



Monthly Bulletin

March 2009

Dr. Patrick Michel
Superintendent of Schools

www.monticelloschools.net

From the desk of the Superintendent: Federal money will help

It has been a tough budget year. Just as in every household in our district we have been studying ways to cut back and economize. At our recent Citizens' Advisory Budget Committee (CABC) meeting, we made our first recommendation to our Board of Education concerning next year's budget. We have great concern about overburdening our taxpayers in these tough economic times, yet we still must balance that against our need to educate our children to be competitive in the global economy.

We have proposed a plan that would allow all of our elementary schools to stay open and keep most of our programs intact. It is also our hope that the federal stimulus money we should be receiving will allow us to preserve other programs and keep staff reductions to a minimum. We have not been given solid numbers as yet concerning how much money we may get. At this time, there is considerable confusion concerning some of the regulations as to how and when the money will be received or spent. As we learn more, we will share that information with you.

We have had some very good news concerning the academic progress our schools are making. The Rutherford Elementary School has been removed from the state list. This means that the entire school and all its sub-groups have met the state standards. All our elementary schools are now meeting those standards and properly preparing our children for academic success. The RJK Middle School was recently taken off the state list for Math and reached Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in English Language Arts (ELA). If they reach AYP next year as well, they will be removed from the state list in ELA.

At Monticello High School, many new programs have been put in place successfully. Although we still have some academic challenges to overcome, it is our firm belief that with the changes that have been implemented, we will see the high school removed from the state list in the near future.

It is truly gratifying to see that the immense hard work of our students, teachers and administrators is paying off.

Even though we are facing some tough times and choices we need to keep focused on our core mission. We need to be sure that our children are graduating ready to succeed in a highly competitive global environment. Our children's academic success today will be the key to their success in the future. It is our responsibility to continue to provide them with the course work they will need to develop a 21st century skill set.

As always, my door is open and your thoughts and opinions are welcome.

The Citizens' Advisory Budget Committee (CABC) is off to a good start! Be a part of the school budget formation process at the next CABC meetings scheduled for Wednesdays, March 11 and 25 at 7 p.m. in the RJK Middle School cafeteria.

**REMINDER: March 2-6: New York State Math Testing for Grades 3, 4 & 5
March 9-13: New York State Math Testing for Grades 6, 7 & 8.**

Quick & CLIPS

AOF Students offering free tax service

Through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program, a group of Academy of Finance students have been certified by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to prepare taxes.

This free service is available to Joint filers whose gross income is \$42,000 or less and to Single filers with a gross income of \$40,000 or less. The service is offered by appointment only and will be available on Thursdays between 2:15 and 4:15 p.m. through April 2 in room 615 of the Monticello High School.

No walk-ins will be accepted.

To make an appointment or for questions, please call 845-794-8840, ext. 10848.

SNOW DAYS/Contingency Days

As of March 2, there is only one snow day left unused for this year.

If weather conditions or other emergencies warrant more than that, the Contingency Days, which are currently scheduled as school holidays, will be used in the following order: April 6, 7, 8, 13.

Monticello High School presents the musical, *Damn Yankees*, Friday & Saturday, Mar. 27 & 28 at 7:30 p.m. in the Arnold Packer Hughs Auditorium

Tickets are available at the door as follows: \$5 adults; \$3 students; Free for senior citizens.

The story takes us on the journey of Joe Hardy (*played by Matthew Thomas*) a happily married, middle-aged baseball fan who sells his soul for his greatest desire - to have his favorite team, the Washington Senators, end their losing streak. So pull out your baseball gloves and fill up the grandstands as the students prepare to sing all your old-time favorites such as Heart, Whatever Lola Wants, Shoeless Joe and Those were the Good Old Days!

For more info, call Music Director Kevin Dirth at 845-794-8840, ext. 10993.

Important Dates

TUESDAY, MARCH 3:

- Air Force Liberty Big Band performance, 7 p.m. Monticello High School auditorium

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4:

- Chase Kindergarten Registration
- Cooke/KLR PTA meeting, 7 p.m. at KLR

THURSDAY, MARCH 5:

- Chase Kindergarten Registration
- Board of Education meeting, 7 p.m.

TUESDAY, MARCH 10:

- Duggan Kindergarten Registration

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11:

- Chase PTO meeting, 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, MARCH 12:

- Duggan Kindergarten Registration

THURSDAY, MARCH 19:

- Board of Education meeting, 7 p.m.

TUESDAY, MARCH 24:

- Forestburgh Firehouse Chat, 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25:

- Half-day Conference - EARLY DISMISSAL

NOTE: March 24 is a REGULAR SCHOOL DAY

RJK PTA and EPIC events for March

The RJK Red Cross Club will be collecting monetary donations till March 19. The money will go to support families of children with leukemia and lymphoma.

RJK PTA Scholastic Book Fair, March 2-6, 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

EPIC Facilitator Training, Wednesdays, Mar. 4 and 11, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. in the Cooke Elementary School Parent Room

Family Reading Night, Thursday, Mar. 5, 6-7:30 p.m. in the RJK Middle School cafeteria - all district families welcome

RJK PTA meeting, Tuesday, Mar. 10, 7 p.m. in the RJK Middle School cafeteria

6th Grade Dance hosted by the SADD club, Friday, Mar. 20, 7-8:30 p.m. in the RJK Middle School cafeteria

EPIC Parent Get-together, Friday, Mar. 20, 7-8:30 p.m. in the EPIC Parent Center - light refreshments and conversation

For questions about any of these events, please contact Robin LaFountain, RJK PTA President and EPIC Parent Center Coordinator, at 845-796-3058 ext. 20216.