



# ICSD Legacy

Engage Educate Empower EVERYONE

Ithaca City School District | April 2018 ICSD LEGACY

## ENV CONTACTS

ENV Insurance Agency, the district's new employee and retiree benefits consultant, can help with:

- Employee benefit questions (medical, dental, flex, etc.)
- New ID card requests
- COBRA questions
- Claims issues
- Provider or network questions

**The Call Center is available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.**

**Phone:** (315) 641-5848

**Toll Free:** (800) 887-9146

**Email:** [callcenter@insurewithenv.com](mailto:callcenter@insurewithenv.com)

## TST BOCES CONTACTS

TST BOCES, as the district's employee benefits management service, offers information regarding:

- Former and current bargaining agreement items
- Payroll deductions for active employees
- Retiree health insurance rates
- Changes to your address or family status

**The Employee Benefits Specialist is available from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.**

**Phone:** (607) 257-1551, ext. 1037

**Email:** [ithaca.benefits@tstboces.org](mailto:ithaca.benefits@tstboces.org)

## ICSD HEALTH INSURANCE WEBSITE

<http://www.ithacacityschoools.org/districtpage.cfm?pageid=1027>

## ICSD CONTACTS

Business Office/Marta Costa-Potter

**Phone:** (607) 274-2121

**Email:** [marta.costapott@icsd.k12.ny.us](mailto:marta.costapott@icsd.k12.ny.us)

## Message from the Superintendent



Greetings, retirees! I certainly hope that you enjoyed the first issue of the ICSD Legacy and found it to be a welcome news source that reconnected you with the Ithaca City School District.

This edition of the ICSD Legacy contains a variety of information that we thought would be of interest to you, again involving retiree health care and other contemporary news items.

If there is other information that you would like us to provide for you, please let us know by emailing us at [icsdcommunications@icsd.k12.ny.us](mailto:icsdcommunications@icsd.k12.ny.us). This publication is for you.

Also, if I may be so bold as to ask a favor of all of you, in your contact with your fellow retirees would you please check if they are also receiving this publication. We would love to include everyone who has committed their working years to the children of the Ithaca City School District and recognize that our mailing database is not comprehensive.

Be well!

Dr. Luvelle Brown

*Superintendent, Ithaca City School District*

## Students, Staff Honored at March Commendations

ICSD students and staff were recognized March 13 for extraordinary achievements during the Board of Education's March Commendation Ceremony.

The quarterly event celebrates the achievements of Team ICSD members who go above and beyond in academics, the arts, sports or the community. Those honored in March include sports teams, coaches, the district's grounds and maintenance team, Northeast Elementary third-graders, and outstanding academic achievers.



**Students shaking hands with Dr. Brown and the Board of Education at March's commendation ceremony.**

To nominate someone for June's Commendation Ceremony, or to see a full listing of March honorees, visit <http://www.ithacacityschoools.org/districtpage.cfm?pageid=1201>.

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## Retiree Health Insurance Information

### REMINDER: Ask your provider if they take Medicare, rather than the Hartford.

#### I'm about to turn 65. What changes should I expect in my health insurance?

When you reach the age of 65, you may become eligible for Medicare health coverage. It is your responsibility to ensure you are properly enrolled in Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B.

When you become eligible for Medicare and are no longer employed, your current health insurance will become secondary to Medicare. Once you provide proof of Medicare Part B coverage, you will receive a reduced rate on your Ithaca City School District health coverage cost. Depending on the bargaining agreement under which you retired, you will be enrolled in the Hartford for the remainder of your health insurance or you may have a one-time option to stay with the BCBS plan at a higher cost if you qualify.

#### IMPORTANT MEDICARE PHONE NUMBERS:

**1-800-633-4227 (Medicare):** This is the general Medicare number where you can get general or claims-specific Medicare information and make changes to your Medicare coverage.

**1-800-701-0501 (Health Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program):** This is the phone number for the New York State Health Insurance Assistance Program, where you can get personalized Medicare counseling at no cost to you.

**1-800-772-1213 (Social Security Administration):** This is where you can get a replacement Medicare or Social Security card, report a change to your address or name, find out if you're eligible for Part A and/or Part B and how to enroll, apply for extra help with Medicare prescription drug costs, ask questions about Part A and Part B premiums, and report a death.

**1-800-999-1118 (Medicare Coordination of Benefits Contractor):** You can use this number to find out if Medicare or your other insurance pays first, to report your other health insurance plans or to report changes in your insurance information.

## Focus On Wellness

### Getting Rid of Unwanted Medicine

No matter what type of medicine you take, make sure to follow your doctor's advice about how to take it, and find out the safest way to throw away medicines that are expired or no longer used. Use these drug disposal tips to help prevent people and animals from taking medicines that aren't intended for them:

- Find out if your local trash and recycle center, pharmacy, or hospital offers a medicine take-back program or a place to drop off medicine. Ask your pharmacist if he or she knows of one.
- If there is not a take-back program or drop-off box near you: Mix medicine with a substance that doesn't taste good such as cat litter, sawdust, or coffee grounds; place the mixture in a container like a sealed plastic bag; and put the container in your household trash. Do not crush tablets or capsules or flush them down the toilet.

*Content provided by Excellus.*

## 2018-19 Proposed Budget Includes Tax Rate Decrease

The ICSD's 2018-19 proposed budget includes an anticipated tax levy (the amount of money to be raised via property tax revenue) of \$87.59 million; meanwhile, the tax rate is anticipated to drop by 32 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value.

The proposed budget includes an increase of \$3,777,376, or 3.03%, over the current 2017-18 budget. This spending plan continues to provide quality educational programs, opportunities and support services for students and provides funds to maintain our facilities. Increases for contractual salaries and benefits are included as well as the creation of new positions and programs. These enhancements include:

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** Professional development stipends in newly settled bargaining agreements; TOSA for Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices; Culturally Responsive Practices Certification Program; Anti-Marginalization Curriculum Development.

**INCLUSIVE SUMMER SCHOOL:** Expansion of an ICSD AIS Summer School to be fully inclusive

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

Date	Time	Location	Performance
May 23	7:30 p.m.	IHS Kulp Auditorium	IHS Spring Band Concert
May 29	7:30 p.m.	IHS Kulp Auditorium	IHS Spring Orchestra Concert
June 6	7:30 p.m.	IHS Kulp Auditorium	IHS Spring Choral Concert
June 7	6:00 p.m.	LACS	LACS Spring Concert
June 12	5:30 p.m.	IHS Kulp Auditorium	Commendation Ceremony
June 20	6:00 p.m.	IHS Kulp Auditorium	LACS High School Graduation
June 21	7:00 p.m.	IC Athletics & Events Ctr	Ithaca High School Graduation

Full ICSD calendar: <http://www.ithacacityschoos.org/districtpage.cfm?pageid=40>  
 Athletic event schedule: <http://www.ithacacityschoos.org/districtpage.cfm?pageid=1052>  
 Fine and Performing Arts: [http://www.fabgithaca.org/event\\_list](http://www.fabgithaca.org/event_list)

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for grades K-8. Summer programming will include daily skills blocks coupled with interdisciplinary project based learning.

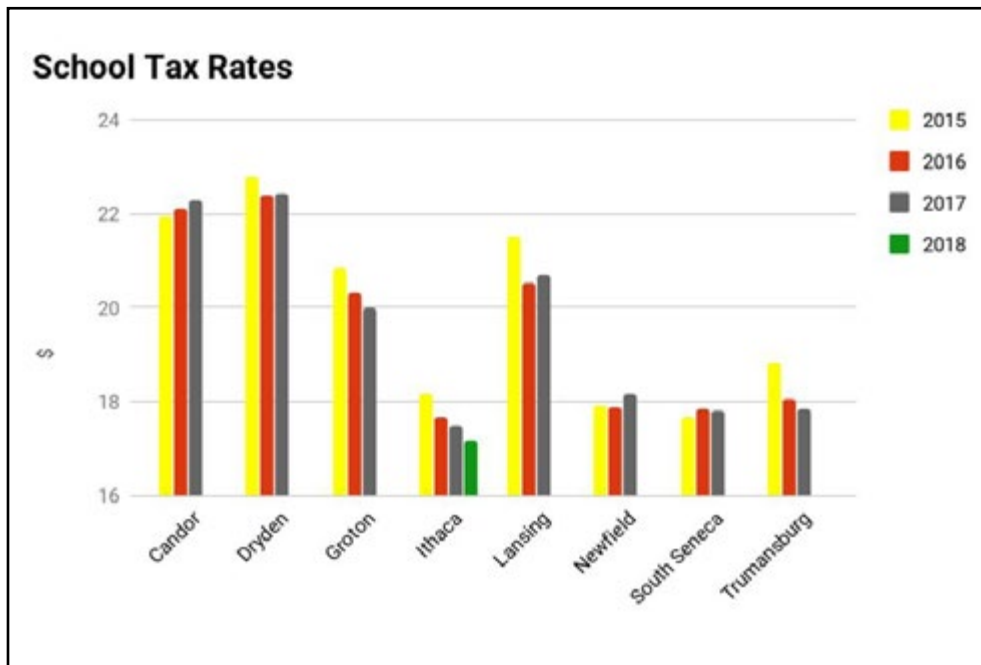
**SECURITY ENHANCEMENTS:** Technology specialist to manage keyless entry system and video cameras provided via the district’s Smart Schools Allocation; Expansion of NaviGate Prepared school safety software.

**MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT:** Professional Development regarding Trauma informed instruction; Dignity Act Audit(s); enhanced mental health support services.

**ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT:** Creation of a Dean of Students and Master educator positions at Ithaca High School; 11-month Assistant Principal at Enfield Elementary.

**CAPITAL OUTLAY (\$100,000):** Remodeling of bathrooms and/or entryways across the district.

For more information on the 2018-19 proposed budget, visit <http://www.ithacacityschoos.org/districtpage.cfm?pageid=214>.



***This graph shows school tax rates from 2015 to 2018 in the Ithaca City School District as well as neighboring districts. The ICSD's school tax rate has dropped each year since 2015 and is proposed to decrease by 32 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value in the proposed 2018-19 budget.***

## **ITHACA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Dr. Luvelle Brown, Superintendent  
400 Lake Street  
Ithaca, NY 14850  
(607) 274-2101

## **RETIREE SPOTLIGHT: *GO tutors provide guidance to ICSD students***

Golden Opportunity (GO), which provides one-on-one tutoring to Ithaca City School District students, thrives largely due to the efforts of retired ICSD educators.

The organization, founded in 2005 by ICSD retiree Marty Kaminsky, provides free tutoring and mentoring services to over 70 students from low-income families.

Over 60 percent of GO tutors have ICSD roots, said Executive Director Kolby Harrell. About 25 are ICSD retirees, while 12 are still actively working as teachers or teacher aides.

The skills retirees developed over decades in the classroom – knowledge, resources, best practices, patience, adaptability – are essential to GO's mission, Harrell said.

"They are deeply passionate about helping students thrive in school and in life," Harrell said. "They have the passion and heart of an educator. They've dedicated their lives to helping students reach their full potential, and they're not quite ready to stop."

GO tutors also meet with teachers to set learning goals; attend curriculum nights, parent-teacher conferences and response-to-intervention meetings; and help students develop study habits and positive attitudes toward school.

Some relationships between tutors and students last for several years. Denise Gelberg, who retired in 2006 after a 30-year career in ICSD elementary schools, has



**Denise Gelberg reads with a student. (Photo by GO tutor and ICSD retiree Jo Marcia Todd)**

worked with an eighth-grade boy for seven years. She also recently started working with a second-grade girl.

"To actually see them grow up is a real treat," Gelberg said. "I think I'm part of his life now, and he's become part of my whole family's life. It's been a lovely experience."

Gelberg's involvement with GO began after she found herself wanting to continue working with children after retirement. "I knew I was going to miss the children, so when Golden Opportunity came on my radar, I thought, isn't that a great way to have at least one kid in my life?" she said. "I love spending time with them and seeing them try to figure out the world and their place in the world."

The students find it beneficial to have a person focused only on them, Gelberg said. "A lot of time it's just having time to listen

to them, which is really great for the kid, and I enjoy it too," she said. "It's like having another person in your corner."

Kathy Faben, like Gelberg, wanted to continue working with children after she retired from Caroline Elementary School in 2010. Since starting that fall, she has worked with three students; she currently tutors boys in sixth and second grades.

Spending time with a student one-on-one is "a much more low-key, but still satisfying, way to keep teaching," said Faben, who likes to use games to help students learn. "We have a good time, but they're learning at the same time. They've already been through a whole day of school when we work together for an hour afterwards. I don't want to make it all school. I want to make it fun, too."

GO also helps Faben feel like she can still contribute the skills she acquired during her ICSD career.

"It's such a nice thing that Marty Kaminsky did with creating this program. It does provide a way for us to feel useful in our retirement," she said. "He aimed specifically for kids who, if their families had the means, would probably hire a tutor but because they don't, this provides them with this service that I hope is making a difference. I'm so proud to be a part of this program."