



Leading Forward ***Together***

Annual Report for school year **2025-2026**

CAPITAL REGION BOCES BOARD OF EDUCATION

Members of the board are volunteers elected to serve three-year terms by our component school districts' Boards of Education.



Matthew Tedeschi
President
Berne-Knox-Westerlo
Central School District



Bruce Tryon
Vice President
Cobleskill-Richmondville
Central School District



Nancy delPrado
Mohonasen
Central School District



Sheila Fleet Kiehle
South Colonie Central
School District



Naomi Hoffman
Shenendehowa
Central School District



Lynne Lenhardt
Bethlehem Central
School District



Catherine Lewis
Schenectady
City School District



Heather Soroka
Watervliet
City School District



Kimberly Tully
Niskayuna Central
School District

Message

FROM THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT & CEO AND DEPUTY DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT & COO

Our commitment to leadership runs deep. As a trusted thought partner to our component schools, we embrace the responsibility of assisting education leaders in addressing evolving priorities and new initiatives. Through our expertise, services and support, we equip students, educators and communities to move forward with confidence and purpose.



Lauren J. Gemmill
District Superintendent &
Chief Executive Officer



Dr. Elizabeth Wood
Deputy District
Superintendent & Chief
Operating Officer

This commitment is reflected in our continued investment in innovation and opportunity. As the demand for skills-based learning grows, we are creating new pathways that connect education to workforce needs. These learning opportunities prepare the next generation for success while supporting districts as they implement New York State's Portrait of a Graduate. By leading forward, we remain grounded in our mission while adapting to an ever-changing world.

In doing so, we recognize that progress is never the work of one person, one program, one division or one district. The collective efforts of our component districts, partners, staff and stakeholders allow us to leverage shared resources and perspectives to solve challenges, expand opportunities and strengthen our region. We accomplish far more together than any one organization could achieve alone.

This report showcases leadership in action and the power of collaboration, highlighting not only the achievements of the past year, but the relationships, vision and shared commitment that continue to drive success. Together, we are preparing learners for the future, supporting our partners and strengthening our region. Together, we are leading forward.

Board of Cooperative Educational Services

AT-A-GLANCE

For more than 70 years, it has been the mission of Capital Region BOCES to provide quality services to each of our component school districts, clients and stakeholders, establishing ourselves as a trusted partner in public education and workforce development.

We continuously strive to strengthen our regional community and economy by supporting learners through non-traditional programs and offering innovative, real-world educational opportunities through partnerships.

Our supplementary services and programs ensure safety, efficiency and effective communications for schools and their various departments.



Our Commitments

Our five guiding commitments support our mission and purpose, leading us in our work and embodying who we are.



SERVICE

We provide quality service to each of our component districts and stakeholders, establishing us as a trusted partner in public education and workforce development.



VALUE

We create value as program and service partners, throughout all of our interactions and relationships.



EXCELLENCE

We strive for excellence in every aspect of our work.



IMPROVEMENT

We are the best at getting better. We anticipate and respond to stakeholder needs.



LEADERSHIP

We are viewed as leaders in our work, applying thoughtfulness and innovation to new program and service development.

2025-26 **FAST FACTS**

709

high school seniors from 24 school districts graduated from CTE in June

\$3.1M+

in grant funding was secured by our grant writers during 2025-26, with additional funding still pending. Since the division's launch in 2010, more than \$175.6M has been awarded

2,007

students, region-wide, learned in BOCES programs, in person and virtually, full- and part-time

100

Adult Education CTE students learned onsite at our Albany campus

77

Adult Health Careers students completed programs at our CTE Center, including 7 Sterile Processing Technician graduates and 70 Adult Practical Nursing graduates

Preparing Today's Workforce for Tomorrow's Opportunities

Through hands-on training and practical learning experiences, students in our Career and Technical Education programs gain the skills, credentials and real-world experiences needed to succeed in today's evolving economy. Whether pursuing higher education or entering the workforce, they graduate prepared, empowered and ready to navigate future opportunities with confidence.

Career and Technical Education Extension Center

The 47,000 square foot facility in Albany opened at the start of the 2025-26 school year. This state-of-the-art building accommodates more than 200 additional students and enables BOCES to offer new courses of study.



Women in the Trades

During Women in the Trades Month each March, we celebrate the young women who are building their futures in the skilled trades by hosting an annual forum and luncheon. More than 100 current and prospective CTE students attended the event this year. They heard from graduates and industry professionals who shared their experiences overcoming obstacles, breaking through gender barriers and building successful careers in the trades. Their stories encouraged students to consider careers in the trades.



CTE Signing Day

Before a crowd of more than 200 family members and business, labor and education partners, 78 high school and adult education students signed letters of intent to work for local businesses. Celebrating these students as well as the role BOCES plays in preparing students to join the workforce, New York State Department of Labor Commissioner Roberta Reardon said:

I congratulate the students signing today and thank Capital Region BOCES and our allies in business and labor for their partnership. When we invest in the future of young people, we invest in ourselves.



New Visions: Emerging Technologies

This new program introduces students to hydrogen fuel cells and semiconductor manufacturing, two rapidly-growing fields of study. Through hands-on learning in advanced manufacturing and mechanical and electrical systems, students explore fuel cell systems, automation, cleanroom protocols and troubleshooting, preparing them for immediate employment or advanced apprenticeships. Recently a team from the program won medals in a NYS high school green technology competition. The BOCES students designed, built and raced a hydrogen-powered car that used hydrogen fuel cartridges and rechargeable batteries to generate the electricity needed to compete.



Creating Impact and Opportunity for All

CVLA graduates record class

The Cooperative Virtual Learning Academy (CVLA) Secondary School offers flexible learning opportunities through synchronous and asynchronous instruction delivered by state-certified teachers. Designed for independent learners and students who need alternative scheduling or remote-learning options, the program

celebrated a milestone in June 2026 when its largest class graduated. The nearly 40 graduates represented 13 home school districts, including five students from the Schenectady City School District's Social Enterprise and Training Center (SEAT), an alternative education and workforce development program.

Making literacy more accessible

BOCES and NERIC partnered with children's author Constance Clarke to create American Sign Language versions of two of her fables. Narrated by a recent BOCES graduate and member of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community, Temani Thompson, the project broadens access to literacy and helps connect DHH students through storytelling.

Fashion students' work featured at New York Fashion Week

Fashion designer and CTE Global Fashion program teacher Karen "Kema" Maxwell surprised Dicey Lewis and Haze Ingram, two Cohoes High School seniors and aspiring fashion designers in the Global Fashion Studies program by showcasing their bag designs in New York Fashion Week.

“ I was honestly surprised a little, but I was also proud. It was really cool. ”

— Dicey Lewis



BOCES graduate and current employee honored

Antonio DiSanto was selected as the New York Association for Continuing and Community Education (NYACCE) 2026 Student of the Year. Currently a NERIC employee, DiSanto completed the Adult Education High School Equivalency (HSE) program in January 2026 and the Skills for Employment, Life and Functional Independence (SELF) program in 2023. HSE teacher Frank Finch offered his praise, "Antonio demonstrated unusual growth in his pursuit of a diploma, and a rare quality, he added positive energy to all those around him. Everyone finds it easy to root for him."



Advancing literacy through professional learning

Through a new partnership with SUNY New Paltz, BOCES' Education Support Services hosted a Science of Reading cohort for 2025-26. These sessions provided educators with access to an online microcredential and wraparound professional learning aligned with NYSED literacy initiatives, including literacy briefs and pre-K-3 best practices. What began as a cohort with 13 participants is expanding, with two districts launching their own cohorts and additional learning opportunities planned for 2026-27.



Advancing Our Shared Purpose

Careers in Construction Month

Nearly two dozen businesses, unions and government agencies partnered to recognize Careers in Construction Month at the CTE Extension Center in October. Students met potential employers, took part in demonstrations and learned about various careers in the construction industry. Many of the organizations brought BOCES graduates — now valued employees — to underscore how a CTE education can prepare students for professional success.

Strengthening student transitions through social-emotional program alignment

Through partnerships with local school districts, Capital Region BOCES continues to provide access to specialized support for students across the region. In 2026-27, Scotia-Glenville Central School District will host all four BOCES social-emotional classrooms, completing a planned realignment that began

the previous year. By working closely with partner districts to identify appropriate locations and embedding comprehensive support within those settings, BOCES is helping ensure students receive the individualized attention they need. Featuring intensive adult-to-student ratios and dedicated full-time social workers, these supportive learning environments foster continuity for students and stronger collaboration among educators and support staff.

Business and education leaders discuss new state graduation requirements

Education, business and government partners convened this past fall at our CTE-Albany Campus to discuss the “Portrait of a Graduate” initiative. Hosted by the Career and Technical Education Technical Assistance Center of New York, the forum focused on proposed updates designed to better prepare students for the workforce by placing greater emphasis on real-world experiences, such as internships and capstone projects.

SELFIE students give back

Students in the Skills for Employment, Life & Functional Independence (SELFIE) program partnered with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in December to help bring warmth and comfort to area children. The Teamsters delivered 900 new pairs of pajamas to the CTE Extension Center, where SELFIE students sorted and organized them for distribution. SELFIE student Skylar Britton was proud to volunteer for the effort.

“Especially for those who may be homeless, in foster care or don’t have money, I just think it’s important to give back to the community.”

— Skylar Britton

”

2025-26 **FAST FACTS****375**

business partnerships fuel educational opportunities — preparing students for the workforce of today and tomorrow

8.6M+

school meals served in 2025-26 by Shared Food Services in 33 districts across the state

~40,000

books were delivered to over 6,200 students through the textbooks program

\$6M+

savings realized by Pharmacy Coalition participants compared to prior year's pharmacy claims

145

cases closed by Residency Verification, the largest number of cases in the 12 years of the service

1,800+

students participated in shared Distance Learning, shared virtual Extended School Year, and Cooperative Virtual Learning Academy (CVLA)

New Emergency Medical Technician program

Beginning in September 2026, the Albany and Schoharie CTE campuses will launch a new one-year Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program. Combining classroom instruction, hands-on skills training and real-world simulations, the program will prepare students to assess, treat and transport patients in emergency medical situations. Aligned with New York State Department of Health standards, the course emphasizes safety, teamwork, communication and professionalism. Upon successful completion, students will be eligible to take the New York State Department of Health EMT-Basic Certification Exam, creating a pathway to careers in emergency medical services and meaningful service to their communities.

Schoharie career fair opens doors to workforce opportunities

The CTE-Schoharie Campus hosted a spring career fair that connected students with nearly 50 business and labor partners, helping them explore internships, mentorships and job-shadowing opportunities while building the region's future workforce.

Supporting student well-being together

Through partnerships with Russell Sage College, CASDA and the Greater Capital Region Teacher Center, we convened more than 90 educators from over 30 districts and BOCES for the second annual Elevate to Regulate conference. With the objective of fostering regional learning and shared strategies to support student social-emotional well-being, sessions focused on restorative practices, emotional regulation and strategies to support student mental health.

Leading AI Integration,

As technology continues to shape the future of education, Capital Region BOCES is exploring how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can enhance education in meaningful and ethical ways. We believe that when used thoughtfully and purposefully, AI has the potential to transform instruction, streamline processes, support staff and help prepare students for success in an increasingly digital world.

We're leading the responsible and safe integration of AI in education, with the goal of empowering school districts and their students and staff with strategies, training and guidance. And we're tackling this work with a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach.

Stakeholder feedback drives strategy

To guide its own use of AI, CRB gathered input from students, families, staff and business partners through surveys and focus groups. Their feedback will help shape a framework that manages risk, supports student readiness and strengthens professional learning, further underscoring BOCES' leadership in education.

NERIC hosts AI summit

In the fall, NERIC hosted "Building Strategic Capacity for Generative AI," to equip K-12 education leaders with the framework, tools and training necessary to approach Generative AI thoughtfully and strategically. Part of a larger, collaborative project led by several nationally recognized organizations, the summit aimed to build AI capacity

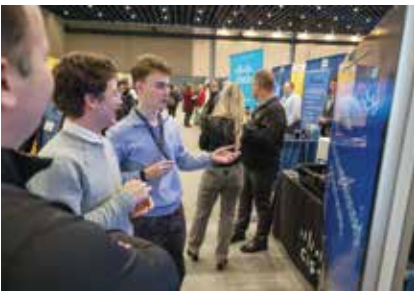
across districts of all sizes, including those in under-resourced and rural areas. Participants evaluated their readiness in areas such as data governance and academic AI literacy and left with specific goals and clear plans for moving forward.

Advancing strategic AI adoption

This year, BOCES both hosted and took part in a three-session workshop led by ILO to assist districts in developing strategic frameworks for the safe and trustworthy governance and adoption of AI. Participants included leaders from Albany City School District, Duanesburg Central School District, North Colonie Central School District, Watervliet City School District, Hamilton, Fulton and Montgomery BOCES and Capital Region BOCES. The sessions explored practical uses, recognizing risk, understanding governmental guidance and AI's role in workforce development, with an emphasis on strategic thinking, clear vision and action planning.

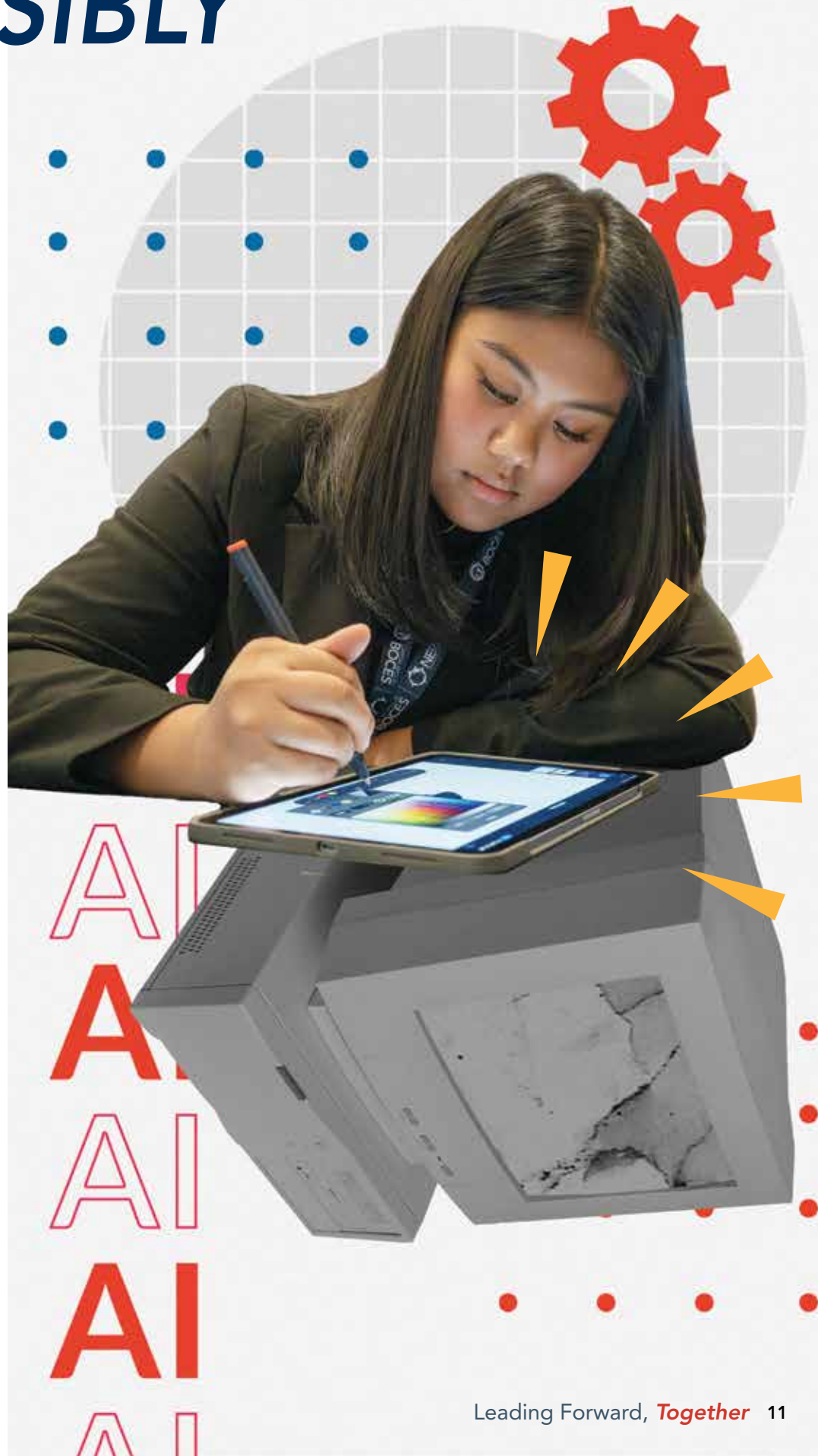


RESPONSIBLY



36th Annual Tech A-Day showcases innovation, AI and workforce-ready tech ed

A signature gathering for educational technology in the region, Technology Awareness Day, or Tech A-Day as it's commonly known, saw more than 700 educators, technology leaders, students and industry partners in attendance. This joint effort of BOCES and NERIC highlighted the role of technology in student-centered learning, AI, cybersecurity, accessibility and instructional innovation, all elements of preparing students for the modern workforce. To further explore employment readiness, NERIC Assistant Superintendent Mike Doughty conducted a conversation with New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) Deputy Commissioner Dana Politis. They discussed labor market trends, classroom innovation and the skills needed to thrive in emerging industries, particularly those shaped by AI and cybersecurity.





Empowering Leaders Across Our Region

Youth summit engages students

The fourth annual Elevating Student Voices (ESV) Youth Summit took place at Proctors Theatre, once again gathering Capital Region students for meaningful dialogue on what matters most to them, their schools and communities. The event is the culmination of a yearlong program that brings youth leaders together to share their perspectives and showcase the results of their collaborative efforts. Participating for a third year, Duanesburg senior Santino Bailey said at its roots ESV is about making sure the voices of the most under-represented students are heard and valued.

Student creativity spotlighted

The 37th annual Student Art Show celebrated the creativity, perspective and individuality of students from across the region. Curated as part of the Capital Region BOCES Arts in Education program, the art show featured over 200 pieces, ranging from digital art, paintings, drawings, sculptures and even a pair of hand-made earrings. "Each piece truly is a window into a unique mind, unique heart and a unique way of seeing the world. And that's the power of creativity, right? It asks nothing of us but to be honest and in return it gives us something that can't be measured—a voice, a vision,

“When students are empowered, schools become stronger, communities become more inclusive and issues that affect us most directly are addressed with honesty, creativity, and urgency...[ESV is] about recognizing that students are not the ‘future’ of change. We are part of what is happening right now.”

— Santino Bailey

”



2025-26 **FAST FACTS****78**

budget publications were designed and produced under the coordination of Engagement & Development Services Print Management and Design

3,012 GB

of digitized records for 33 school districts and 2 BOCES were hosted and managed by Records Management Laserfiche Service

164

class sections offered via Distance Learning and Virtual Teaching Services

154

special education students attended summer 2026 Extended School Year (ESY) program

2,800

professionals attended 146 training sessions conducted by Occupational Health, Safety & Risk

and the courage to share both with the world," said Karen Swain, Assistant District Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction.

BOCES and NERIC hold regional Security Summit

BOCES' Management Services division and NERIC co-hosted their first regional Security Summit, drawing more than 50 school administrators, law enforcement officers, safety personnel and technology directors. The event provided an overview of today's school security landscape, including a keynote address focused on sound decision-making under pressure and effective leadership during critical situations.

Web Team builds school communities connections

During the 2025-26 school year, Engagement and Development Services launched nine redesigned websites for school districts across the state. Developed in partnership with school leaders, each website was thoughtfully crafted to reflect the district's unique identity while advancing its communication goals. Every

site features enhanced navigation, high-quality content and accessibility, to ensure students, families, staff and community members can easily find the information they need. Supported by a team of web specialists, designers, content creators and communications specialists, these websites continue to evolve with the needs of each district, serving as dynamic communications tools that strengthen engagement and build trust with their communities.

Adult Practical Nursing helps launch in-demand careers

Seventy-seven adults participated in the Adult Practical Nursing program this past fall, positioning themselves for rewarding careers in healthcare. Through 1,100 hours of classroom and clinical training, the full-time, state-approved program prepares students to become licensed practical nurses by June, helping meet the growing demand for healthcare professionals.



RECOGNIZING OUR OWN

We are proud to recognize our employees and how the work they do exemplifies our guiding commitments through our Employee Recognition Program.



Louis Cutter

Management Services, Automotive Mechanic Foreman



Frank Rossetti

NERIC, Management Program Coordinator I



Chuck Gallup

NERIC, Program Coordinator II



Jason Stern

NERIC, Program Coordinator II



Commitment Award Recipients

These awards are given throughout the school year, September through June.



Extra Mile Award Recipient

Erica Miller

Engagement & Development Services Photographer

Erica's talent, dedication and commitment to excellence have made a meaningful impact on the districts and communities she serves. Through her photography, she captures authentic moments that tell compelling stories about teaching, learning and student engagement across New York state schools, helping districts connect with families, build community support and showcase the important work happening in their classrooms every day. Beyond her artistic skill, Erica is known for her professionalism, flexibility and willingness to go above and beyond, often traveling extensively and doing whatever it takes to capture the perfect image. Her collaborative spirit, reliability and desire to grow and contribute to the creative process reflect a true commitment to quality and service. Erica consistently exceeds expectations, making her a highly deserving recipient of this award.

RECOGNIZED BY OTHERS

We are humbled and honored to have received recognition regionally and nationally for the work we do on behalf of our students, schools and employees.

The **Engagement & Development Services** team was honored with more than **30 state and national public relations association awards** for creative and strategic communications work. The winning projects ranged from written works to videos to websites.



Arts and Library Program Manager **Annie Gersztoff** was named **president of the New York State School Library Systems Association**, where she will focus on building a strong network of support for school librarians.



Culinary Manager **Megan Kearney** has been recognized as the **2026 New York School Nutrition Association (NYSNA) Manager of the Year**



Special Education teacher **Micaela Broderick** has been named a **2026 WNYT NewsChannel 13 Top Teacher**.



Leading Forward *Together*

Annual Report for school year
2025-2026



Board of Cooperative
Educational Services
900 Watervliet-Shaker Rd.
Albany, NY 12205

518-862-4900

www.capitalregionboces.org

The Capital Region BOCES does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs, activities, employment, and admissions; and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Director of Human Resources, at hrdirector@neric.org, 518-862-4951, or 900 Watervliet Shaker Road, Albany, NY 12205.

Inquiries concerning the application of the Capital Region BOCES nondiscrimination policies may also be referred to the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), 32 Old Slip, 26th Floor, New York, NY 10005, phone: 646-428-3800, fax: 646-428-3843, TTY: 800-877-8339, or email: OCR.NewYork@ed.gov.