

HERKIMER BOCES

2023 ANNUAL MEETING REPORT



Herkimer BOCES Annual Meeting – March 30, 2023



2023 Annual Meeting Report

The Annual Meeting Report serves as the program for the 2023 Annual Meeting and provides news, budget information and feature stories.

On the cover: Herkimer BOCES Building Construction student Janarius Howard, from Central Valley, works on a project in class.

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Agenda for the Annual Meeting

The 2023 Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES Annual Meeting will take place starting at 6 p.m. on Thursday, March 30.

I. Welcome

II. Call to Order

- ▶ Pledge of Allegiance
- ▶ Approval of 2022 Minutes
Joseph Ciccone,
Frankfort-Schuyler CSD
Board President

III. 2023 Community Partnership Award – FoltsBrook Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation

IV. Your Kids, Your BOCES Presentation

- ▶ Sandra Sherwood,
Herkimer BOCES
District Superintendent

V. Introduction of BOCES Board Candidates

- ▶ Respective component superintendents
- ▶ BOCES board candidates will address the audience

VI. Adjournment

- ▶ Joseph Ciccone

Minutes from the 2022 Annual Meeting

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2022 Annual Meeting on April 7, 2022, had limited in-person attendees but was available to all component board members via livestream.

Prior to the official start of the Annual Meeting, a video of student artwork from Poland Central School District was shown.

Herkimer BOCES Board of Education President Thomas Shypski welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Robert Batson, Annual Meeting chairman and Poland CSD Board of Education President, called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and requested everyone rise to recite "The Pledge of Allegiance."

The 2021 Annual Meeting minutes were reviewed. Board member James Schmid moved and board member Janine Lynch seconded a motion to approve the 2021 Annual Meeting minutes. All members present voted in favor.

The 2022 Community Partnership Award was presented to Steven Bulger and the ICAN team.

Herkimer BOCES Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services Jim Picolla presented information on the proposed capital project and intermunicipal agreement.

Herkimer BOCES District Superintendent Sandra Sherwood introduced component superintendents that had candidates for the open BOCES board seats. Four candidates were nominated for four BOCES Board of Education seats, which were for three-year terms from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2025. The candidates seeking a position on the BOCES Board of Education were introduced: Janine Lynch – West Canada Valley CSD, Travis Costin – Central Valley CSD, Holly Pullis – Owen D. Young CSD and Samuel Luce – Herkimer CSD.

Shypski reminded everyone of the BOCES budget vote and election of BOCES board members scheduled for April 20, 2022. He congratulated the ICAN team for being named as the Herkimer BOCES 2022 Community Partnership Award winner and thanked the Poland teachers and students who contributed to the art show.

With no further business, Batson called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Schmid moved and board member Jane North seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:33 p.m. All members present voted in favor.

-Shawn Maxson, Clerk of the Board

A letter to our component school board members and superintendents

March 2023

Dear component board members and superintendents,

We are excited to welcome you back to an in-person Annual Meeting at Herkimer BOCES! We are meeting at the WEB Complex on Gros Boulevard, and this will probably be the last Annual Meeting at this location because our new conference center on East German Street will be opening up in May. The new space will free up many classroom spaces at both the WEB and Remington so that more students can be served within our specialized programs.

We are grateful to all of our boards of education and superintendents for supporting our BOCES on two very big initiatives this year. First were the successful negotiations for an intermunicipal agreement that will allow us to do much needed maintenance and renovations of our two main facilities. This was approved in September, and upon the completion of the building condition survey in February, the design work is underway so that the project can be sent to the New York State Education Department for approval in the coming months. The second big initiative is a bit bittersweet, as it was the completion of the NYSED survey that is required whenever a district superintendent resigns or retires. We appreciate the feedback that all 10 school districts, plus the five contiguous BOCES, provided to NYSED so that we were able to begin the search for our new leader in February. We will keep you updated as the process moves forward.

For our Annual Meeting, Mr. Joseph Ciccone, president of the Frankfort-Schuyler Central School District Board of Education, will be the chairperson. With Frankfort-Schuyler as our host district, their students will provide some entertainment before the meal. After the official business meeting, we will present the Community Partnership Award and then a brief presentation by District Superintendent Sandy Sherwood.

In this publication, you will see that our student focus is a student who is completing his second year in our READiTEC program, which opened in 2021-2022. As you will read, this program has motivated and inspired this student. The READiTEC program was the request of our districts and our Committee on Special Education chair people, as they felt the need for a 9th and 10th grade program to keep some students in school through graduation and get them into a career field...this student exemplifies that purpose!

Our Community Partnership Award recipient this year is the FoltsBrook Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation. FoltsBrook plays a critical role in supporting the clinical requirements for both our Health Science Careers students and our Adult Practical Nursing Program students. FoltsBrook was our only clinical placement location during much of the pandemic, as they found ways to navigate the many regulations around congregate care facilities. They did this all while also covering the additional costs so our students or programs did not bear the burden of the testing and personal protective equipment.

Thank you all for your continued support of our programs and students. Please don't hesitate to reach out to myself or any of the BOCES board members with your ideas and suggestions. Thank you for coming together to celebrate the many accomplishments of this region!

Sincerely,
Holly Sue Pullis
President,
Board of Education
Herkimer-Fulton-
Hamilton-Otsego
BOCES



Administrative and capital budget primers

Administrative Budget Primer

BOCES operates with the collective support of its component school districts; the districts must pay an administrative assessment to cover the administrative portion of the total costs of operating BOCES.

A district's responsibility or level of ownership of the administrative budget is determined by its student population.

The number used is resident weighted average daily attendance [RWADA].

Each district's proportion of the total RWADA for all districts is the district's portion of the administrative budget responsibility.

The BOCES administrative Budget is submitted to each component Board of Education for annual approval in April.

If approved by the boards of education, the administrative budget is reviewed by the New York State Education Department for its compliance with law and regulation.

Upon approval, the administrative budget is static. This means that, unlike program budgets maintained by BOCES, the administrative budget does not fluctuate because of district requests.

The categories that make up the administrative budget are prescribed by law and, therefore, are consistent BOCES-to-

BOCES throughout New York state.

Capital Budget Primer

An estimate of the rentals, capital expenditures and debt service of the BOCES is presented along with the BOCES administrative budget.

State legislation, which gave component boards the right to vote on the administrative budget in 1994, purposely exempted the capital budget from a vote.

Were the capital budget fixed, BOCES would be unable to respond to mid-year district requests requiring additional classroom rentals, such as special education classes.

New York State Commissioner of Education letter for BOCES annual meetings

March 2023

Dear members of the Cooperative Boards of New York state:

After visiting countless schools and having extensive conversations with educators and stakeholders across New York, funding equity, high school opportunity, data modernization, teacher/leader preparation and development and consolidation of early childhood programs emerged as the key themes and are the focus of the Board of Regents and New York State Education Department's (NYSED) legislative and state aid priorities. Centered around lifelong learning, equity, excellence, access, service and stewardship, these priorities are part of our shared goal to close the opportunity gap for all students. BOCES have, and continue to be, at the forefront and serve as exemplary models for how we can create regional schools and programs to increase advanced course access, connect K-12 to higher education through programs like dual-enrollment, bring workforce development opportunities to the forefront through career and technical education opportunities, and think boldly to reimagine high school graduation measures to meet the educational challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

Every student graduating from a high school in New York has a right to be fully prepared for meaningful career, college and civic opportunities to compete in the global economy. To honor this promise for our over 2 million students, the Graduation Measures initiative is thoughtfully reviewing state high school graduation measures. The ultimate goal is to ensure that a New York

state diploma signifies educational excellence and equity for all. Again, BOCES are at the heart of this work through participation and representation on the Graduation Measures Blue Ribbon Commission and by responding to ThoughtExchange questions that guide this innovative work.

This is an exciting time for education in our state, but we must not lose sight of our guiding pillars, which I shared with you in my letter to you last year. The P-20 continuum and a service-oriented approach can be seen in the DNA of all we do. However, it is the foundational pillar of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) that I close this letter with. NYSED is working closely with BOCES to develop a DEI Repository to collect and share effective practices and resources for educators to use. NYSED created a new DEI Office whose director is working closely with BOCES, districts and schools to provide technical assistance and guidance around DEI as we continue to create safe learning environments where every student can feel welcomed, supported and thrive.

We wish you the best in this academic year and beyond. Honoring the spirit of the West-African proverb of Sankofa, now is a time for all New Yorkers to look back at our history so we can move forward together creating a brighter future for all children.

Sincerely,
Betty A. Rosa,
New York State Commissioner of Education

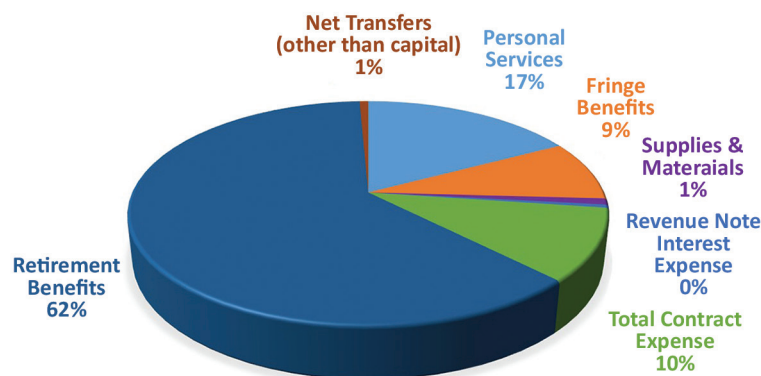
2023-24 Proposed Budget Summaries

Summary of Proposed Administrative Budget

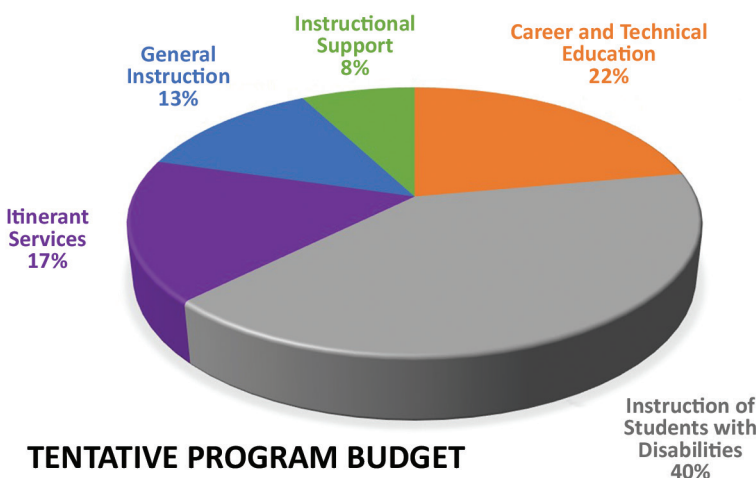
Personnel Services*	\$686,677
Fringe Benefits**	\$344,436
Equipment	\$0
Supplies and Materials	\$35,300
Revenue Note Interest Expense	\$18,000
Total Contract Expense	\$413,552
Retirement Health Insurance Benefits	\$2,460,000
Net Transfers (other than capital)	\$27,500
Total Administrative Budget	\$3,985,465

*Salaries of central administrative and supervisory personnel.

**Benefits of central administrative and supervisory personnel.



PROPOSED ADMINISTRATIVE BUDGET



TENTATIVE PROGRAM BUDGET

Summary of Tentative Capital Budget

Rental of Facilities	\$547,000
Transfer to Capital Project Fund	\$13,250,000
Total Capital Budget	\$13,797,000

Summary of Tentative Program Budget

Career and Technical Education	\$5,182,520
Instruction of Students with Disabilities	\$9,487,943
Itinerant Services	\$3,995,982
General Instruction	\$2,993,424
Instructional Support	\$1,800,147
Total Program Budget	\$23,460,016

Compensation of District Superintendent of Schools

State Salary	\$43,499
BOCES Salary	\$148,974
Annualized Benefits	\$23,757
Total Compensation	\$216,230

Voting Information

Members of all component boards of education will vote on the 2023-2024 Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES administrative budget on Wednesday, April 19.

Voting will take place in each district. After board members cast individual votes, each school board will file a single majority vote.

Component boards will also vote on four BOCES Board of Education seats. Three seats are for three-year terms; one seat is for a one-year term (Frankfort-Schuyler). The following districts have open seats: Dolgeville, Frankfort-Schuyler, Mount Markham and Poland.



Herkimer BOCES Welding and Metal Fabrication student Robert Teel, from Owen D. Young, works on a project.

A look at component school enrollments for the last 10 years

Central Valley:

- ▶ **2013-14:** 2,238
- ▶ **2014-15:** 2,224
- ▶ **2015-16:** 2,229
- ▶ **2016-17:** 2,216
- ▶ **2017-18:** 2,191
- ▶ **2018-19:** 2,121
- ▶ **2019-20:** 2,114
- ▶ **2020-21:** 2,130
- ▶ **2021-22:** 2,088
- ▶ **2022-23:** 2,076

Dolgeville:

- ▶ **2013-14:** 924
- ▶ **2014-15:** 877
- ▶ **2015-16:** 893
- ▶ **2016-17:** 851
- ▶ **2017-18:** 874
- ▶ **2018-19:** 804
- ▶ **2019-20:** 815
- ▶ **2020-21:** 798
- ▶ **2021-22:** 787
- ▶ **2022-23:** 778

Frankfort-Schuyler:

- ▶ **2013-14:** 1,027
- ▶ **2014-15:** 987
- ▶ **2015-16:** 955
- ▶ **2016-17:** 942
- ▶ **2017-18:** 949
- ▶ **2018-19:** 927
- ▶ **2019-20:** 942
- ▶ **2020-21:** 883
- ▶ **2021-22:** 841
- ▶ **2022-23:** 839

Herkimer:

- ▶ **2013-14:** 1,155
- ▶ **2014-15:** 1,132
- ▶ **2015-16:** 1,141
- ▶ **2016-17:** 1,101
- ▶ **2017-18:** 1,052
- ▶ **2018-19:** 1,066
- ▶ **2019-20:** 1,044
- ▶ **2020-21:** 1,008
- ▶ **2021-22:** 1,072
- ▶ **2022-23:** 1,056

Little Falls:

- ▶ **2013-14:** 1,110
- ▶ **2014-15:** 1,085
- ▶ **2015-16:** 1,075
- ▶ **2016-17:** 1,104
- ▶ **2017-18:** 1,112
- ▶ **2018-19:** 1,096
- ▶ **2019-20:** 1,076
- ▶ **2020-21:** 1,065
- ▶ **2021-22:** 1,091
- ▶ **2022-23:** 1,075

Mount Markham:

- ▶ **2013-14:** 1,080
- ▶ **2014-15:** 1,060
- ▶ **2015-16:** 1,055
- ▶ **2016-17:** 1,049
- ▶ **2017-18:** 1,038
- ▶ **2018-19:** 1,058
- ▶ **2019-20:** 1,044
- ▶ **2020-21:** 987
- ▶ **2021-22:** 1,015
- ▶ **2022-23:** 1,021

Owen D. Young:

- ▶ **2013-14:** 193
- ▶ **2014-15:** 201
- ▶ **2015-16:** 191
- ▶ **2016-17:** 191
- ▶ **2017-18:** 193
- ▶ **2018-19:** 194
- ▶ **2019-20:** 184
- ▶ **2020-21:** 173
- ▶ **2021-22:** 181
- ▶ **2022-23:** 180

Poland:

- ▶ **2013-14:** 583
- ▶ **2014-15:** 585
- ▶ **2015-16:** 549
- ▶ **2016-17:** 572
- ▶ **2017-18:** 551
- ▶ **2018-19:** 551
- ▶ **2019-20:** 536
- ▶ **2020-21:** 517
- ▶ **2021-22:** 513
- ▶ **2022-23:** 512

Richfield Springs:

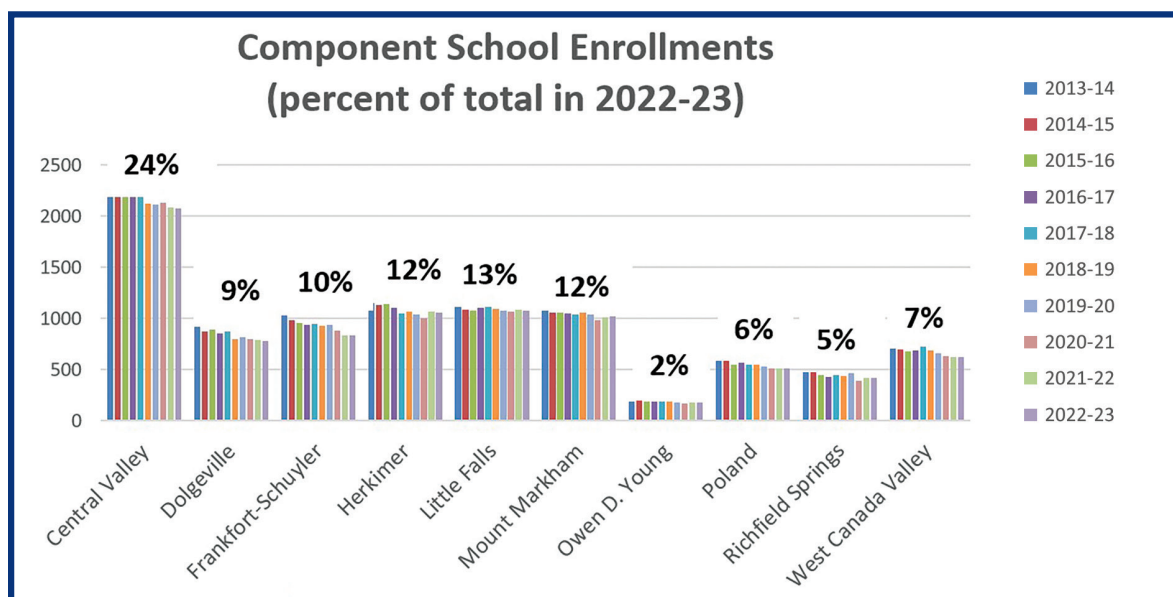
- ▶ **2013-14:** 477
- ▶ **2014-15:** 478
- ▶ **2015-16:** 448
- ▶ **2016-17:** 431
- ▶ **2017-18:** 449
- ▶ **2018-19:** 441
- ▶ **2019-20:** 467
- ▶ **2020-21:** 390
- ▶ **2021-22:** 417
- ▶ **2022-23:** 424

West Canada Valley:

- ▶ **2013-14:** 710
- ▶ **2014-15:** 700
- ▶ **2015-16:** 683
- ▶ **2016-17:** 689
- ▶ **2017-18:** 727
- ▶ **2018-19:** 686
- ▶ **2019-20:** 660
- ▶ **2020-21:** 634
- ▶ **2021-22:** 620
- ▶ **2022-23:** 625

Total:

- ▶ **2013-14:** 9,497
- ▶ **2014-15:** 9,329
- ▶ **2015-16:** 9,219
- ▶ **2016-17:** 9,146
- ▶ **2017-18:** 9,136
- ▶ **2018-19:** 8,944
- ▶ **2019-20:** 8,882
- ▶ **2020-21:** 8,585
- ▶ **2021-22:** 8,625
- ▶ **2022-23:** 8,586



Percentage of CTE participation out of component district enrollment for grades 11-12

Regional grades 11-12 enrollment:

- 2015-16:** 1,386
- 2016-17:** 1,380
- 2017-18:** 1,359
- 2018-19:** 1,333

- 2019-20:** 1,352
- 2020-21:** 1,398
- 2021-22:** 1,319
- 2022-23:** 1,272

CTE enrollment:

- 2015-16:** 490
- 2016-17:** 478
- 2017-18:** 421
- 2018-19:** 390

- 2019-20:** 383
- 2020-21:** 369
- 2021-22:** 396
- 2022-23:** 411

Percentage of CTE enrollment*

- 2015-16:** 35.34%
- 2016-17:** 34.64%
- 2017-18:** 30.98%
- 2018-19:** 29.26%
- 2019-20:** 28.33%
- 2020-21:** 26.39%
- 2021-22:** 30.02%
- 2022-23:** 32.31%

*Percentage of CTE enrollment out of regional grades 11-12 enrollment

Program highlights – updates on some of the many BOCES programs

Technical Education

Submitted by Director of School Services and Outreach Zane Mahar.

This is the first academic year since 2019-20 that has not been held hostage by the COVID-19 pandemic. While the disease continues, we at Herkimer BOCES have fully bounced back and are on the road to recovery from a very difficult three academic years.

Putting the “advanced” in Advanced Manufacturing: Our Advanced Manufacturing program with instructor Peter Stone was fortunate enough to have been able to purchase a Haas Automation CNC lathe. This lathe, which students program using G-Code, is able to machine three-dimensional objects with computer accuracy and efficiency. Students are not only learning how to run a CNC lathe, but all facets of the manufacturing process from design to final quality control checks. Students have designed and machined chess sets that are not only going to be gifted to board members, but will be available for purchase as a program fundraiser.

Diamonds may be forever, but a bouquet from Welding is the next best thing: Students in the Welding and Metal Fabrication program with instructor Mason Fisher took orders for welded steel flowers made of washers. This project not only served as a fundraiser for the class, but showcased the students’ welding skills and artistic flair.

From theory to hands-on: The Automotive Technology program with instructor Jesse Marosek is providing real-life, hands-on learning opportunities for students regarding basic automotive systems. Students in Automotive Technology are undertaking a two-year project, for which they build a T-bucket from the ground up. Students will be learning about brakes, steering, suspension and even assembling the engine. This project will allow them to learn the theory of all major vehicle components over two years. Once the car is built, it will be used as a recruitment tool and be entered into car shows.

Job opportunities: Students

in the Building Construction program with instructor John Martin learned more about the career possibilities that can await them once they complete the class. Representatives from the North Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters presented to both seniors and juniors on the benefits of entering their apprenticeship program. Presenters Dave Brumstead and Bill Maxim spoke about the five-year paid apprenticeship program that allows students to earn an associate degree, if they wish to, while learning the skills of the carpentry trade. At the end of the five-year apprenticeship program, students will be in position to make a minimum of \$101,000 per year, according to the presenters. Brumstead and Maxim also brought trainers with them that ran hands-on demonstrations with students providing feedback on their carpentry skills.

Open House: More than 500 people attended the Technical Education Open House on March 8. To further capitalize on career exploration, Principal of Technical Education David Itzo and his Open House Committee



Herkimer BOCES Building Construction student Colton Roark, from Poland Central School District, works on a project in class.

included ways for students and families to learn during Open House about career opportunities post BOCES completion.

P-TECH ambassadors – seeing a bigger picture: For the first time, our Valley Pathways in Technology Early College High School (VP-TECH) students joined the larger P-TECH community and participated in Engineering Wars. Although only comprised of P-TECH schools in New York, the event gave students a glimpse of the larger educational initiative that they are part of. P-TECH is now an international program found in more than 25 countries. Two teams of VP-TECH students competed at the Engineering Wars held at Innovare in Rome on Nov. 14. Teams created mechanical solutions to specific problems or scenarios.

Also this school year, VP-TECH senior Mark Hanshaw was a participant in the Cornell Cooperative Extension Leadership Internship with the Herkimer County government. This prestigious experience is limited to only 20 youths throughout the county. Hanshaw was nominated and selected, and he represented Herkimer BOCES technical education admirably by bringing “the voice of youth” to community issues that are impacting Herkimer County.



Herkimer BOCES Advanced Manufacturing student Hope Rider, from West Canada Valley Central School District, sketches plans in class.

Continued on the next page...

Program highlights continued – updates on some of the many BOCES programs

READiTEC – from workshop to kitchen and everywhere in between:

Students in our READiTEC program, headed by teacher Brandie Reid, have covered a broad range of skills and learning opportunities this year. Some of the more successful endeavors involved carpentry skills and culinary skills.

Students in READiTEC explored the idea of building a product rather than buying one. Teachers and students were looking at purchasing work benches for the many hands-on projects that are taking place in the class. However, after seeing what was available and how expensive workbenches are, the students decided to build their own.

READiTEC students also had a culinary arts rotation. Specifically, students explored cooking pasta made from scratch. The students hosted a “pasta dinner” in their classroom on Nov. 18, and they invited some area administrators.

A tradition of achievement and excellence: Students throughout our Career and Technical Education programs competed at the Regional SkillsUSA competition at SUNY Morrisville. Just to put this into perspective for you, Herkimer BOCES is one of – if not the smallest – BOCES to compete in our region, yet we are a powerhouse when it comes to demonstrating excellence and achievement. Fourteen of our students placed.

Parting thoughts: Along with our students maintaining a “tradition of excellence,” our districts are the true champions by funding these programs and allowing us to partner with them to provide these world class learning opportunities to our students.

School to Careers

Submitted by School to Careers liaison and Work-Based Learning Coordinator MaryBeth Napolitano.

Rising Seniors: Rising Seniors is for students who have just completed their junior year and are headed into the summer. This program’s flexible design has the ability to work around student schedules for the best possible approach

to obtaining and completing a summer internship.

Full placement of the students includes the following: pre and post meetings with a business/industry partner, coordination with a district point person to ensure proper scheduling and communication throughout the internship experience, parent/guardian authorization and release forms, partner/host consent forms, student and teacher contracts (if applicable), host and student evaluation forms, student reflective essays, monitoring and reporting of student attendance and more.

Students are responsible for their own transportation, unless otherwise indicated. Students may earn work-based learning hours along with transferable validated internship hours.

Basic Internship Placements: Basic Internship Placements prepare students for both the career and college stage of their lives. Students are identified by school counselors in accordance with the district’s “good academic standing and attendance” policies.



Herkimer BOCES Welding and Metal Fabrication Technology student Nathon Randall, from Dolgeville Central School District, welds in class.

Using results of career surveys and previous job shadowing experiences, STC provides for a full-service internship experience. STC will work closely with each student and the district counselor to ensure the right internship placement is found. Internship placements are typically up to 15 hours with the option to obtain additional hours, if deemed necessary. Students may earn work-based learning hours and transferable validated internship hours.

Advanced Career Immersion Experience (ACIE): This is the most comprehensive internship service offered by STC. Students are provided an experience that can help them to determine their life plan. Students are able to forge lasting relationships within their own student cohorts with neighboring district students, colleges, mentors and business leaders. ACIE is designed for seniors that are self-motivated, curious, determined and talented.

ACIE students are identified by their school counselors as academically talented and/or whose curiosity expands beyond the traditional classroom. Once students are identified, STC will meet with district team members, provide an overview of the program to the students and schedule mock student interviews. STC will work with each student and district school counselor to ensure the proper internship placement for each student.



Herkimer BOCES Child and Family Services student Aliza Burdick, from Richfield Springs Central School District, works with a young child during class.

Upon acceptance into ACIE, students are responsible for their own transportation; must maintain “good academic standing and attendance” in accordance with districts policies, submit monthly reflection logs and weekly timesheets, attend the mandatory orientation session, maintain excellent attendance at the internship site, receive positive reports from mentors and abide by all rules, regulations and expectations set forth by the internship site.

The flexible design model allows students to be placed in a six-, 12- or 24-week experience (one or two placements) totaling 72 hours of internship experience. Kicking off in September with a mandatory parent/student orientation session, the ACIE program officially begins in October and is on-going through mid-April. Throughout ACIE, students are provided career counseling coupled with various college and career skill-building workshops. ACIE students may earn work-based learning hours along with transferable validated internship hours. The ACIE program closes with a formal recognition ceremony showcasing the students’ internship experiences, and students present about their experiences.

Special and alternative education

Submitted by Director of Special Education and Alternative Education Roberta Matthews.

In both special and alternative education, we take our mantra from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., when he said, “Whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward.” As a result, Special Programs and the Pathways Academy at Remington continually take steps to be better and to improve outcomes for students through relentless incrementalism.

In both programs, we are incorporating small changes that will make a big difference.

We are continually reviewing our curriculum. We are currently focusing on our Career Awareness program. We map our units and lesson plans to the



Herkimer BOCES Special Programs students presented on stage during a Veterans Day Assembly in November 2022 at the William E. Busacker Complex.

Commencement Level Career Development and Occupational Studies Learning Standards. We also ensure that job shadowing experiences align with the studied units. The acquisition of work-based learning hours is vital.

Our teachers are working collaboratively with our Regional Information Center to analyze the last several years of Regents exams. Teachers identify the units of study that are most frequently tested to ensure that students understand and can master the material. We are not “teaching to the test” but being mindful of what learning standards we should prioritize. These items inform instruction and ultimately improve outcomes for students.

We continue to serve our children with autism using research-based strategies. Working in collaboration with the TIM

Academy, our consultants from Philadelphia, we use structured teaching to support students and translate our consultants’ recommendations to program improvements throughout our classes. In addition, our administrators monitor and support implementation efforts to ensure consistency. New this year is the initiative to have all of our early education teachers trained in the Picture Exchange Communication System. Highly recommended by our speech-language pathologists, this system supports early language acquisition. Our goal is to become the experts on autism in our region!

Supporting students to increase prosocial behavior is a continual need and focus in our programs. On March 17, our teachers will participate in behavior-based training, “Function-Based Thinking.” Here, teachers will learn a behavioral support method that can be utilized with all students. Through analyzing behavior data, teachers will determine the function, or the purpose, of the behavior. Understanding why a student behaves in a particular manner will allow staff to intervene more successfully.

In both special and alternative education, we have a focus on reading. Pathways Academy was able to add a reading teacher to the program’s faculty this year, and we are already seeing progress. We have had students who have been so successful they are no longer in need of additional reading instruction. Students can be seen using newly acquired strategies to improve their comprehension. At the elementary level, we have new reading materials recommended by our Special Programs Reading Committee and endorsed by our Instructional Support Services team. Teachers report that these materials are positively impacting student success.

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Herkimer BOCES Pathways Academy at Remington students pose on stage after an awards ceremony in November 2022 at the Remington Educational Complex.

Program highlights continued – updates on some of the many BOCES programs

A growing need in our region was an *alternative* to our alternative education program, the Pathways Academy. A program that we have just begun and is still in its infancy is our Pathways After School Success program (PASS.) In PASS, students can access an in-person after-school educational option. This option supports students currently struggling behaviorally with the goal of returning to their traditional academic setting.

The BOCES collaborates with Utica University to encourage student teaching internships, fieldwork and student-teaching opportunities in our area. Through these endeavors, we aim to attract quality teachers and promote careers in education in our region.

In special and alternative education, continual growth and progress are pathways to student success and achievement.

Adult, Early Childhood & Outreach Education

Submitted by Director of Adult, Early Childhood & Outreach Education Mary Kline.

Adult Practical Nursing Program: Adult Practical Nursing Program student Rebecca Chol was recognized this school year with the annual Jodi Connor Memorial Christmas Scholarship, which is a financial gift provided to a promising licensed practical nursing student selected by faculty.

Chol moved to the United States as an immigrant in 2000 – a single mom with four kids – and made Utica her home. Originally from the part of Sudan that is now South Sudan, Chol relocated as a refugee to Cairo, Egypt, before applying and being accepted as an immigrant to the United States. English is her second language; Arabic is her first language. She later had a fifth child, has worked as a nursing aide at Masonic Care Community for 17 years and took classes at Mohawk Valley Community College.

Now in her second of two school years in the part-time day class of the Herkimer BOCES Adult Practical Nursing Program that trains students to become LPNs, Chol was in class on Dec. 20, 2022, and hadn't done her Christmas shopping yet.

That's when she got called out of class by Adult Practical Nursing

Program coordinator Sara Nicolette and told she was receiving the scholarship.

"It's so amazing. I was very emotional. Normally, I don't cry, but I was crying," Chol said. "I sure did have a good Christmas – me and my kids."

David Connor created the Jodi Connor Memorial Scholarship in honor of his late daughter, a 2003 graduate of the Herkimer BOCES LPN program who enjoyed Christmas. David Connor presented the scholarship to Chol the day after she found out about it from Nicolette.

Adult Literacy: In 2022-23, the New York State Education Department changed the exam needed for a high school equivalency diploma back to a GED. The GED is a computerized option that allows students to test either by taking each subtest separately or sitting for the whole exam at once. Students who are successful participate in a graduation ceremony.

Migrant Education: The program serves 14 counties and nearly 140 school districts. The program began at Herkimer BOCES in 1975. Its overall goal is to help meet the unique, unmet needs of the identified children. This could include providing academic support for newly identified students who have moved in the last year. The program involves parents in both state and local Parent Advisory Councils. Summer program options can include home-based tutoring and support and opportunities for teenage students to attend programs geared to help them decide on careers. Families who need support during the holidays often are able to receive gifts and, this year, even a tree.

Prekindergarten and Preschool: The Herkimer BOCES Prekindergarten and Preschool programs have students from



Herkimer BOCES Adult Practical Nursing Program part-time day student Rebecca Chol receives the Jodi Connor Memorial Scholarship from David Connor in December 2022.

nine of the 10 component districts. Some of the classes are for integrated preschoolers with special needs, and others are for children wanting a Pre-K experience. There are nine classes located in six districts.

All the classrooms provide a foundation of basic academic skills and social emotional growth. The students are given academic pre-tests and post-tests to show educational gains. Parents are encouraged to participate



The Herkimer BOCES Migrant Education program helps support families during the holidays, such as this family that received a Christmas tree in 2022.

in the activities. Materials are sent home for monthly projects.

Many opportunities and events center around the seasons, holidays, celebrations and special events.

Capital Project

Submitted by Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services James Picolla.

The component school boards approved the 2022 Herkimer BOCES Capital Project in September 2022 for an amount not to exceed \$50 million. The project scope focuses on infrastructure upgrades to the Remington Educational Complex and William E. Busacker Complex buildings.

Improvements include fire safety systems, computer networking, code updates, drainage, food service kitchens and heating, ventilation and air conditioning. The computer networking improvements include the public address system, telephones, clocks, blue lights and security. The code updates include removal of wire glass, replacement of non-compliant doors and Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility.

Additionally, buildings will see some program improvements to increase the BOCES capacity to service children with special needs. These include converting "adult spaces" at

the WEB and Remington Complexes into classroom spaces and adding a fitness center. At Remington, plans include the conversion of spaces to meet the needs of older learners and the addition of a science lab.

In addition to the Capital Project, the BOCES is expanding its footprint at German Street. By moving our Instructional Support Services team (including our conference center), the Adult Practical Nursing Program and some Operations and Maintenance functions to the new location, we are able to better utilize space at the WEB and Remington for expanded student use.

The Facilities Committee met on March 2, 2023, to review the Building Condition Surveys with the team from King + King Architects. The surveys identified more than \$45 million in work requiring attention in the next five to eight years. While much of this work is included in the current building project, there is a significant list of items yet to be addressed. These items include asphalt replacement, storefront, window and flashing replacement, drainage, masonry cleaning, exterior and garage door replacement, foundation repairs, fire-rated wall repairs, building envelope upgrades and more.

It is important to note that the Building Condition Surveys don't include replacing the

WEB or Remington roof systems. The design team, however, indicated both will need replacing by 2030 and will appear on the 2027 survey. The design team currently estimates the roof replacement will cost almost \$20 million.

The committee members also discussed the need for BOCES to complete annual mini-projects as part of our routine maintenance plan. They discussed and prioritized several ideas, including upgrades to the WEB lobby, playgrounds, basement drainage and various CTE lab upgrades.

The committee also reviewed progress with the capital project and discussed the prioritization of later scope items, based on the availability of project funds. The committee will share their ideas for prioritization with the Herkimer BOCES Board of Education.

Capital project construction is set to begin in January 2024 and conclude in fall 2027.

For more information on the capital project including project updates, documents and more, visit bit.ly/2022CapitalProject or go to www.herkimer-boces.org and click on the "Capital Project" button on the homepage.

Thank you to our Culinary Hospitality students and the Frankfort-Schuyler 'Grease' cast!



Thank you to the Herkimer BOCES Culinary Hospitality program and instructor Mark Lovato for preparing and serving the food for our 2023 Annual Meeting. Pictured here, Culinary Hospitality juniors pose for a photo in the kitchen. From left, front row: instructor Mark Lovato with students Aurora Dubia (Little Falls), Marie Cugliandro (Herkimer), Devin Foley (Mount Markham), Christian Lopez (West Canada Valley), Paige Cooper (Richfield Springs), Brandon Magana (Frankfort-Schuyler), Braydin Clark (Central Valley), Dennis Waugh (Frankfort-Schuyler), Jenetta Merdanovic (Frankfort-Schuyler), Elizabeth Muller (Poland), Isabella Meeker (Herkimer) and Juliana Harris (Frankfort-Schuyler). Back row: Rylee Greenwood (Poland), Madison Stevenson (Dolgeville), Shane Polyak (Little Falls), Travis Anthony (Little Falls), Landen Latendress (Central Valley), Nicholas MooreII (Central Valley), Keegan Moss (Central Valley), Laiton Voorhees (Dolgeville), Hayley Stephens (Poland), Margaret Tompkins (Central Valley), Haylie Lowe (Poland) and Saraiya Wierzbicki (Poland).



Thank you to the Frankfort-Schuyler Central School District "Grease" cast (select members) for providing the entertainment for the Herkimer BOCES 2023 Annual Meeting by performing scenes from their "Grease" musical.

The "Grease" cast (select members) are Frankfort-Schuyler students: Angelina Tangorra, Alexandria Service, Vanessa Miles, Destany Martinez, Amber Jacobs, Alex Marmet, Danny Palmisano, Dhomi Mendez, Ben Ruszala, Chris Hobbick, Sammy Hobbick, Nick Castellano, Tristan Klotz, Redzo Begic, Aaron DeJesus, Emily Welch, Adrianna Bellino, Brianna Mullenax, Corinne Bick, Maddie Aulisi and Olivia Teachout.

Community Partnership Award: BOCES students gain valuable clinical experience at FoltsBrook – even through pandemic

The FoltsBrook Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation in Herkimer regularly helps Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES high school and adult students gain in-person clinical experience they need to complete their programs and certifications.

That commitment from the FoltsBrook Center continued during the COVID-19 pandemic by allowing Herkimer BOCES students to return to in-person clinical opportunities sooner than many other similar programs.

FoltsBrook Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation Administrator Mark Scalise said he knows how important clinical is to students because he remembers being 19 and 20 years old and needing to do clinical rotations as a physical therapy assistant.

Doing the in-person work was essential for Scalise and helped motivate him to see job opportunities that his studies could lead to, so he wanted to make sure BOCES students could get back to that access as soon as possible and safe after COVID-19 started.

"There are certain things you need to experience," Scalise said. "For me, I've always been able to learn or hone in my skills by hands-on experience, and you can't really replace hands-on experience. To try to keep some type of a normal environment, even though the times weren't normal with COVID and everything, we wanted to try to do that as much as possible."

For supporting Herkimer BOCES CTE and adult students in general and during the pandemic, the FoltsBrook Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation was named the recipient of the 2023 Herkimer BOCES Community Partnership Award. The award will be presented to Scalise at the 2023 Herkimer BOCES Annual Meeting on March 30.

"Honestly, I was shocked," Scalise said, of how he felt when he found out about the award. "One of my goals at any facility I've worked at is to have a relationship with the local BOCES programs. They're feeder programs for our organization. It's an opportunity for both students to learn and for us to recruit, so it works both ways."

A two-way partnership

The FoltsBrook Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation is a nursing home and rehabilitation center, so it provides 24-hour care for both short-term and long-term residents.

High school juniors and seniors in the Herkimer BOCES Health Science Careers program do clinical work at FoltsBrook as they work toward becoming certified nursing assistants. Local adults in the Herkimer BOCES Adult Practical Nursing Program also do clinical work at FoltsBrook as they work toward becoming licensed practical nurses.

Scalise and FoltsBrook were nominated for the award by Herkimer BOCES Director of School Services and Outreach Zane Mahar and instructor Christe Zambri, who teaches the Health Science Careers program with instructor Chester Winters. Scalise also works with Herkimer BOCES Adult Practical Nursing Program Coordinator Sara

Nicolette to help adult LPN students gain clinical experience – including through the pandemic.

The partnership also helps FoltsBrook because it assists with recruiting. The center currently employs at least four graduates of Herkimer BOCES programs, Scalise said.

"Obviously, nursing homes are the most scrutinized industry in America – specifically in New York state right now – and we need to do what we can to try to not only recruit, but once we recruit, retain our employees," Scalise said.

Another way the partnership benefits FoltsBrook is that the residents enjoy interacting with students. Seeing new faces and having more people to talk to is good for the residents, Scalise said.

"It gives them an opportunity to socialize," Scalise said. "In some cases, some of these residents don't have family, so the people that come in and care for them at the facility become their family. I know that our residents appreciate when they're there helping and caring for them."

Clinical during a pandemic

Health Science Careers students returned to clinical experiences at FoltsBrook in March 2021, only about one year after schools were first impacted by COVID-19.



FoltsBrook Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation Administrator Mark Scalise.



Health Science Careers students joined FoltsBrook residents for a Christmas party – including dancing to Christmas music provided by a local DJ. From left: Frankfort-Schuyler students Jaelyn House and Grace Gregory, Central Valley students Caitlyn Fuller and Alana Grogan and Health Science Careers co-teacher Chester Winters.

"With the parameters and procedures we had in place, we felt that we could allow the students to come in and not only provide a clinical experience for them, but do so in a safe manner – limiting the spread of COVID for both our residents and the students," Scalise said.

Mahar said those efforts made a huge difference for Herkimer BOCES students.

"During the pandemic, many BOCES health occupations classes were prevented from offering any type of clinical experiences due to the restrictions placed on us by the health department," Mahar said. "One of the requirements involved two COVID tests per week. When I explained to Mark that several of our students did not have insurance, or that their family health insurance would not cover testing unless they were sick, he graciously offered to test our students twice a week for free. Many students across the state did not have an opportunity like this, and it was due to Mark and the FoltsBrook team willing to truly partner with us."

Health Science Careers students need to complete 108 hours of clinical in order to be eligible for New York state CNA certification, Zambri said.

"FoltsBrook has been very accommodating during the pandemic," Zambri said. "They made sure that there was always space available to us. When the pandemic first started, COVID testing was very expensive and not easily accessible. Mark made sure that the kids had access to testing so that they could attend clinical at his facility. If it wasn't for him, we would not have been able to complete the requirement."

Many students join the Health Science Careers program not only get an education in the healthcare field but also to get that CNA certification, Zambri said.

"This certification is in high demand," Zambri said. "Students who are certified leave the program with multiple job opportunities. If we did not have to opportunity to go to clinical at FoltsBrook, they would not have been able to become certified."

Scalise said FoltsBrook had free testing kits from the state and didn't want students' insurance or lack of access to tests to stand in the way of their education and the experience they need.

"Which is why we felt it was necessary to go ahead and offer to do the testing because we have the means to do so, and we didn't want that to be a barrier to anybody that was looking to do this," Scalise said.

'A warm and welcoming environment'

Scalise said he has worked closely with Zambri and Mahar to ensure Health Science Careers students have positive clinical experiences and hear presentations.

"Our goal is to give them more opportunities to see not just what their career field is, but to show them that there are other options in healthcare as well," Scalise said.

Zambri recalled when Scalise first approached her about having students practice clinical skills at FoltsBrook and how Scalise said he wanted FoltsBrook to be an educating facility.

"He seemed so excited about the idea of our students coming there to learn and experience nursing care," Zambri said. "I could tell there was something different about him, and I knew at that moment I wanted my students to be part of what he had in mind."

Zambri said Scalise made sure to personally get to know Mahar and the BOCES teachers and students, and he continues to do that.

"He checks in with not only me as the teacher but also with the students," Zambri said. "He asks them regularly if their experience has been positive, and if not, what they could do better. He always adds a special touch that the kids especially enjoy. He treats them to breakfast or lunch at various times throughout the year. Some of their favorite meals have been pizza, subs and hot chocolate."

One student had asked if they could have hot chocolate instead of juice, and the next day, students were greeted in the morning with breakfast pizza and hot chocolate.

"There is just something different about Mark," Zambri said. "He is a perfect role model of what a leader should be. Our students are very lucky to have him as an example to follow as a leader in healthcare."

Scalise said that taking those extra steps for students ties into the overall climate he tries to create at FoltsBrook.



Health Science Careers students Taylor Parman (Herkimer) and Reagan Stock (Little Falls) speak with a FoltsBrook resident during a Christmas party.

"Our goal – not just for students, but for our residents and our residents' families – is we want to create a warm and welcoming environment," Scalise said. "For the perspective of the students, we want them to be comfortable. We want them to know when they come in, they're going to get a good clinical experience, and we're not there just to put them through their clinical experience, but we want to be a partner, and we want them to know that if we can do anything to enhance or to improve the experience that they're getting, we're here to do so."

Scalise makes sure students get to interact with facility leadership and staff, so they have multiple avenues for raising concerns or aspects of their experience that could be improved. This helps to fine-tune what FoltsBrook can offer students.

"So when we invite them in for just a quick meeting or we want to know how they're doing and we have a meeting with them and provide snacks and things of that nature, we want to earn their trust," Scalise said. "We want to let them know their feedback matters to us because we not only want to create a better experience for them, but for future classes to come."

Student Spotlight: READiTEC program helps student get back on track, create path to welding career

As a Little Falls seventh grader in 2020, Chase Harrer was a straight-A student, played three sports and was in the National Junior Honor Society.

When COVID-19 caused in-person school and sports to stop in March 2020, Chase became a shell of himself, according to his mother, Sarah Harrer. Throughout eighth grade, it was a struggle to get him to attend classes or do any work, she said.

But just as COVID-19 knocked Chase's school path off course, something else pushed him back in the right direction: the Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego BOCES READiTEC program.

READiTEC, an acronym for Real Experience and Designed Instruction in Technical Education Careers, is a pre-vocational exploratory program for ninth and 10th grade students. READiTEC introduces students to all 14 Herkimer BOCES Career and Technical Education programs, helps them learn more about trade jobs and allows them to do internships with the CTE programs they're most interested in. Students then have the opportunity to fully join one of the CTE programs for 11th and 12th grade if they choose to.

"When he was offered the chance to try READiTEC in ninth grade, he was excited," Sarah Harrer said. "As soon as he started attending BOCES in ninth grade, everything changed. He was excited to go to school again. He started getting good grades both in Little Falls and in READiTEC. He loved the new skills he was learning and often brought them home to use."

Chase was part of the first ever cohort for the READiTEC program as a ninth grader in September 2021. Now in 10th grade, Chase has turned his school experience back around. He plans to join the Herkimer BOCES Welding and Metal Fabrication program next school year and pursue a career in welding.

"READiTEC has been a total game changer for Chase in both life and in his education," Sarah Harrer said. "He is in his second year of READiTEC, and he continues to thrive. I believe that READiTEC has made school enjoyable and worthwhile again for Chase. It has also given him the opportunity to explore so many different career options. I can't say enough good things about the program and the teachers."

'It's unbeatable'

Chase found out about READiTEC in eighth grade from his school counselor after he took a job interest survey that indicated he was attracted to various trade jobs.

"It was really enticing the part where I got to come to another school and do stuff that wasn't just straight up school work," Chase said. "I got to learn other useful skills."

He signed up for READiTEC and joined the program in ninth grade.

"I loved it right off the bat. I could come

here and start learning hands-on," Chase said. "At the beginning, it's a lot of book work, but once you get into the hands-on stuff, it's unbeatable – it's unmatched."

READiTEC students spend about half of their school day at Herkimer BOCES. Ninth graders attend BOCES in the afternoon, and 10th graders go in the morning. While there, they have the opportunity to interact with students from the other nine Herkimer BOCES component school districts.

"It's always better to meet new people, and I have a lot of new friends in here," Chase said.

Attending READiTEC helped Chase stop dreading going to school every day, he said.

"It's just better coming here because it's something I enjoy doing," Chase said. "Working hands-on, you can actually see what you're doing. You don't have to just visualize it like you do when you're back at school in your core classes. You're learning stuff that you'll probably use when you get out of high school."

Chase said he would recommend READiTEC to any students considering it.

"Yes, do it. Go for it," Chase said, of what he would



READiTEC student Chase Harrer, from Little Falls City School District, in class at BOCES.



READiTEC student Chase Harrer (center) at BOCES with READiTEC classmates.

tell students. "It's the best decision they'll probably make."

'Leader in the READiTEC program'

Chase said READiTEC is a great program for learning and exploring career options.

"The classroom environment is really good," he said. "It doesn't matter who you are, you can come in here and feel welcome. You can get all your stuff done in here. Everybody wants you around."

READiTEC teacher Brandie Reid said she has had the pleasure of having Chase in her READiTEC class for almost two years now.

"From the first day of his ninth-grade year, when he was the only one with his hand up to answer questions, I knew he was going to be a perfect fit for READiTEC," Reid said. "Over the last year and a half, Chase has maintained high academic achievement as well as being a leader in the READiTEC program."

After completing his own assignments, Chase spends much of his spare time at BOCES assisting other READiTEC students, Reid said.

"He has played a vital role in helping many of his classmates be successful within the READiTEC program as well," Reid said. "He is always engaged in every area we study and sets a positive example for the other students."

Reid is happy to see that Chase will be continuing in a CTE program.

"Chase is a model student, and I look forward to seeing him grow in the Welding program over the next two years," Reid said.

'Good path to go down'

Over the course of the two years in the READiTEC program, the class explores all 14 CTE programs together.

Chase has enjoyed a variety of activities such as making cornhole boards through Building Construction, cooking in the classroom through Culinary Hospitality and making stickers and creating logos to print on shirts in Visual Communications Media Arts.



READiTEC student Chase Harrer designed and printed the shirt he is wearing through exploring the Herkimer BOCES Visual Communications Media Arts program.

His mother said the skills he has learned have already been put to use at home.

"He has fixed things around our house, made dinner and even made his own sweatshirt," Sarah Harrer said. "I also love that he is learning business skills such as money management, tax prep and business management."

If READiTEC students are passing everything and have good behavior, they can also choose internships to participate in with the CTE programs.

Chase did an internship with the Outdoor Power Equipment program and was able to work directly with the older CTE students.

He also did a shadow internship with the Welding and Metal Fabrication Technology program and was able to watch how students welded, used a plasma cutter and worked on their senior projects.

After learning more about welding jobs and salaries, Chase decided on the BOCES Welding program for the next two school years and to pursue a career in that field.

"It was probably the most bang for my buck," he said. "As soon as I heard about how much you can get paid doing a welding job, I decided it would probably be a good path to go down."

Chase has specific goals in mind.

"My plan is maybe after high school, go to a secondary vocational school and then go down south travel-welding for a little while and then come up here with a whole lot of money, and maybe since there aren't a lot of big welding schools around here, maybe start one of them," he said. "As industry goes on, they're going to need more and more welders."

It's nice to know already as a 10th grader what direction he plans to take his career, Chase said.

"It makes me really happy because now I don't just have my brain going everywhere, and when people ask me what I plan on doing after I get out of high school, I don't have to sit there and tell them I don't know," he said. "I can tell them what I want to do."

Sarah Harrer said she is happy that Chase was able to see first-hand what the Welding program entails and to be part of visits hearing from professional welders.

"I am so excited that Chase already has a career connection with welding in 10th grade," Sarah Harrer said. "The READiTEC program was able to expose him to so many different career options and really helped him be confident in his chosen career path at only 15 years old."



READiTEC student Chase Harrer cooks in class as part of the Culinary Hospitality unit.

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