

WAPPINGERS

Central School District

• COLLABORATION • COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP • CHALLENGE •

BUDGET ISSUE

2008-2009 Budget

From The Superintendent

Dear Community Members:

The Board of Education has adopted resolutions that will place four propositions before the voters of our community on May 20th which seek authorization to:

- Approve the proposed 2008-2009 budget
- Purchase twenty-two vehicles as part of the District's annual bus replacement program
- Expend funds to install artificial turf fields and perform reconstruction projects at each high school
- Expend funds in conjunction with capital construction projects to be performed districtwide

This issue of WCSD in Print contains important information regarding all four of these propositions.

Proposed 2008-2009 Budget

The proposed 2008-2009 budget adopted by the Board of Education represents a spending plan of \$175,653,600 and reflects a 5.92% increase over this year's voter approved budget. The associated tax levy percentage increase as contained in the District's Property Tax Report Card is 4.52% and is one of the lowest increases in the last seven years.

A Contingency Budget has also been adopted which could be implemented should the proposed budget not receive voter approval. The Contingency Budget reduction is only \$491,804 or 0.29% less than the proposed budget, with the difference being the deletion of funding for equipment, other than that deemed necessary for health and safety purposes, and certain student supplies. More information on the Contingency Budget as currently approved is on page 3.

In the 2007-2008 school year, the WCSD was one of 55 districts in New York State to be designated as a Contract for Excellence (C4E) district. With such a designation came the accountability to implement locally designed programs with State Education Department approval that address student performance. We are also a designated district for 2008-2009. As such, approximately 23% of the proposed budget increase represents the cost of implementing mandated programs in our district's 2008-2009 C4E Plan as submitted to the State Education Department. Information regarding our C4E designation can be found on page 4.

The proposed 2008-2009 budget provides for the continuation and expansion of several proven initiatives as well as for the introduction of some exciting new instructional programs. Additional information regarding budgeted initiatives can be found on page 5.

this issue

Board Candidates	2
Budget Notice	3
Star Tax Savings	3
Contingency Budget	3
Contract for Excellence	3
Propositions	4
Initiatives.....	5, 6
Curriculum.....	7
2008 Valedictorians/Salutatorians --	8

Bus Replacement Program

As has been our annual practice, we are looking to update the district's fleet of 248 vehicles via the replacement of 22 vehicles of various capacities at an estimated maximum cost of \$1,784,868. Based upon the current aid formula, approximately 51% would be returned to the district in the form of transportation aid. The purchase of these vehicles would be financed over a period of five years. Detailed information regarding Proposition 1 can be found on page 3.

Artificial Turf Installation and Various Reconstruction Projects at JJ and RCK

Earlier this year, members of our school community approached the Board of Education expressing an interest to have turf fields installed and other related improvements made at both the John Jay and Roy C. Ketcham high school athletic complexes. This group, working within a committee structure that included members of the Board of Education and administration as well as the District's architect and construction manager, developed a scope of work and related budgets. This work has been translated into Proposition #2 that appears on the ballot.

In order for the District to receive building aid (currently 58.3% of approved costs) for the installation of turf fields and related work, it is necessary to combine this type of project with at least \$10,000 of reconstruction work within each high school building. The reconstruction work selected for completion must be included in the District's Five-Year Plan. The State Education Department (SED) makes the final determination of aid eligibility. Based upon a discussion with SED representatives relative to our selection of the necessary and preferred health and safety projects to be included, the Board of Education has given its approval to include the replacement of boilers and associated systems at John Jay and the replacement of steam traps and asbestos abatement in tunnel areas at Roy C. Ketcham as part of the cost of this proposition. The combined estimated maximum cost for all of this work is \$5,563,472, with \$3,714,440 representing the total cost of turf installation and other athletic field improvements

at both high schools.

Detailed information regarding this proposition is contained on pages 3 and 4.

Districtwide Capital Construction Projects

Proposition 3 on the ballot seeks authorization to expend a maximum estimated amount of \$15,844,638 for various capital construction projects to be completed districtwide. The scope of the work being recommended includes projects at all of the district's schools with the exception of the alternative high school (which is located in the facility that is leased for district offices) and the two junior highs. The reason for the exclusion of the junior high schools is that with the defeat of the Master Plan Referendum it is unclear at this time how these buildings will ultimately be configured to accommodate grade levels, pupil capacities and programs.

A detailed list, by school, of all the projects being recommended is contained on page 4.

continued on page 2



From The Board President

Dear Community Members:

Spring has finally arrived and with it comes flowers, baseball and the annual vote on the WCSD budget. The development of this year's budget has been especially challenging for a number of reasons. The Board needed to develop a budget that was both mindful of the needs of our students and sensitive to the current economy. In addition, the Wappingers Central School District has been designated by the New York State Education Department as a "Contract for Excellence" (C4E) school district since the 2007-08 school year. This designation brings with it strict mandates as to how our increase in state aid must be spent and the amount that can be allocated for such purposes as outlined on page 3 in this newsletter. We must subscribe to these mandates or lose our entire state aid entitlement of approximately \$51.4 million. For the 2008-2009 school year, the portion of state aid that has been linked to the District's C4E contract is approximately \$2.3 million.

Until the WCSD was designated a C4E district, the Board of Education had the discretionary authority to use any increase in state aid either to help defray increased costs or to help lower the tax levy. The Board's adopted 2008-2009 budget is \$175,653,600 reflecting a 5.92% budget-to-budget increase with an associated tax levy increase as contained in the District's Property Tax Report Card of 4.52%. If the Board had discretionary authority over the additional aid associated with C4E; that is, was allowed to apply the \$2.3 million to help lower taxes rather than being mandated to spend that money on new, expanded or experimental programs, the budget-to-budget increase could have been as low as 4.53% with an associated tax levy increase of 2.81%.

However, since the Board is required to spend \$2.3 million on new, expanded or experimental programs within the C4E guidelines, the administration and Board were diligent in creating programs and services that would lead to improved academic achievement, improved graduation rates, and meeting the needs of our students. Contract for Excellence funds will also be targeted to address Special Education concerns that were brought forward as a result of the Community Roundtable convened by the Board earlier this year, including the need to put inclusion classes back into the high school. C4E funds will also be used to strengthen and expand 9th grade programs, establish a summer school for grades 8-9, and provide expanded Academic Intervention Services at the high schools.

While we are disappointed that we cannot apply more of our additional state aid toward reducing the tax levy, we are delighted to be able to provide programs and services that will enable our students to achieve greater student academic success in the years to come.

Regards,

Deborah Kuter

President, Board of Education

continued from page 1

Tax Levy Impact of Capital Project Propositions

The borrowing authorizations associated with Propositions 2 and 3 amount to \$21,408,110 and would be financed over a fifteen year period. Both of these propositions represent capital construction projects of various magnitudes and would be subject to a different borrowing protocol than would be applicable for bus purchases.

In the 2009-2010 school year, the District will be retiring debt which will equate to a reduction of approximately \$900,000 in budgeted debt service payments. This decrease further translates into our ability to replace this retiring debt with new borrowings of approximately \$19 million without any impact upon the tax levy. This \$19 million threshold takes into account a five-year borrowing associated with a successful passage of Proposition 1.

Based upon current aid formulas, should either Proposition 2 or 3 be approved by the voters, there would be no impact upon the tax levy over the life of that borrowing. However, if both propositions were to be approved, the combined tax levy impact is estimated at less than one-tenth of one percent of the 2007-2008 tax levy.

Summary

Please familiarize yourself with the propositions that will be on the May 20th ballot not only by reading this issue

of WCSD in Print but also by reviewing the materials on the district's web page: www.wappingersschools.org

You may also share your thoughts with members of the Board of Education and the superintendent via e-mail: WCSDBoard@www.wappingersschools.org

I hope that you will cast an informed vote on May 20th.

Yours truly,

Richard A. Powell
Superintendent of Schools

If this newsletter was mailed to you, please **check the address label** for your polling location or **call 298-5000, ext 145**

BOARD CANDIDATES

(As they appear on the ballot)
(Vote for 4 *only* by placing an ✕ or ✓ in the box under the candidate's name)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Deborah KUTER	Keri PETERSON	Mary McGEARY	Lori JIAVA	John C. McMAHON	Dr. CHANDANI	Ann S. FADGEN	John C. LUMIA	Write-in	Write-in	Write-in	Write-in

From Our Board Candidates:

On May 20th, the voters will be asked to cast their vote to elect four trustees to the WCSD Board of Education. Eight Board candidates are running for these four available seats. Each candidate was asked to write a brief statement of no more than 165 words. The candidates' statements appear in the order that they will appear on the May 20th ballot.

Deborah Kuter

I have served on the Board of Education for six years and am currently finishing my second term as Board President. I am a Past President of Gayhead PTA, Wappingers PTA Council and the John Jay Community Association. I volunteered for twelve years as a special education parent advocate. I have lived in the district with my husband and two children for 22 years.

As a trustee, I have and will continue to advocate for:

- Making all students' needs a priority
- Aggressive education goals for all of our students
- Fiscal responsibility

Our district is at a critical crossroad. Growth, deteriorating facilities, and increases in mandates are forces which must be addressed in a climate of economic uncertainty. We must balance the resources of the community with the demands of the educational system.

Experience, leadership, fair and independent decisions are what I will once again bring to the board. More importantly, I have and will always continue to put the needs of our students first.

Keri Peterson

I have been a resident of the Wappingers Central School District since 1998 with one child now at Van Wyck and the other at Gayhead. I am the Chief of Staff for NYS Assemblyman Joel Miller.

I have attended Board of Education meetings regularly for ten years, been a member of many district committees including the Master Plan. I was PTA President at Gayhead for three years.

My beliefs/goals:

To create a positive opinion of the district from those it serves.

To be proactive rather than reactive.

Find a real answer for each problem.

Have a school district where kids excel and parents have pride.

Help provide a responsive and open Board of Education and Administration that serves the needs of every family and student.

Promote the necessary components to have a school district that through its positive actions encourages parent's involvement.

I will do it right.

I will be fair.

Beholden to only you the taxpayer.

Mary McGeary

I've been a Fishkill resident since 1991. I'm married to a NYC firefighter, we have two sons, and they will be attending Wappingers Junior High and Ketcham this fall.

I've volunteered as a baseball coach, chairperson for DARE, and co-president of the Fishkill PTA. I've served on the Wappingers PTA council as Council Rep., 3rd VP, 2 VP and 1st VP. I've been on district-wide Budget Review, SLT Review, Interview, Comprehensive Literacy and the Master Plan committees. I regularly attend BOE meetings.

We are at a crucial crossroads in Wappingers. Our community needs to get back its "VOICE". We MUST balance what we "need" and "want" with what "we" can "afford". The board needs to be sensitive to all stakeholders. I am willing to set forth the time, effort and commitment needed to do the job, but I need your help. Please pull lever three on May 20th. Together, we can make a difference in the WCSD. Visit www.vote4mary.org. Thank you.

Lori Jiava

As a Wappingers native, I know of no better feeling than promoting your own roots. I'm a product of WCSD and D.C.C. I have great memories of my WCSD education, which has given me the foundation that has enabled me to own and operate a travel agency for 18 years.

As a local realtor, I want to tell prospective buyers that the WCSD strives for excellence. In my profession, I see many families move into the area. It is important that we provide an education that is second to none.

I am running for the School Board because I care about our children. They are our future. We must provide them with all the tools needed for their education. We must support, guide and teach them to strive for excellence.

Now that my life has come full circle and I now have school children in the district, I want to be part of a Board that will promote what is best for our children in the most fiscally responsible manner.

John C. McMahon

I have been a resident of Hopewell Junction since 1999. I have been married to my wife, Donna, for 20 years and we have two sons. John (18) is a senior and Robert, (15) is a freshman at John Jay High School. I am a graduate of Iona College where I earned a Bachelors in Business Administration as a Finance major. I am self employed and a co-owner of a successful janitorial service and building maintenance company.

I have served on numerous committees at John Jay:

- SLT Committee.....3 years
- Equity Team.....3 years
- Athletic Appeals Committee.....2 years
- Assistant Principal
- Hiring Committee3 years
- Tri State Consortium (Parent Rep) ...2 years
- Critical Thinking Committee (Parent Rep)..... 1 year

I have also served on the District Coordinator for Athletics Hiring Committee.

Dr. Suresh Chandani

Qualifications & Experience

- My wife and I are 20-year residents of East Fishkill. My two children are John Jay graduates.
- I have been in private family practice in Dutchess County for twenty-five years.
- I hold a Masters Degree in Public Health from New York Medical College, and I work with public issues nationally and internationally.
- I've worked with parents and students regarding alcohol, smoking and drug abuse.
- I have worked on several community projects.
- I have served for six years as a Board member at the Hindu Samaj Temple.
- I've served two terms as President for Hudson Valley Physicians from India, (HVAPI).
- I'm making a commitment to the time and energy required to serve on the School Board.
- I want to bring all constituents of the WCSD community together.
- I want to make a positive difference in people's lives, while performing a vital service to community.
- I'm able to listen to opposing views. I consider all sides. I'm open-minded, approachable, and fair.

Ann S. Fadgen

Beginning in 1996, I served three terms as a trustee, including two years each as president and vice president. I am proud of my 100% attendance record.

If elected, I seek to continue my work with:
Infrastructure: The Master Plan, with academic achievement as its core goal, needs continued attention and commitment from the Board to garner community support.

Taxes: Previously, I helped focus the board's work on an alternative to the local property tax, an unsustainable burden for all. I will re-focus the Board's attention on this critical issue.

Academics: As a trustee, I strove to increase student achievement beyond standardized test scores. Our district's success is driven by the success of each individual student.

Governance: I would continue strong oversight on district expenditures, operations and practices, and redirect savings toward the classroom.

I bring passion, energy and experience to bear on our children's education. To this I add my knowledge of our region. I welcome your thoughts, questions and concerns.

(annfadgen@optonline.net)

John C. Lumia

My name is John C. Lumia and I am running for the WCSD school board. My educational background is: BA Marist College, MA St. John's University. As a retired math teacher from RCK, my goals are to:

- Create and maintain programs where students are educationally and physically challenged to excel at their own level
- Create an atmosphere where everyone in the community is involved in decisions affecting the education and safety of our children
- Establish realistic and measurable goals for the students and teachers
- Create an atmosphere where community leaders in their fields are involved with the teachers so that students can see the relevance of their education
- Better utilization of teachers during their duties
- Hire and maintain the most qualified personnel
- Re-establish trust by making sure that all expenditures are needed, justified and fully explained to the community

As a parent of two RCK graduates, I want the district to strive for real educational excellence. I want WCSD to be second to none.

Wappingers Central School District Budget Notice

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2008-2009 by the qualified voters of the Wappingers Central School District, Dutchess and Putnam Counties, New York, will be held at Fishkill Elementary, Fishkill Plains Elementary, Gayhead Elementary, Myers Corners Elementary, Vassar Road Elementary, and Wappingers Junior High schools in said district on May 20, 2008 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 p.m., at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine.

2008-2009 Propositions Before Our Community

OVERALL BUDGET PROPOSAL

	Budget Adopted 2007-2008 School Year	Budget Proposed 2008-2009 School Year	Contingency Budget 2008-2009 School Year*
Total budgeted amount	\$165,829,939	\$175,653,600	\$175,161,796
Increase/decrease for the 2008-2009 school year		\$9,823,661	\$9,331,857
Percentage increase (decrease)		0.0592%	0.0563%
Change in the consumer price index		2.80%	
Resulting estimated property tax levy		\$113,385,978	\$112,894,174
Administrative component	\$17,311,106	\$18,426,154	\$18,290,929
Program component	\$129,710,886	\$137,372,885	\$137,176,203
Capital component	\$18,807,947	\$19,854,561	\$19,694,664

* Statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2008-2009 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated.

	STAR Tax Savings	Budget Proposed 2008-2009 School Year	
	Basic STAR tax savings	\$562.00	

CONTINGENCY BUDGET

A Contingency Budget is prepared and adopted by the Board when the voters have rejected the proposed budget. The Board of Education may present a proposed budget to the community only twice.

The total spending authorization imposed under a Contingency Budget is limited by formula. The increase over the previous year's budget may not exceed the lesser of either: (1) 4%; or (2) the result obtained when multiplying the national average consumer price index by 120%. For the 2008-2009 school year, a consumer price index of 2.8% equates to a maximum authorized increase of 3.36%.

ITEMIZED BUDGET REDUCTION MEASURES

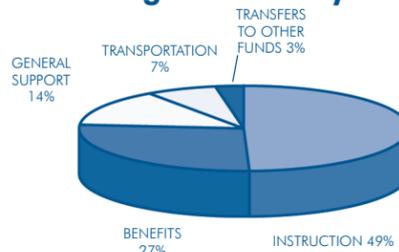
Equipment	450,304
Student Supplies	41,500
Total	\$491,804

Based upon the budget adopted by the Board of Education and taking into account the types of expenditures that can legally be used to modify this formula, the Contingency Budget calculated for the 2008-2009 school year would be set at \$175,161,796. If the proposed budget is defeated, the budget items in the table below would be eliminated.

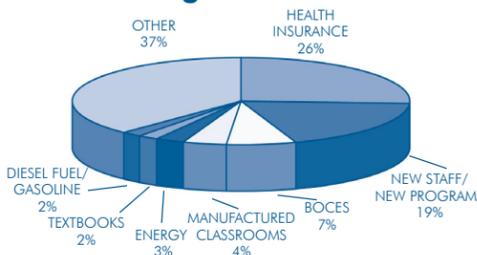
Should the District be required to adopt a Contingency Budget it will NOT be able to purchase needed student and District equipment such as:

- Student musical instruments
- Graphing calculators
- Sports and physical education equipment
- Computers and audio-visual equipment
- Custodial and grounds equipment
- Vehicles and plows to maintain our schools

Budget Summary



Areas Contributing to Budget Increase



WAPPINGERS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT TAX REPORT CARD FIGURES: 2008-2009 OPERATING BUDGET

Total General Fund:	\$175,653,600
Percent Increase:	5.92%
Estimated Tax Levy:	\$113,385,978
Percent Increase:	4.52%
Enrollment Growth:	123
Percent Change:	.99%
Percent Increase in CPI:	2.80%

BUDGET

Shall a budget for Wappingers Central School District for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2008, in the amount of \$175,653,600 be adopted, and the necessary taxes to meet such expenditures be levied and collected?

PROPOSITION #1 BUS PROPOSITION

Shall the Board of Education of the Wappingers Central School District, Putnam and Dutchess Counties, New York ("District"), be authorized to purchase the following student transportation vehicles: sixteen 72 passenger school buses at an estimated maximum cost not to exceed \$95,273.00 per bus; one 7 passenger suburban at an estimated maximum cost not to exceed \$33,500.00; four 18 passenger school buses at an estimated maximum cost of \$52,900.00 per bus; and one four-door sedan at an estimated maximum cost of \$15,400.00; which total estimated maximum sum of \$1,784,868.00, or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of a tax upon the taxable property of the District and collected in annual installments as provided by law, and for which obligations of the District may be issued?

Current Fleet

Large Vehicles.....	166
Van Vehicles	73
Wheelchair Vans	9



Number of Students Transported

Public.....	12,415
Private.....	1,405
Special Education Out of District.....	196
Total.....	14,016



Requested Replacements

16 72 Passenger Buses.....	\$1,524,368
1 7 Passenger Van.....	\$33,500
4 18 Passenger Buses.....	\$211,600
1 4-dr Sedan.....	\$15,400
Total Cost.....	\$1,784,868



PROPOSITION #2 TURF FIELDS

Shall the Board of Education of the Wappingers Central School District, Putnam and Dutchess Counties, New York, be authorized to construct improvements to athletic fields at school district facilities, and reconstruct various School District facilities, at a maximum estimated cost of \$5,563,472 and said amount or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of a tax upon the taxable property of said School District and collected in annual installments as provided by Section 416 of the Education Law; and, in anticipation of such tax, obligations of said School District shall be issued?

PROPOSITION #3 CAPITAL PROJECTS

Shall the Board of Education of the Wappingers Central School District, Putnam and Dutchess Counties, New York, be authorized to reconstruct various school district facilities at a maximum estimated cost of \$15,844,638 and said amount, or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of a tax upon the taxable property of said School District and collected in annual installments as provided by Section 416 of the Education Law; and, in anticipation of such tax, obligations of said School District shall be issued?

CONTRACT FOR EXCELLENCE

Contract for Excellence is a New York State Initiative first implemented in 2007-08. This plan compels selected school districts to use foundation aid funding for New York State Education Department (NYSED) approved Academic Improvement Plans. Districts with at least one school requiring academic progress and receiving an increase in Foundation Aid of at least \$15 million, or 10% of the amount received in the base year, (whichever is lower), are identified as Contract for Excellence (C4E) districts. Once a district is identified as a C4E district, the state mandates how their increased Foundation Aid may be used.

Wappingers Central School District was identified as a C4E school last year because both Junior High schools were considered Schools Requiring Academic Progress (SRAP) when students with disabilities failed to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) in English/Language Arts. The district also received over 10% increase in Foundation Aid in the same year.

Being a C4E school provides Wappingers with the opportunity to introduce and fund new programs in an effort to improve student achievement. We are required by the NYS Education Department to spend \$2,307,636 on C4E programs. At least 50% of this must be spent on new programs

and up to 50% may be spent to expand or improve existing programs.

While funds must be targeted for programs that will predominantly benefit students with the greatest educational needs, NYSED has given preliminary approval for our district to take a more global view and accomplish the following:

- Reduce class sizes at Fishkill Elementary via manufactured classrooms and at Kinry Road Elementary via a school-wide teaching assistant
- Reduce class sizes at the high schools with an additional math/business teacher
- Provide more time-on-task via a summer school program for students in grades 8-9, a Summer Reading Camp for students in grades K-2, adding an Academic Intervention Program at the high school
- Improving principal/teacher quality via continued use of literacy coaches
- Restructure middle/high schools via Teaming in Grade 9 at both high schools, adding a School-to-Work program for special education students, and providing additional special education services throughout the district

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

STUDENTS

- According to the NYS Report Card, the District has a four-year graduation rate of 85%.
- Annually, at least 90% of WCSD students pass five Regents exams.
- WCSD students take 25% more AP courses than they did five years ago.
- Over 30% of high school students take at least one Honors or AP course.
- District AP scores and SAT scores consistently exceed those of the state and nation.
- One-fifth of 8th grade students take high school math and science Regents courses.
- The district has eight National Merit finalists.
- Nine schools received SED commendation for NYS Assessment Testing Achievement.
- Both high schools have made the Newsweek Challenge Index for the past four years.
- An RCK team competed at the National Academic World Quest competition in Washington, D.C.
- The John Jay Science Olympiad Team placed 2nd at the Mid-Hudson Tournament.
- The newly-formed Van Wyck Lego League team won first place for robot design at the regional tournament.
- A John Jay senior qualified for the Mathematical Association of America national-level championship.
- Forty-six elementary and sixty-five junior high students were selected for the All-County Music Festival.
- Thirteen high school students were selected for the All-State Music Conference.
- Nineteen high school students won NYS Media Arts awards.
- John Jay High School received a NYS Scholar Athlete Team of Distinction award.

FACULTY

- A John Jay math teacher received National Board Certification, joining six other certificate holders in the district.
- An RCK teacher received a NYS English Educator of Excellence award.
- Six district coaches received "Coach of the Year" recognition.
- The Taconic Regional PTA selected a Vassar Road School teacher as its Teacher of the Year.
- Fishkill Elementary School was certified as a National PTA Parent Involvement School of Excellence.

PROPOSITION 2: TURF FIELDS & RECONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Earlier this year, members of our school community approached the Board of Education expressing an interest in having turf fields installed at our two high schools. This group, working within a committee structure that also included members of the Board of Education and administration, the District's architect, and construction manager, developed a scope of work and related budget. This work has led to Board authorization of Proposition #2.

What improvements are included in Proposition Two?

- Synthetic turf fields, bleachers, scoreboards, goal posts, and soccer goals at John Jay and Roy C. Ketcham High Schools.
- Community friendly, low-glare lights at Roy C. Ketcham High School's turf field.
- Boiler system replacements and storm drain upgrades at John Jay High School.
- Replacement of steam traps, upgrade of storm drain system, and tunnel asbestos abatement at Roy C. Ketcham.

What research has been done by the District on turf fields?

- The new generation of polyethylene fiber, rubber in-filled systems that the District is proposing to install has been tested by independent agencies and the New England Journal of Medicine, Penn State, New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, UMASS, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protections. These agencies have reported no negative findings with respect to toxicity, lead, MRSA or increased injuries.

Who benefits from turf fields?

- 27 District high school and 12 District modified outdoor sports teams will benefit.
- The District fields support programs from three towns, (East Fishkill, Fishkill and Wappinger). These towns field hundreds of teams representing thousands of children, who could have access to these turf fields.

What are the benefits to the District and to the community?

- To provide additional teaching stations in the spring and fall for physical education classes.
- To deliver more consistent and playable field conditions for all athletes.
- To enable spring sports athletes to move out of the gyms and parking lots at the start of the spring season.
- To provide our athletes playable fields in all weather.

What is the itemized cost?

- Turf fields: \$3,714,440
- Building Reconstruction: \$1,849,032
- Total: \$5,563,472

Why is the District including select capital projects at the two high schools with turf fields?

Under the current formula, in order to be eligible for the anticipated 58.3% of approved costs in state aid, each field must be tied to a building project in each of the high schools, and also meet these criteria:

- Projects must be over \$10,000.
- Projects must be part of the District's Five-Year Plan.
- Projects should preferably address health and safety or ADA compliance issues.

If the building reconstruction project only has to be a minimum of \$10,000 at each high school, why has the district chosen projects that total \$1.8 million?

Important health and safety projects within the District's Five-Year Plan are strongly preferred by the New York State Education Department, especially when coupled with artificial turf fields.

Will there be any maintenance savings to the District because of the turf fields?

Yes, the cost to maintain a natural grass field per week is approximately \$210. The cost to maintain a synthetic field per week is approximately \$45.

How much maintenance do turf fields require?

Fields need to be groomed every 3-4 weeks on average.

What is the life expectancy of a turf field?

- The top layer of turf, or carpet, lasts approximately 15 years and is covered by an industry average warranty of ten years.
- The most expensive part of the turf fields, the drainage system, does not have replacement issues. The drainage system is under vendor warranty.
- The cost for the carpet is about 25% of the total project cost.
- Children who enter kindergarten in 2013 could have the opportunity to use these proposed fields.

When will the turf fields be ready?

- The anticipated completion date is Fall 2009.

What additional revenue sources, if any, might be identified to help in maintaining the turf fields?

- Usage fees will be charged to outside agencies.

- A Town of East Fishkill grant writer will explore recreation and shared municipalities grants.
- We will continue to partner with the towns to explore other revenue sources.
- We will continue to pursue corporate, business and foundation grants.

Are there many schools in the area that have switched to turf fields?

- Area schools with recently installed turf fields include: Arlington High School (3 fields), Carmel High School, Columbia University, Dietz Stadium (Kingston), Fordham University, Harrison High School, Lakeland High School, Manhattan College, Marist College, New Rochelle High School, Ossining High School, Siena College, Somers High School (2 fields), SUNY New Paltz, Tuckahoe Middle School/High School, United States Military Academy, Walter Panas High School, White Plains High School

What is the tax levy impact of the Capital Project Propositions?

The borrowing authorizations associated with Propositions 2 and 3 amount to \$21,408,110 and would be financed over a fifteen year period. Both of these propositions represent capital construction projects of various magnitudes and would be subject to a different borrowing protocol than would be applicable for bus purchases.

Based upon current aid formulas, should either Proposition 2 or 3 be approved by the voters, there would be no impact upon the tax levy over the life of that borrowing. However, if both propositions were to be approved, the combined tax levy impact is estimated at less than one-tenth of one percent of the 2007-2008 tax levy.

PROPOSITION 3: CAPITAL PROJECTS BY SCHOOL

Brinkerhoff Elementary School

- REPLACE:
- Exterior Cafeteria Doors
 - Rooftop Vents on Entire Roof
 - Classroom Sinks and Cabinets
 - Art Room Sink and Trap
 - Wall Padding and Base in Gym
 - Classroom Floor Tiles (East Wing)

- INSTALL:
- HVAC Controls for Boilers

Evans Elementary School

- REPLACE:
- Boiler (one of two)
 - Boiler Piping
 - Classroom Sinks and Counters
 - Sidewalk
 - Steam Traps in Tunnels

- INSTALL:
- HVAC Controls for Boilers

- UPGRADE:
- Exhaust Fans and Ventilation
 - Fire/Intrusion System

- PERFORM:
- Complete Asbestos Abatement in Tunnel

Fishkill Elementary School

- REPLACE:
- All Windows

- INSTALL:
- Elevator in Bell Tower

- UPGRADE:
- Enlarge Front Parking Lot
 - Regrade Playing Fields

- PERFORM:
- Asbestos Abatement in Tunnel

Fishkill Plains Elementary School

- REPLACE:
- Classroom Sinks, Faucets and Counters
 - Replace/Repair Sidewalk
 - Gym Molding with Rubber Base
 - Gym Heaters
 - Exterior Doors - New Wing

- INSTALL:
- Solar Block on Windows in Art Room

- UPGRADE:
- Resurface all Parking Lots

- CONSTRUCT:
- New Basketball Court in Back of Building

- RENOVATE:
- Restrooms for American Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance

Gayhead Elementary School

- REPLACE:
- Drywells

- UPGRADE:
- Exterior Stairs and Handicapped Ramp
 - Exterior Doors Phase I

- UPGRADE:
- Resurface Middle Parking Lot
 - Resurface Upper Parking Lot
 - Connect to Municipal Sewer

- PERFORM:
- Asbestos Abatement in Tunnel

John Jay High School

- REPLACE:
- Roof Drain Piping
 - Sidewalk/Curbing Near Flagpole
 - Main Storm Drain Piping
 - Hall Lockers - Phase 3 of 4 Phases
 - Baseball Backstop
 - Steam Lines in Tunnel

- UPGRADE:
- Regrade Physical Education Field
 - Electrical Service in Career and Life Sciences Room
 - Electrical Panels
 - Fire Alarm Systems
 - Pave Main Parking Lot Front
 - Municipal Water Hook-Up
 - Ventilation/Unitventilators
 - Public Address/Clock System
 - Science Room Air Regulators
 - New Field by Sewer Plant
 - Blacktop Access Road to Boiler Room

- RENOVATE:
- Restrooms for American Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance

- INSTALL:
- Cafeteria Doors Tied into Fire Alarm System
 - Irrigation on Baseball Field
 - HVAC Controls

Roy C. Ketcham High School

- REPLACE:
- Darkroom Art Room Sinks
- UPGRADE:
- Pave Student Parking Area
 - Pave Student Parking Lot Rear
 - Repave Front Parking Lot and Extend up to Fuel Tank
 - Resurface Roof/ Extend Warranty
 - New Utilities for New Serving Line
 - Corridor Lighting Upgrade
 - Upgrade Gym Ventilation
 - Fill in Old Dry Wells on Football Field

- UPGRADE:
- Pave Main Parking Lot Front
 - Municipal Water Hook-Up
 - Ventilation/Unitventilators
 - Public Address/Clock System
 - Science Room Air Regulators
 - New Field by Sewer Plant
 - Blacktop Access Road to Boiler Room

- RENOVATE:
- Restrooms for American Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance

- INSTALL:
- Cafeteria Doors Tied into Fire Alarm System
 - Irrigation on Baseball Field
 - HVAC Controls

Kinry Road Elementary School

- REPLACE:
- Boilers
 - Library Carpet with Tile
 - Exterior Doors
 - Classroom Doors

- UPGRADE:
- Hook Up to Municipal Sewer
 - Electrical Service
 - Interior Stage Curtains
 - Pave Kinry Road Entrance
 - Expand and Resurface Staff Parking Lot
 - Repave Both Blacktop Play Areas

- INSTALL:
- HVAC Controls

Myers Corners Elementary School

- REPLACE:
- Classroom Floor Tiles
 - Water Heater
 - Library Carpet with Floor Tile
 - Main Office Door

- UPGRADE:
- Redesign Student Drop Off
 - Cafeteria Floor Abatement
 - Ventilation/Unitventilators
 - Renovate Restrooms
 - Remove Underground Liquid Propane Tanks
 - Blacktop by Boiler Room
 - Relocate Basketball Court
 - Blacktop Walkway to Flagpole
 - Blacktop Swale for Drainage

Oak Grove Elementary School

- REPLACE:
- Cafeteria Windows
 - Sidewalk

- UPGRADE:
- Relocate Play Area and Parking Lot
 - Resurface Teachers' Parking Lot

Sheafe Road Elementary School

- REPLACE:
- A Section of the Blacktop Playground
 - Concrete Front Entrance Area and Sidewalk

- UPGRADE:
- Renovate Restrooms for American Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance
 - Expand South Parking Lot
 - Create Parking on Circle Edge
 - Blacktop Basketball Court and Playground
 - Install Fence Behind Playground

Vassar Road Elementary School

- REPLACE:
- Windows - All
 - Floor Tiles - Classrooms
 - Fire/Intrusion Alarm
 - Stage Curtains

- UPGRADE:
- Install Dry Wells for Roof Drains and Repair
 - Complete Sidewalk Project in Front
 - Construct New Sidewalk (Center Section)
 - Construct Additional Parking in Old Playground Area
 - Upgrade Temperature Controls
 - Resurface Parking Lot

INITIATIVES

PLANET FOCUS

On May 21st and 22nd the Wappingers School District will be "thinking globally and acting locally"! With help from Dutchess BOCES, the WCSD Technology Integration teachers have organized "Planet Focus: A Virtual Conference on Climate and Change". This gathering of students, teachers, elected officials and concerned citizens will use video conferencing and other web-based technologies to learn about global climate change, energy use and other environmental issues. There will be a series of one-hour sessions scheduled throughout both days. These sessions will connect students and presenters from other regions, states and around the world to learn about important environmental issues.

The conference will employ many of the technology resources that are regularly used by Wappingers students. The main method of communication will involve video conferencing, which has become common in many district classrooms. There have already been over 75 connections to schools, museums and other content providers made this year. A newly acquired district web server will allow students to engage in blog, wiki and podcasting activities as part of Planet Focus. A project web site (accessible from the district web site) has been set up with important links to resources and activities for the conference.

Among the presenters will be Dan Shapley, News Editor for the online publication Thedailygreen.com, Chris Bowser, Science Education Specialist, NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program, and members of Alaska Youth for Environmental Action. Classroom connections from as far away as Alberta, Canada and the United Kingdom have also been planned. Each class or group that connects will prepare a visual display with a message about how we can work to protect our environment. Their artwork will be displayed as a patch for a "virtual quilt" on the Planet Focus web site.

For more information about Planet Focus, contact Paul Rubeo at 845-298-5000 x159 or e-mail paul.rubeo@wappingersschools.org

Best Wishes to Our 2008 Retirees

After celebrating the retirement of **Bob Jutton**, Coordinator for Fine and Performing Arts, earlier this year, two other district coordinators lead a group of thirty four to retire in 2008.



John Merlino, Coordinator for Science and Technology, is retiring after 29 years of distinguished service to the WCSD. John earned a BA in Biology from Marist College, an MS from Russell Sage College and a CAS in School Administration and Supervision from SUNY New Paltz.

John began his work for the District in August of 1979, serving as an Assistant Principal for 3 years. After serving as Acting Department Head for Science for a year, he began his historic tenure as Coordinator for Science and Technology, a position that he has held for the last 25 years. John is only the second person to serve in this capacity in over 50 years, which is truly remarkable evidence of the stability of the science program.

There are many high points in John's career. Always "looking out" for students' best interests, he is very proud of his success in expanding the science program and encouraging students to take more science courses. Over the years, he has initiated many programs, including Science 21 on the elementary level, and Advanced Placement courses and science electives on the secondary level.

In technology, John was instrumental in establishing many new and innovative programs. *Project Lead the Way*, the expansion of computer technology, and retention of industrial arts courses during the 1990's are among his proudest moments.

Over the years, John has amassed many memorable moments and friendships. He remembers with fondness

TEAMING NEW TO 9th GRADE

The 9th grade year is a crucial one in steering students toward success. Grouping students in teams at the 9th grade level is one way to create smaller learning communities within the large high schools and provide the support many of the incoming freshmen will need to succeed.

Groups of 100+/- students will be placed on "teams" that consist of the four core academic teachers. These teachers will be responsible for monitoring student progress and creating intervention strategies for the at-risk students on their team. Teaming will facilitate communication between parents and teachers, and among teachers on the team, by providing a structure of accountability. Teaming will also help spread the low-achieving students among the general population, provide targeted academic intervention services, and reduce the student-teacher ratio to make sure these students are receiving timely and focused assistance. An additional guidance counselor will be hired to work with the 9th grade. His/her responsibilities will include providing "groups" on various topics, such as anger management, school success, study skills, and social skills.

The other type of "teaming" often referred to is the partnership between special education and regular education teachers to provide services within a classroom for classified students. This inclusion teaming approach will be an integral part of the 9th grade small learning community teaming which will be implemented in 2008-09 at each of the high schools.

AIS EXPANDED AT THE HIGH SCHOOLS

Academic Intervention Services (AIS) are mandated at all levels for students who have failed to meet state standards or who are at risk for not meeting state standards in English, math, social studies, and science. We have made great strides in providing these services for students in grades K-8 to date.

To begin the multi-year process of providing adequate academic intervention services to high school students, a reading teacher will be added to the staff at each of the high schools. Additional staff in the other subject areas will be added over the next three years to provide AIS "labs" for students in need of these services.

and appreciation the late Pat Ryan and Doug Deppe, good friends and colleagues, whom John describes as "the heart and soul of the WCSD science program". "I think my happiest moments occurred at the annual science fair awards, watching the happy faces of the many award-winning students!"

John looks forward to relaxing and enjoying his retirement. We wish him and his family well!



Marilyn D. Kovarik, Coordinator for Mathematics and Business Education is retiring at the end of this year after seven years of distinguished service to the District. Marilyn earned her BA in Mathematics, her MS in Education, and her CAS in Administration/Curriculum all from SUNY Oswego.

She joined WCSD in July of 2001.

Over these seven years, she has worked tirelessly for program improvement, adding enhancements such as AP courses, computer programming, the revision of sixteen math courses at the secondary level, two revisions of the K-6 curriculum, and the development of curriculum guides for all grades and levels of mathematics.

She has provided leadership through two changes in the NYSED Math Core Curriculum. Her innovation has led to extensive program improvements and student improvement in the NYS Assessment results.

She has been a positive change agent for district programs and in our community. Throughout her tenure, Marilyn has been very responsive to the concerns and needs of students, teachers, staff, and parents. She has energized the business education department in many ways.

SUMMER SCHOOL COMES TO WCSD

Proposed for the 2008-09 budget is a summer school program for students completing grades 8 and 9 who failed English or Social Studies. The focus of the program for 8th graders will be to help students develop the skills they need to be successful in 9th grade. It will not be simply content oriented, but will also include a strong writing skills component for both subjects. For 9th grade students, content will be stressed so that students may receive high school credit for the course. However, the curriculum will be presented in a project-based format in order to increase student motivation and comprehension.

The proposed WCSD summer school program would be open to 8th graders who scored level 1 or 2 on the NYS Assessment and 8th and 9th graders who failed their English and/or social studies course(s). Multiple sections of English 8, English 9, Social Studies 8, and Global Studies I will be offered in two morning sessions. Transportation will be available with pick-up/drop-off at each elementary school within the district. Applications will be available from the guidance counselors and in the main offices of each secondary school. Completed applications are due to the summer school administrator no later than June 30th. There is no cost to WCSD students for this program.

9th GRADE ADDED TO ORCHARD VIEW ALTERNATIVE HIGH SCHOOL

There have been multiple requests to place 9th graders at Orchard View. This year's budget provides funding to include a 9th grade program at Orchard View in order to reach those students who have been unsuccessful in the larger junior high and high schools and who need the more structured, more closely monitored and smaller learning environment provided at OVAHS. Ninth grade students will have the opportunity to take the following courses:

- Algebra 1A
- Science (not all courses are offered each year)
Non-Regents courses such as Science Across the Spectrum, Marine Science, Practical Chemistry and Conceptual Physics
- Regents Biology
- Global History I
- English 9

In addition, incoming 9th graders may participate in the multi-grade level classes already part of the grade 10-12 schedule: art, English electives, social studies electives, health, and cultural language (Spanish). Students will be bused to RCK for physical education classes.

"As I reflect on my seven years in Wappingers, I am truly honored to have worked with such outstanding administrators and teachers, and I am extremely proud of our accomplishments."

After retirement Marilyn will continue to work in education as a staff development consultant for a textbook company and serving in interim administration positions. Eventually, Marilyn and her husband plan to move to their lake home on the shore of Lake Ontario in Oswego County. Best wishes, Marilyn!

Congratulations, 2008 Retirees:

Helen Abramson, Sally Antunovich, Judith Bowe, Margaret Capell, Debra Cassidy, Sandra Corwin, Terrence Daley, Anne DiAntonio, Jeanne Ditton, Suzanne Dykeman, Elizabeth Faison, Rebecca Greene, Robert Jutton, Suzanne Jutton, Anna Kane, Marilyn Kovarik, R. Russell Martin, Sandra McCluskey, John Merlino, Jeanette Montalbano, Deborah Oldenburg, Carol Orr, Ronald Patterson, Franca Petrillo, Elaine Rippa, Marla Rohwer, Mary Sherman, Linda Stow, Mary Tiernan, Susan Tompkins, Marilyn Vecchi, Sandra Walker, Nancy Wright, Robert Young

WCSD Granted Full Membership in the Tri-State Consortium

Over the past four years, the WCSD has been involved in an intensive self-study and accreditation process through participation in the Tri-State Consortium, a learning organization which is devoted to assisting its member public school districts in New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey, in using student performance data to develop a rigorous framework for systemic planning, assessment, accreditation, and continuous improvement.

The Consortium advances teaching and learning and shares best practices among member districts through the application of the Tri-State assessment model. In April of 2007, the Consortium performed a three-day visit to our district and evaluated our K-12 English Language Arts program.

First Dutchess County Consortium Member

At the Tri-State Consortium's January 2008 meeting, the Steering Committee voted to admit the Wappingers Central School District into full membership in the Tri-State Consortium as its 41st member district. The WCSD is the first member district from Dutchess County. In his

letter of admission to the WCSD, Dr. John Starr, Executive Director of the Tri-State Consortium, stated; "It has been particularly satisfying to me to see the way in which your district (has) used your affiliation with the Consortium in our pilot project with you." Dr. Starr closed his letter by stating, "I feel privileged to have worked with you over the last four years."

As full members in the Consortium, the WCSD benefits from a proven continuous improvement model and has already begun to benefit from its affiliation with some of the best public school districts in the region.

All Schools Gain Middle States Accreditation (MSA)

As a result of the Tri-State consortium visit and evaluation, all fifteen WCSD schools received accreditation using the MSA standards. The lengthy process culminated in a three-day visit to WCSD schools in April of 2007. On November 8th, the District was informed by MSA that accreditation was granted to all of our schools effective December 1, 2007 through December 1, 2017. What is particularly exciting is that of the seventeen schools in Dutchess County who received MSA certification, fifteen are from the WCSD. (For a list of all member districts, visit www.wappingersschools.org or www.tristateconsortium.com)

WCSD Special Education Department Works to Improve Services

This year the Special Education Department met with parents, staff and administration to improve the delivery of services to classified students. Since the Special Education Roundtable meeting in the fall of 2007, committees have been formed to address many of the issues that were raised. As a result of the work of these committees, additional curriculum materials have been ordered. Professional development opportunities for special education teachers have been expanded, especially in the areas of multi-sensory reading and Autism. The Roundtable committees continue to work together to expand the continuum of services available to students with disabilities and are recommending Inclusion classes for the 9th grade at both high schools and the School-to-Work program for students who are graduating with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

The Special Education Department is led by the Director of Special Education, Johanna Hudak, and five assistant coordinators. The assistant coordinators are responsible for supervising all special education staff in the district and for chairing all of the Committee on Special Education (CSE) meetings.

Special education addresses the educational needs of our children who have identifiable disabilities beginning as early as the age of 3, until they receive their high school diplomas or reach the age of 21. Per state requirements, the District conducts evaluations for school-aged children from ages 5-21 and arranges for multi-disciplinary evaluations to be conducted by County-approved providers for 3-5 year-olds.

Following evaluation and classification, the District provides children aged 3-5 with educational and therapeutic services through contracts with County-approved agencies. Children aged 5-21 receive school-based services through District staff such as special education teachers, psychologists, social workers, and physical, occupational and speech therapists.

An Individual Education Plan (IEP), addressing the unique needs of the individual learner, is drawn up for each child who is classified by the CSE. The IEP for every student is reviewed annually, and the District conducts a comprehensive re-evaluation of each classified student every three years.

There are currently 1,626 school-aged classified students and 260 classified preschool children in the District. These students receive applicable services ranging from resource room, inclusion classes, direct consultant teacher services, indirect consultant teacher services, self-contained IEP classes, self-contained credit classes, to intensive instruction classes.

Related services may be also recommended by the CSE to meet the specific needs of a student with a disability as set forth in the student's IEP. Related services may be provided in conjunction with a regular education program or with other special education programs and services. Examples of related services include:

- Speech/Language Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Vision Therapy
- Counseling
- Orientation and Mobility Training

For more information, please visit the Special Education web page located on the WCSD website: www.wappingersschools.org, or call Johanna Hudak at 298-5000, ext. 135.

EXCEL Project Update

In May 2007 the Wappingers Central School District community approved a referendum to perform districtwide improvements with minimal tax impact using state provided EXCEL monies. EXCEL is part of a \$2.6 billion statewide Expanding our Children's Education and Learning package proposed by the state legislature and approved by the governor as part of the 2006 state budget. The amount of EXCEL funding each district receives is based on the number of students it serves. Wappingers' grant allocation is \$3,974,024.

Immediately following voter approval, WCSD formed an EXCEL project team. This team consists of the District's construction managers, architect, director of facilities and operations, assistant director of facilities and operations and school business manager. The EXCEL team, along with valuable input from our building principals, administrators, coordinators and stakeholders has devised a phased approach to the numerous projects that will be undertaken.

Our approach is to break down the projects into trade-specific contracts. This three-phase approach is designed to take advantage of economy of scale, allow sufficient time for preconstruction planning and approvals required by the State Education Department (SED) and to minimize or avoid disruption of student activities.

Phase One of the EXCEL Project

This portion of the project has already received SED approval and has been bid and is planned for construction in the summer of 2008. This phase consists of the following projects:

Evans Elementary School

- Replace gymnasium windows

Roy C. Ketcham High School

- Electrical upgrades
- Refinish and repair gym floor
- Replace gym partitions
- Replace wall padding and base in gym

Phase Two of the EXCEL Project

This phase has already received SED approval. Bidding is scheduled for May 2008 with anticipated construction work to begin on a portion of this phase this summer. This work consists of the following projects:

Brinckerhoff Elementary School

- Replace boilers

Gayhead Elementary School

- Replace boilers

Kinry Elementary School

- Upgrade, replace and repair unit ventilators

Myers Elementary School

- Replace boilers

Oak Grove Elementary School

- Replace boilers
- Re-roof

Sheafe Road Elementary School

- Replace boilers

Vassar Road Elementary School

- Replace heating valves and pumps

Phase Three of the EXCEL Project

This phase has been designed and submitted to SED for approval, which is expected in June 2008. Bidding will take place and contract awards are anticipated in September 2008. Construction will begin in Fall 2008. This work consists of the following:

John Jay High School

- Construct a four classroom addition
- Renovate locker rooms
- Renovate restrooms
- Partial corridor locker replacement

Roy C. Ketcham High School

- Renovate ground level to create four new classrooms
- Renovate locker rooms
- Renovate restrooms
- Upgrade fire alarm and public address system
- Improve auditorium lighting and controls

IMPORTANT DISTRICT ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING MEGAN'S LAW

"... From time to time local law enforcement officials will notify the District when an individual with a history of sex offenses against a child is being paroled or released into the community. Upon written request to the principal, notification will be provided by the principal to the community members who have made the request of the fact that such an individual has been paroled or released into the community. Requests for particulars about the individual being released will be referred, at the request of local law enforcement, to the hotline number or the website provided . . ." (1-800-262-3257) (www.criminaljustice.state.ny.us/nsor/index/htm)

CURRICULUM

First and Second Grade Institutes

Last July the WCSD initiated the Kindergarten Institute as part of the Early Literacy Initiative. Continuing with the Early Literacy Initiative, this summer we are scheduling one-week long Institutes for both first and second grade teachers, including special education, reading and Academic Intervention Services (AIS). The purpose of these Institutes is to provide a consistent grade-level model for Wappingers. The AGENDA for the Institutes will include the following:

Essential questions: What First/Second grade looks like in Wappingers

What do we want our students to know at the end of first grade/second grade?

- A) Unwrapping the standards
- B) Creating timelines and maps for each content area
 - Thematic units
 - Integrated SS/ELA (PNW BOCES)
 - Best Practices, including reading and writing research
 - Embedding critical thinking into the primary classroom
 - Handwriting and spelling
- C) Assessments, Benchmarks and Standards for achievement
 - Review assessments and timeframes
 - Use of assessments and benchmarks to inform instruction
- D) AIS utilization, interventions and classroom management
- E) Communicating progress
 - Report card indicators/handwritten comments
 - Creating user-friendly parent documents about 1st and 2nd grade expectations and outcomes

First LEGO League Update

This school year, the WCSD participated in its initial FIRST LEGO LEAGUE (F.L.L.) competition. In early February, teams from Van Wyck Junior High School, Wappingers Junior High School and Fishkill Elementary School successfully participated in this sports-like robotics event at Dutchess Community College. Van Wyck placed first in the "Robotics Design" competition among the field of twelve teams.

As a result of this overwhelmingly successful endeavor, the WCSD plans to be more involved in the F.L.L. during the 2008-2009 school year. Funding for participation for the remaining eight elementary schools is included in the 2008-2009 budget. This means that next year there could be eleven teams from the WCSD. In addition, Van Wyck Junior High School has been selected as one of the four qualifying sites for the finals competition scheduled at Dutchess Community College on February 8, 2009.

Putnam-Northern Westchester Integrated Social Studies/ELA

The Putnam/Northern Westchester BOCES Integrated Social Studies and English Language Arts (ELA) Curriculum is a user-friendly, web-based elementary curriculum developed by teachers throughout the region. Updated annually and maintained throughout the year to make sure everything works properly, the content of the curriculum is based on the New York State Social Studies Learning Standards and Core Curriculum, while simultaneously incorporating the New York State ELA Learning Standards. The curriculum currently spans grades 1 through 5 and contains complete lesson plans for teachers, handouts for students, and technology links for colorful, exciting and interactive content and resources.

In response to numerous requests throughout the region, PNW BOCES has decided to expand the program into Kindergarten, thereby providing teachers at that grade level with a full array of resources and learning activities to support social studies and English Language Arts. The Wappingers Central School District will be sending two Kindergarten teachers to participate in the design and writing of the curriculum. Our teachers will then have access to the pilot Kindergarten web site in the Spring of 2009, in addition to the grades 1-5 program we already enjoy.

For more information and a look at some sample lessons, go to http://pnwboces.org/cesari/CurriculumCenter/SSELA/Sample_Lessons/sample.htm.

K-2 Summer Reading Camp

A summer reading camp modeled after the Reading Round-Up Camp that the Site-based Leadership Team (SLT) initiated at Oak Grove Elementary School is planned for this summer. Instruction will be geared toward building and enriching beginning reading skills.

The reading camp will provide academic intervention for our youngest struggling students. K-2 students from all elementary schools will be invited by their teachers to attend. Themed-based literature activities will provide a foundation for supplemental reading experiences, reinforcing skills in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics fluency, vocabulary development and comprehension.

The K-2 summer reading camp will take place at three different district sites. Host sites were selected based on their locations: Oak Grove (North), Myers (Central), and Gayhead (South). Small groups of students will attend a one-week session. We are planning on offering two sessions. The camp will run for two hours a day, Monday-Thursday from June 30 to July 10.

History of Mathematics

The History of Mathematics course will cover the development of mathematics from the ancient Egyptians through today. Students will be introduced to history's pivotal mathematicians and their important contributions to the world. This high school course, scheduled to begin in the fall, is designed to broaden students' mathematical vocabulary. It will give them insight as to how the math they have learned actually came about and for what reason. This course will be an excellent choice for students who have an interest in history and who have varying levels of mathematical ability.

Write Source Handbook

To ensure continuity and consistency, WCSD is implementing a K-12 writing continuum utilizing the *Write Source* textbooks with the six traits approach.

On the *Write Source* web site there are examples of actual student models from grades 1 through 12. Students can also submit writing to the web site to be published. Students can find information about correct citation of sources for use in both Modern Language Association (MLA) and American Psychological Association (APA) style on the *Write Source* web site.

Currently, all students in grades 3-5 and 7-8 have access to the books and materials from *Write Source*. The District wants to expand the adoption of *Write Source* to include all grade levels, K-12, so that each ELA classroom has a complete set of texts available for students to use.

New Science Courses

In serving an ever-growing number of high school students enrolling in science courses, new courses have been approved by the Board of Education to begin in September.

The first course, Science Across The Spectrum, is designed to address students who are failing or are "at risk" of failing science as they enter ninth grade. Students will be primarily identified through their scores on the NYS Science 8 Assessment being given this spring. A "level one" or "level two" performance level will identify the students in need of additional skills and content instruction. By taking this course, the students will strengthen basic skills in science which will prepare them for the rigors of the Regents science courses ahead.

Astronomy is the second course to be offered. The intent is to add another science enrichment opportunity for students who are pursuing a required third year of science or have met their Regents requirements and wish to take a fourth year of science. The Astronomy course will be an enrichment course for physics/earth science.

A third course, Forensics, has been approved by the Board of Education to begin in September 2009. Curriculum development will start this summer through an association with Syracuse University. Forensics will be an enrichment course for chemistry/biology.

CRITICAL THINKING

At the next Tri State visitation, scheduled for the 2009-2010 school year, we are asking for a review of critical thinking in the WCSD. Below please find the many areas we have addressed or will address.

District Wide Definition of Critical Thinking

We believe our primary purpose is to prepare students to become competent, humane critical thinkers who employ sound reasoning to make decisions and solve problems. We believe that competent critical thinkers are effective, innovative, and self-directed learners who:

- can see both sides of an issue.
- are open to new evidence, even when that evidence contradicts personal beliefs or ideas.
- reason dispassionately.
- demand that claims be backed by evidence.
- deduce and infer conclusions from available facts in order to make sound decisions.
- solve problems.

Professional Development Day Dedicated to Critical Thinking

The article, *Critical Thinking, Why Is It So Hard to Teach?* was read and discussed at the November 2007 Professional Development Day.

Key questions were asked, such as *What is Critical Thinking? What does it look and sound like here in Wappingers? Why is it important to address it in our curriculum?*

District Teams Formed to Create Critical Thinking Plans

Through team efforts, three-year critical thinking plans are being created and individualized for each school in the district. These teams involve parents, teachers and administrators.

Work to be Completed Summer of 2008

Members of the critical thinking teams from each building are invited to participate in a week-long Critical Thinking Institute.

The critical thinking activities and professional and curriculum development will evolve over a three-year period. This summer's Critical Thinking Institute is to be funded by Title II grant monies.

Top Seniors, Class of 2008

John Jay High School

Zhong Zhuang, Valedictorian

Zhong is an exceptional young man with the capacity to create positive change and influence everything with which he is involved. He has been a member of NYSSMA, symphonic, jazz and marching bands since 9th grade. As captain of the varsity swim team, vice-president of the Sophomore class and the Young Democrats Club, opinion editor of the school newspaper and treasurer of the Science Olympiad, Zhong is always juggling his busy schedule. He still finds time to volunteer many hours helping in the community and tutoring younger students. Last summer Zhong participated in the Columbia University Science Honors Program doing research in genetics and molecular bacteriology, eukaryotic genetics and genomics. He is fluent in Chinese and Japanese languages. Zhong has traveled to Japan and worked as a research assistant at Utsunomiya University. He is the recipient of the Outstanding Yale Science and Engineering Award, The Outstanding Chemical Society Award, and the Environmental Defense Award. There is no question about Zhong's character, devotion or moral fortitude. He is well liked by his peers and enormously respected by our faculty and staff. Zhong has a warm and loving home environment in which he has thrived academically. In the fall, Zhong plans to attend Columbia University and pursue a career in the medical field.



Sruti Akella, Salutatorian

Sruti Akella is a leader, role model, humanitarian and survivor. She is a highly motivated young woman dedicated to achieving her goals. Academically, she is an extremely accomplished student. She has taken Honors and AP courses throughout her career and has maintained an A+ average. She has received perfect scores on all of her AP exams, and near perfect scores on the ACT, SAT and SAT II. She has recently been selected as a finalist for the National Merit Scholarship. Sruti is actively involved in school and her community. She is a member of the National Honor Society, Math and Spanish Honor Societies, orchestra, FBLA, Multicultural Club and Math Team. She is the editor-in-chief of the yearbook, is the editor of the Life section of our award winning school paper, The Patriot, and is the secretary for Amnesty International. Sruti has volunteered thousands of hours within her community, at locations including Vassar Brothers Medical Center, Hudson Haven Care Center, Poughkeepsie Family Center Lunch Box, and our local library. She also tutored students in math and Spanish. For the last two summers Sruti participated in the Summer Camps at Stony Brook University, first in Biotechnology and then in the Garcia Center Engineering Program. She was also part of the Summers Scholars Program at Vassar College in 2006. Sruti has a warm rapport with both faculty and staff. Her ability to set and attain goals will undoubtedly guide her toward a successful future as she pursues a major in biomedical engineering and a career in medicine. At this time she is undecided as to which college she will attend.



Roy C. Ketcham High School

Gordon Moseley, Valedictorian

Gordon Moseley currently plays first singles for and is captain of the RCK tennis team. He has been a Varsity Scholar-Athlete for four years. In addition to tennis, he participates in the table tennis and chess clubs at Vassar College. Gordon's musical interests are just as diverse as his athletic interests. Besides singing in RCK's Chamber Choir, Gordon also sings and acts onstage (most recently as Lysander in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and Tony in "The Boy-friend"). When not singing he can be found playing French horn in the wind ensemble, or trumpet in the jazz band. As the president of RCK's chapter of the National Honor Society, Gordon recently organized and co-hosted the "Mr. Ketcham Pageant". This winter he was a member of the WorldQuest Foreign Affairs Quiz Bowl team which won the regional competition and represented the Mid-Hudson Valley at the national competition in Washington, D.C. Gordon won the Cornell Book Award, the Ketcham English Award and a bronze medal in Le Grand Concours, a French language competition. He is an AP scholar with distinction and a National Merit Finalist. Although he does not yet know what or where he will be studying next year, he has been accepted at Dartmouth College, Vanderbilt University and Yale University and looks forward to whatever the future may hold for him.



Geoffrey Bass, Salutatorian

Geoffrey has kept himself very busy throughout his four years at Roy C. Ketcham. He swam on the Wappingers Varsity Swim Team since freshman year and this year was chosen to be a captain by his teammates. He has also played active roles in the school's theatre program, crew team, and wind ensemble. For the past year, he has been involved with RCK's chapter of the National Honor Society, of which he is vice-president. Geoffrey has been a member of Boy Scout Troop 56 in Wappingers since fifth grade, achieving the rank of Eagle Scout. He was also recently honored by receiving a Congressional Award. Geoffrey plays the French horn in the New Paltz College Youth Symphony and will be traveling to France and Belgium this summer with the RCK Traveling Choir. Geoffrey has volunteered at Vassar Brothers Medical Center and has participated in a number of mission trips, most recently spending one week in Mississippi working on homes devastated by Hurricane Katrina. A National Merit Finalist, Geoffrey has not yet made a final decision about where he will be studying in the fall. He is considering either Amherst College or an Honors program at the University of Pennsylvania.



Congratulations & Best Wishes!

WAPPINGERS SCHOOLS

Elementary Schools

Brinkerhoff
Evans
Fishkill
Fishkill Plains
Gayhead
Kinry Road
Myers Corners
Oak Grove
Sheafe Road
Vassar Road

Secondary Schools

Van Wyck JHS
Wappingers JHS

John Jay HS
Roy C. Ketcham HS
Orchard View Alternative HS

WCSD OFFICES

167 Myers Corners Road, Suite 200
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590

ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent
Richard A. Powell

Deputy Superintendent
Technology, Testing & Assessments
Charles Hill, D.A.

Assistant Superintendent
School Administration
Cheryl Thomas, Ph.D.

Interim Assistant Superintendent
Curriculum & Instruction
Christine Brady

Director/District Administration
G. Thomas Stella

Director of Special Education
Johanna Hudak

Business Manager
Michele Moloney

Director/Human Resources
Joanne Sereda

BOARD OF EDUCATION

President
Deborah A. Kuter
Vice-President
Roger L. D'Aquino
Douglass Biteker
Joseph Incoronato
Anthony A. LoCicero
Joseph R. Porpora
Sebastian A. Rutigliano
Marilynn Shultz
Vacant Seat

in print: WCSD Newsletter

Editor: G.Thomas Stella
Designer: Cherie Kocsis
Produced in cooperation with the Dutchess
BOCES Public Information Service

NEW from CONTINUING EDUCATION SUMMER CAMPS for WCSD STUDENTS

Theater and Art Camp

For students entering 4th, 5th & 6th
grade in the Fall
Gayhead Elementary School
July 7 - July 11

Band Camp

For students entering 6th & 7th grade
in the Fall
Van Wyck Junior High School
July 14 - July 18

How to Register: Call 298-5000 x 137
or check out Continuing Education on
the WCSD website

MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Relay for Life
Friday, June 13
6PM
Fishkill Allsport

The Relay for Life is...

- A community gathering where everyone can participate in the fight against cancer.
- Comprised of teams of friends, families, and communities who walk along a track while raising funds, awareness, and the spirits of those present.
- An opportunity to give a tax deductible donation to the American Cancer Society

60% of the funds raised remain in Dutchess County for patient services
40% used for research on the state and national level.

Be a team leader or a team member!

Purchase a luminaria or simply make a donation. The Relay is a time of hope, progress and answers, raising much needed funds, awareness of cancer prevention options, treatments and patient support groups.

For further information contact Gail Buckle at 896-5087, Fishkill Allsport at 896-5678 or the American Cancer Society at 452-2932.

You are cordially
invited to enjoy our
students' fine and
performing arts!

Festival of the Arts

Saturday, May 17

10am-4pm

Mesier Park, Wappingers Falls

Rain date: Sunday May 18, 10a.m.-4p.m.

Don't miss it!

Wappingers Central School District Youth Sports Camps

Camp	Weeks	Contact*
JJ Volleyball	6/30-7/4	Jan.Baisely@wappingersschools.org
JJ Girl's Basketball	7/7-7/11	Lawrence.Brooks@wappingersschools.org
JJ Boy's Basketball	7/14-7/18, 7/21-7/25	Darryl.Sullivan@wappingersschools.org
JJ Football (Non-contact)	7/28-8/1, 8/11-8/14	Paradox220@frontier.net
JJ Soccer (Boys & Girls)	7/7-7/11	Darryl.Sullivan@wappingersschools.org Robert.Seipp@wappingersschools.org
Gymnastics	6/30-7/25	Anne.Seymour@wappingersschools.org
RCK Volleyball	7/14-7/18	Daniel.Pampelone@wappingersschools.org
RCK Girl's Basketball	7/21-7/24, 7/28-7/31	Kristie.Meyer@wappingersschools.org
RCK Boy's Basketball	6/30-7/3, 7/5-7/9	Matthew.Paino@wappingersschools.org
RCK Field Hockey	6/30-7/3	Erin.Mulligan@wappingersschools.org
RCK Baseball	7/17-8/7	Patrick.Mealy@wappingersschools.org

*Check with contact person for information on registration and fees.

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEWBURGH, NY
PERMIT NO. 934

WAPPINGERS
Central School District

167 Myers Corners Road, Suite 200
Wappingers Falls, NY 12590