

The
News
from

Monticello

CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Budget Vote

**Tuesday
May 19**

All voting locations
are open from
8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Voting Locations

Forestburgh

School Election District #5
Forestburgh Town Hall

Thompson (Rock Hill area)

School Election District #4
Rock Hill Fire Department

Mamakating

School Election District #3
Chase Elementary School,
Wurtsboro

Bethel

School Election District #2
Duggan Elementary School,
White Lake

Thompson (Remainder of the district)

School Election District #1
RJK Middle School

Absentee Ballots & Voting Information

If you are unable to vote in person or if you have any questions about the voting process, please call District Clerk Mary Ryan Buchholz at 794-7700, ext. 70501.

Absentee ballots must reach the district clerk's office no later than 5 p.m. on May 19.

3.4% budget increase the lowest in more than a dozen years

Monticello Central School District residents will go the polls on May 19 to vote on a proposed \$76,685,227 budget for the 2009-10 school year. The plan, which represents an increase of 3.44% over the current budget, is the lowest budget increase in more than 12 years. The proposed spending plan includes a projected tax levy increase of 3.85%. This number is under the 4% tax levy cap recommended by the NY State Commission on Property Tax Relief.

This year's budget reflects certain cost-cutting measures including:

- restructuring of the food service and athletic departments
- 10% reduction in departmental budgets

- furnace upgrades/energy savings

- reduction of four staff positions

- voluntary waiver of salary increases for the top three administrative positions

- reorganization of the transportation department.

If the budget is not approved by voters, the Board of Education has the option to put the same budget up for another vote, put a revised budget up for vote or adopt the contingency budget.

For Monticello, the difference in this year's proposed tax levy



increase between the proposed budget and the contingency budget is about 1%.

By law, when a district is under a contingency budget it is subject to various limits and controls on how money is spent and it is required to charge fees for public use of school buildings and grounds.

Educating our children for the 21st Century

The following letter is from Monticello's Superintendent of Schools to the district's community members.

Since December, we have been agonizing over our budget. During these tough economic times, we are faced with difficult choices – just like many families. The stark realities of this past year have helped us put important things into perspective – what we really need and why we do the things we do. In an effort to establish trust and honest communication with our community, we held numerous forums, CABC meetings and Firehouse

Chats. We asked our residents for their ideas and suggestions and strived to present our fiscal situation in a transparent manner. It was imperative that people understood the reasoning behind the vital need for better student programs, the changes we enacted and why we were fiercely advocating to keep those changes intact.

We can no longer educate children the way we were educated. Never in the history of our country have schools been required to educate so many students at the demanding levels that the 21st century economy and society necessitate. It would be irresponsible



to assume that 19th and 20th century teaching techniques will adequately prepare our children for the demands of the global economy and the technological age. We know that even the basics have changed.

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Professional Jazz Band Shares Expertise with Aspiring Musicians



Monticello High School students A.J. Nittoli and Jesse Martinez were ecstatic to work with visiting jazz musicians from the Air Force Liberty Band during a recent workshop at the school. Bass player Eric Pantalone and drummer Dean Macomber schooled the boys in rhythm, technique and form and explained that playing music was more than just reading notes on a page, it was “capturing the essence of the song and then sharing it with the audience in a deeply emotional way.” As part of their military duties, the servicemen travel one week a month to areas in New England, New York and New Jersey giving free concert performances and workshops. Thanks to the persistence of Music Director Dr. Kevin Dirth, Monticello Schools was chosen as one of this year’s locations.

Monticello’s Music Department has been selected as one of the nation’s best school districts for music education for the third year in a row. This top honor is given by the NAMM Foundation to districts with a “superb school-based music education program for young people.” For more information about the award, please visit www.nammfoundation.org.

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Letter from the Superintendent: **Strengthening our Commitment**

Although the three R’s - Reading, Writing and Arithmetic - remain important, we now have three more R’s - Rigor, Relevance and Relationships. Meeting these new requirements is what will help us prepare our children for success.

Why is education so expensive? The costs we pay to educate our youth are small compared to the cost of the long-term effects on our society if we continue to ignore this need. We cannot allow any student to graduate unprepared. Times have changed dramatically and to compete in today’s economy more and more employers are requiring at least an Associate’s Degree or an equivalent education.

When our schools were first listed as “needing improvement” because our students were failing the state assessments, we were confronted with the fact that we were not meeting the state’s educational demands. All our students must reach a certain standard. We can no longer segregate students into two different tracks of learning. Once we realized that our standards were not good enough to prepare students adequately and we were not being removed from the state lists, changes had to occur. Those changes began with new programs. By exposing more students to rigorous and relevant course work and encouraging them to reach an international standard, we raised our expectations of achievement. To fulfill this vision, we added the International Baccalaureate and Rising Expectations programs and put literacy and math coaches in all our elementary schools. We redesigned our middle school and gave more students access to the accelerated

and enriched programs. We began the Project Lead the Way initiative which gives students a solid foundation in technology and is a pathway to a career in engineering. At the high school level, we created teams for our freshmen and sophomores. This structural redesign helped to improve relationships. More juniors and seniors now have access to our expanded curriculum of college courses and honors programs to help them increase their chances for future success.

The results speak for themselves. We are no longer classified as a “District in Need of Improvement.” Not one of our elementary schools is on a state list. Our middle school is making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in English and has been removed from the state list for Math. There has been substantial improvement at our high school, and we can all agree our schools are much safer.

These numerous improvements did not fall from the sky. They were the result of good planning, hard work and a vision to make the Monticello Central School District the standard in preparing children for the 21st century. Although we have made great strides, we still have much work to do. It is my sincere hope that our community will continue to help us realize this vision. In the end, it is our children and their future that really matters and preparing them for that future must be our core mission.

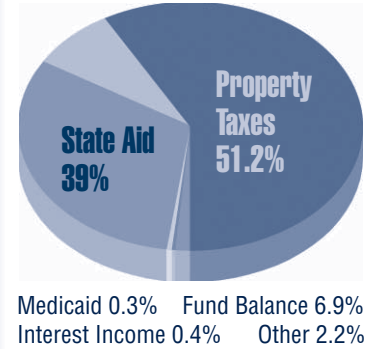
Sincerely,
Dr. Patrick Michel

The budget at a glance

Revenues

	Adopted 2008-09	Proposed 2009-10
Charges for Services	\$190,000	\$195,000
Other	1,172,000	1,434,000
Interest Income	500,000	300,000
Medicaid	250,000	250,000
State Aid	28,710,798	29,901,197
Fund Balance	5,473,745	5,307,225
Property Taxes	37,840,217	39,297,805
TOTALS	\$74,136,760	\$76,685,227

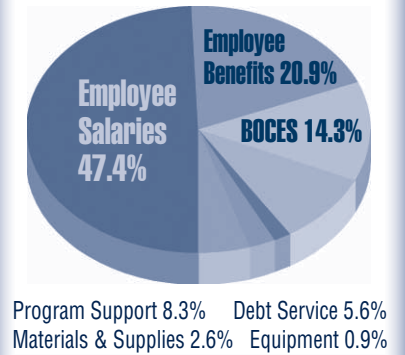
2009-10 Revenue Breakdown



Expenses

	Adopted 2008-09	Proposed 2009-10
Employee Salaries	\$35,053,301	\$36,377,867
Benefits	14,832,115	15,998,678
BOCES	10,224,599	10,978,784
Program Support	7,015,437	6,362,878
Equipment	1,023,712	707,584
Materials & Supplies	1,998,361	1,956,086
Debt Service	3,989,235	4,303,350
TOTALS	\$74,136,760	\$76,685,227

2009-10 Expense Breakdown



Monticello High School receives money for scholarships

Two scholarships, The Isaac and Ruthe Silberman Legal or Medical Profession Scholarship Fund and the Dr. Herbert J. Avrutis & his sister Ruthe Silberman Medical Scholarship have been established to financially help students who are interested in pursuing a career in the field of medicine or law.



The scholarships are available beginning the 2009-10 academic year to subsidize the tuition of high school students enrolled in the College in the Classroom program. Due to the combined efforts of district officials, local attorney Henri Shawn and the Executive Director of the Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan, Karen VanHouten, the monies have been used to create an endowment fund designed to permanently finance the scholarships for years to come. For more info, please contact the high school guidance department at 794-8840.

Attorneys Henri Shawn and Steven Mogel, Community Foundation Executive Director Karen VanHouten and Monticello Schools Assistant Superintendent for Business Gladys Baxter visited a Public Affairs college-level class where the students were thrilled to hear about the new scholarships and expressed their appreciation for the community's continued support of their program.

Budget Summary

New York State law requires all school districts to present their budgets divided into three expenditure categories - administrative, program and capital - and compare them to last year's amount. Monticello's three-part budget breaks down as follows:

	2008-09	2009-10
ADMINISTRATIVE		
Amount	8,497,655	8,700,328
% of total	11.46%	11.35%
• • • • •		
PROGRAM		
Amount	55,558,561	57,943,196
% of total	74.94%	75.56%
• • • • •		
CAPITAL		
Amount	10,080,544	10,041,703
% of total	13.60%	13.09%

Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Patrick Michel

**Assistant Superintendent
for Student Learning**
Ms. Kathleen Pagano-Fuller

**Assistant Superintendent
for Business & Support Services**
Gladys P. Baxter

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CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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On the May 19 ballot: Monticello Board of Education candidates

Three of the nine seats on Monticello Schools' Board of Education are up for election. The following are the seven candidates who will appear on the ballot.



Robert L. Stewart, current BOE president, resident of Forestburgh

Robert and his wife Karen came to Monticello Central School District as teachers after graduating from SUNY Oswego in 1967. His graduate studies were at SUNY Plattsburgh and SUNY New Paltz. He has served on the Board of Education for six years and is currently the Board president. He has also served as the Board's vice president. He taught science and math at Monticello High School for thirty years and worked as an adjunct professor at SUNY New Paltz and SCCC. He served on the Board of Fire Commissioners for the Forestburgh Fire Department for 16 years. He is married and has two children, Jon and Heather.



Jacob Billig, current BOE member, resident of Glen Wild

Jacob is a current member of the Monticello Board of Education. He has served on the Board for eight years. He is a lifetime resident of Sullivan County and a graduate of Fallsburg High School. He attended Cornell University for his undergraduate studies and graduated from Pace Law School in 1983. Presently, he runs a private practice law firm in Rock Hill. He has been an active member of the community and has been very involved with assorted groups including AAU Basketball and various booster clubs for many years. He is married and has two children, Emily and Austin.



Robert Bellamy, resident of Monticello

Robert has served on the Monticello Broadway Development Committee. He served in the U.S. Air Force during the 1960s and is a former vice-commander at the Ruddick-Trowbridge Post. He is a past coach for the girls junior varsity basketball and soccer teams at Monticello Schools and has coached boys soccer at Tri-Valley. He volunteers for the Federation for the Homeless and is a member of the Community Progressive Response Group. He attended Laverne University in California and Nyack College in Rockland County where he studied business management. He is married and has two daughters, Jessica and Jaelyn.



Robert Kunis, resident of Monticello

Robert worked as a BOCES administrator for 20 years and is currently a local businessman. He has served on the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) committee and has attended many school events and meetings throughout the years. He is a former Sullivan County Legislator, a former Rotarian and was actively involved with Little League for many years. He is a graduate of Fallsburg High School and has multiple advanced degrees from Marshall University, the University of Tennessee and New York University. He is married and has three children, Darin, Brent and Jordan.



Jo-Ann Peabody, resident of White Lake

Jo-Ann is a member of the Duggan Elementary School PTO, currently chairs the 5th grade committee and is a book fair volunteer. She is an RJK PTA member and volunteers for Monticello High School's debate team. She is the secretary for Boy Scout Troop 86 and does work with the Cub Scouts. She is a member of the White Lake Reformed Presbyterian Church, spokesperson for the Bethel United to Save our Schools group and is involved with NYS Parks and Recreation. She attended SCCC for sociology. She is currently the president of Peabody Management, Inc. She is married and has three children, Savannah, Ryan and Dean.



Susan Purcell, resident of Wurtsboro

Susan is a graduate of Orange Community College with a degree in dental hygiene. She is a member of the RJK PTA and a past member of the Chase PTO. She is a co-founder of the Monticello School Community Advocates and a past president and co-founder of the Monticello Performing Arts booster club. She was a parent member of the CDEP committee and served as a parent representative on Monticello Schools' districtwide safety team. Presently, she works as a dental health educator for Prasad Children's Dental Health Program, "Smiles for Teens." She is married and has three daughters, Maria, Annie and Kate.



Babette Ross, resident of Mongaup Valley

Babette serves on the Town of Bethel Youth Board and is the Sullivan County Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) coordinator. She is a member of the Mongaup Valley United Methodist Church and is involved in the Agriculture Education Outreach Program. She helps run her family businesses which include the Fiddlers Flea Market and Ross Auto. She is a parent advocate for Special Education and has a background in business administration. She is experienced with business contracts and was a business member in a commercial trade organization till 1997. She is married and has four children, Nicole, Jessica, Michelle and Zachary.