



B R I G H T E R   T O G E T H E R

# DISTRICT DISPATCH

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AUGUST 2025



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

Dear North Syracuse Community,

Welcome to the 2025–2026 school year! As we begin this exciting new chapter, I am thrilled to extend a heartfelt welcome to our returning families and to those joining us for the first time. We are honored to be part of your child's educational journey and look forward to a year filled with learning, growth and shared success.

At the North Syracuse Central School District, our mission remains unwavering: “We educate all students to the highest levels of academic achievement and prepare them to be productive, responsible, ethical, creative and compassionate members of society.” Every decision we make and every initiative we launch is guided by this mission. Our dedicated teachers, staff and administrators are committed to providing a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where each student is encouraged to thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

Improving the literacy outcomes of our students remains a top priority. This school year we have restructured our organization to provide more literacy support. One of the main supports now in place includes our new Director of ELA and Elementary Education, Dr. Amanda Viel. Dr. Viel brings a strong background in curriculum leadership and instructional support, currently serving as the Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Support Services at OCM BOCES. In addition, Dr. Viel is a proud North Syracuse parent, already deeply connected to our community. We are confident that Dr. Viel's expertise and leadership will be instrumental in advancing our district's literacy goals and supporting teaching and learning across our elementary schools.

We are also making significant progress on the North Syracuse Central School District Utilization Study, a vital initiative designed to assess how we use our facilities and resources to support long-term student success. The committee is composed of parents, staff, students and community members who are partnered with nationally recognized educational consultants. The central question we aim to answer is: “How can the North Syracuse Central School District

## A FRESH LOOK FOR A UNITED FUTURE: WE'RE ALL NORTHSTARS

This school year marks a historic first for the North Syracuse Central School District. For the first time in our history the Board of Education has formally approved a district brand and logo, a visual identity symbolizing the unity, pride and shared purpose connecting our entire school community.

The updated design is more than a fresh look. It reflects the outcome of a thoughtful years-long branding initiative, which began after a communications audit revealed inconsistencies in how the district was represented. Different unofficial logos and name variations were creating confusion and diluting NSCSD identity. A 2023 survey confirmed that while “CNS” was widely recognized, many used it to refer to the entire district, highlighting the need for a unified districtwide brand.

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## DISTRICT INFORMATION

### Board of Education

**Michael A. Mirizio**, President  
**Paul Farfaglia**, Vice President  
**Robert Crabtree**  
**Matthew Hermann**  
**Beth Kramer**  
**Joshua Ludden**  
**Xavier Moody-Wusik**  
**Amanda Sugrue**  
**Mark Thorne**  
**Brigid Gill**, Student Ex-Officio  
**Jilian Herrera**, District Clerk

### Administration

Superintendent of Schools,  
**Dr. Terry L. Ward**

Deputy Superintendent  
**Dr. Christopher R. Leahey**

Associate Superintendent  
 for Business Services,  
**Donald F.X. Keegan**

Assistant Superintendent  
 for Human Resources,  
**Dr. Michael G. Baroody**

### Board of Education Meetings

Sept. 8 & 22, 2025	Feb. 9 & 23, 2026
Oct. 6 & 20, 2025	Mar. 9 & 23, 2026
Nov. 3 & 17, 2025	Apr. 6 & 20, 2026
Dec. 1 & 15, 2025	May 4 & 12, 2026
Jan. 12 & 26, 2026	June 1 & 22, 2026

### Newsletter Information

The District Dispatch is published by the NSCSD to inform residents about issues, events and achievements. Suggestions are welcome and should be directed to:

**Laurie Cook**, School Information Officer  
**Phone:** 315-218-2190  
**Email:** [lcCook@nscsd.org](mailto:lcCook@nscsd.org)

## SEEKING COMMUNITY VOICES

**Share your thoughts. Strengthen our schools.**

The North Syracuse Central School District is excited to announce a new chapter in our story — one marked by unity, clarity and connection. With the recent launch of our new district logo, we are reaffirming our commitment to unifying the district and strengthening the relationships that connect our students, families, staff and community members.

As part of this effort, we invite you to participate in our CommUNITY Voices ThoughtExchange — an interactive conversation designed to help us improve how we communicate across the district.

Your honest feedback will guide us in identifying what's working and what needs improvement. Whether you're a student, parent, teacher, staff member or community partner, your voice matters. Together, we can make our communication more timely, clear, responsive, and accessible for all.



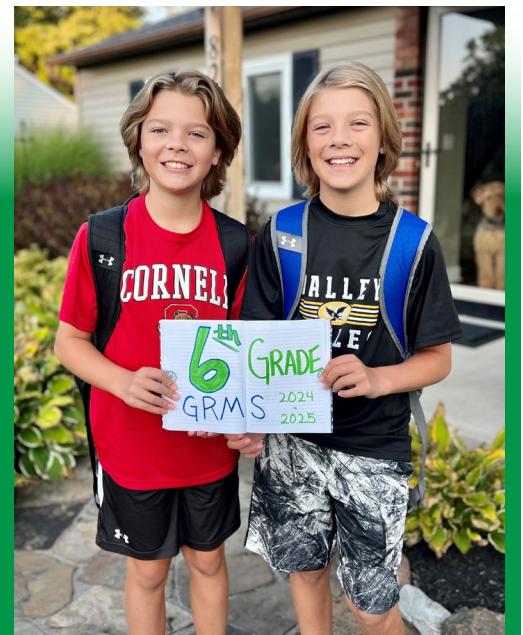
Let's build something better and even brighter — by working together.

**Join the conversation now:**

<https://tejoin.com/scroll/187412940>

(Coming soon to [www.nscsd.org/UNITY](http://www.nscsd.org/UNITY))

Thank you for being part of our NSCSD community and helping us move forward as one.





## WHAT'S NEW IN THE NSCSD BRAND?



### FIRST BOARD-APPROVED DISTRICT LOGO

Historic milestone as the first time the Board has officially approved a district brand



### BUILT ON STRENGTH

Expanded the well-recognized CNS Northstars identity across the district



### CONSISTENT AND PROFESSIONAL

New Brand Guide sets clear standards for logo usage, colors, fonts and tone



### COMMUNITY DRIVEN PROCESS

Guided by a logo committee with input from students, staff and community members



### EXPERT PARTNERSHIP

Developed with nationally recognized branding experts for a modern and unified look



### PHASED ROLLOUT

Updated materials will be introduced gradually to minimize waste and cost



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## A FRESH LOOK FOR A UNITED FUTURE: WE'RE ALL NORTHSTARS

Rather than starting from scratch we built on the strength of the CNS Northstars identity which is already highly visible and well regarded in our community and expanded it across the district. A logo committee guided the process and we partnered with nationally recognized branding experts to ensure the final design honors our history while positioning us for the future.

A key part of this effort was creating a district brand guide which defines logo usage, colors, fonts and tone. With 11 schools and many departments this consistency will help us present a coordinated professional image in every communication from websites and signage to letterhead and athletic uniforms.

The theme UNITY is woven into every aspect of the redesign. It reminds us that from the first day of kindergarten to high school graduation, from classrooms to athletic fields, we are stronger together. As we begin the 2025–26 school year you will see the new logo and branding rolled out in a thoughtful phased approach to minimize waste, with updated materials appearing as existing supplies are replaced.



**We're All Northstars.**  
**Together we shine brighter.**



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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR SUPERINTENDENT

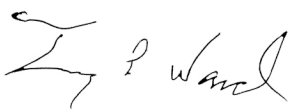
strategically restructure its staffing, facilities and grade-level configurations to optimize educational outcomes and emotional well-being for all students, while addressing declining enrollment, reduced state aid and future growth opportunities such as the Micron project?" We anticipate that the committee will present its recommendations to the Board of Education this December.

Student safety continues to be our top priority. This year, we are proud to announce a new collaboration with Verra Mobility, Onondaga County and several Central New York school districts. Through this partnership, stop-arm cameras have been installed on our buses and are ready for use at the start of the school year. These cameras will help significantly reduce the dangerous and illegal passing of school buses, ensuring greater protection for our students as they travel to and from school.

We believe open and ongoing communication between families and schools is essential. If you have questions, concerns, or suggestions, we encourage you to reach out to your child's teacher, school principal or the district office. Together, we can create a strong, supportive network that benefits every student.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education. We deeply value your partnership and are committed to providing each student with the tools and opportunities they need to succeed. Let's make this school year a remarkable one filled with achievement, discovery and community spirit. Welcome to the new school year, and thank you for being a vital part of the North Syracuse family.

Yours Truly,



**Dr. Terry L. Ward**

Superintendent of Schools

North Syracuse Central School District

## FULL STEAM AHEAD!

### NEW COLLABORATION DESIGNED TO INSPIRE CREATIVITY, CURIOSITY AND CAREER SUCCESS

The North Syracuse Central School District is amping up its commitment to science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) and the journey is just beginning.

Earlier this summer, Nick Scholz, formerly the district's Director of Mathematics, stepped into the newly created role of Director of STEM. Superintendent Ward created the new Director of STEM position to strengthen academics and expand opportunities for students.

"STEM education is essential to preparing our students for the future," Dr. Ward said. "By building these skills now, we're giving them the tools they need to succeed in college, careers and life."

Scholz has already begun building strong connections with Jason Clark, Director of Technology; Daryle Redmond, Director of Fine Arts; and Jamie

Sullivan, Director of Secondary Education. Together, they have formed the district's first STEAM Team with other educators in the district. The group is committed to breaking down silos and designing learning experiences that merge logic and creativity. As progress is made, input and ideas will be sought from students, parents and community members.

***"The energy and ideas from our first meeting shows just how much we can achieve together."***  
**Nick Scholz**

The team's inaugural meeting on July 31 set the tone for what's to come. Participants were encouraged to "think big" and imagine without limits, considering how NSCSD could become a regional leader in STEAM education while preparing students for high-demand careers in fields like technology, engineering and the arts.

While Scholz is taking time to listen and explore ideas before committing to specific initiatives, he is energized by the passion and creativity already emerging. "The possibilities are endless when we work together, and our students will be the ones who benefit most," he said.

With collaboration at the heart of the work and a shared belief in the power of innovation, the STEAM Team is poised to create meaningful, future-focused opportunities for students. The excitement is palpable, and in North Syracuse, the best ideas are yet to come.

# NEW SCHOOL BUS STOP-ARM CAMERAS FURTHER PRIORITIZE STUDENT SAFETY

To reinforce our ongoing commitment to overall student safety, the North Syracuse Central School District is joining several other districts throughout NYS in utilizing school bus stop-arm cameras starting this fall. Approved and supported by county law-makers and law enforcement, this pilot program is aimed at deterring drivers from illegally passing stopped school buses.

## How The Program Works:

Cameras activate when the bus stop-arm extends and red lights flash. When a vehicle passes a stopped school bus with the stop arm extended, the camera captures images and videos. Potential violations are reviewed by law enforcement and, if verified, a ticket is issued to the vehicle owner by mail.

## No cost to NSCSD

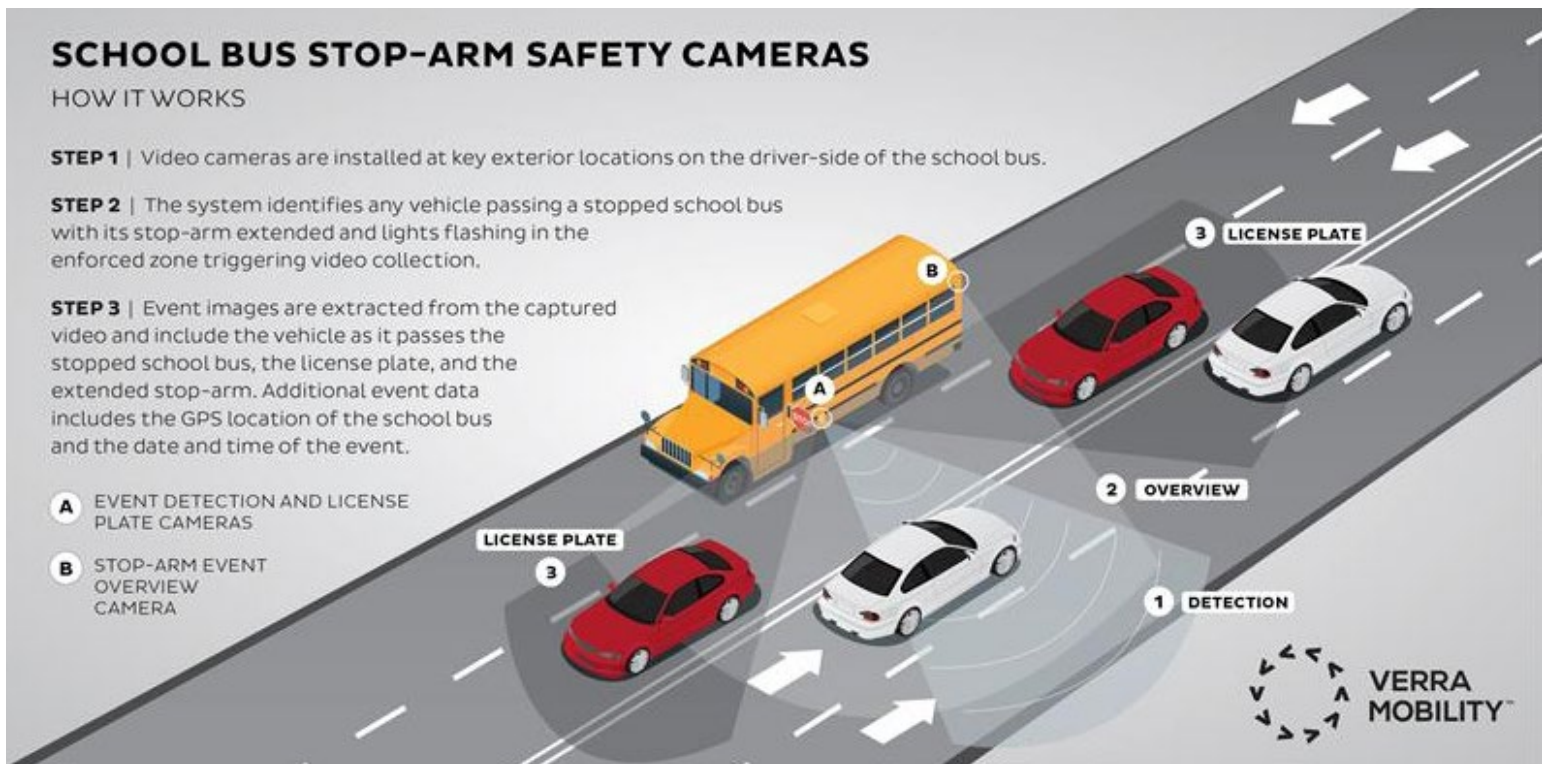
Cameras are managed by Verra Mobility in partnership with Onondaga County with no up-front costs to school districts or the county.

## Fines for violations:

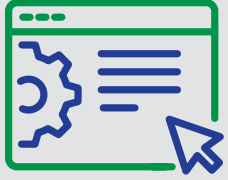
**1<sup>st</sup> offense:** \$250

**2<sup>nd</sup> offense (within 18 months):** \$275

**3<sup>rd</sup> offense (within 18 months):** \$300







## TECH BYTES: OUR JOURNEY CONTINUES

- 195 new ViewSonic interactive boards have been purchased with funds from our Smart Schools Bond Act grant and will be installed throughout the 2025-2026 school year, offering innovative immersion of technology for our classrooms
- Continued partnership with Talas and Cisco to further strengthen our building safety and cyber-security
- Increased cyber-security awareness training

- Implementation of MFI (multi-factor authentication) with Duo was completed last school year, adding another layer of security to our network
- Expanded use of ParentSquare communication
- Increased STEAM learning opportunities at all grade levels, including creation of our STEAM team, purchase of STEAM robotic platforms with grant funds from Miron for use in our multi-media centers, our first full year of Lego League teams at both middle schools, benefits from the Advanced Technology Framework pilot program and our continued partnership with OCC to offer our high school students free electromechanical pathway college courses.

## PARENTSQUARE - STAY CONNECTED TO THE NSCSD!

The NSCSD uses ParentSquare for essential communications with families. Many important, student-specific messages are sent through the system. Parents should be able to see all their children in one account and receive important notifications.

### PARENTS

- **Automatic Accounts:** Accounts are created based on email or cell phone information in SchoolTool, NSCSD's student data system. Updates in SchoolTool take 24 hours to sync with ParentSquare.
- **Register:** Visit [parentsquare.com/signin](https://parentsquare.com/signin) and use the email or phone number listed in SchoolTool. For convenience, download the ParentSquare app for iOS or Android.
- **Check Your Info:** Click on your name > My Account in ParentSquare to verify your contact details. If changes are needed, please contact your child's school office to update SchoolTool.

### Community members can join ParentSquare

Did you know that grandparents and community members can sign up for emergency alerts on ParentSquare?



### COMMUNITY MEMBERS

- **Receive Updates:** Join community groups to get district news about emergency closings, registration, budget votes, school/district events and more.
- **Sign Up:** Go to [www.nscsd.org/alerts](https://www.nscsd.org/alerts) or scan the QR code below. Parents/guardians and staff are already registered and do not need to join.
- **Options:** Customize your notification settings, preferred language, and communication method (email, text, or app). Individuals who enroll will be able to: Receive district communication via email, text or app notification.
- **Manage notification settings.**
- **Communicate in their preferred language.**

## FOSTERING LITERACY AND LEARNING: DR. AMANDA MCKENNA VIEL JOINS NSCSD LEADERSHIP TEAM

The North Syracuse Central School District is proud to welcome Dr. Amanda McKenna Viel as our new Director of ELA and Elementary Education. Dr. Viel brings nearly two decades of experience as an educator and leader, most recently serving as the Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Support Services at OCM BOCES. In that role, she supervised a team of instructional coordinators and spearheaded regional professional development initiatives in areas including literacy, STEM learning, equity and social-emotional support.

Her career includes leadership positions as Director of Curriculum and Instruction at Cortland Enlarged City School District, Principal of Millard Hawk Elementary, and Principal of Donlin Drive Elementary, as well as experience in instructional technology leadership and classroom teaching. Dr. Viel holds a Doctorate in Educational Research, Theory and Practice from Binghamton University, along with advanced certifications in educational leadership and literacy education.

In addition to her professional expertise, Dr. Viel is a proud North Syracuse parent, already deeply connected to our community. She is eager to work collaboratively with staff, families and students to strengthen literacy outcomes and instructional excellence across the district's elementary schools.

Dr. Viel shared, "I'm thrilled to join the North Syracuse Central School District in this role. I've had opportunities to work with many staff here already and I've seen first-hand the talent and dedication. As both an educator and a parent in the district, I'm looking forward to contributing to the community I call home and working alongside our outstanding principals, teachers and staff."

Superintendent Dr. Terry Ward added, "Improving the literacy outcomes of our students remains a top priority. Dr. Viel's deep expertise in curriculum leadership and literacy instruction will be instrumental in advancing our ELA initiatives and supporting high-quality teaching and learning."

Looking ahead, Dr. Viel emphasizes that while strong literacy skills are essential, it's equally important for students to discover the joy in reading and writing. "When students connect with literacy in ways that excite them, they not only build skills but also a lifelong love of learning," she said.

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Viel to her new role as we continue to build a strong future for all North Syracuse students.



New role, same community pride! Dr. Viel and her daughter celebrated her first day as NSCSD's Director of ELA and Elementary Education with matching Northstars t-shirts and ice cream at William's.





North Syracuse  
Central School District  
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North Syracuse, NY 13212

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# **CNS HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM GRAND REOPENING CEREMONY & RIBBON CUTTING**

**Guided Tours**

**"Behind the Scenes" Look**

**Refreshments will be provided**

**Be on the lookout for more details in September!**



**WWW.NSCSD.ORG**



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