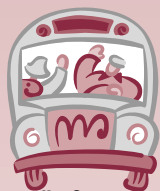


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focus

Preparing World Class Citizens

June/July, 2006



Two of the more than 400 happy graduates from the Colonie Central High School Class of 2006. The class earned more than \$1.9 million in academic/merit scholarships.

Two inducted into CCHS Hall of Fame Alumni role models for our students

Two graduates of Colonie Central High School were honored in June as the newest inductees in the Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame was established in 1994 to honor South Colonie alumni who can serve as role models and a source of inspiration for students based on their variety of accomplishments following high school. To date, 41 CCHS graduates representing more than 20 different high school classes have been honored with Hall of Fame status and have their plaques and photos hanging in the high school entranceway. For a brief look at CCHS's latest inductees, please turn to page 2 of this newsletter.

IMPORTANT! Attention new parents

Enclosed in this newsletter is a census form which must be completed and mailed back free of charge so the district can begin planning for future enrollment. NOTE: Registration for ALL new students is done at Colonie Central High School, regardless of student's age or school he/she will attend.

NYS School Report Card

An annual look at how South Colonie students are performing on New York State exams from the 2005 testing year

Each year, the New York State Education Department releases its annual School Report Card — a snapshot of how well students are achieving academically as measured by standardized tests taken the previous school year.

Since the state introduced new and more challenging exams for all students in 1999 — raising the bar on what students should achieve in school — South Colonie students have shown

For a snapshot of results please go to pages 4-5.

steady improvement at all grade levels. Proof of this is the continued appearance of South Colonie elementary schools on the state's "most improved" list.

Overall, the district is pleased with student results from the 2005 testing year and continues to offer those who need extra help a variety of remedial programs so that they too will be successful in school and in life. Some of our 2005 testing results are featured in this newsletter. For a complete copy of the School Report Card please contact the district office or your child's school.

Meet our CCHS 2006 Hall of Fame inductees

J. Dennis Cafaro – Class of 1966

J. Dennis Cafaro has spent many tireless years dedicated to the children of the South Colonie Central School District as a member of the Board of Education and founding member of South Colonie Dollars for Scholars campaign. Cafaro served on the school board for 10 years from 1995-2005.

During his tenure he was school board President for two years (2001-2003), Vice President for three years (1998-2001) and a member of every school board committee during his tenure. He also served over the years as chairman of the board's Finance, Communications, Transportation and Government Relations Committees. He was a former treasurer of the Capital District School Boards Association and a frequent presenter at National and New York State School Boards Associations conferences.

His many accomplishments on the school board included serving as a member of the South Colonie Schools' 50th Anniversary Steering Committee in 1999 (where the Alumni Scholarship Fund was born) as well as helping to oversee a variety of capital improvement projects. Today, he is Second Vice President and Immediate Past President of the South Colonie Dollars for Scholars chapter and a member of the Project Lead the Way Partnership Team at Colonie Central High School. His community involvement includes former president and current member of the Financial Stewardship Committee of the Church of St. Clare, former manager/coach in the Colonie Little League and former assistant pack leader for the Cub Scouts.

Cafaro has worked for 23 years with Clough Harbour & Associates LLP in Colonie. Today, he is an associate with the company and Manager of Office Operations and a member of the National Association of Purchasing Management – Eastern New York. He graduated in 1970 from Oklahoma City University with a bachelor of science degree in Marketing and Management.

Charlene Dukes – Class of 1985

Charlene Dukes is the first African American Deputy Public Defender for the State of Maryland and the youngest to hold that position in the history of the agency. She was appointed in August, 2004, and manages an agency with more than 1,200 employees and a budget of over \$85 million.

At CCHS, Dukes was a member of Student Government and the Mock Trial Team and attended Howard University on a debate scholarship. Today, she is a Mock Trial coach and judge. While at Howard she worked at the U.S. Department of Justice and earned a Certificate of Outstanding Service. She graduated from law school at the University of Maryland in three years while working full time as a counselor at a group home.

Dukes is a member of the faculty at the National Legal Aid & Defender Association and a former adjunct professor at the University of Maryland School of Law. She has worked as In House Counsel for State Farm Insurance Co. and has taught and practiced civil and criminal litigation. She is a member of the Washington, D.C., the National and the Women's Bar Associations and is licensed to practice law before the U.S. Supreme Court and in Maryland, Washington, D.C., Texas and New York State.

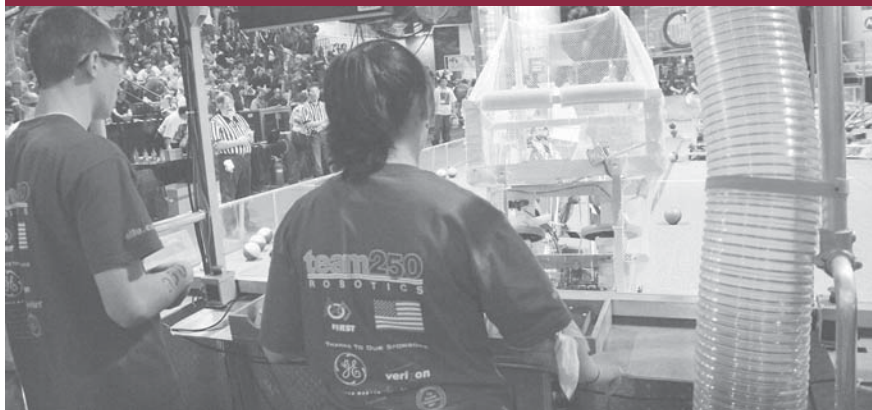
At CCHS, Dukes was an exchange student/host to Spain, an Albany County Legislative intern and a page for the New York State Assembly. She was also a member of the varsity track and soccer teams. She remains active in the community as a mentor and tutor and is committed to supporting organizations that provide funding for research and treatment of cancer, AIDS and kidney disease. In 1997 she became a member of the National Organ Donation Society when she donated a kidney to her father.



Michael Palmer

Palmer named Coach of the Year by T.U.

Michael Palmer, physical education teacher at Roessleville Elementary, was named Boy's Indoor Track Coach of the Year by the *Times Union*. Palmer is also the head men's indoor track coach and the assistant men's outdoor coach for Colonie Central High School. In his eighth year at Colonie, he has led the Garnet Raiders to victory in the Dartmouth Relays, to the Suburban Council and section II championships. Palmer sent 11 runners to the state championships and coached nine All-Americans.



Colonie Central High School Robotics teammates Bobby Deflice and Alaina Ranalli at the controls of the CCHS robot.

CCHS Robotics Team at the controls of an award-winning performance

Your assignment is to build a robot from scratch in just six weeks. Impossible, you say?

Well that's how long it took this year's Colonie Central High School Robotics Team and their mentors to conceive, design, fabricate and assemble the robot that they took to Rochester and Philadelphia for FIRST competitions.

FIRST, short for — For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology — is an international event teaming professionals and young people to solve an engineering design problem in an intense and competitive way. South Colonie students have been involved in the FIRST competition for years.

In mid-March, nearly 100 team members, mentors and team supporters were at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) to watch how South Colonie's student robot would stack up against the teams from Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York and Canada at the Finger Lakes Regional. The Finger Lakes regional typically attracts some of the toughest FIRST teams, including former National Championship winners. Team 250, as the Colonie Team is known, came away with the Silver Medal, missing the Gold by only five points after 21 matches, including a replay of their highest scoring match because of technical problems on the field. The team also won the Industrial Safety Award, and a Special Judges Award for creative fundraising techniques.

At the end of March, the team headed to Drexel University to face another 46 Teams from the Mid-Atlantic States, Virginia and Ohio. On the way to Philadelphia the team stopped in Kintnersville, PA, for a party hosted by Team 103, the Cybersonics, a premier FIRST team they had befriended in Atlanta last year. In



Eric Bosen proudly carries one of the CCHS team's Safety Awards.

Philly, the team got off to a slow start. The fierce competition at RIT had damaged the robot, but it wasn't detected until the team played its first match in Philly. Throughout the morning, the student mechanics worked between matches to repair what they could. At the end of the fourth seeding match, Team 250 was ranked 43rd out of 46. During the lunch break the mentors and student mechanics put their heads together, identified the problem and set a plan for repairs. Everything was uphill from there; Team 250 had the highest score of the competition. All this effort culminated again in a second place finish for the Colonie Team.

The Team also continued the safe practices in the pits and on the field that helped them claim the Safety Award in Rochester. This, coupled with the safety considerations incorporated into the robot design and the students' ability to explain the team's extensive safety program, resulted in a second Industrial Safety Award. Team 250 is one of only three teams out of more than 1,100 worldwide to win two Safety Awards in one season.

Inside the numbers

What do the Report Card statistics mean?

Sometimes it seems that interpreting the New York State School Report Card results can be almost as difficult as taking the exams themselves. So what do all the numbers mean?

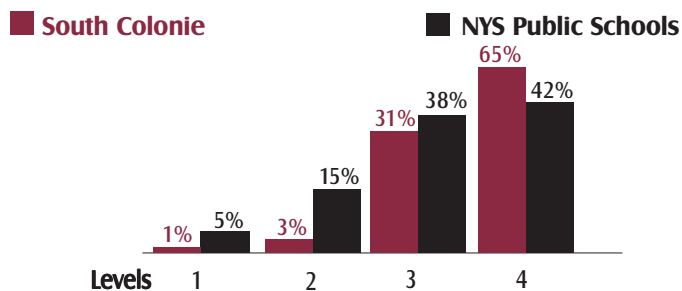
On this page are charts with the results of exams taken by students in 2005 in English/Language Arts, Mathematics and Science. The exams are designed to measure how well they are meeting New York State's tougher academic standards and how well they are being prepared to succeed in an all-Regents high school curriculum.

The red and black bars show the percentage of South Colonie students, and New York State students as a whole, scoring at four performance levels. The performance levels are interpreted this way:

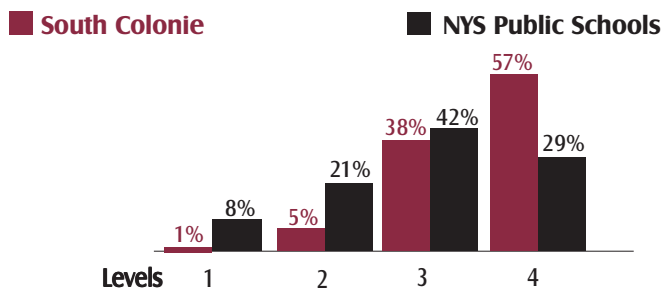
- **Level 4:** The highest performance level. These students exceed the standards and are moving toward high Regents performance.
- **Level 3:** These students meet the standards and with continued steady growth should pass the Regents examinations.
- **Level 2:** These students need extra help to meet the standards and pass the Regents exams.
- **Level 1:** These students have serious academic difficulties.

Science

Elementary Level: 2005 Testing Year

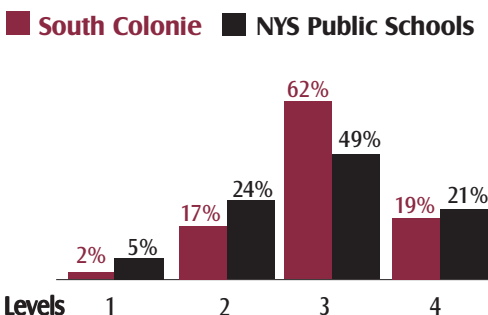


Middle School Level: 2005 Testing Year

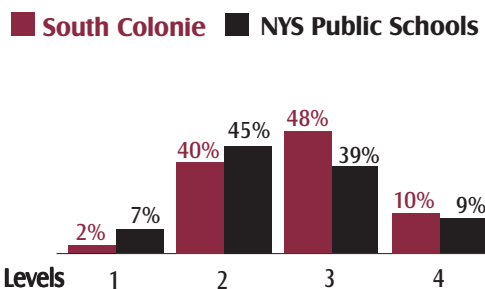


English/Language Arts

Grade 4 Year 2005 Testing

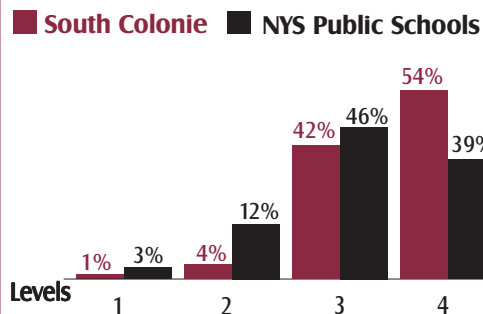


Grade 8 Year 2005 Testing

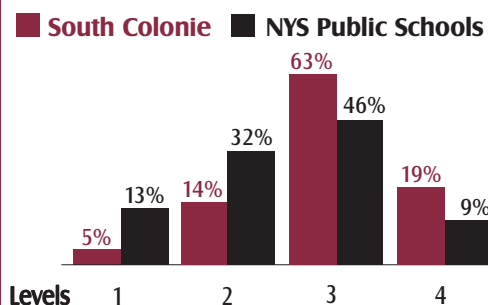


Mathematics

Grade 4 Year 2005 Testing



Grade 8 Year 2005 Testing



More from the NY State Report Card

Students meeting the Regents challenge

Colonie Central High School students are facing academic challenges like never before. Over the past few years, the New York State Board of Regents has been phasing in new and tougher Regents Exams that all students must now pass to graduate.

The annual School Report Card illustrates how all high school students are meeting this challenge and compares their Regents results with students from high schools across the state. The chart on the right illustrates the percentage of Colonie Central High School students passing Regents Exams in different subject areas (65-100) and the percentage of students scoring (85-100) on those exams (which is considered subject mastery).

The South Colonie Central School District has a wide variety of remedial programs for helping students who are scoring at the lower levels on these early assessment tests. These programs are designed to help students improve academic performance so they can succeed later in high school – succeed on Regents exams and graduate with a Regents diploma.

CCHS Regents test results by course

Comprehensive English

Percentage of tested students scoring 65-100 (Passing) 97%
 Percentage of tested students scoring 85-100 (Mastery) 48%

Mathematics A

Percentage of tested students scoring 65-100 (Passing) 94%
 Percentage of tested students scoring 85-100 (Mastery) 32%

Mathematics B

Percentage of tested students scoring 65-100 (Passing) 81%
 Percentage of tested students scoring 85-100 (Mastery) 19%

Global History and Geography

Percentage of tested students scoring 65-100 (Passing) 87%
 Percentage of tested students scoring 85-100 (Mastery) 36%

U.S. History and Government

Percentage of tested students scoring 65-100 (Passing) 92%
 Percentage of tested students scoring 85-100 (Mastery) 62%

Living Environment

Percentage of tested students scoring 65-100 (Passing) 90%
 Percentage of tested students scoring 85-100 (Mastery) 32%

Physical Setting/Earth Science

Percentage of tested students scoring 65-100 (Passing) 99%
 Percentage of tested students scoring 85-100 (Mastery) 82%

Physical Setting/Chemistry

Percentage of tested students scoring 65-100 (Passing) 70%
 Percentage of tested students scoring 85-100 (Mastery) 14%

Physical Setting/Physics

Percentage of tested students scoring 65-100 (Passing) 85%
 Percentage of tested students scoring 85-100 (Mastery) 35%

Comprehensive French

Percentage of tested students scoring 65-100 (Passing) 100%
 Percentage of tested students scoring 85-100 (Mastery) 77%

Comprehensive Spanish

Percentage of tested students scoring 65-100 (Passing) 100%
 Percentage of tested students scoring 85-100 (Mastery) 72%

Comprehensive Italian

Percentage of tested students scoring 65-100 (Passing) 100%
 Percentage of tested students scoring 85-100 (Mastery) 100%

98% of general education students in the CCHS Class of 2005 earned a Regents diploma – tied for highest in the Suburban Council.



Saluting the vets at Lisha Kill Middle School.



A children's tribute at Forest Park Elementary.

Veterans honored on Memorial Day

South Colonie students and staff at many of our schools took time to pause this Memorial Day to remember and give thanks to all who have sacrificed to make our country free. Following is a brief roundup:

- **Forest Park Elementary** third graders honored local veterans with an emotional program that included relatives of the students who served in the armed forces. Displayed around the cafeteria were more than 2,400 names of veterans who lost their lives fighting the War in Iraq. The children sang patriotic songs and spoke about relatives who served our country.

- Three former World War II prisoners of war visited **Lisha Kill Middle School** to talk with students and answered a variety of questions. They were later honored at a school-wide assembly and received a standing ovation from the more than 1,000 in attendance. A patriotic luncheon followed.

- **Sand Creek Middle School** held a special program with the sixth grade chorus singing patriotic songs and the eighth grade band entertaining a crowd of more than 1,000. Students shared stories of relatives who served our country and provided information on the origins of Memorial Day as well as the significance of the Pledge of Allegiance and "Taps."



Displaying "the colors" at Sand Creek Middle School.

Summer building use notice for residents

South Colonie residents should note that three district buildings – Colonie Central High School, Veeder Elementary and Lisha Kill Middle School – will be closed this summer due to construction activity. Summer school and all special activities will be held at other buildings.





Carthi Mannikarottu

Sand Creek student is one of the area's top spellers

Carthi Mannikarottu from Sand Creek Middle School was one of five top spellers in the Capital Region honored by BOCES at a special ceremony in May. Barnes & Noble on Wolf Road hosted the event in which these extraordinary spellers were awarded prizes and served on a panel — answering questions about their preparation for the Regional Spelling Bee back in March. Carthi was a runner up in the event.

In the news

Sand Creek students invited to Tech Valley Summer Camp

Sand Creek Middle School students Amie Jefferson and Michael Fitzgibbon have been selected to participate in the third annual Tech Valley Summer Camp sponsored by Questar II and the Capital Region BOCES.

The Tech Camp, held in August, enables students to actively engage with the emerging technologies of Tech Valley: Biotechnology, Nanotechnology, Information Technology and Alternative Energy. Participants will spend two days learning on the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute campus in Troy, one day at the Center for Functional Genomics on the SUNY East campus in Rensselaer, one day at Plug Power in Latham, and one day at MapInfo led by Waste Management and Recycling Products.

District Educators Offer National Reading Workshop



Four South Colonie teachers joined Jill Currier, District Supervisor of English Language Arts, in a presentation at the International Reading Association (IRA) in Chicago this spring. The presenters at this national conference were Currier, Dr. Sherry Guice, Krista Jiampetti, Christine Carhart and Ginny DonVito MacPhee. The two hour and 45-minute symposium on the district's grade 5-8 reading program was entitled "A District-Wide Middle School Remedial Reading Program: Powerful Texts + Powerful Strategies = Powerful Success Stories." More than 150 people were in attendance and the program was very well received.

Colonie High graduate authors new book

Colonie Central High School graduate Jennifer Rozines Roy has authored a new book entitled — Yellow Star — which is now available in book stores.

The book is being praised as "a stunning, poetic recreation of life lived within the horror that was the Holocaust." Rozines Roy is a member of the Class of 1985 and attended elementary school at Shaker Road and Forest Park and middle school at Lisha Kill and Sand Creek. For more visit www.JenniferRoy.com

District voters approve budget, elect three to school board

South Colonie residents voted 1,256-963 on May 16 in favor of a \$79.9 million district budget for 2006-07 school year. Voters also elected three members to the South Colonie Board of Education.

In the only contested school board race, Leonard Motto defeated Rick Dunn 878-809 for the one year remaining on the five-year term of the late Joan Ricciardi, who died while in office.

In the two other races, incumbents Paul Gordon and Neil Johanning ran unopposed and were elected to new five-year terms on the school board. Gordon received 1,500 votes and Johanning received 1,386 votes. All three elected officials began serving their new school board terms on July 1.



The Shaker Road Elementary School community raised nearly \$400 in this spring for the Children's Hospital at Albany Medical Center by wearing their favorite hats to school. Each hat wearer made a donation for the right to cover their heads for the day. So far this year, the school has raised \$1,400 for the children's hospital and is its top fundraising school in the area.

Michael Marcelle
Superintendent of Schools

Peter Haessig
Assistant Superintendent/
Management Services

Anthony DeBlois
Assistant Superintendent for Instruction

Beverly Miller
School Business Administrator

David Seaver
Director of Human Resources

Board of Education
James (Tim) Ryan, President
Paul Gordon, Vice President
Brian Casey
Robert Domenici
Vernon Fonda
Shelle Jaquish
Neil Johanning
John Monteiro
Leonard Motto

In Focus Editor: John K. Noetzel

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