



WELCOME TO THE NORTH COLONIE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER!

Dear North Colonie Families and Residents,

I'm excited to introduce our new North Colonie Central School District newsletter! This quarterly publication will be delivered to households in the school district to keep our families and community members informed. This newsletter showcases some of the incredible work being done by North Colonie students, teachers and staff in all eight of our school buildings and beyond. Our "Staff Spotlight" (Page 2) will give you a chance to get to know our staff members from around the district who are helping to educate and support our students every day. You will find articles about programs and curricula, student and staff achievements, PTA news and much more.

As we embark on the Capital Project that was recently approved by voters in May, this newsletter will also give us a chance to update you on the progress of the work that has already begun and will continue to take place over the next several years (Pages 4-5). There are so many wonderful things happening here in North Colonie and we are excited to share them with you. We have plenty of reasons to be proud of the school district we live in, and we invite you to be an active participant in sharing these successes with us.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Skeals
Superintendent of Schools

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NORTH COLONIE STAFF SPOTLIGHT



LISA COONS
ENL Teacher at Blue Creek
28 Years with North Colonie

Mrs. Coons is an Altamont native and Guilderland graduate who has been an ENL (English as a New Language) teacher in NCCSD for 25 years. Her love of teaching was sparked by a semester abroad in Japan her junior year of college, when she tutored junior high school students, teaching them English. Now, she helps students from around the world not only learn English, but also to feel welcome at Blue Creek Elementary School. In her free time, Mrs. Coons likes to read, hike, spend time with her children and travel.

Most Rewarding Part of Your Job: "I would say the most rewarding part of my job is being a part of my families' journeys. Once they arrive at Blue Creek, who knows what they've been through to get here. A lot of my families come directly from their native country and I can only imagine the obstacles they've overcome and the challenges they've faced. So, I do see it as a privilege to be in this position where I am one of the first faces that welcome them."



AMANDA CUTTER
Assistant Director of Transportation
10 Years with North Colonie

Mrs. Cutter is originally from Niskayuna and spent 16 years in the Niskayuna CSD transportation department before joining North Colonie. Originally a stay-at-home mom to three children, she initially enjoyed working in transportation because she could work during school hours and still be home with her kids and have summers off! In her free time, Mrs. Cutter enjoys baking and crafting. In fact, she has made two of her three kids' wedding cakes and is making her daughter's wedding cake when she gets married in March!

Most Rewarding Part of Your Job: Cutter was quick to cite the people she works with as being one of the best parts of her job. But she also appreciates the district as a whole, saying "I feel like every staff member matters at North Colonie."



JOHANNA DENNISTON
Reading Specialist at Shaker MS
3 Years with North Colonie

Mrs. Denniston knew she wanted to be a teacher since the third grade. She grew up in Clifton Park and graduated from Shenendehowa, where she also began her teaching career after college. Life took her to Boston and then Omaha, but she returned home to the Capital Region after having her two children. Denniston started at NCCSD three years ago, first at Southgate and then on to SMS. In her free time, Denniston enjoys "reading about reading." She has enjoyed her time at the district, saying that the people are her favorite part of the experience.

Most Rewarding Part of Your Job: "It's actually really rewarding when kids don't need to come to reading anymore. The kids are so proud of themselves. It's great just seeing that little light go off in their head, when they can understand and do things they couldn't before."



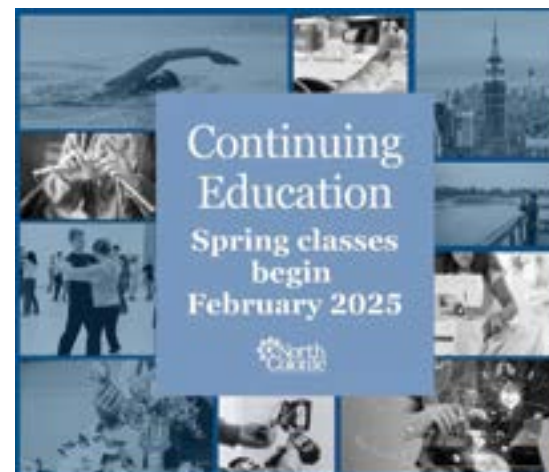
ARNEL JOYNER
School Counselor at Shaker HS
28 Years at North Colonie

Mr. Joyner is a long-time counselor and track and field coach at SHS. An Albany native, Joyner graduated from Guilderland CSD and went on to attend SUNY Geneseo for his undergraduate degree in psychology. After completing his graduate studies at Russell Sage, he started in NCCSD as the coordinator for the Personal Improvement Program for students at risk of not graduating. Joyner served as a counselor in the program for 23 years before transitioning into his current role. He has two kids and loves sports, especially football for which he is involved in a number of fantasy leagues.

Most Rewarding Part of Your Job: "Occasionally, when I'm out in the community and someone comes up and says, 'Hey Mr. Joyner, that thing you told me way back when I was a student and ever since I remembered that and it helped me.' That's kind of rewarding and that happens a lot actually. That would be the best thing, running into people you see down the road that you've had some impact or influence in their life and you didn't know you did."

YOU'RE INVITED: TEACH OR ATTEND A CONTINUING ED CLASS

Are you a baker looking to share your tips and tricks? Are you an arts and crafts pro who has mastered the perfect DIY? Do you know a trade or skill you would like to teach others? Consider teaching others and sharing your talents in a Continuing Education class! North Colonie CSD is currently accepting submissions for Continuing Education classes for the Spring 2025 semester. The Spring 2025 semester will begin Feb. 24, 2025. Submissions are requested by Dec. 1, 2024. For any questions or submissions, please contact us at continuinged@nccsk12.org or visit our website at www.northcolonie.org/CE.



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR NORTH COLONIE CSD PTA



**Loudonville
Welcome Back Festival**



**Boght Hills
Ice Cream Social**



The North Colonie Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) are pleased to be a part of the 2024-2025 school year! Each year, the PTA runs many events across the district. The goal of every event is to strengthen our school community, while having fun and making new friends.

Our NCCSD PTAs need your help! We are always looking for volunteers to help plan, prepare, and run events. Any assistance you can provide is greatly appreciated by students, families, and NCCSD staff. With your support so far this year, our PTAs have already been able to put on successful events like the Boght Hills Ice Cream Social and the Loudonville Welcome Back Festival.

Please contact your school PTA if you are interested in helping run an existing event or if you have an idea for a new activity. PTA pages and contact information can be found on each school home page at NorthColonie.org.

Thank you very much for your support of our district PTAs! North Colonie is a wonderfully strong community and this is due to your support and dedication to our schools.

JOIN THE NORTH COLONIE CSD TEAM!



The North Colonie CSD is hiring for Noon Aides. A Noon Aide supervises students in the lunchroom and on the playground. This position allows for variable mid-day hours with a starting salary of \$17.46 per hour.

Looking for something else, full-time, part-time, or as needed? We're also hiring full-time, part-time, and substitute roles for:

- Nurses (starting at \$36.84 per hour)
- Custodial Department (starting at \$19.39 per hour)
- Bus Drivers (starting at \$24.48 per hour)
- Bus Aides (starting at \$18.49 per hour)
- Food Service Helpers (starting at \$20.69 per hour)

Apply now at NorthColonie.org/Employment

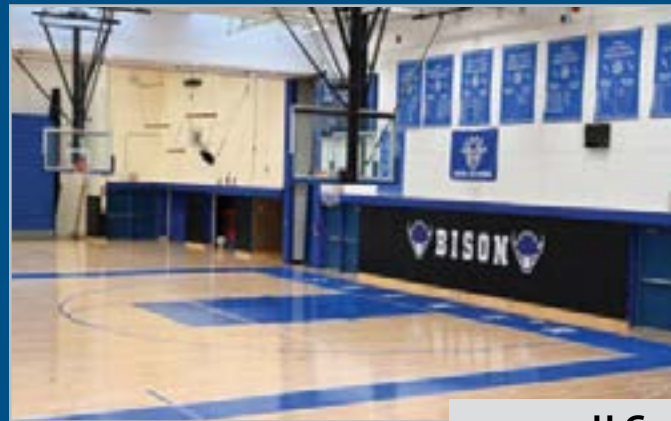
PHASE 1: TRANSFER TO CAPITAL UPDATES: K-WING KITCHEN



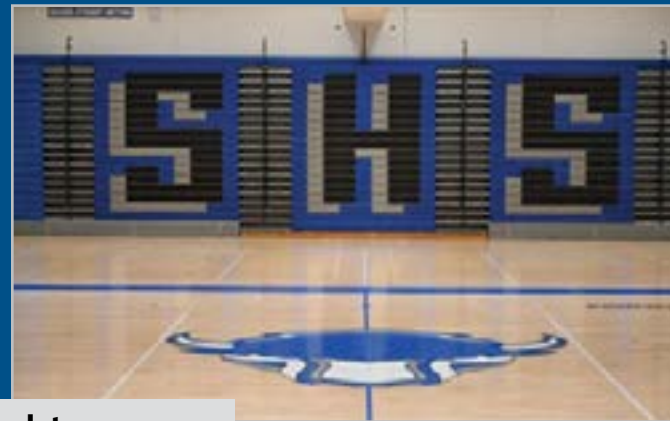
K-Wing Kitchen

Phase 1 includes Transfer to Capital work, which consists of:

- Updates to the K-Wing Kitchen
 - H - Gym Updates and Entrance Work
 - M - Wing Bathroom Renovation
 - Security Desk Bathroom Renovation
- Estimated Completion Date: Dec. 2026



H-Gym Updates



CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATES

01.

Phase 1 – Transfer to Capital - (\$5,705,580.00)

SED Submission Completed – August 30, 2024 | Submitted to SED – September 19, 2024
 Construction Document Estimate – September 2024
 Bid – March 2025 | Construction – June 2025 – August 2026
 Closeout – December 2026

02.

Phase 2 – 2024 Capital Project - J-Wing Addition and Building Renovations (\$48,438,624.00)

Design - July 2024 – March 2025 | SED Submission – March 2025
 Bid – November 2025 | Construction – April 2026 – September 2028
 Closeout – December 2028

03.

Phase 3 – 2024 Capital Project - Performing Arts Additions and Building Renovations (\$45,699,056.00)

Design - January 2025 – September 2025 | SED Submission – September 2025
 Bid – May 2026 | Construction – July 2026 – October 2028
 Closeout – December 2028

These are targeted construction schedules: they will be reevaluated throughout the design process to maximize the best bid opportunities. Design Schedule is based on 36 weeks | SED Current Review Time: 28-30 weeks.

PHASE 2: CAPITAL PROJECT: CLASSROOM RENOVATIONS & J-WING ADDITION



Updated Science Labs

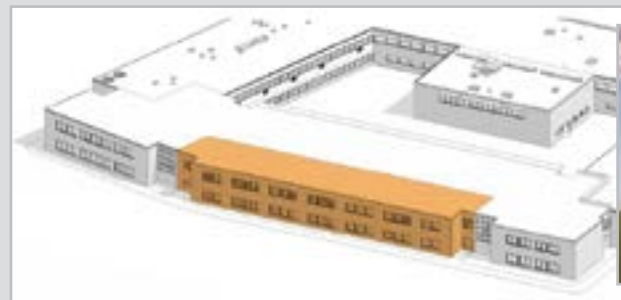
Phase 2 of the Capital Project includes:

- J-Wing Addition
 - Seven General Classrooms
 - Four Science Labs
- Renovation of 50 Existing Classrooms
- Athletics Updates
 - Install New Synthetic Turf Field on Lower Maloy
 - Install New LED Lights on Walker Field

Estimated Completion Date: Dec. 2028



Lower Maloy



J-Wing Addition



J-Wing Addition

PHASE 3: CAPITAL PROJECT: PERFORMING ARTS ADDITIONS & BUILDING RENOVATIONS

Phase 3 of the Capital Project includes:

- Expand Auditorium Stage
- Renovate Auditorium with Balcony for Additional Seating
- Update Band and Orchestra Rooms
- Renovate and Expand the Art Gallery

Estimated Completion Date: Dec. 2028



Current SHS Auditorium



Current Art Gallery at SHS

Shaker High School Students Selected for NYSSMA

SHS is proud to have nine talented students selected as performers or alternates for the 2024 New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) All-State Festival! Our students are among approximately 600 participants chosen from more than 6,500 sophomores and juniors who auditioned state-wide and will take the stage December 5-8 in Rochester, NY.

Congratulations to:

- Cristiano Logrippio - Tenor in Mixed Chorus
- Blake Nazarian - Tenor in Mixed Chorus
- Regan Morrissey - Alto in Mixed Chorus
- Mia Sorrentino - Soprano in Treble Chorus
- Tahlia Stefanik - Soprano in Treble Chorus
- Isabel Yang - Alto in Mixed Chorus
- Bowen Yu - Viola in String Orchestra
- Kevin Lu - Alternate on Alto Saxophone
- Jackson Majewski - Alternate on Voice



National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists



And then there were four! Congratulations to Catherine Cheng, John Park, Shubham Patel, and Faiz Shaikh who are all National Merit Scholarship semifinalists. The Shaker seniors are among more than 16,000 students across the country who scored in the top one percent on the PSAT exam and will have the opportunity to continue in the competition. Finalists will be announced in February and those students will have the chance to compete for 6,870 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$26 million that will be offered in the spring. Good luck!

North Colonie Named #1 School District in Albany Area

We're #1 and we're proud of it! The website Niche.com recently released its Best Schools and Districts rankings and North Colonie and Shaker High School are both at the top of the list! Niche ranked North Colonie CSD the #1 School District in the Albany Area with an overall grade of A. North Colonie CSD is one of the largest public school districts in the Capital Region, serving more than 6,200 students in grades K-12.

Thank you to all of the administration, faculty and staff who help make North Colonie Central School District one of the best in the area from our six elementary schools all the way up through SHS.

Communications Classes Explore Innovation Labs at SMS



For the first time this year, Communications Classes are experiencing Innovation Labs as a group. This allows students to better immerse themselves into the labs, while giving them the opportunity to practice hands-on learning in the state of the art facilities.

For more information on this class, scan the QR code or visit the article on our website at northcolonie.org/news.



Taste Testing at North Colonie Elementary Schools

"Liked It, Loved It, Tried It (Not My Favorite)." Those were the feedback options for Loudonville Elementary School students who chose to taste test the cherry tomato and corn salad recently during lunch. The taste test is part of North Colonie's "Harvest of the Month," which is one of the district Farm to School initiatives.

"Harvest of the Month is a fun way to promote New York grown fruits and vegetables, as well as NY dairy products," Farm to School Facilitator Amber Cost said. "The idea is to think of different ways to incorporate the Harvest of the Month item onto the menus and have kids, hopefully, try new things. Introducing taste tests of a recipe lets students try fresh, local ingredients in a fun and exciting way, with the opportunity to provide feedback and tell us what they think."

The program brings plenty of local ingredients to the district. The basil in the salad was harvested right from the SHS garden and the cherry tomatoes were from Hillard's Greenhouse in Latham. While the tasting at Loudonville was just the sampling, the tomato and corn salad were placed on the lunch menu elementary-wide the very next week for "New York Thursday." Each school will have a chance for taste tests in the coming weeks and months.

"This is a great opportunity to have real conversations with students about the food they are eating in the cafeteria," Cost said. "It helps us raise awareness about our Farm to School programs and our pledge to increase the amount of fresh and local ingredients we are serving throughout the district."





Interested in Receiving District Communications?

If you're a member of the North Colonie CSD and do not currently have a child attending the schools but still wish to actively engage with the community, we invite you to sign up for district announcements and alerts through the NCCSD Community Group. Scan the QR code to sign up today!



UPCOMING NORTH COLONIE CSD EVENTS

OCTOBER

- Oct. 17 HALF DAY FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS** - Elementary
Parent Teacher Conferences
- Oct. 21** BOE Regular Meeting at Loudonville Elementary Gym, 6:30 p.m.
- Oct. 24** SHS Financial Aid Night, 6:30 p.m.
- Oct. 26** SHS PSAT Exams, 7:30 a.m.

NOVEMBER

- Nov. 1 HALF DAY FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS** - Elementary
Parent Teacher Conferences
SHS Last Day of Q1
- Nov. 5 NO SCHOOL - K-12 Superintendent's Conference Day**
Election Day
- Nov. 11 NO SCHOOL - Veterans Day**
- Nov. 12** SMS Q1 Ends
- Nov. 15** SHS Q1 Report Cards Posted
- Nov. 18** BOE Regular Meeting at Forts Ferry Auditorium, 6:30 p.m.
- Nov. 19** SMS Q1 Grades Posted
- Nov. 21 HALF DAY FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS** - Elementary
Parent Teacher Conferences
- Nov. 27-29 - NO SCHOOL - Thanksgiving Recess**

DECEMBER

- Dec. 6 HALF DAY FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS** - Elementary
Parent Teacher Conferences
- Dec. 16** BOE Regular Meeting at Loudonville Gym, 6:30 p.m.
- Dec. 23 - Jan. 1 - NO SCHOOL - Winter Recess**

JANUARY

- Jan. 2** Classes Resume
- Jan. 17** SHS Last Day of Q2
- Jan. 20 NO SCHOOL - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day**
- Jan. 21-24** SHS Mid-Year/ Regents Exams
- Jan. 27** BOE Regular Meeting at Blue Creek Assembly Room, 6:30 p.m.
SHS Second Semester Begins
- Jan. 29 NO SCHOOL - Lunar New Year**
- Jan. 31** SMS Q2 Ends

FEBRUARY

- Feb. 5** SHS Q2 Report Cards Posted
- Feb. 7** SMS Q2 Report Cards Posted
- Feb. 17-21 - NO SCHOOL - Mid-Winter Recess**
- Feb. 24** BOE Regular Meeting at Southgate Assembly Room, 6:30 p.m.