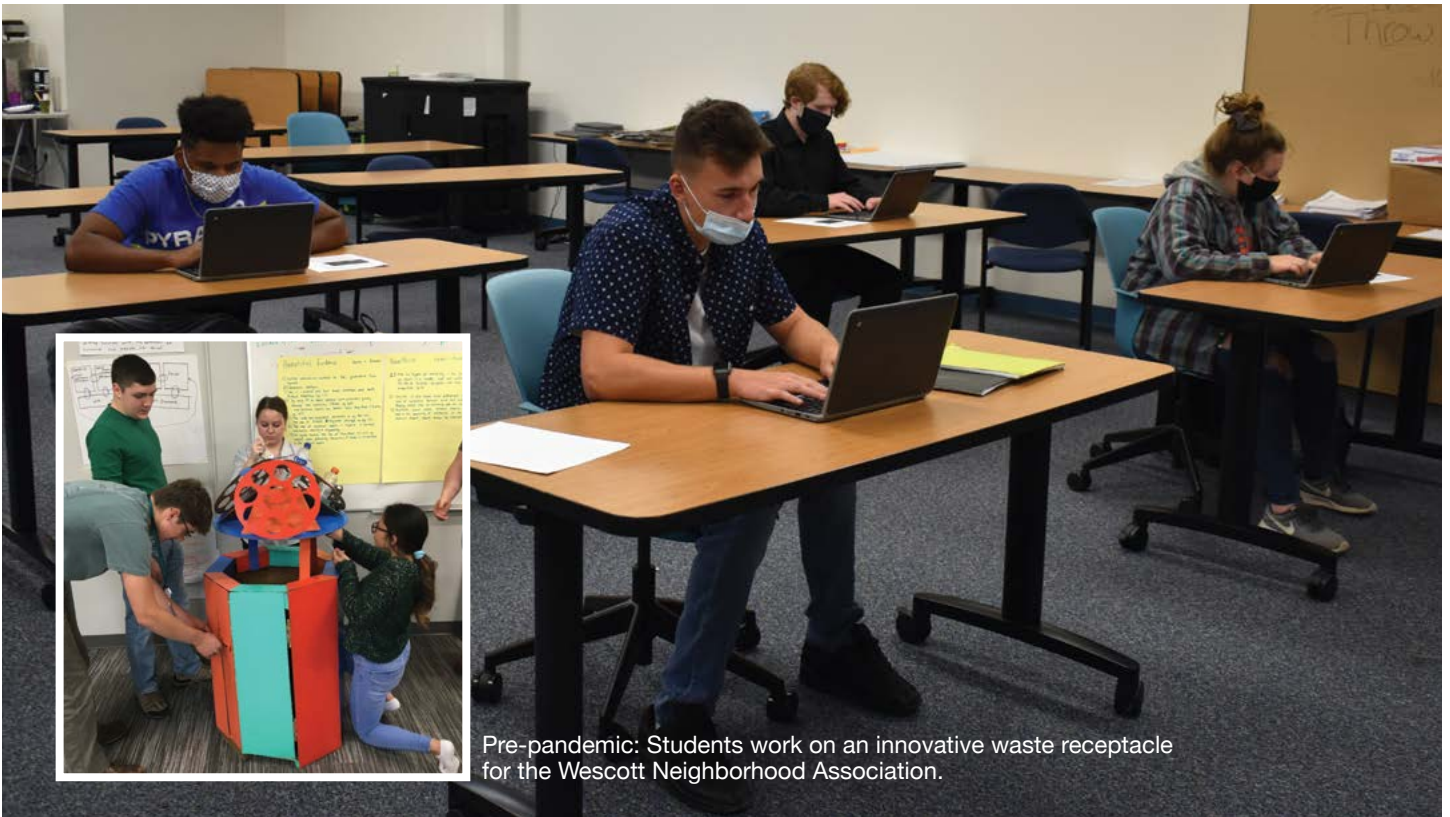
When it launched in 2019, the New Vision Engineering Professions Program at Lockheed Martin allowed students to work inside the company's sprawling complex off Electronics Parkway. In 2020, the program went virtual. Even with the challenges of COVID-19, students continued to connect with Lockheed engineers and other professionals from their temporary classroom inside the Central New York Regional Information Center. One Fayetteville-Manlius senior, Isabel Zuber, says nothing stopped her from getting the unique benefits of this experience, which allowed her to work with the company's Integrated Product Team.

"Because of this program, I will be able to narrow my focus to a specific branch of engineering, get more hands-on experience, and better understand engineering," she said.



"All these experiences will allow me to select and attend the best engineering school for me."

-Isabel Zuber



Pre-pandemic: Students work on an innovative waste receptacle for the Wescott Neighborhood Association.

Adult Education: A Year Like No Other

The year 2020 inspired creative changes for students and staff in the OCM BOCES Adult Education division. When campus closed in March, instructors in full-time workforce programs assembled pickup packages so students could practice with hands-on materials at home. No package was too challenging — even Construction Trades students hauled away bricks and mortar to practice building walls from the safety of their homes.

Video demonstrations, Google Classroom, Zoom — all became ways for instructors to continue teaching and consistently connect with students. In late spring and early summer, when restrictions eased, students had an opportunity to return to their classrooms in programs with specialized equipment such as welding and HVAC/R.

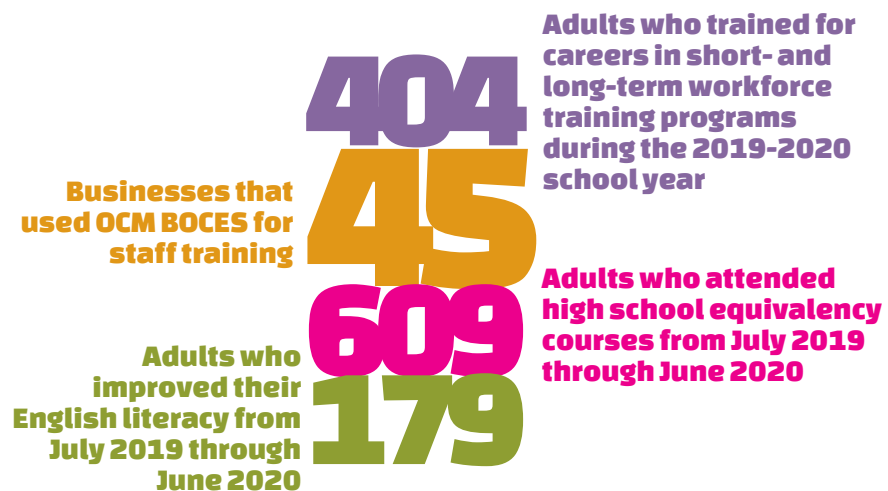
For prospective students, weekly Open Houses went virtual. Adult Education Coordinator Matt Tarolli hosted a live Open House on Zoom for a steady stream of visitors who registered each week. Later, prospective students could also go online to schedule in-person visits.

Graduations, once a festive indoor event with large crowds at Onondaga Community College, moved outdoors. One by one, over several hours, Adult Education students who graduated in 2020 walked across an outdoor stage at the OCM BOCES Main Campus to receive their certificates or diplomas. It was a happy atmosphere, full of signs, flowers, photos, and the cheers of loved ones.

In the fall, the doors to Adult Education re-opened — and stayed open — for in-person learning. Students wore masks and socially distanced themselves from others. Despite periodic quarantines, programs continued. By 2021, full-time training courses were largely full.

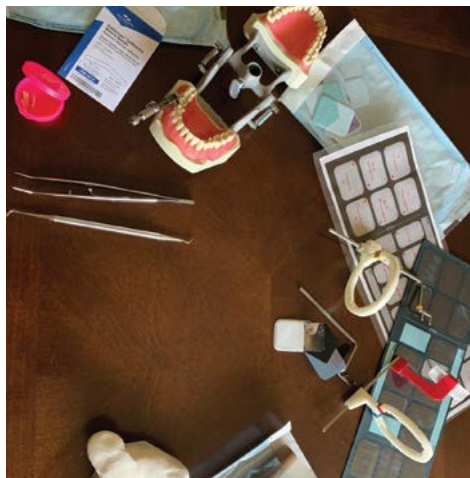
“It was a difficult year, but also an amazing year,” Adult Education Director Mari Ukleya said. “I am so proud of all of our students and staff for supporting each other and getting through this together.”

By the numbers



Keeping on Track

Lights, camera, action: Construction Trades teacher John Sweeney adapted to the virtual learning model by bringing the classroom into his workshop. Seen here with his computer and video camera, Sweeney taught his students how to build rafters.



Instructors made the most of the pandemic with “curbside pickups” at Main Campus that allowed students to practice hands-on skills at home. Middle photo: Central Sterile Processing Instructor Carol Corso provided a pickup day for a course chapter on prepping, packing and assembling surgical kits and trays for sterilization. Bottom: Pickup materials were also arranged for medical assisting, dental assisting and construction students.

Building a “Bridge to Brave” at Innovation Tech



As schools reopened in the middle of a pandemic, facilitators at Innovation Tech wanted to empower students with a meaningful project, one that would focus on their social and emotional needs as much as their academic progress.

As a result, an orientation project called “Bridge to Brave” started with this driving question:

“2020 is a year unlike any other, with students around the world adapting to new educational norms. How can I, as a New Tech student at Innovation Tech, empower myself and others to create a brave space and develop strategies to succeed?”

Students jumped in with all sorts of activities and strategies to help themselves and their classmates cope with the stress and isolation of the new year.

They started with a “mind map” to help reframe negative thinking, created a “rookie card” that emphasized their positive characteristics, created videos at home with testimonials and tips for coping, and even generated personalized Google Classrooms with links to resources, such as music, podcasts and games, that could give themselves and each other an emotional lift.

Facilitator Christine Alexander took it one step further. She connected with an award-winning digital design teacher, Lisa Gottfried, who works at the original New Tech High School in Napa, California. Students at Innovation Tech shared their videos and projects with Gottfried and her students at the flagship school. The result was a social connection with students in the same New Tech Network, as well as a shared pool of resources for coping in a difficult time.

One Innovation Tech student, Luka Galle, outlined her orientation work in a colorful slide-show presentation that included the video she made at home. Luka, a junior from Cazenovia, shared a mix of strategies for coping with the stress of the pandemic, such as listening to music mixes, exercising, and expressing her feelings in journals called “Burn After Writing” and “How to be Happy (Or at Least Less Sad).”

She loved the project — and she loves Innovation Tech.



**537
masks**

Innovation Tech Facilitator Martha FitzPatrick created a socially-distanced assembly line of fellow facilitators to cut, iron, sew and stitch 537 masks for students to have at their disposal when school reopened in September 2020. “This was really a labor of love for our Innovation Tech family,” Martha said.

STUDENT PROFILE



Nathaniel Edsall, a sophomore from Marathon, points to several aspects of Seven Valleys New Tech Academy that have appealed to him since he first joined the high school as a freshman: smaller class sizes, individualized attention, a welcoming environment, and three subjects in particular — history, science and math — that continue to capture his interest.

But Nate says the hallmark of Seven Valleys — project-based learning — is what really gets him excited about school.

“I need the basic coursework, but project-based learning has really given me a taste of the real world, teaching me deadlines, teamwork and agency,” he said. “It’s also good to know that my work has impacted the community.”

As an example, Nate points to a recent project that involved selecting a local community, profiling it, and describing the region’s sociological, ecological, and geographical movement. In Nate’s case, he and his classmates researched the nearby town of Lapeer, noting its ability to sustain its natural agricultural environment while also making modifications, such as transportation corridors, so residents could thrive.

When it was finished, the group’s informational poster was displayed at a local nature center to “educate the public on how to best conserve and effectively utilize land for human use,” Nate said.

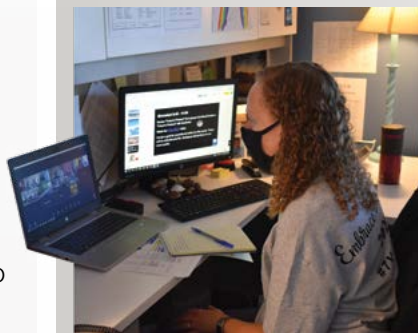
“I’ve had a lot of support here at Seven Valleys,” Nate said, “and I’ve become a much more knowledgeable person.”

“We’re All in This Together” — Educators Show Support Through Song

Within two weeks of the switch to remote learning, Innovation Tech Facilitator Ryan Howlett had unleashed his creativity and rounded up fellow staff to perform a rollicking video of “We’re All in This Together,” the 2008 smash hit in Disney’s “High School Musical.” The intent was to connect with students, newly isolated at home, and show support amid the early and unfamiliar uncertainties of the pandemic.



The video inspired similar efforts in several other OCM BOCES student programs, including a touching rendition of Phillip Phillips’ “Home” performed by Cortlandville educators who used real and toy instruments similar to some pop-song performances on “The Tonight Show.” Led by teacher Natalie Walters, the group called itself the “High School Virtual Faculty Choir” and ultimately posted a YouTube video that had more than 2,900 views. One commenter said, “Can you say, ‘Going above and beyond?’ This made my day and will be cherished for the remainder of this pandemic.”



Seven Valleys Principal Amy Drumluk embraced the challenge of combining in-person instruction with classes for remote learners by holding a schoolwide assembly that connected both sets of students on the first day of school in the fall of 2020.

By the numbers

351
 Number of
 college
 credits
 earned by
 New Tech
 students in
 2019-2020

By the numbers

369
students
supported in
Innovative
Education
programs at
OCM BOCES

Cortland Alternative School



Marissa Hyde of Dryden

Outdoor Celebrations

In June 2020, all graduation ceremonies were moved to outdoor stages because COVID-19 restrictions did not allow for large gatherings inside buildings. At Cortland Alternative School (CAS), 14 seniors from eight districts crossed an outdoor stage outside the Cortlandville Campus. CAS Principal Josh Martin said the challenges of the pandemic meant educators sometimes learned from students, rather than the other way around. “Class of 2020, you have provided us with the most valuable lessons — how to overcome obstacles, the power of positivity, and the ability to take advantage of opportunities as they are presented ... I cannot put into words how impressed I’ve been.”



Daniel Storrier of Homer waves to family and friends.

STARS Alternative High School

STUDENT PROFILE



As a Liverpool senior at the STARS Alternative High School, Logan Buchanan stands out as a model student. He attributes his success to the smaller class sizes at STARS and the abundance of support he receives from teachers, social workers, and other staff members.

Logan came into the program three years ago, behind in his high school credits, but he is back on track academically because of his own determination and the support he received from school counselors and administrators.

For Logan, STARS has made all the difference in his life.

“The staff really tries to build relationships with students and really encourage them,” he said. “I was glad to be able to take the necessary credits, get higher grades and graduate with my class.”

Looking ahead, Logan hopes to pursue a career in real estate, an idea he discovered in a career exploration class at STARS and affirmed in a financial planning class. He’s also been involved in the school’s Friends of Rachel (FOR) Club and community service activities.

Emily Behan, the assistant director of the program, is proud. She says Logan “has matured into a responsible, respectful and caring member of our school community. He embodies the spirit of STARS in his demeanor, his motivation and his determination to succeed.”



Liverpool senior Kristin Rankin was one of 16 students from the STARS Alternative High School and FUTURES programs who celebrated their commencement ceremony outdoors in the spring of 2020. Graduates walked across an outdoor stage in front of the OCM BOCES Main Campus to receive their certificates. Signs of congratulations lined the streets as families drove up to cheer on their graduates.



Special Education

By the numbers

567
Special Education students supported by OCM BOCES as of Oct. 3, 2020

5
days per week students were able to receive in-person instruction since schools reopened in September 2020

Supporting students at home

When school buildings closed in March, educators in Special Education focused on the social and emotional needs of their students as well as their academic needs. Teachers worked hard to stay connected with families at home and shared upbeat videos that showed them dancing, singing, sharing their pets, and holding up signs with positive messages.



Teachers also held “Virtual Spirit Weeks” and learned to get creative on Zoom. In the photo at left, students enjoy a game of Simon Says during a Friday “Hat Day” in the Transition Program at Onondaga Community College.

Reopening our schools – and staying reopened

With the state’s green light to reopen schools in September, the Special Education staff took on the challenge of accomplishing this feat while adjusting to the challenges of the new, COVID-related protocols. They spaced out desks, stored extra furniture, bought masks, set up signs, organized hand-sanitizing stations, created COVID isolation rooms, taped directional arrows in the hallways and made other adjustments to help prevent the spread of the virus. They also created a welcoming environment for students and continued using Google Classroom and other virtual tools to accommodate remote learners.

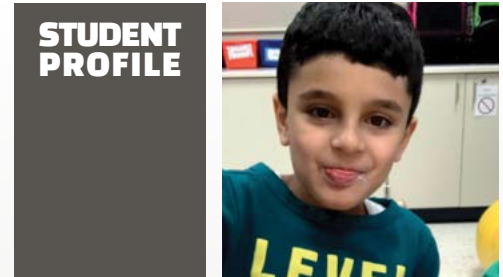


Sharing expertise at a national conference



In October 2020, a team of educators from OCM BOCES presented a virtual workshop about Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) for the 25th Annual Conference on School Mental Health, an event organized by the National Center for School Mental Health at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

The OCM BOCES team of Rosanna Grund, Dominique Ricciardelli, Chrissy Woodring, Heather Vitale, Erin McLaughlin and Laura Dibble presented “Not Just Another Initiative: Empowering School Staff to Embrace MTSS.” MTSS is a framework of interventions and supports to help schools identify students with academic and/or behavioral needs.



Every week, third-grader Mahmoud Zaqzouq from West Genesee enjoys “Fun Food Friday,” one of his favorite activities in the OCM BOCES SKATE Program at Mott Road Elementary School in Fayetteville. Students have to follow directions, take turns, and describe what they like or dislike about a recipe. The activity is perfect for Mahmoud because he has a special fondness for crunchy snacks — “He loves food!” says his teacher, Corinne Campbell — and wants to be a baker when he gets older.

More importantly, the activity demonstrates how much progress Mahmoud has made in the SKATE classroom for students on the autism spectrum. The classroom utilizes a research-based approach that offers a structured routine, a predictable schedule, a positive reinforcement plan, and an environment that emphasizes visual learning. Because it is housed in a public school, the students also benefit from learning and interacting with their general education peers.

Mahmoud joined the program in kindergarten and is still making progress on a daily basis. No matter what he is doing, his positive attitude and energetic spirit are contagious.

“Mahmoud’s excitement for school brings so much happiness to our classroom,” Campbell said.



Support for Educators in 2020

When educators pivoted to remote learning in March for 52,000 students in the region, the Instructional Support Services team was there to help:



- During the *first month* of the COVID-19 shutdown, ISS collectively provided 76 online workshops, sharing opportunities, and drop-in sessions that reached 1,469 educators.
- ISS collaborated with the Central New York Regional Information Center to create a comprehensive Google website of parent, educator and community resources that was shared across the state.
- ISS harnessed the regional expertise of 46 school psychologists, counselors, social workers and other professionals to create a 13-page booklet to help parents and educators with the social and emotional challenges of COVID-19.
- As schools reopened, ISS supported educators with 116 training sessions that focused on new teaching strategies during the pandemic, then continued to support teachers during 2020-2021 with professional development opportunities offered virtually.

Teacher Immersion Program deemed a win-win for students, districts



OCM BOCES launched the Teacher Immersion Program to address two major needs — the state and national substitute teacher shortage and the need for college education majors to find practical teaching experience. By the end of 2020, 12 component districts had signed up for this program, and ISS was recruiting more students to participate. The students, called “fellows,” work as substitutes in local districts but also receive professional development and support from OCM BOCES and TST BOCES. The first students involved in the program came from SUNY Cortland.

ISS 2019-20 by the Numbers

9,048

educators who attended ISS workshops & sessions

1,514

K-8 classrooms that received science materials from the OCM BOCES Science Center

1,246

students who attended the Virtual Regional Summer School in 2020

499

workshops & sessions provided to educators to improve instruction in the region

116

professional development sessions provided to educators that applied specifically to district reopening plans

Aspiring Leaders Institute welcomes second cohort

An OCM BOCES program that was launched in early 2020 to develop high-quality school leaders is now entering its second year, with a new cohort of educators beginning their journey through the Aspiring Leaders Institute.



The program provides participants with several advantages as they prepare for a future in educational administration, including a series of leadership courses with Marcellus Superintendent Michelle Brantner; guaranteed acceptance into one of four partnering universities that offer school administrative degrees; and a guaranteed internship at a school in the region. In the photo, new members of the cohort are welcomed to the program.

Fruit flies, lava flows, and vaccine science from a dorm room

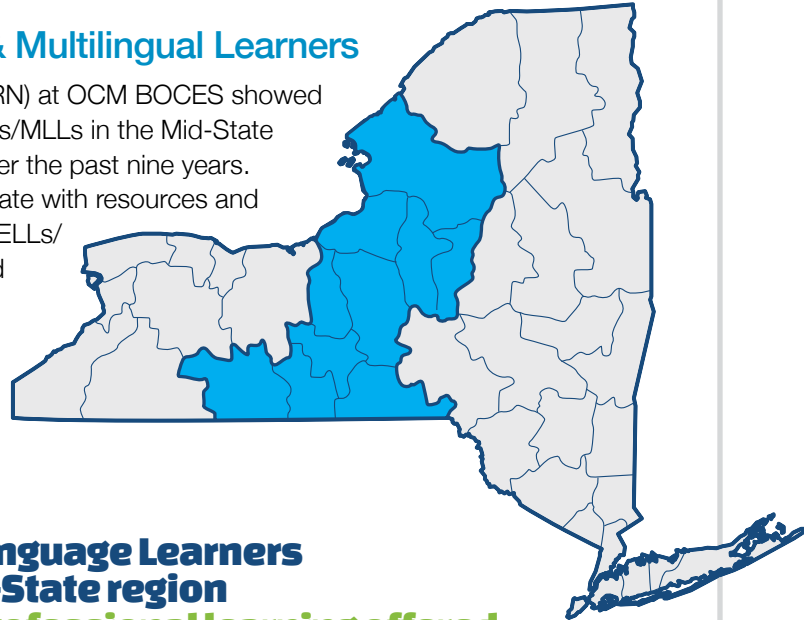
As Zoom and other virtual meeting platforms became a routine part of work and school, ISS trainers had the opportunity to make connections with experts all over the world. In the spring of 2020, STEM Coordinator Chris Leece offered 95 elementary students a live Zoom session with British scientist Dr. Maria O'Hanlon, who is studying the brains of fruit flies to learn more about Parkinson's Disease. Later, educators studying plate tectonics connected with Syracuse University's Dr. Jeff Karson, whose work involves studying real-life lava pours and combining it with lava-produced art. In December 2020, Leece invited educators to a live Zoom discussion from the dorm room of Rob Swanda, a Cornell Ph.D. candidate and national Twitter sensation who has made it his mission to explain the current mRNA vaccine mechanisms for COVID-19.



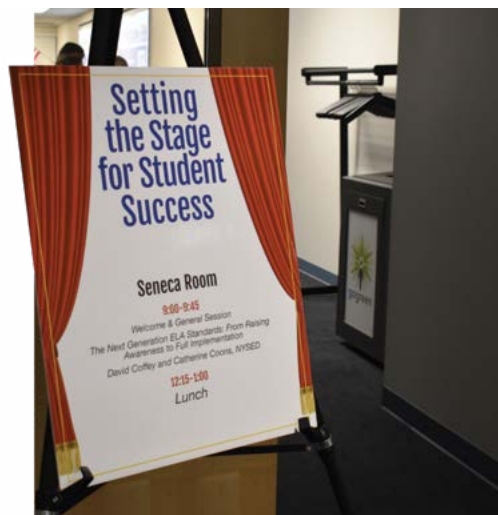
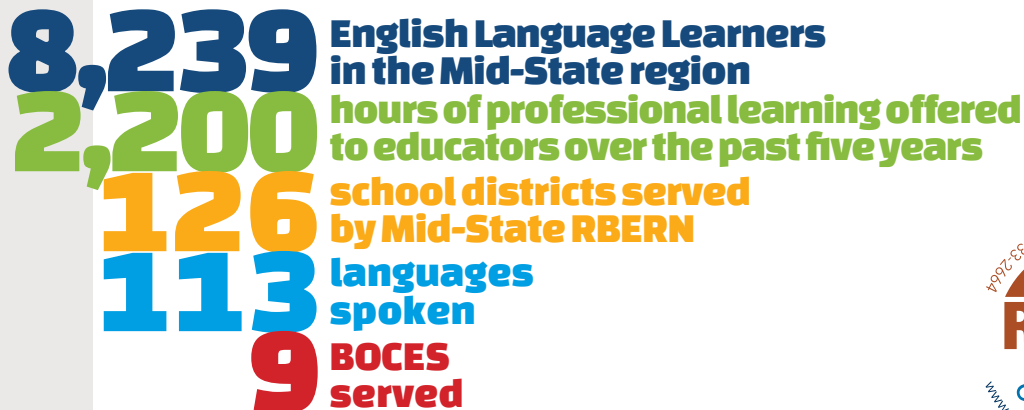
"Drosophila. Small Fruit Fly" by Macroscopic Solutions is licensed with CC BY-NC 2.0.*

Support for English Language Learners & Multilingual Learners

The Mid-State Regional Bilingual Education Network (RBERN) at OCM BOCES showed its impact and importance in 2020, with the number of ELLs/MLLs in the Mid-State region increasing 19% over the past five years and 26% over the past nine years. During the pandemic, RBERN trainers stepped up to the plate with resources and training for parents and educators to support the needs of ELLs/MLs across the state. In one example, educators benefitted from a weekly podcast that addressed a wide range of “RBERNing” issues.



Mid-State RBERN by the Numbers



Educators across the state gather at OCM BOCES to focus on English Language Arts

ISS hosted a statewide conference March 5, 2020, that focused on new state standards for ELA. ISS Literacy Coordinator Kathryn Daughton said the conference, titled “Setting the Stage for Student Success: A Spotlight on the Next Generation Learning Standards,” drew more than 100 educators and administrators for sessions that focused on aligning curriculum, supporting English Language Learners, formative assessments, and using inquiry in the classroom, among other topics.

Moving forward with Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education

In the spring of 2020, administrators at OCM BOCES jumped into the training that needs to be done to support an equitable and inclusive educational environment for all students, one that is grounded in the cultural view that “multiple expressions of diversity (e.g., race, social class, gender, language, sexual orientation, nationality, religion, ability) are recognized and regarded as assets for teaching and learning.”

Those words are taken from the New York State Education Department’s framework for Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education. The framework is meant to guide educators as they design student-centered learning environments that:

- Affirm racial and cultural identities and foster positive academic outcomes
- Develop students’ abilities to connect across cultures
- Empower students as agents of social change
- Contribute to an individual’s engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of critical thinking

As part of their initial training, 20 OCM BOCES and district administrators participated in a 10-day course on Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education through New York University’s Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools. Later, OCM BOCES Directors Doreen Bergman and Rosanna Grund started this training with all OCM BOCES administrators.

That training continued when OCM BOCES began turnkeying that training with its first cohort of 34 district and building leaders from its 23 component districts. Two coordinators from Instructional Support Services, Tanya Rosado-Barringer and Kathryn Daughton, facilitated the monthly sessions that were expected to extend until the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

“While schooling has traditionally privileged the capital of families from dominant backgrounds, CR-S positions educators to acknowledge, value, and leverage the wealth of knowledge found in communities that have been marginalized.”

- NYSED Culturally Responsive Sustaining Education Framework



Central New York Regional Information Center



By the Numbers

17,245
laptops and
other devices
purchased
for districts in
2019-2020

1.5
million
number of
spam emails
caught by
the CNYRIC's
"CanIT" filter in
April 2020

40
districts that
relied on
the CNYRIC's
Financial
Services
Department in
January 2020
to balance,
print, and
transmit W2
forms to Social
Security



Getting devices to districts

When students needed laptops to learn from home, the Central New York Regional Information Center was there to help. The CNYRIC purchased 17,245 instructional computers and other devices for districts in 2019-2020, including 10,936 Chromebooks.

Supporting Instructional Technology

The Model Schools team, now part of ISS, pulled out all the stops to support teachers with distance learning and reopening strategies amid the ever-changing world of the pandemic. Model Schools trainers held virtual office hours, created online courses, and conducted 45 professional development sessions over the summer for 2,194 participants.



On a related note, Todd Parks from Model Schools and Instructional Coach Randi Downs created a wildly popular "how to" video for educators who wanted to create virtual Bitmoji classrooms for students. The video had more than 46,000 views on YouTube.

Districts value 'eLearning' services more than ever



The pandemic sparked a heightened interest in eLearning, which offers distance learning, videoconferencing and other resources through the New York State Distance Learning Consortium (NYS DLC). The mission of NYSDLC has always been to “expand the traditional role of education through virtual environments.”

In early 2020, eLearning Coordinator Amy Keesey lent her expertise to a popular community organization — the Rosamond Gifford Zoo at Burnet Park. Initially, the zoo planned to roll out interactive, educational

videoconferencing in the fall in hopes of expanding its audience. When COVID forced the zoo to close, however, the project became a priority. With Amy’s assistance, the zoo launched video-conferencing opportunities in the summer with the Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration, an online catalog that reaches schools across the country. Topics from the zoo included “Species Survival,” “Beastly Builders” and “Animal Myths Busted!”

In another notable project, Amy helped boost the spirits of some senior athletes by setting up a Zoom meeting with some well-known professional athletes from Central New York, including Patrick Corbin (pitcher for the Washington Nationals), Breanna Stewart (professional basketball player) and Latavius Murray (running back for the New Orleans Saints).

Printing, printing, printing

To prepare for schools reopening in the fall, the CNYRIC printed and delivered more than 15,000 COVID-check daily passes for students to hand in at the bus stop or at school. They also printed thousands of COVID safety signs and supplied absentee ballots for school elections.

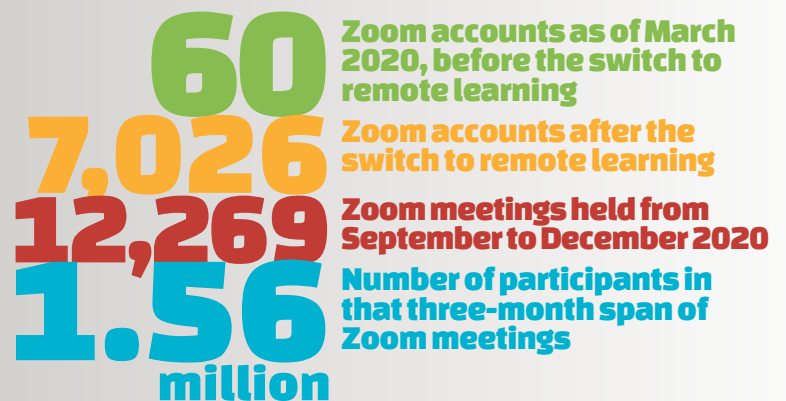
Staying focused on cybersecurity

In the area of data privacy and security, the CNYRIC conducted extensive training for district data protection officers and other employees to address Ed Law 2d and Part 121 regulations as part of the RIC’s new Data Privacy and Security Service (DPSS).



Zoom boom

Zoom became a household word in 2020 as teachers, students and others working at home as a result of the pandemic often turned to this popular video-conferencing tool to connect with others. The CNYRIC saw a huge spike in district Zoom accounts over the year:



Management Services

By the numbers

\$2.7 million
estimated savings for districts in 2019 through cooperative purchasing

859,204
meals delivered to students during the COVID-19 closures through the OCM BOCES Food Service Management Program

11,685
number of forms OCM BOCES submitted for districts for the Affordable Care Act

Working for Districts

Helping students stay fed and focused — BOCES was there

The need to provide healthy meals for thousands of students across the region did not stop with the switch to remote learning in March 2020. At OCM BOCES, Food Service Director Wendy Swift said she and her team “didn’t skip a beat” when it came to supporting 12 component districts who used this shared service during the 2019-2020 school year.

In these districts, Swift said, food service workers prepared meals in school cafeterias, then created “mass assembly lines” to package them in brown bags. Depending on the district, bus drivers either delivered the meals directly to students’ doors or took them to central pickup locations so families could take the food home. Even within this new, takeout meal system, food service workers strived to prepare healthy meals that would appeal to students, including baked chicken, meatball subs and tuna sandwiches. “We tried to give them variety so they didn’t get bored eating the same thing every day,” Swift said.

In North Syracuse, one of the largest districts that uses the OCM BOCES program, cafeteria workers designed bright yellow T-shirts that sported a masked Rosie the Riveter and the words, “Never underestimate a lunch lady who survived the 2020 coronavirus pandemic.” Swift said the workers received several thank-you notes from students, even coffee and flowers from one appreciative mom who dropped it off at a pickup location.





In the end, the OCM BOCES Food Service Management Program helped districts serve 426,848 breakfasts and 432,356 lunches from mid-March until the end of June, when the summer break began. That's 859,204 meals in all.

In the fall, that process changed again. Most districts in the food service program reopened using a hybrid model, with different groups of students attending a portion of each week and then learning remotely the rest of the time. Because of that system, cafeteria workers continued to prepare meals that were either delivered to classrooms (since students could not gather in cafeterias) or bussed to students learning at home.

Saving districts money

During its 72-year history, OCM BOCES has generated significant financial savings for school districts and their taxpayers.



Purchasing Power: OCM BOCES identified potential savings of \$2.7 million for districts participating in cooperative purchasing during the 2019 calendar year.

Shared Services: OCM BOCES generated \$37.6 million in state aid for districts in 2019-2020 based on prior-year services.

Assisting districts with compliance

OCM BOCES submitted 11,685 1095-C forms in 2019-20 to help 33 school districts remain compliant with the Affordable Care Act.



BOCES was there for contract negotiations & labor relations

Director of Labor Relations Dominic D'Imperio, Esq., and Labor Relations Specialist David Maestri, Esq., assisted districts with negotiating more than 30 collective bargaining agreements in 2020, while also providing value-added services that included compliance training, assistance with personnel matters, employee investigations, contract administration and grievances, and regular updates and guidance on school personnel and employee relations matters.



Left to right: David Maestri, Esq., & Dominic D'Imperio, Esq.



In Their Words



“BOCES is like my happy place. If I’m having a horrible day, I come here and I leave and I’m fine because we’re like a small family.”

– DeRuyter senior Alynna Kanaby, Auto Technology



“I definitely want to study physical therapy in college because OCM BOCES has shown me all aspects of this profession. It turned out to be what I was most interested in doing.”

– Homer senior Alina Heyer, Physical Therapy & Rehabilitative Professions



“Our family has changed for the positive, and our whole day is different. With smaller class sizes and better grades, Tanner feels totally different about himself — he feels like he is part of something!”

– Mother of Fabius Pompey junior Tanner Belge, LaFayette Transition Program



“Because of Seven Valleys, I believe I will be prepared for what I want to do in the future. I am acquiring great presentation and communication skills. I am learning how to participate in group discussions and see everyone’s views.”

– Tully 9th-grader Chelsie Trafton, Seven Valleys New Tech Academy



“What’s better than working on a car?”

– West Genesee senior Andrew Trioano, Auto Collision



“The possibilities are endless! I like hands-on learning, and I get it here at OCM BOCES, whether it’s video, photography, graphic design, radio production or communication. This is my field of study — I am passionate about it — and I get to do it every day.”

– Marcellus senior Lyle Freeman, Media Marketing Communications at WCNY in Syracuse



“The teachers here are amazing. They understand that if you have struggles learning, they will help you out. They are not going to leave you behind.”

– Westhill senior Madi Dennison, Laboratory Technology

Partnering Districts

School District Superintendents

Mr. Joseph DeBarbieri (*Acting*)
Baldwinsville Central

Mr. Matthew Reilly
Cazenovia Central

Mr. Michael Eiffe
Chittenango Central

Mr. Todd Freeman
Cincinnatus Central

Mr. Robert Edwards
Cortland City

Dr. David M. Brown
DeRuyter Central

Dr. Donna DeSiato
East Syracuse Minoa Central

Mr. Timothy P. Ryan
Fabius-Pompey Central

Dr. Craig Tice
Fayetteville-Manlius Central

Mr. Thomas Turck
Homer Central

Dr. Peter C. Smith
Jamesville-DeWitt Central

Mr. Jeremy Belfield
LaFayette Central

Dr. Mark Potter
Liverpool Central

Mr. James J. Austin
Lyncourt Union Free

Ms. Rebecca Stone
Marathon Central

Ms. Michelle Brantner
Marcellus Central

Ms. Melinda McCool
McGraw Central

Mr. Daniel Bowles
North Syracuse Central

Mr. Robin Price
Onondaga Central

Mr. Jay Tinklepaugh
Solvay Union Free

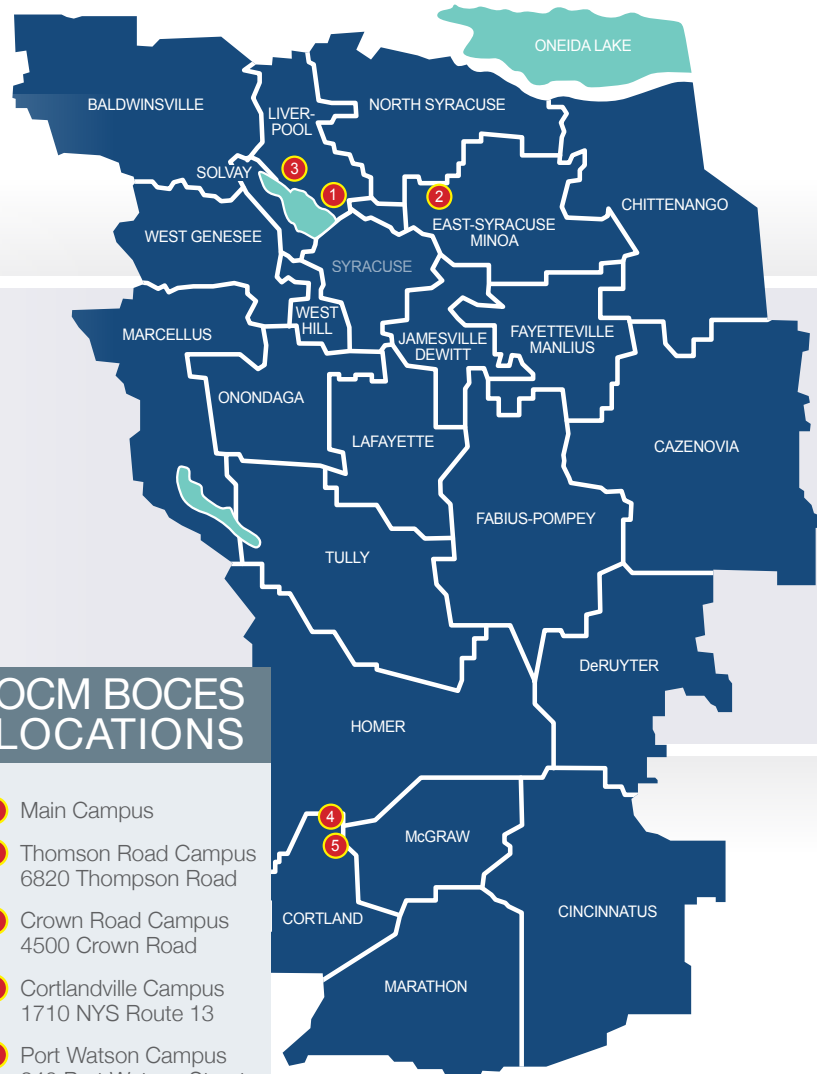
Mr. Robert Hughes
Tully Central

Mr. Casey Barduhn
Westhill Central

Mr. David C. Bills
West Genesee Central

Mr. Jaime Alicea
Syracuse City Schools

Mr. William Crist
Syracuse Diocese Schools



OCM BOCES LOCATIONS

- 1 Main Campus
- 2 Thomson Road Campus
6820 Thompson Road
- 3 Crown Road Campus
4500 Crown Road
- 4 Cortlandville Campus
1710 NYS Route 13
- 5 Port Watson Campus
240 Port Watson Street

2019-2020 School Districts



Baldwinsville Central



Cazenovia Central



Chittenango Central



Cincinnatus Central



Cortland City



DeRuyter Central



East Syracuse Minoa Central



Fabius-Pompey Central



Fayetteville-Manlius Central



Homer Central



Jamesville-DeWitt Central



LaFayette Central



Liverpool Central



Lyncourt Union Free



Marathon Central



Marcellus Central



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