



Monthly Bulletin

April 2010

Dr. Patrick Michel
Superintendent of Schools

www.monticelloschools.net

From the desk of the Superintendent: Working together as a community

As spring arrives, we continue to face some very trying economic times. Although many of us are discouraged with the unpleasant fiscal situation, we must remember that we are here to serve the children and it is imperative this remain our first priority.

In recent letters to the editor in various newspapers, there has been an ongoing debate concerning the serious decisions that lie before us. Although it is healthy to debate and search for alternative answers, it is necessary to understand that though we may disagree, in the end, the tough choices still have to be made. For us to move forward as a community, we must work together to find those solutions that focus on what is best for our children. We cannot let our adult fears create an atmosphere that frightens children and makes them apprehensive and resistant to the changes we are forced to make - those changes that are inevitable due to circumstances beyond our control.

As adults, we must make sure that we are not transferring our fears to our children. The unknown that comes with change is always risky and uncomfortable and it can be even more frightening when that change is forced upon us. We will get through this if we focus on serving the needs of our children. As responsible adults within our schools, we should not interweave our anxiety into conversations with students. Questions should be answered in an objective, supportive manner to alleviate fear and worry in our children - not instill it.

Every household in our district - from the richest to the poorest - has been forced to make difficult choices under the present economic circumstances. As a school district, we also have some tough choices to make. Our decisions need to be based on what is best for the students we serve. Our common purpose must be to prepare our children for the demands of the rapidly changing world and to model that change for them. Negative change is part of life. If we teach our children how to innovate and adapt, this will give them the flexibility in their thinking necessary to be successful in the world in which they live - a world that is constantly changing. Today, there are much higher expectations and demands of accountability on students and adults. We have to work together to prepare for this standard and yet accept the fact that more money will not be part of the solution. Recently, a coalition of states including New York agreed to create a common core of academic standards for the U.S. The proposed changes will force us to make even more substantial changes in how and what students learn. During the past four years, we have positioned ourselves to make this transition and we need to continue on this path.

In the new economy, managing and adapting to change are essential skills. The future will not stop because we face a crisis. It is more important than ever that we remain clearly focused on our core mission - graduating young adults who are prepared for their futures.

I wish you a happy and prosperous spring. My door is always open.

Board of Education Candidate Petitions Available

Petitions nominating candidates for the Board of Education are available in the District Clerk's office.

The names of the last incumbent of the three vacancies are:

Richard Feller - 3-year term; Yvonne Housman - 3-year term; Barbara O'Rourke - 3-year term

Petitions must be filed no later than 5 p.m. on April 19. For info, call Mary Ryan Buchholz at 794-7700, ext. 70501.

Workshop for Prospective Board of Education Members, April 7, 7 p.m., SCBOCES in Liberty

Sullivan County School Boards Association free workshop for community residents who are interested in becoming school board members. Topics include: legal and practical qualifications; roles and responsibilities; decision making; school district relationships; and fiscal responsibility. To register, call Kris Roth at 292-9039.

Spring Break: March 29-April 2; Monday, April 5: NO SCHOOL - Snow Day give-back

QuickCLIPS

AOF students offering free income tax preparation service to the community

Through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) 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 those who made \$49,000 or less in 2009. The service is offered by appointment only. **To make an appointment or for questions, please call Wendy Levinson at 794-8840, ext. 10848.**

Absentee Ballot Applications Available for May 18 School Budget Vote

Absentee ballot applications are available at the office of the District Clerk and on the district web site at www.monticelloschools.net. Completed applications must be received by the District Clerk at least seven (7) days before the election if the ballot is to be mailed to the voter. Anyone can pick-up multiple absentee ballot applications, but only the voter can personally pick-up an absentee ballot. If the ballot is to be mailed, it must be mailed to the voter. Absentee ballots are available for voters who are residents of the district but will not be able to physically vote in their designated polling place (e.g. college students, travel, disabled, etc.)

Absentee ballots must be filed in the office of the District Clerk no later than 5 p.m. on May 18. For more information, call Mary Ryan Buchholz at 794-7700, ext. 70501.

***Board of Education meetings
Thursday, April 8 & Tuesday, April 20***

Monticello School District residents will go the polls on May 18 to vote on a proposed school budget for the 2010-2011 school year. Details of the budget will be available in April and will be posted on the district web site at www.monticelloschools.net.

Voter Registration information is available on the district web site or by calling the District Clerk, Mary Ryan Buchholz, at 794-7700, ext. 70501.

Meet the Board of Education Candidates, Monday, May 10, 6:30 p.m. in the RJK Middle School library. 2

Spring Testing Dates

RJK Middle School

ELA - Grades 6, 7, 8 - April 26 & 27
ELA - Grade 6 only - April 28
Math - Grades 6, 7, 8 - May 5 & 6
Science Performance - Grade 8 - May 24, 25 & 26
Science Written - Grade 8 - June 7
Social Studies - Grade 8 - June 14 & 15

Chase Elementary School

ELA - Grades 3, 5 - April 27 & 28
ELA - Grade 4 - April 27, 28 & 29
Field Tests ELA & Math - Grades 3, 4, 5 - May 12, 13 & 14
Math - Grades 3, 5 - May 5 & 6
Math - Grade 4 - May 5, 6 & 7
Science Performance - Grade 4 - May 25
Make-ups: May 26- June 3
Science Written - Grade 4 - June 7

Duggan Elementary School

ELA - Grades 3, 4 - April 26 & 27
ELA - Grades 4, 5 - April 28
ELA - Grade 5 - April 29
Field Tests ELA & Math - Grades 3, 4 - May 12
Field Tests ELA & Math - Grade 5 - May 13
Math - Grades 3, 4 - May 5 & 6
Math - Grades 4, 5 - May 7
Math - Grade 5 - May 11
Science Performance - Grade 4 - May 26
Science Written - Grade 4 - June 7

KLR Elementary School

ELA - Grades 3, 4 - April 26 & 27
ELA - Grades 4, 5 - April 28
ELA - Grade 5 - April 29
Field Tests ELA & Math - Grades 3, 4 - May 12
Field Tests ELA & Math - Grade 5 - May 13
Math - Grades 3, 4 - May 5 & 6
Math - Grades 4, 5 - May 7
Math - Grade 5 - May 11
Science Performance - Grade 4 - May 26
Science Written - Grade 4 - June 7