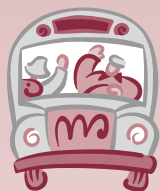


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focus

Preparing World Class Citizens

October, 2008



Staff and students at Forest Park Elementary added a little bit of pirate humor to their character education program this fall as the school participated in National Talk Like a Pirate Day. Students dressed and spoke like pirates while enjoying a skit performed by staff about three pirates who actually chose to COOPERATE and WORK TOGETHER to find some treasure.

Proposition No. 2 seeks approval for new CCHS press box

Construction would not raise property taxes

South Colonie residents will be asked on October 23rd to approve construction of a new press box overlooking the football field and track at Colonie Central High School.

The new press box would replace the antiquated, 40-year-old, three-story structure, which no longer meets New York State Education Department's fire and safety regulations and must be demolished. The district had anticipated this issue last year after inspections confirmed that the existing structure could not meet the current safety codes. Knowing this change would be required, the district set aside fund balance to cover the expense without having any tax increase for community members.

The district will be asking for voter approval to spend \$149,600 for the project. A public referendum is still required by law because replacing the existing structure is technically "new" construction.

New school buses on October voting ballot as Proposition No. 1

South Colonie residents to vote October 23rd Polls are open 11 a.m. – 9 p.m.

South Colonie residents will go to the polls on Thursday, October 23rd, to vote on the annual school bus proposition to upgrade the district Transportation Department. The polls will be open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the district's five elementary schools. There is **NO** voting at the high school or middle schools. *(More voting information on page 2)*

Proposition No. 1 asks for voter approval to spend \$634,000 to purchase seven new transportation vehicles to meet the district's annual replacement schedule. The replacement plan of the existing fleet has

Continued on page 2 ... school bus vote October 23

Continued on page 3 ... press box vote

Who can vote on October 23rd?

You are eligible to vote if you are a U.S. citizen, 18 years or older, and a resident of the school district for at least 30 days prior to the vote.

Voting Sites

FOREST PARK ELEMENTARY

100 Forest Drive (869-3006)

ROESSLEVILLE ELEMENTARY

100 California Ave. (459-2157)

SADDLEWOOD ELEMENTARY

100 Lorelee Drive (456-2608)

SHAKER ROAD ELEMENTARY

512 Shaker Road (458-1440)

VEEDER ELEMENTARY

25 Veeder Drive (869-4661)

Absentee ballots online

Absentee ballots may now be downloaded online from the district web site. Look under Administration (top of page)/ Budget/Voting Information.

PLEASE NOTE:
All voting takes place in the elementary schools. There is NO voting at the high school or middle schools.

Proposition No. 1- Buses

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the South Colonie Central School District, Albany County, New York, is hereby authorized to purchase buses, at a maximum estimated cost of \$634,000; and that such sum, or so much thereof as shall be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of 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.

... School bus vote October 23

Continued from page 1

helped to maintain student safety and control repair and maintenance costs on older buses. Proposition No. 1 breaks down as follows:

- \$517,500 for the purchase of five, 66-passenger school buses, at \$103,500 per vehicle;
- \$107,500 for the purchase of one, 24-passenger/two-wheelchair school bus;
- \$34,000 for the purchase of one, 7-passenger Suburban transportation vehicle.

After receiving an estimated \$25,000 trade-in value on buses that will be taken out of service, the total cost is to the district for the seven new vehicles would be \$634,000.

The district also is eligible to receive 55 percent of the purchase in state aid making the district's net cost \$317,396. The money would be borrowed over a five-year period. The cost to South Colonie property owners would be about 2.5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value if the bus proposition is approved. On an average home assessed at \$150,000, the total cost would be \$3.36 per family. (See *complete tax rate chart below*).

Bus property tax impact

Annual School Bus Purchase Proposition — \$634,000

Estimated tax rate increase Year 1 (Per \$1,000 of Assessed Value)

	<u>Colonie</u>	<u>Niskayuna</u>	<u>Guilderland</u>
Homestead	\$0.025070	\$0.016477	\$0.020321
Non-Homestead	\$0.028384	\$0.018934	\$0.023780

AAA honors school bus driver Jim Kochan recognized for safety and job performance



South Colonie school bus driver, Jim Kochan, was among a group of bus drivers honored recently by AAA Hudson Valley for their dedication during the 2007-08 school year. Criteria for the award include the driver's safety record, no at-fault accidents, minimal absences, job performance, interaction skills with students, as well as extraordinary acts or heroism. Kochan has been a driver for the district for three years. For more on this award, visit the district web site.

Proposition No. 2 - CCHS Press Box

Resolved, that the Board of Education of the South Colonie Central School District, Albany County, New York, is hereby authorized to replace, reconstruct, and construct a press box at Colonie Central High School, including all original furnishings, equipment, apparatus, appurtenances, site improvement, and incidental improvements and expenses in connection therewith, and is further authorized to expend an amount not to exceed \$149,600, to be expended from the District's budget fund balance at no tax levy impact.

... press box vote

Continued from page 1

Colonie Central High School opened to students in 1953. The original press box was destroyed by fire in the 1970s and rebuilt. The wooden structure has been well maintained over the years, but simply does not meet the current codes.

The new press box would be built out of fire resistant masonry block, not wood, and would also include the state required separate rear fire escape exits to the ground level from each of its three floors. The new structure would be a well constructed basic building which would meet current codes and last for decades with very limited maintenance.

With direction from the State Education Department's Office of Facilities Planning, the district has retrofitted the existing structure to receive a temporary certificate of occupancy until November 22. After this date, the structure will no longer be useable.

Several modifications had to be made over the summer. First, the top observation level has been permanently closed. Second, rear fire escape doors and temporary fire escape scaffolding (stairs to the ground – see photo above, right) had to be installed to make the middle and bottom levels of the press box useable.

Without a press box, it will be very difficult for the district to host sporting events like football, track and lacrosse because the building serves as the electrical source for the scoreboard and public address system.

If approved by voters in October, construction plans would be submitted to the State Education Department for approval during the winter. The old press box would be demolished in the spring and the new structure constructed in time for the fall, 2009 athletic season.



With direction from the State Education Department's Office of Facilities Planning, the district has retrofitted the existing high school press box with rear fire doors and fire escape scaffolding to receive a temporary certificate of occupancy until November 22. After this date, the structure will no longer be useable.

South Colonie offers free and reduced meals

The South Colonie Central School District participates in the National School Lunch Program providing nutritious meals for students free or at a reduced price of 25 cents. Free or reduced priced meals are provided daily based on household size and income. All information is kept strictly confidential.

To see whether your family qualifies for this program, all you need to do is complete an application available at your child's school or contact the South Colonie Food Service Department at 869-3576. You will be notified within a few days if you qualify for the program.

Sex offender notification

The Colonie Police Department provides our schools with a list of the names and addresses of Level 2 and 3 convicted sex offenders living in the South Colonie Central School District.

Those lists are now kept in a binder at each school and the District Office and can be viewed during normal school hours or by contacting the Colonie Police Department. A signature is required. Pages can be copied for 25 cents each.

Information is also readily available on the Colonie Town Police web site at www.colonie.com/police, the district web site at www.southcolonieschools.org and the New York State Sex Registered Sex Offender web site at <http://criminaljustice.state.ny.us>.

South Colonie Job Fair

**November 13th • 6 - 7 p.m.
Room 211 • Colonie High School**

Need a job? Maybe you are retired or just looking to work 3-4 hours a day. South Colonie is the place. Learn more by attending this one-hour informational seminar. Supervisors of the Buildings & Grounds, Food Service and Transportation Departments will be on hand to explain the duties associated with each district position. Minimum qualifications will be covered, and employment applications will be available. Training is provided for most positions including bus drivers.



Go Home Early Drill Nov. 10

On Monday, November 10th, South Colonie Schools will send its students home 15 minutes early to test its Emergency Management Plan. The "Go Home Early Drill" is required once a year by the New York State Education Department. The purpose of the early dismissal drill is to test the effectiveness of the transportation and communications systems in the event of an emergency. Copies of the Emergency Management Plan are located in the Principal's Office of each school, and at the District Office, 102 Loralee Drive, Albany.

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Superintendent of Schools

Tim Backus
Assistant Superintendent for Instruction

Beverly Miller
Assistant Superintendent/
Management Services

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