



Monthly Bulletin

January 2010

Dr. Patrick Michel
Superintendent of Schools

www.monticelloschools.net

From the desk of the Superintendent: As we move forward

As we continue to face the challenges of these tough economic times, it is difficult to watch the dysfunctional political exchanges in Albany and not be concerned about the future of our school system and our children.

During the past five years, increased funding from New York State has helped us make great strides in improving the quality of education in the district. This included hiring more teachers and receiving direct funding to support our students. At the same time, we streamlined our administrative staff by cutting three positions. This reorganization of our administrative structure enabled us to reduce the administrative costs in our budget from 5.05 percent to 4.61 percent - resulting in a very lean and practical structure. Other ways we have reworked our budget to save millions of dollars include the renegotiation of our contracts with vendors, incorporation of data analysis into our programs and utilization of that information to discontinue programs that are not effective. We are now part of a regional bidding system and have worked with our head teachers and administrators to establish a process to deliver services more efficiently and effectively.

Although some hard choices will have to be made if the present fiscal situation does not get better, we must remember that the programs and changes we have put in place are making a real difference in improving the success of our students. We have been recognized at the state and national levels for the work we are doing and our schools are much more effective and safe. We will need to utilize creative ideas and solutions if we are to preserve the future for our children.

Before the winter break, the district was informed that Chase Elementary School was designated an International Baccalaureate (IB) world school. This designation is a culmination of years of hard work by the Chase administration, faculty, staff and students. This means that our Chase Elementary School is now recognized as giving a world class education to our children. Duggan Elementary School is now diligently striving for this same designation and we are confident that by next year it will also receive this recognition. Presently, the Rutherford and Cooke Elementary Schools are at the beginning of this process with teachers and administrators being trained to create their own IB schools.

To explain why we are doing all of this and why we need to make changes in the middle school and high school, please take time to consider that we cannot stop the future. If we take away the programs that prepare our children for the challenges of the global economy, how are they to be successful? We must be willing to model our readiness for innovation and transformation. It is my sincere hope that our community will recognize the need to look forward and support our schools and the very positive changes we have made. An outstanding school district is one of the best economic engines of a community.

I wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year. As always, my door is open.

Monticello Little League Registration, Saturday, Jan. 23 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the RJK Middle School cafeteria. Registration is open to all boys and girls, ages 5 to 18, who live in the Monticello School District (except the Town of Mamakating). For more details or to register online, visit: www.MonticelloLittleLeague.org or call Olga at 583-5431 or Dean at 791-1102.

Quick CLIPS

Monticello Schools Firehouse Chats

In an effort to keep the ongoing dialogue among school administrators, parents and the general public, the Firehouse Chat series of talks with the community will continue for 2010. These open forums are informational meetings that include a presentation by district officials and a question-and-answer session.

2010 Schedule:

Wurtsboro - Wednesday, Jan. 13, 7 p.m. in the Chase Elementary School library

Forestburgh Firehouse - Wednesday, Feb. 10, 7 p.m.

White Lake Firehouse - Wednesday, Feb. 24, 7 p.m.

YMCA of Sullivan Free Trial Membership

The YMCA of Sullivan County is offering a seven day free pass to all members of the community. This mini membership allows you unlimited access for one week to utilize the Wellness Center located on the 2nd floor of Monticello High School. It also entitles you to participate in fitness classes, open volleyball and much more. For more information stop by the Wellness Center or call Director Ross Miceli at 794-7700, ext. 10975 or 344-9622, ext. 241.

NEW Offering

Swimming lessons for children ages 3-12 are being offered by the YMCA at The Lodge in Rock Hill.

Instrument Donations Needed

Monticello's music department welcomes the donation of used instruments for students who want to play an instrument but cannot afford to rent or purchase one. Donated instruments are refurbished and repaired so they can be borrowed by students in need. If you have an instrument to donate and would like to help, please contact Music Director Dr. Kevin Dirth at 794-8840, ext. 10993 or via e-mail at kdirth@k12mcsd.net.

Important Dates

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7:

- Board of Education meeting

TUESDAY, JANUARY 12:

- RJK PTA meeting, 7 p.m., cafeteria

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13:

- Wurtsboro Firehouse Chat, 7 p.m. at Chase

MONDAY, JANUARY 18:

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - NO SCHOOL

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20:

- Chase PTO meeting, 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 21:

- Board of Education meeting

TUESDAY-FRIDAY, JANUARY 26-29

- Regents Exams

1/25-2/12: Red Cross Club "PENNIES for PATIENTS"

H1N1 Flu Information on the Web

With the continued attention in the news of escalating cases of the H1N1/Swine Flu pandemic, the Monticello School District has dedicated a section of its web site at www.monticelloschools.net to provide important information and resources for parents, staff and community members seeking facts and information about this strain of the flu virus.

District officials continue to work with local and state health agencies, as well as monitor information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the state and federal governments to ensure the well-being of our school community.

Please understand that this is an evolving situation and the district will provide updated information as it becomes available.

REMINDER: For school closings and delays, call the School Closing Hotline at 845-796-5006 for a recorded message.