



The Year in Review

State High commencement was held at Memorial Field on June 2, 2023.



To Prepare Students for Lifelong Success
Through Excellence in Education



Annual Report

2022-2023

Our District

Situated in the heart of Pennsylvania, the State College Area School District serves a diverse community that combines a growing college town with suburban neighborhoods and working farms in the countryside. As the area's fourth largest employer, SCASD draws its students from a 150-square mile attendance area encompassing the Borough of State College and five surrounding townships.

Across eight elementary schools, two middle schools, a high school and the alternative Delta Program for middle and high school levels, our district annually serves an enrollment of about 6,800. Each year, our faculty and staff dedicate themselves to providing the best possible academic experiences for students — from an innovative STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) program for grades K-5 to the middle school foreign language classes and the diverse array of high school courses that include AP, Advanced, International Baccalaureate and Career and Technical Center opportunities. Our art, library and music departments districtwide excel in their fields; in fact, over the past decade the district has perennially received the Best Communities for Music Education Award. At the high school alone, students can choose from 73 clubs and activities, including 22 musical ensembles and 31 athletic teams.

Within this dynamic environment, our teachers and students shine. SCASD routinely garners awards for teaching, and district schools annually are highly ranked in state and national lists for instruction and learning opportunities. Four State High students in the past decade have been named U.S. Presidential Scholars, a rare honor, and each class typically includes several National Merit Scholarship finalists.

Additionally, we take pride in our special education services, K-12 counseling department, intervention and learning enrichment programs, and individualized education plans to accommodate all student needs. Our district is fully committed to promoting responsive instruction and equity, inclusivity and restorative practices so that all students, faculty and staff feel welcome and supported. In everything we do, we strive to meet the objectives spelled out by our Four Pillars and fulfill our core mission: To prepare students for lifelong success through excellence in education.

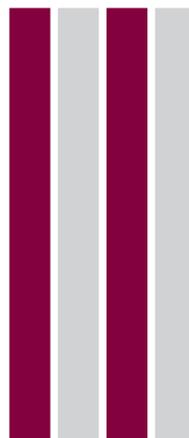


Veronica Iacobazzo, an International Baccalaureate teacher at State High, received the Faculty Excellence Award from the Mid-Atlantic Association of IB World Schools (IBMA) in 2023 for her outstanding work with students.

Four Pillars

The district's instructional focus, or road map, is based on four pillars, its prime objectives:

- » Data-informed, culturally-responsive teaching and learning
- » Collaborative community built on trust
- » Inclusive and supportive communities
- » High-performing organization



Demographics

American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.2%
Asian	8.6%
Black	2.7%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.1%
Hispanic	4.5%
White	76.7%
2 or More Races	7.2%

Year in Review

A new school year meant a new routine at Park Forest and Mount Nittany middle schools.

For the first time, sixth-graders followed a daily schedule aligned with seventh and eighth grades. Previously, the sixth-grade schedule contained fewer room changes to help the transition from elementary school. The change was made to facilitate academic and behavioral interventions and to enable students to take accelerated classes more easily.

The district also began the year with covering reduced-price meal payments for eligible students, using a combination of grants and Food Service Department funds, after federal funding no longer paid for free meals as it had in the past two years.

In October, Gray's Woods Elementary marked turning 20 with a spirited all-school assembly that kicked off a year-long celebration, including anniversary-related activities and a time capsule for 2042.

At Mount Nittany Elementary, librarian Dustin Brackbill and library paraprofessional Cheryl Anderson used a loaned "traveling suitcase" lesson kit to turn their library's Cultural Corner into a display celebrating Latin American people and cultures in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month.

Around the same time in the fall, Corl Street Elementary unveiled a mural of student artwork made by a team led by Shannon Goff, a Penn State art professor, and district art teachers Courtney Latorre and Shannon Stallings. The 24-foot mural consists of about 900 6-inch square tiles depicting drawings by Corl Street students.

Throughout the fall and winter, the Solar Power Purchasing Agreement Working Group, a co-op of 15 public entities including the district, continued working toward forming a collective solar power purchaser for potential energy savings and to promote green energy. SPPA



released a request for proposal for a developer and distributor, then began negotiating contracts with low bidders Prospect14, for generation, and DirectEnergy, for delivery and supply.

In November, longtime district teacher and administrator, Tonya Black, became the district's second director of equity, inclusion and belonging.

March saw Curtis Johnson (pictured above) named superintendent of schools, the first African American to lead the district. Johnson had been serving as interim superintendent for the past 10 months.

April featured the district library department's third K-12 SCASD Reads initiative, SCASD Reads for our Planet, to promote lifelong literacy, critical thinking, and positive student behaviors. In addition to the highlighted books, "Seeds, Bees, Butterflies and More: Two Poems" and "Two Degrees," the initiative included environmental and art activities, visits from Penn State scientists, and a family event at Radio Park Elementary.

State High Art Club and National Art Honor Society students capped a year-long effort by unveiling a vivid outdoor

amphitheater mural titled "Unity in Diversity," celebrating students' backgrounds, heritages, and cultures. Inspiration came from the school's theme for the year, "Unity is Key in 2023."

In June, Meredith Henderson moved from being Mount Nittany Middle School's assistant principal to become Easterly Parkway Elementary's new principal.

Quick Facts

- » 1,935 Individuals employed
- » 6,783 Students
- » 616 Students in Class of 2023
- » 4th Largest county employer
- » Average elementary class size: 20
- » Average grades 6-8 class size: 23
- » Average years teaching: 15
- » National Merit finalists: 11
- » 14th best district in Pennsylvania out of 495: Niche.com
- » \$183 million in total expenses
- » 96.5% 5-year cohort graduation rate
- » 663 Professional employees (teachers, nurses, counselors, psychologists)
- » 17 Professional employees with PhDs

Growing all Learners K-8

Classroom community is important to our elementary and middle school programs. Teachers work hard to sustain the positive relationships they build with their students throughout the year. We know that social and emotional well-being is key to supporting academic achievement and that's why we teach how to get along, share, deal with conflict, follow rules and be good citizens. All of our teachers and staff have been trained in the Restorative Practices approach, which emphasizes repairing relationships when handling conflict.



The district revamped its sixth grade model of education for the 2022-2023 school year by aligning its daily schedule with those for seventh and eighth grades, in order to facilitate interventions and academic enrichment.

At the elementary level, we emphasize differentiated instruction to meet individual student needs, as well as to create more effective learning environments. Students receive English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies as core subjects. Language arts focuses on reading and writing, while mathematics uses structured investigation, exploration and games to master concepts. Adhering to Next Generation Science Standards, the science curriculum develops in-depth understanding through collaboration, inquiry and problem-solving. In addition, five weekly specials are art, library, music, health and physical education, and STEM.

scope and sequence that included a new K-5 core reading resource: Into Reading.

Middle level students start learning French, Spanish or German while taking English, mathematics, science, social studies, art and general music courses. Social studies provides civics and economics instruction. Academic Literacy courses help students build critical thinking skills to analyze texts, and develop reading and metacognitive conversations through inquiry-based learning.

During the 2022-2023 year, the district adopted a revised K-12 ELA

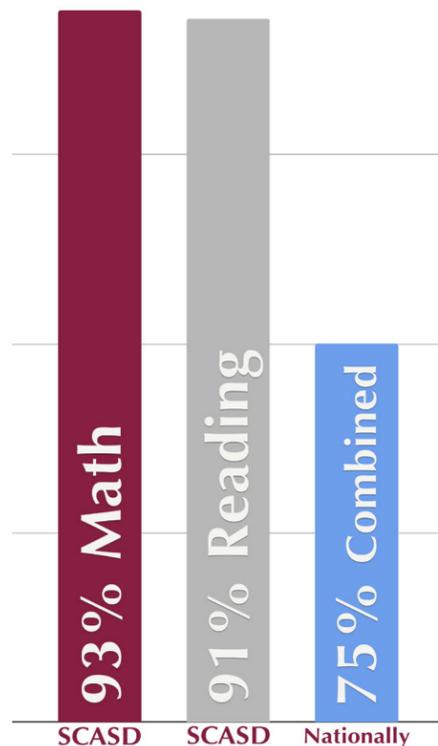
Measuring Success

We use multiple assessments to evaluate students' performance in order to continually adapt instruction. One example is our districtwide Measures of Academic Progress assessment results, which reflect our commitment to growth for all students.

a year or more worth of growth in math and reading.

Right: Overall, students in grades 2-8 performed at the 93rd percentile nationally for math and at the 91st percentile for reading, compared to the national average of the 75 percentile for both. Additionally, over 50% of our students performed in the top quartile in both reading and math, compared to only 25% nationally.

District Learners
 Special Education: 12.7%
 Gifted: 7%
 English Language Learners: 3.1%



In 2022-2023, each of our quartiles of elementary and middle school students demonstrated an average of

Secondary Students 9-12

State College Area High School provides challenging academic courses, comprehensive vocational/technical programs, and diverse extracurricular activities, contributing to it being ranked 43rd out of 750 Pennsylvania public high schools by U.S. News and World Report and in the top 3 percent of Niche.com's equivalent rankings. Niche.com also ranked the faculty in the top 3 percent statewide for quality of instruction.

State High consistently places graduates in the nation's top universities and colleges. From the Class of 2023, Penn State accepted 237. SAT scores annually surpass state and national averages, and athletic teams, music ensembles and clubs consistently garner honors. The 2023 graduating class of 616 included 237 Faculty Scholars (GPA of 4.00 or 3.75 unweighted).

During 2022-2023, 65 percent of students took rigorous courses, compared to the statewide average of 55 percent. Learning also occurred outside classrooms. Dozens of students received off-campus enrichment opportunities beyond the scope of the traditional curriculum, including Learning Enrichment, Advanced Option, independent study, research, lab experiences, Penn State courses, mentorships, and internships.

State High

- » 2,254 Total students 9-12
- » 96.5% 5-year cohort graduation rate
- » 73 Activities and clubs
- » 22 Bands, orchestras, choirs, string ensembles and rock ensembles
- » 31 Athletic teams
- » 73 Advanced Placement and advanced courses
- » 16 International Baccalaureate World Campus courses
- » 13 Career and Technical Center programs

SAT Scores	Reading and Writing	Math
State High	597	590
State Average	547	531
National Average	520	508

Advanced Placement

1,250 AP tests were taken with a maximum score of 5

- 86% Scored a 3 or higher
- 225 AP Scholars with an average score of 4.21



State High had 11 National Merit Scholarship finalists.

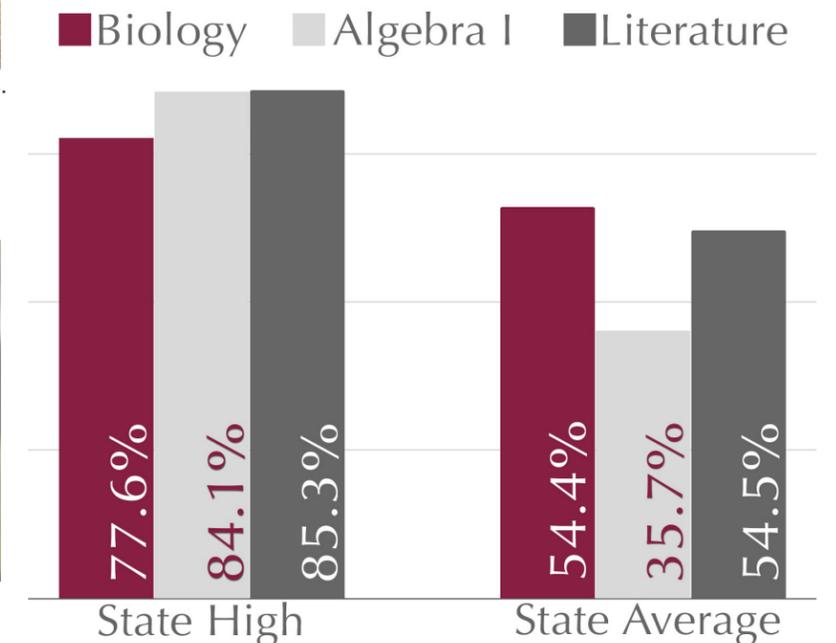
616 Graduates
 » 84% Attended college



Valedictorian Audrey Shu, left, and Salutatorian Emily Zhang.

The Keystone Exams

State High students annually outperform the state average on the Keystone Exams. The chart below shows a comparison of State High students who achieved proficiency vs. the PA state average for Keystone test scores in 2022-2023.



Finance

Historically, SCASD schools have benefited from strong community support for public education and consistent revenue streams from a stable economy centered around Penn State University. Total revenues for 2022-2023 were \$185,618,000, which is primarily funded by local revenue totaling \$147,502,944 (79%). The local revenues were derived primarily from levying taxes such as real estate tax, earned income tax and real estate transfer tax: \$113,489,000, \$21,639,000, and \$1,203,000, respectively. For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the district increased the real estate tax rate by 3.4% (equal to the Act I Index) or 1.5669 mill, resulting in a total of 47.6544 mills.* The tax rate increase followed two years without a change. In addition, the district experienced positive results with interest on investments (\$3,462,000), which is reflective of the improving economy created by the easing of the pandemic.

State revenues (\$34,631,929) were derived primarily from state subsidies for basic education and special education and a 50% reimbursement for social

Revenue Sources

Local: \$147,502,944: 79%
State: \$34,631,929: 19%
Federal: \$3,483,359: 2%

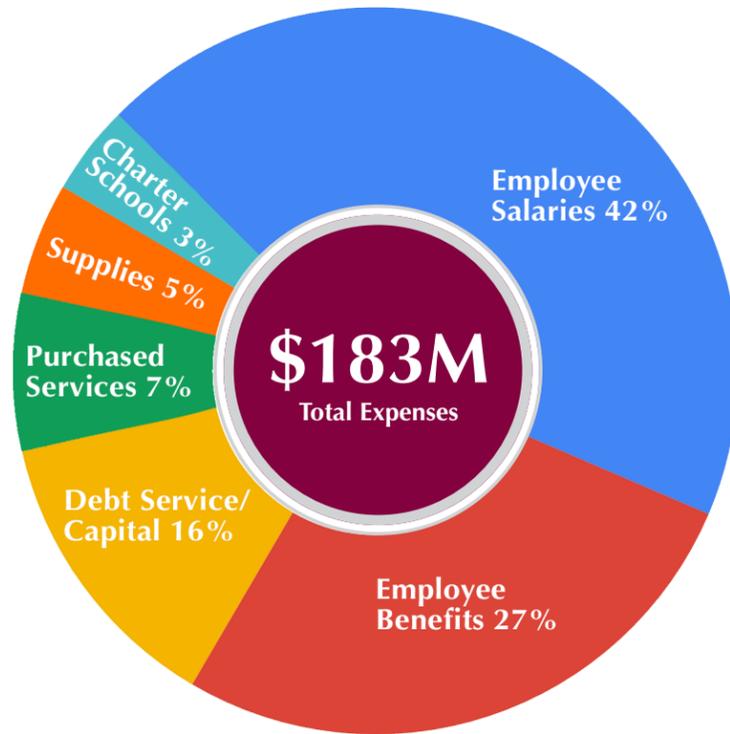
security and retirement costs, which totaled approximately \$30 million. Federal revenues were greater than budgeted by \$559,000 due to higher-than-budgeted reimbursable COVID-related grant expenditures, in addition to a greater-than-budgeted reimbursement from the special education Medical ACCESS Program.

Expenditures and other financing uses for the 2022-2023 fiscal year were \$183,445,000, compared to the 2021-2022 fiscal year of \$169,529,000 (8.2% increase). Salaries increased by \$2,791,000, and retirement and health insurance expenses increased by \$1,230,000 and \$985,000, respectively. The increases in purchased services were primarily related to security, psychological and legal services. Expenses for supplies along with purchased services increased mostly due to purchases being made with federal funds (ESSER grants) in response to the impact

90% of the budget is used directly to support student learning.

of the pandemic. Another point of note is the transfer to the Debt Service Fund was eliminated, with debt service payments now occurring in the General Fund.

For the eighth year, the district continued to offer the Supplemental Property Tax Rebate Program and issued over 200 rebates totaling \$57,449. Additionally, each



approved district homestead and farmstead received approximately \$137 in property tax relief.

Pennsylvania State Employees Retirement System payments continued to rise because of increases in salaries and the state-mandated contribution rate. Debt service included payments on the \$85 million high school referendum borrowing in addition to the financing for the remainder of the high school project, Memorial Field renovation, and three elementary school projects. The district continued setting aside resources for funding future expenditures as part of a long-term capital plan.

Charter School Expenses

The district's payment of \$5.8 million to charter schools for 329 students represented three percent of the budget. The amount was based on a state formula calculated using the district's actual per capita costs. While the district funds charter schools as required, it maintains no financial, academic or operational supervision, nor does it have evaluative authority over them.



Payments to charter schools rose from \$4.6 million in 2013 to \$5.8 million in 2023 due to the increase in per capita cost, while enrollment over that span declined from 403 to 329.

Facilities

Throughout the year, architects refined design plans for a new 10,000-square foot Physical Plant building located between Community Field and State High's North Campus. Intended to replace Physical Plant's headquarters in the Fairmount Building, the new facility will include district and athletic storage spaces. Construction bids for the \$5,280,900 project were approved on June 5, 2023.

Renovation designs for the former North Building Career and Technical Center area, next to the current Delta Program, progressed during 2022-2023. The renovated space eventually will house the district's Information Technology department, as well as the RIT Program and Virtual Academy after they move from the Fairmount Building. Construction bids for the \$2,647,753 project were approved on May 15, 2023.

In other facility news, SCASD commissioned the architectural firm of Crabtree, Rohrbaugh & Associates to prepare a districtwide facility and attendance boundary analysis focusing on district population and enrollment trends. CRA found that, collectively over the next five years, the elementary schools feeding Park Forest Middle School likely will decline in enrollment. However, CRA anticipates Park Forest Elementary's enrollment to increase in five years. During the same period, the collective enrollment for elementary schools feeding Mount Nittany Middle School is expected to increase.



Following a donation of \$875,000 for a new Memorial Field press box, bleachers and concession stand in 2021, alumnus Larry Beans, Class of 1962, donated \$125,000 through the SCASD Education Foundation for a new scoreboard.



At Mount Nittany Elementary, work began on converting three large group instruction rooms into full-time classrooms. Previously, the LGI spaces were located next to building corridors without barriers, leading to disruptions in the spaces between periods and limiting the use of them for meeting educational programming needs.

*Centre County School Tax Comparison

District	Mills	Median Assessed Value	Real Estate Tax	Earned Income Tax*	Total Tax
SCASD	47.6544	\$73,325	\$3,494	\$666	\$4,160
Bellefonte	51.4902	\$47,515	\$2,447	\$736	\$3,182
Bald Eagle	61.9800	\$35,220	\$2,183	\$1,437	\$3,620
Penns Valley	50.1677	\$45,270	\$2,271	\$911	\$3,182

*EIT Based on Centre County median income of \$70,087



Awards & Recognitions

Mount Nittany Middle School Orchestra teacher Matt Shaffer received the 2022-2023 Outstanding Music Education Alumni Award winner from the Penn State School of Music.

Faculty & Staff

Park Forest Middle School German teacher David Strock was a 2023 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year semi-finalist.

Cindy Sergeon received the 2022 Paving the Way to Education Success Advocate Award from the Pennsylvania Department of Education for her work as a district homeless and foster care liaison.



Lois Thompson, the certified school nurse at Ferguson Township and Radio Park elementary schools, received the 2023 School Nurse Excellence Award for the North Central Region of Pa. from the Pa. Association of School Nurses and Practitioners.



Radio Park Elementary kindergarten teacher Cheryl Isola, Mount Nittany Middle School director of bands Matt Nelson, and Mount Nittany Elementary fifth grade teacher Karen Rossman Styers were State College Magazine teachers of the year.

Park Forest Elementary Principal Jessica Quinter was chosen to be the Zone 2 Director for the National Association of Elementary School Principals, one of three directors nationwide.

Chris Rosenblum and Nabil Mark won first places in writing and photography, respectively, as well as two first-place publications awards in the Pennsylvania School Public Relations Association statewide communications contest.

Music

For the 19th time, the district received a Best Communities for Music Education in America designation from the National Association of Music Merchants.

The Middle School Choir and Symphonic Band, combined ensembles from Park Forest and Mount Nittany, each earned a first place at the Music in the Parks competition in Hershey. The symphonic band, which received a superior rating, also garnered the Best Overall Band award.

The State High Jazz Band, Master Singers and Symphonic Band earned first-place gold ratings for their performances at the WorldStrides Heritage Adjudication Festival. The Jazz Band and Master Singers also each earned the Adjudicator Award given to the festival's top band and choir.

State High students Karen Yee, Janae Hass, Ireland McDyre, Genavieve Clayton, Al Eburne, Nat Hickner, and Owen Parkinson were chosen for The Pa. Music Educators Association All-State Choir, as was their director, Erik Clayton.

Athletics

Jesse Myers won a gold medal in the 200M race at the state outdoor track and field championships, breaking his own school record time and helping the State High boys' team finish second. He was also second in the 400M and fourth in the 100M.

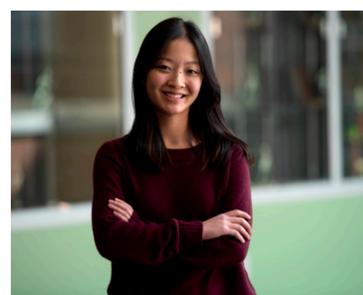


The 200-yard medley relay team of Jade Castro, Madison Watschke, Ally Koehle, and Molly Workman won a gold medal at the state swimming and diving championships. Coach Aaron Workman was recognized as the 2022-2023 Coach of the Year for AAA girls by the Pa. High School Swimming Coaches Association.

State High boys' golf coach Greg Wilson was named the 2021-2022 National Federation of State High School Associations/Pennsylvania Boys' Golf Coach of the Year.

The State High girls' cross country team finished second at the state cross country championships.

Academics



Emily Zhang was selected to be a U.S. Presidential Scholars Program candidate, among 5,000 semi-finalists nationwide.

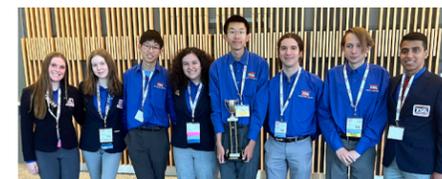
Abigail Sparrow, Avi Mazar, Miles McCormick, Sam Kilareski, and Abby Kilareski contributed to three first-place finishes at the DECA State Conference. Sparrow and Mazar earned a medal for the top entrepreneurship test score at the DECA International Career Development Conference in Orlando, Fla.



Ally Koehle won a gold medal in the nurse assisting competition at the HOSA State Leadership Conference.



Park Forest Middle School Technology Student Association chapter students won three state championships at the state TSA Leadership Conference and Competition: Natalie Branstetter and Sara Rothoff (community service video), Maggie Gulis and Benny Gulis (STEM animation), and Vanessa Weeseman and Sanai Purkait (challenging technology issues). At the national conference, PFMS won a championship in STEM animation and placed second in STEM children's stories.



Margo Wyckoff and Sienna Sullivan won first place in fashion design and technology at the state high school Technology Student Association competition. Wyckoff individually placed first in the future technology and engineering teacher category.

The Mount Nittany Middle School Mathcounts team of Rachel Zhang, Frank Hsu, Cole Steffie, and Even Zhang took second place at the Pennsylvania State Mathcounts Competition. Park Forest Middle School's Helen Kifer was the top female student in the state.

In the nationwide 3-2-1 academic competition, the Park Forest Middle School sixth grade Quiz Bowl team finished first in the state and nation. The PFMS 7th/8th grade Quiz Bowl team took first in the state and third in the nation.

Claire Chi was chosen as one of two Pennsylvania delegates to the prestigious United States Senate Youth Program.

Arts

The SCAHS Thespians' spring musical *Hello Dolly* garnered the best production award at the 18th annual Isaac Awards ceremony. The ensemble from the show took the best ensemble runner-up award. Madeleine Christopher won the best lead actor in a female role award, and Luca Snyder received the runner-up award for best supporting actor in a male role.



Directory

www.scasd.org

Elementary Schools (K-5)

Corl Street Elementary

235 Corl Street
State College, PA, 16801
Dr. Kelly Mark, principal
814-231-1185
Enrollment: 238

Easterly Parkway Elementary

234 Easterly Parkway
State College, PA, 16801
Susan Lunsford, principal
814-231-1170
Enrollment: 316

Ferguson Township Elementary

215 West Pine Grove Road
Pine Grove Mills, PA, 16868
Shelly Buckholtz, principal
814-231-4119
Enrollment: 311

Gray's Woods Elementary

160 Brackenbourne Drive
Port Matilda, PA, 16870
Dr. Kristen Dewitt, principal
814-235-6100
Enrollment: 369

Mount Nittany Elementary

700 Brandywine Drive
State College, PA, 16801
Mark Feldman, principal
814-272-5970
Enrollment: 431

Park Forest Elementary

2181 School Drive
State College, PA, 16803
Dr. Jessica Quinter, principal
814-231-5010
Enrollment: 430

Radio Park Elementary

800 West Cherry Lane
State College, PA, 16803
Alex Raup, principal
814-231-4115
Enrollment: 396

Spring Creek Elementary

217 Scholl Street
State College, PA, 16801
Paul Brigman, principal
814-231-5026
Enrollment: 369

Middle Schools (6-8)

Mount Nittany Middle School

656 Brandywine Drive
State College, PA, 16801
Brian Ishler, principal
814-272-4050
Enrollment: 641

Park Forest Middle School

2180 School Drive
State College, PA, 16803
Dr. Karen Wisner, principal
814-237-5301
Enrollment: 733

State College Area High School

650 Westerly Parkway
State College, PA, 16801
Laura Tobias, principal
814-231-1111
Enrollment: 2,254

Programs

Delta Middle Level (6-8)

653 Westerly Parkway
State College, PA, 16801
Dr. Jon Downs, director
814-231-1000
Enrollment: 135

Delta High School Level (9-12)

653 Westerly Parkway
State College, PA, 16801
Dr. Jon Downs, director
814-231-1000
Enrollment: 160

Virtual Academy

653 Westerly Parkway
State College, PA, 16801
Tina Chambers Greene, director
Jen Scudder, coordinator
814-231-1011 x2894
Enrollment: 27 (K-5) and 182 (6-12)



616 students graduated at Memorial Field on June 2, 2023.

Board of Directors

Dr. Peter Buck
Dr. Carline Crevecoeur
Dr. Dan Duffy
Amber Concepcion, President
Curtis Johnson, Superintendent
Gretchen Brandt, Vice President
Dr. Deborah Anderson
Laurel Zydney
Dr. Amy Bader
Jackie Huff

Pictured left to right

Email: all-board@scasd.org



Amber Concepcion resigned from the Board in January 2023. Jim Leous was then unanimously appointed to fill the vacant seat on Feb. 6, 2023 and Jackie Huff was voted in as president.

Administration

Curtis Johnson
Superintendent of Schools

Danielle Yoder
Assistant Superintendent of
Elementary Education

Christine Merritt
Interim Supervisor of Secondary
Education

Linda Pierce
Human Resources Executive
Director and Compliance
Officer

Randy Brown
Finance and Operations
Officer and Open Records
Officer



Curtis Johnson assumed the role of interim superintendent in June 2022 before being hired as superintendent on March 13, 2023.

Directors

Deirdre Bauer, Director of Curriculum K-5
Tonya Black, Director of Equity, Inclusion & Belonging
Mike Fisher, Director of Physical Plant
Justin Hetrick, Director of Technology
Jonathan Klingeman, Director of MTSS and
Intervention Support
Jeanne Knouse, Director of Student Services

Dr. Ben Mordan, Director of the CTC
Heather Pringle, Director of Special Education
Chris Rosenblum, Director of Communications
Jackie Saylor, Interim Director of Curriculum 6-12
Megan Schaper, Director of Food Services
Van Swauger, Director of Transportation
Chris Weakland, Director of Athletics

Registration

The district's registration office is open year-round to accept new students. Each spring, we host registration events for the next school year, including for kindergarten. For the latest information, please call our office at 814-231-1017 or visit our registration website. We look forward to welcoming your child.

www.scasd.org/Registration



The annual report is produced by Chris Rosenblum and Nabil Mark in the Communications Department.





The annual homecoming parade is a time-honored State High tradition.



2022-2023 Annual Report

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State College, PA, 16801
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