

## Superintendent's Report Spring, 2025

### NYS and Federal Govt. Information and Data Update:

**Cell Phone Use:** New York State Governor Kathy Hochul announced that cell phones will be banned in all classrooms in New York State starting from the 2025-26 school year. This ban will apply to grades K through 12 across all schools in the state, making New York the sixth state in the nation to have passed laws that ban or restrict students' use of cell phones statewide. Governor Kathy Hochul recently laid out her vision to get cell phones out of K-12 schools from "bell to bell." The law would cover all instructional and non-instructional time, including homeroom, lunch, recess, study hall and passing time in the hallways. It would apply to anywhere on school grounds, including athletic fields and playgrounds.

**Regents Exams:** New York students will soon no longer be required to pass a certain number of state Regents exams to earn a high school diploma under a proposal presented at the June meeting of the Board of Regents. Instead, the state would create many ways for students to demonstrate proficiency and knowledge in fulfillment of diploma requirements. The Blue Ribbon Commission has outlined the various pathways to graduation, and a timeline has been created. According to the state's proposed timeline, changes to graduation requirements would first take effect in fall 2027.

**Recent NYS data reporting recently complete and submitted:** Essa Grants, Civil Rights Data and Department of Labor Data and Statistics

### Facilities Update:

The south window in the stairwell that has had badly chipping paint was repaired over the February break, damaged due to a previous leak. It was left that way for years. Sal Ventimiglia, Director of Facilities, removed the debris, re-coated it with a mortar, then plastered, and added a finish coat. He then painted the area with two coats of fresh paint. It is returned to its original state. It's a major improvement to that area of the school. He also began restoration on the window itself.

**North end portico:** After the snow and ice shifted the column supporting the overhang at the door where students exit for the playground and music class, Principal Chris Aguirre had the door closed off, and Sal Ventimiglia worked on a repair to stabilize the column and overhang, preventing a possible collapse. There is a structurally sound column now in place. It will be replaced with a new steel column that will be then wrapped with the original column and it will be restored to its original state.

There are several plumbing updates being attended to in the building currently, and a minor roof leak over the locker room that is being addressed. There are two small holes and a small area of previous damage due to leaks in the roof. Rick Shaw, a certified engineer from Boces, will take care of the repair, and Sal Ventimiglia will paint and finalize the project.

Frames have been ordered to replace and re-hang the drama photos displayed in the upstairs hallway. Under Mr. Towsley's direction, the students made wood frames in Woodshop class. The clear glazing and back piece to the frame will be added, and the photos will be rehung, carefully aligning them in a straight formation, which is currently lacking. Mr. Towsley plans to complete the project in conjunction with his students by the end of the school year in June.

Phone System: The school district is currently looking to update the phone system in place. It is very old and no longer in proper working order. We are waiting on some estimates now, with an eye toward phone replacement in the building in the near future.

Building and Grounds: The Catskill Watershed will be replacing the front fencing located by the Town Hall, along with running a new fence along the top of the stream. We met with the CWC and requested this for safety reasons. Although not part of the Stream Project, they agreed to put the new fencing up. It will be put in place during the April school vacation.

Teaching and Learning Update:

In early March I attended the New York State Conference of School Superintendents (NYSCOSS). The conference held in Albany was titled Expanding the Horizon: The Promise of Public Education. It covered matters related to changing school law, curriculum and policy for school administrators across New York State.

Pre-K 3 and 4 registration is open and underway. Notice of registration is up on the website, and it has been added to MTC free public access television. Signs have been ordered to be placed in the front of the school to notify the public about open registration.

Ed Elements [Home | Ed Elements](#) visited our faculty for professional development (PD) on Superintendent's Conference Day, 3/14. We worked together as a faculty from 9 a.m. to noon on creating an instructional vision for the district, along with the notion of student engagement. The session was based on our own input and feedback, and it was our second time meeting with this organization for PD.

Dr. Collins, Chris Aguirre and Samantha Candreva are conducting faculty observations as part of the state's requirement for an Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR).

Enrichment/Booster Club: The Booster Club has committed to putting together a list of community members willing to work with our students in a workshop setting in order to impart their various talents and strengths. The teachers have been asked to sit on an Enrichment Committee. The first meeting was

productive and planning is underway to put a program in place which will be piloted this coming June, and it is slated to be fully in place for next school year.

The Delaware County School Music Association All County Music Festival took place at Delaware Academy in Delhi, NY on March 15th at 3:00 p.m. ACS students slated to perform were Gabby Bene, Lindsey Kiley, Emily McGowan, Darbey Mondore, Laney Mondore, Addy and Lucy Moore, Charlie Orio, Faith and Liem Sass. Ms. Yasmin Reshamwala was the faculty advisor to the event.

CST Meetings Update: CST is the Child Study Team implemented this year. Megan Shelton, our Speech Pathologist, is overseeing the meetings, along with Principal Chris Aguirre. The purpose of the meetings is to use data to closely look at each student and take a prescriptive approach to responding to their learning needs. Each child in the building will be addressed over time. Plans to meet each child's educational needs are put in place, with a continual eye toward student success, achievement and improvement. This is a model I have worked with in the past, and it is a successful initiative due to its cyclical and reflective systematic approach.

Regionalization Roundtable: Dr. Collins attends monthly meetings at the Milford Boces covering key policy updates, legislative priorities, and critical issues impacting school districts across the state. There are ongoing conversations about how we can work together as a region to share and support one another through our school systems.

Scheduled Trips for High School Sophomores through Senior Year through high school guidance: SUNY Oneonta, SUNY Cobleskill, SUNY Albany, BOCES Occupational Center, Fox Care New Visions Program.

Board of Education Reps: Two current sophomores, Faith Sass and Mason Leal, have been appointed as student representatives to the Andes Central School Board of Education. Their term serving will begin in July, 2025. Under a new law, student school board members would not be empowered to vote or attend executive sessions. Nor would they be able to attend any meeting or hearing that is not open to the public (e.g., appeals to the board of education related to contests over student suspensions and district special education classifications and placement determinations). However, they would be able to represent the student body and it would provide an opportunity for the students' voices to be heard.

Safety Update:

Mandated Reporter Training: All staff, including BOE members have until April 1st to complete an online NYS webinar certifying training in this very important area.

Finance Update:

Budget Vote Timeline. 2025-2026 Budget Currently Being Prepared for the May Budget Vote.  
Public Budget Review Hearing: April 9th, @4:15pm in the Distance Learning Room Annual Budget Hearing May 7th, 2025 @5:15pm in the Andes Central School Gymnasium.

Budget Vote–Tuesday, May 20th, 2025, 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Early Childhood Learning Center Multi-Purpose Room across the street from the main building.

CaseBP Health Insurance winter board meeting: Dr. Collins attends regular meetings as a Trustee. At the last meeting, the rates for the coming year were voted on.

Communication: A district Instagram page has been implemented and is being overseen by Samantha Candreva and Hana Mokay-Rossley. There is an ongoing effort to keep the staff and families up-to-date on all things ACS. Handbooks: The Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook, and Code of Conduct are under review, and Mr. Aguirre is in the process of updating each of these importanta school tools.

Upcoming Events:

Talent Show, March 26th

Spring Concert, May 15th