CATSKILL AREA SCHOOL STUDY COUNCIL





CASSC MEMBER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

ANDES

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The mission of CASSC is to offer member districts the opportunity to access programs for students and staff members, while maximizing resources through shared services. Membership in CASSC is available to all school districts in the ONC BOCES and DCMO BOCES service areas.

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Kristen Shearer, Superintendent, Milford Central School

Staff

Suzanne Swantak-Furman, Executive Coordinator

Carolyn Leon-Palm, Assistant Coordinator





The Catskill Area School Study Council (CASSC) was organized in 1951 as a partnership between the area's school districts and the State University College at Oneonta. In 1971, the Council was chartered by the New York State Board of Regents. Effective July 1, 1991, the administrative functions of the CASSC were placed under the direction of the Otsego Northern Catskills BOCES. This arrangement did not alter the Council's partnership with the State University College at Oneonta, however, which continues to house the Council's headquarters on the SUNY campus and to provide space for a variety of CASSC events.

Operation of the Council represents one of the longest continuous running educational partnerships in the region. The Council is governed by an eight-member Board of Trustees, consisting of three representatives from each of the two BOCES districts, plus a permanent member from ONC BOCES and SUNY Oneonta's administrations. Board members from the component schools are elected to serve three-year terms.

The CASSC is a member of the Study Council Alliance of New York State (SCANYS), an organization of school development, service and study councils that serve the majority of New York State. The Alliance allows local members to gain member rate privileges at any of the Study Council affiliate programs throughout New York State.

The 2022-23 is the 71st year of the establishment of the Catskill Area School Study Council, a partnership between SUNY Oneonta and area school districts. All of our programs returned and we enjoyed a busy and productive year! This year marked the return of our Student Leadership program



for area juniors- one of my favorite programs with a focus on service and community. Our dedicated Student Directors helped each school group develop a service project to positively impact their school community. Another program that was revitalized was BIEN!, the Bilingual Immersion Experience Network. Over 60 high school students attended the program that was developed and taught by SUNY Oneonta Education students. Seeing the enthusiasm, curiosity, smiles and interaction at our in-person programming was exciting. CASSC continues to work closely with various departments here on campus, most notably the Division of Education. Watching the enthusiastic interaction between the SUNY students and area students is always inspiring. Learning is fostered as local students work hand in hand with college student volunteers.

In addition to our student programs, CASSC continues to strengthen and develop learning opportunities for Board of Education Members, professional Office Staff and Bus Drivers. New this year was an online learning series designed for Non-Instructional Leaders in the areas of facilities, transportation, and food service. Our School Board Institute program was able to host several in-person events along with our established partnership with NYSSBA for new Board member training. Working together in these unique times, CASSC's programs continue to offer valuable opportunities to maximize resources to provide a wide range of high-quality programming for both students and professionals.

CASSC continues to focus on community, relationships and hard-work. These ideals are rooted in the values of our ONC and DCMO regions. Supporting each other has helped us grow and persevere. We appreciate the support and guidance of our Board of Trustees who advise us in the development of our programs. I hope you enjoy reading about the details of our programs in this Annual Report. I write this message with an appreciation for everything you continue to do to support your students, school community and CASSC. I look forward to working together in the future.

Sincerely,
— Suzanne Swantak-Furman,
CASSC Executive Coordinator



Mrs. Michelle Osterhoudt has proudly been an educator in our region for over 24 years. Many of those years were spent in both High School and Middle School where she loved teaching literature while focusing on Social Justice. Michelle has also been an active community member

having served as a council member and is the current President Elect of the Oneonta Area NAACP. Michelle is the proud Superintendent of Margaretville Central School. Originally from Jefferson and Oneonta, New York where she currently resides, Osterhoudt attended SUNY Oneonta earning a bachelor of science degree in Secondary English Education. She received her master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction and a Certificate of Advanced study in Educational Leadership from The University of New England in Biddeford, Maine. A lover of learning, Michelle also received a CAS from SUNY Oswego while immersed in their Superintendent Development Program. Michelle is currently enrolled in the Doctor of Education Program at the University of New England. Most importantly, Michelle is the wife of Marty Osterhoudt and proud mom to Alex who studies Physical Education at SUNY Brockport and Ella Osterhoudt who is a sophomore at Norwich High School who also aspires to work with children.





Mrs. Kristen Shearer has worked in rural, suburban, and urban schools throughout her 28 years in education. She began her career as the Director of Guidance for Schenevus Central School District in 1999. Since then, she has held positions as Director of Pupil Personnel Services with the

Schenectady City Schools, Curriculum and Instruction at Eastchester Union Free School, and Special Education and Student Services at Delaware Academy in Delhi. Mrs. Shearer currently serves as the Superintendent at Milford Central School since 2022." I am incredibly proud and humbled to serve as Milford's Superintendent. We are fortunate to have a talented, committed staff who value continuous improvement and a community that generously provides enthusiastic support." Mrs. Shearer resides in Oneonta, NY with her husband, David. She has lived in the upstate area for over 30 years and raised two sons in Oneonta. She received both her bachelor's and master's degree from State University at Oneonta and her School Building and District level Administrative certifications for the State University at Cortland. Mrs. Shearer is a 2020 New York Education Policy Fellow. Mrs. Shearer served on the curriculum writing team for Social Emotional Learning and district wide implementation of SEL readiness at different schools, served on the NYS School Counselor Association Executive Board, and as the NYS Education Departments School Counseling and Mental Health in Schools Advisory Council liaison. She will be one of eight members on the CASSC Board of Trustees, which meets regularly as the governing body.

Student Director Testimonials



Tyler Branigan: Student Director, Delaware Academy

"The leadership program offered through the Catskill Area Student Study Council has been one the highlights of my senior year. As a

Student Director in a position of leadership and responsibility, the program has allowed me to flourish and experience some of the best memories I have ever made with some of the best people I have ever met. Not only have I developed truly wonderful relationships and connections, but I have built my character through this program. I would not trade this experience and



the lessons I have learned for anything" Tyler will attend Syracuse University in the fall and major in Policy Studies."

Katie Lewis, Student Director 22-23, Oneonta City School District

"This program has been such

a great experience for me during my senior year. I learned so much about leadership, community building, and stepping out of my comfort zone. I met some amazing people and am very grateful for the experience." Katie will attend the University of Delaware to study Fashion Merchandising and Management in the fall.

Student Leadership Program





"Building Community through Leadership & Service"

The 45th year of Student Leadership conferences was an exciting one as we were able to bring this program back! Our leadership conferences are designed to help young people assume leadership roles through communication and a focus on service. Student Directors are elected each year who are dedicated, enthusiastic, confident, intelligent, and possess the ability to become a role model for other students. The ten Student Directors for the 2022-2023 year were *Tyler Branigan*, Delaware Academy; *Hannah Bonczkowski*, Gilbertsville-Mt-Upton, *Sierra Rondeau*, Laurens, *Anna Delberta*, Oneonta, *Eva Palm-Leon*, Oneonta, *Katie Lewis*, Oneonta, *Jack Edmonds*, Milford, *Jonathan Child*, Morris, *Adam Champlin*, South Kortright, and *Grace Bullard*, Stamford.

Student Director training was held a few times this year led by Jim DiLiberto, of the Clark Adventure Programs in Cooperstown, NY. The new Student Directors learned how to facilitate and debrief small group activities, build community in groups, improve communication and worked on developing other skills for directing the conferences.

Three Student Leadership conferences were held for eleventh graders. Each conference is an interactive educational experience

Student Leadership continued

where students learn leadership skills while identifying school and community strengths and needs. With the support of Student Directors and School Advisors, each school team developed a service project that positively impacted their own community. The service projects were meaningful and achievable such as a letter writing campaign for health-care workers or food drive. Students enjoy the exchange of ideas and practices and are encouraged to implement these ideas beyond the workshop.

Eighteen participating school districts sent 117 students!. The workshops were: November: "What's your Why"? presented by Kate McMichael, SUNY Oneonta; January: "Positivity through Action" led by Daniel Williams, Founder of Daniel Barden Mudfest. A panel of community leaders focused on "Showing up with a Service Mindset". The panel included: Linda Drake, Office



of Social Responsibility, SUNY Oneonta; Robert Escher, Executive Director, Oneonta Boys and Girls Club; and Patricia Leonard, Executive Director of Family Services, Inc. The final workshop held in April focused on "Deeds not Words" and our Student Directors presented the tie blankets to Dawn Harmer on behalf of Helios Care's Camp Forget-me-not. The highlight of the day were the student presentations to select the 2023-2024 Student Directors.

Enrichment Seminar Program

The Enrichment Seminar Program is a supplemental educational experience for children who have demonstrated the interest to learn outside the classroom and further expand their world. Carolyn Leon-Palm was the Enrichment Program Coordinator for 2022-2023. The elementary and middle school class instructors were current Education majors from the State University College at Oneonta. The program runs for four Saturdays in the fall. The SUNY Oneonta pre-service teachers gained experience developing and delivering instruction while building relationships with their students. We had 14 SUNY Oneonta education majors volunteer to help in this program.

The fall enrollment for the Enrichment Seminar Program from thirteen (10) school districts totaled fifty-two (52) elementary and middle school students.

Course offerings included:

Arts and Humanities

Babysitting Training

Intro to Drama

Science and

World Around You

Fiber Arts

Intro to Dance

Spanish

High School

S.A.T. Preparation Course

Enrichment Seminar Program

The Online S.A.T Preparation Course continues to be offered for high school students in the Fall and Spring. The virtual format of the SAT enrichment program was again popular allowing busy juniors and seniors the opportunity to access the program. The program runs for six Saturdays in the Fall and Spring. Ten (10) high school students participated in the fall S.A.T. Prep class and twenty-three (23) in the spring S.A.T. Prep class.





Fall 2022 SUNY Instructors and Volunteers

Spotlight On Suny Oneonta Enrichment Instructors:



Samantha Harvey, Milford Graduate '20, SUNY Student, CRTC Assistant, CASSC Instructor, Next Stop Oneonta Teacher Resident!

Hello! My name is Samantha Harvey. I am a junior at SUNY Oneonta studying Childhood Education with a

concentration in English. Since being at SUNY Oneonta I have been inducted into Tau Sigma Honors Society, Omicron Delta Kappa National Leadership Honors Society and Tri-Alpha Honors Society. While studying at SUNY Oneonta I became a Teacher's Assistant for Dr. Susan Goodier for the course New York State History in Spring 2023. I am a work-study student for the Catskill Regional Teacher Center (CRTC) that supports teachers in the ONC and DCMO Boces Area. According to Aaron Sorenson, Director of the CTTC, "Samantha is an amazingly dedicated student that has a deep desire to learn in the classroom and beyond." I help create the monthly newsletters, maintain the facility and communicate with teachers in the area. For CRTC I help run two programs called History Day and America 250. This past year I

helped coordinate the 2023 Catskill Regional History Day Competition with local school districts. In the summer of 2022 I had an internship with Dr. Susan Goodier regarding a New York State conference focusing on the positive impacts History Day can have on students who participate and how to build an argument. I have been an Enrichment Instructor for the Babysitting training course through Catskill Area Study School Council in the Fall of 2022 and will return to instruct this course in Fall 2023. I volunteer as an English Tutor through the Multicultural Department at SUNY Oneonta to help students in Columbia learn English. I am an active volunteer at SUNY Oneonta Open Houses. In my free time I babysit for local families surrounding the Oneonta area. I am an active board member with the non-profit group Oneonta World of Learning (OWL) and contribute to the Programming and Education Committee as well as the House and Grounds Committee. I am currently volunteering as a coach for the major league softball team for Milford Youth Athletics. Outside of school I work as a substitute custodian at Milford Central School. Next year I was accepted into the year-long Teacher Residency program, a partnership between SUNY Oneonta and the Oneonta City Schools.

Enrichment Instructors continued



Madison Saunders, Intro To Dance Enrichment Instructor

Hello, my name is Madison Saunders. I am currently a sophomore at SUNY Oneonta studying

Early Childhood and Childhood education, with a concentration in

English. I had the chance to

teach "Intro to Dance" in the fall of 2022. It was a wonderful experience getting to share my love of dance with a group of young students! At my high school in Hopewell Junction, NY, I had the opportunity to take an education class through the local community college. It was a great experience and it emphasized my love of teaching. I have known that I wanted to teach, even as early as elementary school. I have many teachers to thank for that. One day I hope to have that effect on the children I work with. Everyone deserves an equal opportunity and I plan on finding ways to give a voice to all students in the public education system.



Donna Iganacio-Santis, Introduction To Drama And Bien! Instructor

Hello, my name is Donna Ignacio-Santis, and I'm currently studying to become an educator. I am passionate about education and the impact that teachers can have on their students'

lives. I am pursuing a degree in Childhood education at SUNY Oneonta, with a concentration in liberal arts. I graduated from Cristo Rey Brooklyn in Brooklyn, NY.

I'm excited to be working toward my goal of becoming a teacher. I believe that teaching is a calling, and I am committed to providing my future students with the best possible education . I had the opportunity to teach "Intro to Drama" in the fall of 2022 for the Saturday Seminar program. It was a wonderful experience getting to share my love for drama . I also had the opportunity to plan and host the Bilingual Immersion Education Network(BIEN) alongside Kim and sky who are also future educators. I had amazing support from Suzanne who is the coordinator and other dedicated educators. Outside my studies, I enjoy listening to music, spending time with family, friends and my cat, Lucee.



Kim Stevenson, Bien! Instructor

Hello, my name is Kimberly Stevenson. I am going into my fourth year at SUNY Oneonta studying Adolescent Education and Spanish. Fellow students and I spent this semester coordinating the Bilingual Immersion Education

Network (BIEN) Program between the Education and Foreign Language departments. We invited about 60 high school students from nearby school districts to come to the SUNY campus and participate in a day full of activities, like a scavenger hunt, painting, board games, lunch and dessert- but they were only allowed to speak in their studied foreign language, Spanish. They were so engaged and had a wonderful day, and it was so heartwarming to see our hard work mean something to these students. It was a wonderful experience working on this project and I look forward to helping where I can next year.





Bien! Bilingual Immersion Experience Network

The Catskill Area School Study Council (CASSC) hosted BIEN!, a Foreign Language Immersion Program on April 14th at The CRJIE. CASSC hosted 60 local high school



students from Unatego, Franklin, Milford and Laurens. The program and activities were planned, developed and taught by SUNY Oneonta Education students Donna Ignacio-Santis, Kim Stevenson and Sky Torres with the support of Suzanne Swantak-Furman, Educational Psychology and Counselor Education, Dr. Maria Montoya, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures and Pathy Levia, Director Access and Opportunity programs.

The SUNY Oneonta pre-service teachers Donna, Sky and Kim created an immersive experience into Hispanic culture and language while also increasing their own cultural competence and instructional skills. The



high school students were challenged to speak Spanish for the entire day through interaction with SUNY Oneonta students. Activities included a scavenger hunt on campus, lessons about Puerto Rico, Mexico and Colombia and exploration of music and art featuring Bad Bunny. Sky Torres taught the students how to make Tres

Leches! In addition to our teacher candidates, we had an amazing group of Spanish-speaking SUNY Oneonta volunteers from a variety of organizations including CAMP (College Assistance Migrant program), AOP, and the Adios Club who supported the program for the day and led Board Games in Spanish. Programs like BIEN create opportunities to strengthen the relationship between SUNY Oneonta and our larger community.

Upstate Academic Competition

This was the sixteenth year of competition for the Upstate Academic Competition, and the event continues to be popular each year. We were excited to offer the contests in-person this year. As a subset of the Enrichment Program,

it offers teams of high school students the opportunity to participate in an academic competition in a gameshow format, complete with sets, buzzers and electronic displays of points earned. Mr. Brooks Sanders served as the Tournament Host on January 10, 2023 and May 18, 2023.

Eighteen teams from thirteen different school districts competed during the all-day tournament on January 10, 2023. Cooperstown took home the winner's team trophy followed by runner-up Delaware Academy.





Fourteen teams from nine different school districts competed in the second all day tournament on May 18, 2023. Cooperstown took home the winner's trophy followed by runner-up Seton-Catholic.

The enthusiasm and sportsmanship demonstrated by all teams was impressive! Members of both finalist teams received individual medals. We invite new teams to join this exciting program where academic all-stars have the opportunity to shine!

Kites & Kings And Catskill Review





This year marked some exciting changes. We were able to offer our publications in full color with the support of Lawrence D. Heldman Fund of SUNY Oneonta! Jo Mish continues to be our dedicated and talented Editor and we hired Ashley Pink, a SUNY Oneonta Art and Design student, to be the Assistant Layout Editor. Her passion for illustration and design led her to become layout editor for multiple art and literary publications, most notably SUNY Oneonta's largest student run Art and Scope magazine. We want to thank all of our component school district partners for providing

us submissions and continuing to support the Arts and Literature. The high school publication, Catskill Review, has

been provided as a service to member schools on a continuous basis since 1970. Jo Mish became editor of both publications in 1975. This year's publication, the 53rd edition, contained sixty-five (65) pieces selected from 229 entries from sixteen (16) submitting districts. Copies were sent to all students whose work was published, as well as to Superintendents, Principals, Librarians, and Art teachers and teachers who submitted student work from all participating schools.

For elementary students, the 49th edition of Kites & Kings was published. ninety-seven (97) pieces of art, poetry and prose were selected for inclusion in the magazine from 405 entries from fifteen submitting districts. Jo Mish, Editor, continues to have a large variety of submissions to choose from. Copies were sent to all students whose work was chosen for publication, and to district Superintendents, Principals, Art teachers, teachers who submitted student work and Librarians from all participating schools.

Workshop for Education Office Professionals





This program was created in 2005 in response to requests from district Superintendents for training for Educational Office Professional Staff employed at their schools. This year's summer workshop was held in person at SUNY Oneonta.on Wednesday, July 13, 2022. Twenty-Seven (27) individuals from six districts, and ONC BOCES departments, attended.

Our day of learning offered four sessions. Heidi E. Tanner, Director of Wellness & Health Promotion at Hartwick

College led a session on Personal Wellness. The second session, Data Privacy and EdLaw 2-D was led by Brian DeBoyace, Educational Technology Specialist, ONC BOCES. For the third session we offered two learning cafe's on the following: "Best Practices in Minute-Taking" led by Alyssa Oliveri, ONC BOCES and "Best Practices with File Organization and Sharing" led by Brian DeBoyace. Our day ended with a networking session for office professionals to share best practices and apply new knowledge with people who share their same job.

Office Professional Learning Webinar Series:

In addition to our in-person workshops, we continue to offer a variety of online learning opportunities in partnership with Jeff Olefson of Staff Development Associates through our Educational Office Professional Webinar Series. We included three webinar series including our "Lunch and Learn" series, Excel Basics and Excel Intermediate/Advanced series. We had twenty-two office professionals from nine (9) districts participate

School Boards Institute

CASSC offers a variety of workshops and programs to support the training and professional development of local School Board of Education members and School Leaders. A total of eighty-eight (88) individuals from twenty-four (24) school districts took advantage of the programs this year. We offered three in-person programs this year.

CASSC continues to offer the NYS required Governance and Finance training locally for existing and new Board of Education members. This was the fifth year in a row that we offered the training regionally in our established partnership with NYSSBA. The training was held in-person at SUNY Oneonta on September 29th and 30th. . Sixteen (16) individuals from eight (8) school districts attended this event. The members who attended appreciated the opportunity to learn about the roles and responsibilities of BOE members and network with other local Board members.

On November 3, 2022, CASSC offered an evening in-person workshop on Legal Updates and Hot Topics which focused on asking: What do Board members need to know about legal issues related to schools? and; 2) What laws pertain to students with disabilities. Gilbertsville-Mt. Upton

continued

School Boards Institute continued

Superintendent, Annette Hammond, and ONC BOCES District Superintendent, Dr. Catherine Huber, facilitated a conversation with attorney representatives based on participant questions. Attorneys who participated were:Wendy K. DeWind, Esq. Ferraro Fiorenza, P.C.Ryan P. Mullahy, Esq. Girvin & Ferlazzo, P.C. Forty-Seven (47) registered participants from twelve (16) school districts participated in this event.



In response to member requests, CASSC hosted a workshop on SuperEval Training on January 24, 2023 at SUNY Oneonta. The workshop, led by Bob Hartz, VP of Strategic Partnerships of SuperEval, highlighted best practices in evaluations and how SuperEval operationalizes those best practices in an easy-to-use, digital platform. Twenty-five (25) registered participants from seven (7) school districts participated in this event.

Non-Instructional Leadership Development

As a new coser this year, CASSC offered a professional learning program to assist non-instructional school leaders strengthening their leadership skills. A three part online learning series facilitated by Jeff Olefson of Staff Development Associates was offered for Directors of Transportation, Food Service managers, Head of Facilities, HR Office managers, head custodians, and anyone else who supervises non-teaching staff in a school district. We had twentyfive (25) participants from (8) schools attend. Our local group joined leaders from around New York State during these online learning sessions. The sessions included addressing underperforming staff, helping employees embrace the mission of the school/ department and how to create a customerfocused department.

School Bus Driver Safety Refresher Course

The 44th Annual School Bus Driver Safety Refresher Course was held on September 12th. Sixty-Eight (68) drivers, attendants, monitors and transportation supervisors from five school districts were registered to participate. The New York State mandated topic, "Looking in the Wrong Place" and "Center of Attention", was presented by Kenneth Starr, Transportation Supervisor at Vestal Central School.

A Mid-Year Safety Refresher Course was held on January 30, 2023, at SUNY Oneonta. One-hundred-twenty four (124) drivers, monitors and school bus attendants from nine (9) school districts attended the training. Brian Trask, Transportation Supervisor at Unatego Central School presented on "PJ's Law. Working with Students with Disabilities: Focus on students with Sensory Disabilities" and New York State Police, Trooper Shannon L. Hartz School and Community Outreach Coordinator, Troop C presented on "Students in Crisis: Deescalation techniques and the Active Shooter Scenario on the bus".

CASSC again offered districts the opportunity to host the Bus Driver Safety refresher in-district in the fall and spring. Two (2) districts participated with thirty-four (34) drivers, monitors and school bus attendants in the fall and One (1) district with sixteen (16) drivers, monitors and school bus attendants in the spring.

School Bus Driver 30-Hour Course

The Catskill Area School Study Council delivered two 30-Hour Courses for School Bus Drivers. The first was held in October at NCOC in Grand Gorge and instructed by Ken Starr. Five (5) bus drivers attended the training. The second course was offered in March. Brian Trask instructed six (6) bus drivers at OAOC in Milford. CASSC will continue to offer the 30 hour training at both Occupational Centers each year.

School Bus Monitor 10-Hour Course

The School Bus Monitor 10-Hour Course was held twice this year. This course is required by New York State for bus monitors. The Fall course was held at OAOC on Friday, November 4th and Saturday, November 5th at OAOC in Milford. Two (2) districts with a total of eleven (11) monitors attended this training. Brian Trask instructed this course. The Spring course was held on Friday, April 21st and Saturday, April 22nd at OAOC in Milford. Brian Trask instructed this course. Seven (7) districts with a total of fourteen (14) monitors attended this training.



Advanced Bus Driver 10 hour Course

CASSC was excited to again offer the Advanced Bus Driver 10 Hour Course approved through the NYS Education Department in December. Brian Trask, Transportation Director at Unatego and CASSC bus driver program coordinator taught the course. Seventeen (17) drivers from three (3) districts and Opportunities for Otsego participated. This advanced course offers an opportunity for veteran drivers to recharge their batteries while sharing experiences with other drivers. Topics covered included current laws and regulations, self-assessment and revisiting the basic operations that will help ensure safe student transportation. CASSC and the bus drivers appreciate NYSIR's ongoing sponsorship of breakfast and lunch for the group!







Celebrating over seventy years of success!

A partnership between SUNY Oneonta and area school districts since 1951; serving schools in the Otsego-Northern-Catskills BOCES and the Delaware-Chenango-Madison-Otsego BOCES.

Contact Information

Catskill Area School Study Council SUNY Oneonta 243 Fitzelle Hall, SUNY Oneonta, Oneonta, NY 13820-4015

Phone: (607) 436-2533 • Fax: (607) 436-2015

Website: www.oncboces.org/CASSC • Facebook: Catskill Area School Study Council

