



Monthly Bulletin

October 2007

Dr. Patrick Michel
Superintendent of Schools

www.monticelloschools.net

Message from the Superintendent addressing important issues

Our school year has started out extremely well with very positive feedback from our students, teachers and parents. I have been struggling with what to write for this letter because there are two important themes that have emerged during the month of September. I will try to address them both.

Last year we were faced with a considerable tax increase. We decided to attack this issue immediately. Working as a team with our Board of Education, administrators, teachers and community members, we were able to do something about it. People have asked me how they ended up with a tax cut in the towns of Thompson and Mamakating and a significantly smaller tax increase in the towns of Bethel and Forestburgh. There are two reasons. First, we adopted the conservative fiscal policies we spoke about right away. Through very responsible fiscal management we were able to bring costs down. We also had some luck on our side.

The new Governor changed the way we receive State Aid. By doing so, we saw a significant increase in the monies we received from the state last year. There were strings attached and we had to create a "Contract for Excellence." We were told that we would have to apply most of the additional money we received to new and improved programs. If we had kept the policies of the past and had not received additional State Aid, we would never have been able to create such a reasonable budget and taxpayers would have seen a significant increase in their property taxes.

I have also been asked many questions about the current school redesign. Parents are apprehensive and confused because school no longer looks and feels like it did when they were in school. It is even different for parents of recent graduates. It is only natural to be nervous and to ask questions. Due to the fact that the world has changed, the way we educate also must change. If we wish to continue to fail the majority of our students academically, we can hold onto the past - I know none of us want that. So the reality of the situation is that our school structure will have to change even further if we are to adapt to the continual changes in the global economy. In the not so distant future, many experts even speculate that school will no longer be confined to a building and textbooks.

I will be sure to give you opportunities to ask your questions and do my best to address your concerns. Please contact me if you wish to talk further and thank you for your continued support.

Firehouse Chats to resume this year

In an effort to continue the open dialogue among school administrators, parents and the general public, the Monticello Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Patrick Michel have decided to continue their Firehouse Chat series of talks with the community. The chats allow for community members to ask questions and make comments directly to top school officials about plans and concerns for the upcoming school year. It also allows district administrators to discuss the school budget with the community in an open and relaxed environment. **Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend.** The following is the information for the first two chats:

Monticello Firehouse: Wednesday, Oct. 10, 7 p.m.

(Please Note: the Monticello meeting will be combined with the EPIC Parents Group Open Forum scheduled for the same night)

Rock Hill Firehouse: Thursday, Oct. 25, 7 p.m.

Quick CLIPS

The Village of Monticello Department of Parks & Recreation

is offering the following fall programs:

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**Gymnastics, Weightlifting, Chi Kung,
Self-Defense, Aerobic Kick Boxing,
Ballroom Dancing, Latin Dance,
Skateboard Contest, Baseball Clinics,
Teen Link Community Workshops,
Pinochle, 3v3 Basketball Tournament,
Senior Exercise and Senior Shuffleboard**
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**For information or registration,
please call Betsy at 794-2351**

Important Dates

MONDAY, OCTOBER 15:

- RJK Picture Day - Grades 6, 7 & 8
- Monticello Schools' Parent Advisory Group meeting, 7 p.m., RJK cafeteria

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17:

- Chase PTO meeting, 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18:

- Board of Education meeting, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19:

- RJK Dance - Grade 6, 7-8:30 p.m.
- RJK PTA Shopping Night, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26:

- Half-day Conference - Early Dismissal

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 31:

- Cooke Elementary School Fall Festival

Please note: Due to a conflict with the Passover holiday, the dates originally printed on the district calendar for the Monticello High School musical performances have been changed.

The correct information is as follows:
The High School Musical matinee will be performed at 8 a.m. on April 9 & 10, and the musical's evening performances will be held at 7:30 p.m. on April 11 & 12. Please mark your calendars, so you don't miss this great performance!

FYI: The **3v3 Youth Tournament** (*middle school age*) will be held under the lights following the annual Halloween Parade on **Wednesday, October 31**. The games will be held at the basketball court behind the Ted Stroebele Recreation Center. Teams should **register by Friday, October 27** to guarantee a spot. For more information or registration, call Betsy at 794-2351.

The Monticello School District wants all of its students to be safe from harm. Parents need to keep their children safe as well.

The New York State Sex Offender Registry is a helpful tool parents can use to identify and locate sexual predators living their community.

For more information or to check your neighborhood, call 1-800-262-3257 or visit www.criminaljustice.state.ny.us.