



News about...

January 2018

Urban **US** Suburban

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The Tale of Sibling Preference

October 2, 2017 marked the beginning of the application process for the 2018-2019 school year for the Urban-Suburban Program. As can be expected, parents' awareness is heightened as they seek the best educational opportunities for their students. Questions abound regarding the selection process.

How are students selected for the program?

The Urban-Suburban Program has a thorough selection process. Students are selected to participate in the program following a district level review of student report cards, test scores, attendance records, and family/student interviews. Each application is reviewed based upon its own merit. Districts must have space for the students that live in their districts, and then the program has the opportunity to fill available space.

One of the most commonly asked questions: Is there sibling preference?

No, the Urban-Suburban Program does not select students based on sibling preference. Each applicant's file is reviewed on its own merit.

Parents with multiple children often apply to the program, in hopes that their children will not only be accepted into the program, but within the same school or district. This may not be the case. While there are instances in which siblings may end up in the same school or district, oftentimes, families end up with children in multiple districts.

Tina Cook, was an active parent in the Urban-Suburban Program with children in multiple districts. Below, she talks about her experiences balancing these responsibilities and offers tips to families in this situation as well.

The question of why siblings are in different school districts comes up every year. As a parent of six children who were in the Urban-Suburban Program but not all in the same school district, I can say I asked that question too. My family participated in the Urban-Suburban Program from 1995 to 2017.

My first two children were accepted into the program as they each entered first grade, one year apart in the Pittsford Central School District. When my third child was going into first grade, she did not get accepted into the program and was in the Rochester City School District. My fourth child was accepted into the program in first grade, but at Wheatland-Chili Central School District. At this point, I had four children in three different school districts.



Tina Cook

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Participating Districts:

Brighton
Brockport
East Irondequoit
East Rochester
Fairport
Hilton
Penfield
Pittsford
Rochester
Rush-Henrietta
Spencerport
Webster
West Irondequoit
Wheatland-Chili

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EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

When my third child (remember the one who didn't get in at first grade) was going into 6th grade, I received a call saying she was accepted into Fairport School District. At the same time, my fifth child was accepted into first grade at Pittsford. So, I sat in the car and had to contemplate whether I was going to accept these placements and take on more ripping and running from one side of the county to another, or was I going to decline the placements and take the chance that my children would be accepted in the same school district the next year.

I had to ask myself what was my ultimate goal? Why was it important for me to have my children involved in the Urban-Suburban program? My answer was...**Access to good education and opportunity**. I ultimately accepted the placements. The next year, my 6th child was accepted at Pittsford and was at the same school as her brother.

Looking back, I have to say although it would have been easier for **me** to have my children in the same school district, I believe each of my children received what they needed from the school district they were in. I believe they each grew and flourished in their own school districts, and the education they each obtained met my goal of them having access to good education and opportunity. So, do our children always need to be in the same school district? I don't believe so. I believe when we parents accept a placement for our children, we must acknowledge **we** also are Urban-Suburban participants and **we** go on the journey **with** our children. I also believe when the school administrators review our children's application material, they look at the strengths of our children and consider what their school district can offer them to enhance their strengths and help them be the best well rounded student they can be. I am sure they struggle with not keeping siblings together, but I believe placing children where they can best grow and learn is the priority.

As I went on this education journey with my children, I had to embrace and believe that whatever school district my child was in...it was for them. I had to see each of them as individuals and unique. With that in mind, I used the tips below to assist me in keeping my sanity as I managed all of our schedules.

1. Use one of the district's calendars to keep all of the students'/family events. Many of the districts have all the school events on one calendar (ie, Pittsford's calendar is inclusive of all academic buildings).
2. Review the calendar no later than Sunday so you can prepare for the week. Know if there are conflicts and make adjustments as needed.
3. When your children begin to take interest in activities, have rules about how many activities your family can effectively participate in. When you allow your child to participate, you are also agreeing to be a full and complete participant. Your presence at their events is very important (ie, students must stay for the entire band concert)!
4. Know that it is okay to say NO. Many times, we try to make sure our student is involved in everything, especially if they are new to the district. This is not always helpful to them or to you. Pick and choose.
5. Become a friend to other parents in the Urban-Suburban Program. Utilize the US staff to assist you in getting to know other parents in your school districts. At the parent meetings, be friendly; get to know the parents. Carpool with other parents to get your students to and from events.
6. Get to know parents in the school district; call your child's friend's parents and introduce yourself. Meet for coffee. Once you are comfortable with the family, allow your child to visit. You and your children should have friends (acquaintances) in the districts.
7. You and your family should attend events in the community where they attend school. Get to know the community. You will become comfortable with the community, and it will become easier to allow your child to spend time outside of school there.
8. Stay informed—do this by attending the parent/teacher conferences, open houses and accessing the parent portals if applicable. Know what is expected of you and your students.
9. Communicate with your child's counselor and teacher, especially if you have a conflict with parent/teacher meetings, open houses etc. Most often they will be flexible and make arrangements that meet your schedule. Be flexible; sometimes the meetings can be very early in the day or right after school. Make sure they know you have students in different school districts.
10. When possible, make doctor appointments afterschool. This way you are not spending a lot of time going back and forth to multiple schools, and your student is not missing school.

Urban-Suburban welcomes new Communications Assistant

Please welcome the newest member of the Urban-Suburban team, Shawanda Evans. Mrs. Evans began her career with Urban-Suburban Interdistrict Transfer Program in November 2017 as Communications Assistant. In this position, she is a liaison for students, parents, partners and participating school administrators. Mrs. Evans's primary responsibilities include student placement and student support services.

Mrs. Evans is an alumna of School of the Arts. Following graduation, she attended Virginia State University and Roberts Wesleyan College, receiving a bachelors of science in interdisciplinary studies and master of education in inclusive and childhood education respectively.

Prior to joining the Urban-Suburban Program, Mrs. Evans worked for Hillside Family of Agencies where she worked in various capacities, most recently as the Alumni Relations Coordinator for the Hillside Children's Foundation. She prides herself on her strong ties to the community, and is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Mrs. Evans is excited about joining the Urban-Suburban team and has a lot of resources to share.

"The Urban-Suburban program has transformed the lives of students and families for over 50 years. The program serves as the gateway to new experiences and learnings for students, families, school districts and our communities. As a member of the Urban Suburban team, I'm honored to have the opportunity to serve and to assist students in families in gaining more access and opportunities within local districts, the greater Rochester community and beyond."



Parent Group Meetings for the Remainder of the 2017-2018 School Year

- **Athletics & Academics**
February 1, 2018 at 7pm at #9 School, 485 N. Clinton Ave.
- **Youth & Family Fair**
February 13, 2018 at 7pm at Wilson Foundation Academy, 200 Genesee St.
- **Cultural Diversity**
March 21, 2018 at 12pm at Brighton Administration Building, 2035 Monroe Ave.

Please Note:

You are required to attend a minimum of **two** Parent Meetings per year. If you do not meet your Parent Meeting requirement, you will be referred to the superintendent of your district.

Summer 2017: Urban-Suburban, Pittsford Schools and YMCA Camp Cory – Uniting Kids

This summer, 26 Pittsford Urban-Suburban students enjoyed the beauty and magic of overnight camp at YMCA Camp Cory. I was down at Camp Cory often this summer to greet our campers and their families as they arrived on Sunday afternoon. Moms and dads helped set up bunks, enjoyed a mini tour of camp, stopped by the camp store and... returned to their cars for the ride home. Some shedding a few tears.

I like to stay a bit longer and watch how expertly the cabin counselors guide their campers through fun “get to know you” activities. Before you know it, new friendships begin to form and the campers settle in for family-style dinner in the dining hall where they learn decades-old camp songs and take part in all the goofy traditions that make camp... camp. Camp Cory’s counselors are enthusiastic, compassionate and creative. Many are former campers themselves, and their love for Camp Cory inspires our new campers to look to the future and dream about being a counselor themselves. There were international counselors as well from Scotland, Columbia, Paraguay and Great Britain. Camper, Samari Brown shared, “They make it seem like there’s another world out there that I can’t wait to explore.”



Summer 2017 was the best yet because we had 16 returning campers, some celebrating 3 amazing summers at Camp Cory. These experienced campers were a reassuring presence for our 10 brand new campers and their families. Throughout all 8 sessions of camp, children from diverse backgrounds played, laughed and splashed together. They learned to play guitar, kayak, prepare outdoor meals, create skits and swim together. Many zip-lined, log rolled, and canoed, and they all sat around the camp fire and listened to stories. Their love of the outdoors blossomed and their sense of independence grew. I caught up with a few recently and asked them to share their favorite parts of camp.

My favorite part of camp was going in the lake for the first time. I will forever keep the memory of paddle boarding with my cabin. I discovered that I am independent; I’m okay with being away from my parents for a week.
—Keturah Lockett camper ‘17

What I discovered about myself was that I made a lot of friends. I say this because when I first showed up to camp I didn’t want to make any friends, but I ended up making many.
—Kelis Ruiz ‘17

My favorite part of camp was rest hour. This was my favorite part of camp because it was relaxing and I got to hang out with my friends. I discovered that I’m actually good at canoeing because I tried it, and it was very simple.
—Kirsten Ruiz ‘17

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I feel like I grew more independent. I don't really feel like I need my parents to help me with everything. I have skills to do things on my own. I'd have to say my favorite part of the summer would be either meeting new people or devotion at night time. —Jamal Lewis '16 & '17 camper

(Devotion or “devo time” is when campers reflect over their day with the guidance of their cabin counselors identifying the bright spots and any opportunities for growth.)

My cabin and I were close... we learned that we can depend on one another if we need to. Although we would be competitive in the games we played, we always knew that as long as we kept a smile on our face and felt happy for one another, we'd make it through. I'm more used to camp and I'm not afraid to be who I am because I now know that there are people at camp who are exactly like me. I'm not shy and I'm no stranger to camp. It let me know that I can make friends everywhere I go. —Samari Brown '15, '16 & '17 camper

Lastly, if you would like to learn more about Camp Unites Kids or get involved with our 2nd Annual KICKS for Campers Kickball Tournament Scholarship Fundraiser, please call or email. We need your help!

KICKS for Campers 2018
Kickball Tournament & Scholarship Fundraiser

May 12, 2018
5:00–8:30PM
Mendon High School

***This year parents can play too!**

Thank you!

Jeanne Strazzabosco
Camp Cory Board & Camp Unites Kids Volunteer Coordinator
(585) 943-6031
jeannestrazzabosco@gmail.com

Urban-Suburban Interdistrict Transfer Program

3 on 3 Basketball Tournament!

The Urban-Suburban Program is hosting its 4th annual basketball tournament with 100% of the proceeds supporting the Urban-Suburban Scholarship Fund. This tournament will consist of teams in the middle school division (grades 6-8), high school division (grades 9-12), Foul Shooting and 3 Point Competition (open to all). Concessions will be sold, and there will be door prizes and more! **Admission is FREE!**

Date: Saturday, March 3, 2018

Time: 10am – 12pm: Middle School Tournament;
 12pm – 1pm: Foul Shooting & 3 Point Competition;
 1pm – 3pm: High School Tournament

Location: Pittsford Mendon High School,
 472 Mendon Road, Pittsford, NY 14534



REGISTER YOUR TEAM!

Register by Friday, February 16, 2018 for instant prizes!

- **Registration Fee:** \$30 per team if received by Feb. 16, or \$40 if received Feb. 17 through March 3, 2018.
- **Team must consist of 4 players:**
 2 program participants & 2 suburban students
 (co-ed teams welcomed)
- More details and registration form can be found at www.monroe.edu/usball18



VOLUNTEER!

- **Opportunities include:** referees, concession stand, sign in table, score keeper, set up and award table
 Students receive **community service hours**
- **For more information:** please contact Felicia A. Smith, Program Director, at (585) 249-7046 or email felicia_smith@boces.monroe.edu



DONATE!

- Sponsor a Team (\$30)
- Granola Bars
- Prepackaged Chips
- Prepackaged Cookies
- Gatorade
- Door Prizes
- **For more information:** please contact Felicia A. Smith, Program Director, at (585) 249-7046 or email felicia_smith@boces.monroe.edu



2017 High School Tournament Champions



2017 Middle School Tournament Champions



2017 Tournament Sponsors

Urban-Suburban Science Bowl Teams Attend NOBCCHE National Science Bowl in Minneapolis, MN

On October 30–November 2, the Urban-Suburban Science Bowl Teams traveled to Minneapolis, MN to compete in the NOBCCHE (pronounced No-be-shay) STEM Week and National Science Bowl, Juniors level. There are two teams consisting of resident and Urban-Suburban students from participating Urban-Suburban school districts. Both teams competed in seven rounds of STEM science and Black Science History trivia competition.

Janaii Smith, 8th grader at Iroquois Middle School, West Irondequoit Central School District, was a member of the first team. Team 1 finished first overall, winning the gold medal.

Abigail Bowen, 5th grader at Iroquois Middle School, West Irondequoit Central School District, and **Jacyn Burch**, 8th grader at Twelve Corners Middle School, Brighton Central School District, were members of the second team. Team 2 finished second place, winning the silver medal.

Prophecy and Philiastophia Woods, 6th and 7th graders respectively at A.D. Oliver Middle School, Brockport Central School District, are also proud members of the Urban-Suburban Science Bowl Team. All members worked diligently and demonstrated their commitment and dedication, participating in weekly practices and taking advantage of learning opportunities to enhance their skills. The team participated in the FIRST LEGO League Robotics competition in November. This spring, they are scheduled to participate in the Department of Energy National Science Science Bowl in Buffalo, NY. In May, they will also build solar cars to compete in the Junior Solar Car Races in Buffalo, NY.



Student Corner

Red Ribbon Week

At our October 26, 2017 parent meeting, Parent Advisory Council (PAC) representative for Webster, Mrs. Cheryl Poole, facilitated an exercise in honor of Red Ribbon Week. Elementary school level students in attendance were asked to pledge to stay drug free and complete a written exercise containing the following statement “Today I pledge to stay drug free so when I grow up I can be a...”

Jussara Hunter, 5th grader at Scribner Road Elementary School in Penfield Central School District, was the first to take the pledge and submit her write-up. She wrote “I want to be a super star student and get good grades. I want to also fulfill my dream of being a soccer player or a doctor. People who do bad drugs can’t always fulfill their dreams.” In recognition of her commitment and participation, Jussara received a complimentary ticket to the Step Jam 2017 on December 9, 2017 at the Blue Cross Arena. Keep aiming for your dreams, Jussara!



Kahmari Ward performs in Calkins Road Middle School’s 2017–2018 6th Grade Musical

Kahmari Ward is in the 6th grade at Calkins Road Middle School. This is her first year in the program, and she is immersing herself into her new school environment and taking advantage of new opportunities. On October 27th and 28th, she performed in the school’s annual 6th grade musical. This year’s production was the “Lion King Jr.” Kahmari played the role of a hyena. She auditioned for the part, and was an active participant in rehearsals.

Good job, Kahmari. We look forward to seeing you on the stage again in the future!



Back-to-School Events

During September and October, some of our participating schools held Back-to-School events for their Urban-Suburban students. These events kicked-off the beginning of the school year and allowed the students across grade levels to interact with one another, school personnel, and Urban-Suburban staff. Pictures from these events can be seen on these next few pages.



Penfield High School

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Back-to-School Events



Sutherland High School



West Irondequoit

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Back-to-School Events



East Rochester



Fairport High School



Brighton High School

(continued on next page)

Back-to-School Events



Brockport High School



Twelve Corners Middle School

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Back-to-School Events



Johanna Perrin Middle School



Calkins Road Middle School



East Irondequoit Middle School



Visit the Urban-Suburban Program Web site at:
www.monroe.edu/US

A program of

