

Construction Zone Safety is the Highest Priority

The topic of safety has been of the highest priority in planning for the Capital Project construction to begin. Since it is necessary for some construction to occur while the building is occupied, many steps have been taken to ensure that the environment will remain safe and secure for students and staff.

Teacher Larry Mautone has been appointed as a teacher on special assignment. Among his duties will be the responsibility for overseeing and coordinating the safety of the project. Mr. Mautone has been with the District since 1999 and is currently participating in an administrative internship to become certified as a school administrator. He will also serve as a liaison between staff, administration, and the construction manager to address any concerns. He will regularly conduct morning walk-throughs to ensure that the facilities are secure and everything is ready for the building to be safely occupied.

Although students and contractors will both occupy portions of the building during normal school hours, they will have separate entrances and temporary partition walls will confine workers to designated areas. Any work that is required outside of the confined areas will be scheduled for evenings or weekends. All contractors have been apprised of the various safety standards they must adhere to and reminders will be part of weekly meetings with the construction manager.

The District has also worked hand-in-hand with State Education Department officials and the Safety, Health and Risk Management coordinator at Ulster BOCES, Dr. Michael O'Rourke, to ensure all health and safety requirements are being met throughout the process. Any asbestos or other environmentally hazardous work is scheduled for periods of time when the building will not be occupied. Before students and staff are readmitted, licensed technicians will test air quality and certify that the work has been done according to NYS standards. Even details for safely storing science laboratory chemicals has been discussed and planned.

Safety will continue to be an on-going topic and be discussed at weekly meetings with the District administration, maintenance staff, Board of Education representatives, construction manager, and other key participants of the project.

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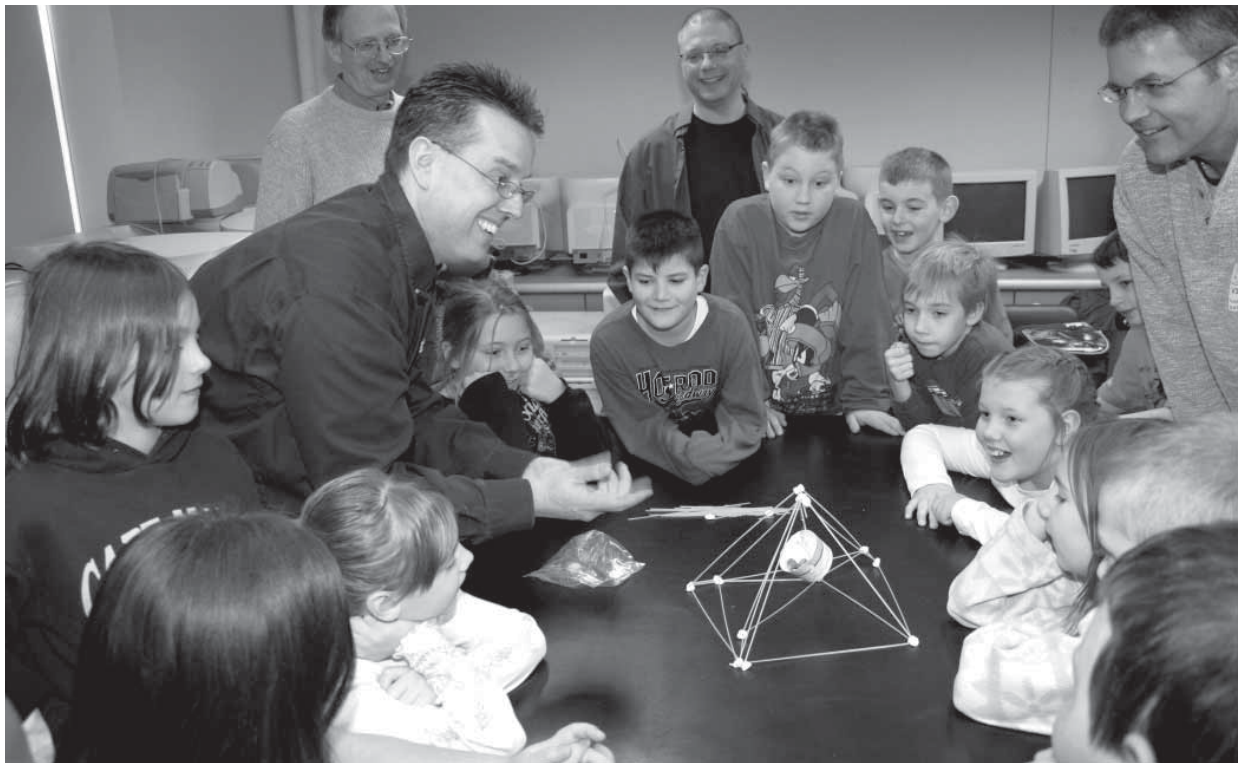
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Engineers Week Focuses on Value of Innovation



Jamie Monroe's third grade class at Cahill Elementary School designed and built a "Spaghetti and Marshmallow Bridge" with IBM East Fishkill engineers during Engineers Week. A team of five girls built the strongest bridge, which withstood the weight of 60 pennies. *To read full story, see page 6*

Groundbreaking Set for Capital Project Construction

After thousands of hours of behind the scenes work, the time has finally arrived for construction to begin on the Capital Project voters approved in March 2005. Groundbreaking is scheduled for the first days in April, and the District's construction manager, Craig Zandonella of U.W. Marx Construction, says the pieces are falling into place for work to begin.

For months, Mr. Zandonella and the District's administrators have been on-site working with various groups of staff to plan and coordinate the dozens of individual projects that will be undertaken in each of the District's five buildings. His participation is a requirement of the New York State Wicks Law, which calls for any public project to have an architect, engineer, and construction manager, each with a myriad of responsibilities to fill.

According to Mr. Zandonella, the pre-con-

struction phase is critical to ensuring a successful project. Just some of the areas that were addressed during this time included examining and setting safety standards for the project; meeting with staff to gather their ideas on proposed work in specific areas; closely examining the structures and mechanical systems to create a final plan that most efficiently uses the District's financial resources; finalizing designs and drawings; conducting required environmental testing; predicting costs and making adjustments to fit within the budget; preparing bid documents that accurately reflect the final scope of the work; and coordinating a complex schedule that spans nearly two years and covers a multitude of different projects, in different buildings, with different contractors.

Scheduling the various projects is much like putting a puzzle together. Certain pieces

Story continued on page 2

**See Page 3 for More Information About
New JR/SR High Campus Traffic Pattern**

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Groundbreaking Set for Capital Project Construction

Story continued from page 1

need to be in place before their adjoining parts can be added, and none of the pieces can be lost for the puzzle to be complete. It is often necessary for one type of work to be completed before another type can begin, and this requires each of the individual contractors to complete their part before the next contractor can start. When a set-back occurs (and in construction they are inevitably going to happen), the schedule needs to be quickly adjusted to still meet the completion deadlines. This is especially important in school construction where it is necessary to have aggressive schedules that capitalize on periods of time that the buildings are vacant for holidays and summer vacations.

As the District enters the next phase, the planning that has gone into the past several months will be put to the test. Addressing challenges of varying degrees, such as weather set-backs, overlapping contractor schedules, working in buildings while they are occupied, needing to maintain existing systems (such as heat, ventilation, etc.) while replacements are being installed, and making unexpected discoveries once walls are opened, will become routine for Mr. Zandonella. "When the work begins, the challenges will be incredible, but we are ready to meet them and are looking forward to getting started."

Superintendent Richard Rhau echoes Mr. Zandonella's thoughts and adds that everyone has been working very hard to minimize any disruption to the students' education, but with so many projects happening at once, some disruptions and inconveniences will be inevitable. Mr. Rhau asks everyone to be flexible and patient. "Patience will be necessary during the process, but in the end, it will all be worth it," states Mr. Rhau.

Traffic Pattern at JR/SR High School to Change After Spring Break

When students return to the Junior/Senior High School after Spring Break, they will be greeted with a new traffic pattern and procedures, which were designed to provide safe drop-off and pick-ups while construction on the voter-approved Capital Project occurs. It is expected that this traffic pattern will last through the end of the school year.

Buses will now enter the campus from the south entrance, which is currently used by staff and students, as well as parents for student drop-offs. Buses will arrive in two shifts, spaced 10 minutes apart, to minimize congestion and allow other traffic access to the parking lots. The former bus circle located in front of the building has been modified and will serve as the parent drop-off and pick-up location. The rear parking lot will be reserved for handicapped bus drop-off and pick-up only.

During dismissal in the afternoon, staff and students will not be able to exit the parking lot until all students are safely loaded on the busses. Once the busses leave, staff and students may exit.

The set of doors next to the flagpole will be designated as the main entrance to the building. Dropped-off students may also en-

ter through the doors at the end of the media center corridor.

Construction fencing will enclose the section of the campus located between the two drop-off locations and there will be a pedestrian walkway around its perimeter, which students who walk or are dropped off at school will follow to reach the entrance. Signs and pavement painting will be highly visible, and school staff will be on hand to safely direct pedestrians to the parking area and parent drop-off location.

To minimize confusion, the District has worked with the transportation department to practice the procedures and hopes for a smooth transition to the new pattern. Initial implementation will require some patience while everyone gets accustomed to the change. District staff will be available to facilitate the transition and everyone is asked to follow all directions and obey all traffic laws.

Parents are asked to review these new procedures with their teen drivers and to encourage everyone to please drive safely. Parents are also encouraged to have their children use school bus transportation during this time of traffic congestion around the Junior/Senior High School.



REMINDER It is illegal in New York State to pass a school bus while its lights are flashing.

Capital Project Scope of Work

MT. MARION

- Replace Facia w/ Metal
- Replace Windows w/ Thermal Double-Glazed
- Replace Window Air Conditioners w/ Rooftop Units
- Replace Kitchen Grease Trap
- Replace Lighting in Cafetorium
- Replace Exterior Doors
- Replace Toilet Partitions w/ High Density Polyethylene
- Replace Freezer
- Replace Classroom Casework
- Replace Gymnasium Windows
- Replace Clock & Intercom System
- Miscellaneous Painting
- Create Accessible Toilet Rooms
- Provide ADA Compliant Signage
- Complete Conversion of Locker Rooms into Instructional Space
- Upgrade Building Electrical System: Additional Circuits & Surge Suppression
- Upgrade HVAC System – Install Unit Ventilators
- Upgrade Plumbing
- Upgrade Fire Alarm System: Add Smoke Detectors; Add Emergency Lighting
- Add Water Treatment System
- Install Security System: Add Security Cameras
- Hazardous Material Abatement
- Replace Roof

GRANT D. MORSE

- Retube Boilers & Upgrade Controls
- Replace Windows w/ Thermal Double-Glazed
- Replace Kitchen Grease Trap
- Replace Sewage Ejector System
- Replace Water Pumps & Storage Tank
- Masonry Repairs
- Replace Exterior Doors
- Replace Toilet Partitions w/ High Density Polyethylene
- Replace Gymnasium Windows
- Replace Clock & Intercom System
- Miscellaneous Painting
- Install Elevator
- Repair & Resurface Roof
- Create Accessible Toilets
- Provide ADA Compliant Signage
- Create Areas of Refuge
- Install Smoke Doors – Create Separate Smoke Zones
- Cafeteria Improvements: Replace Flooring & Improve Acoustics
- Water Treatment System
- Upgrade Electrical System
- Upgrade HVAC System – Install Unit Ventilators
- Upgrade Plumbing
- Install Exterior Lighting
- Upgrade Fire Alarm System – Add Emergency Lighting
- Install Security System: Add Security Cameras
- Asbestos Abatement

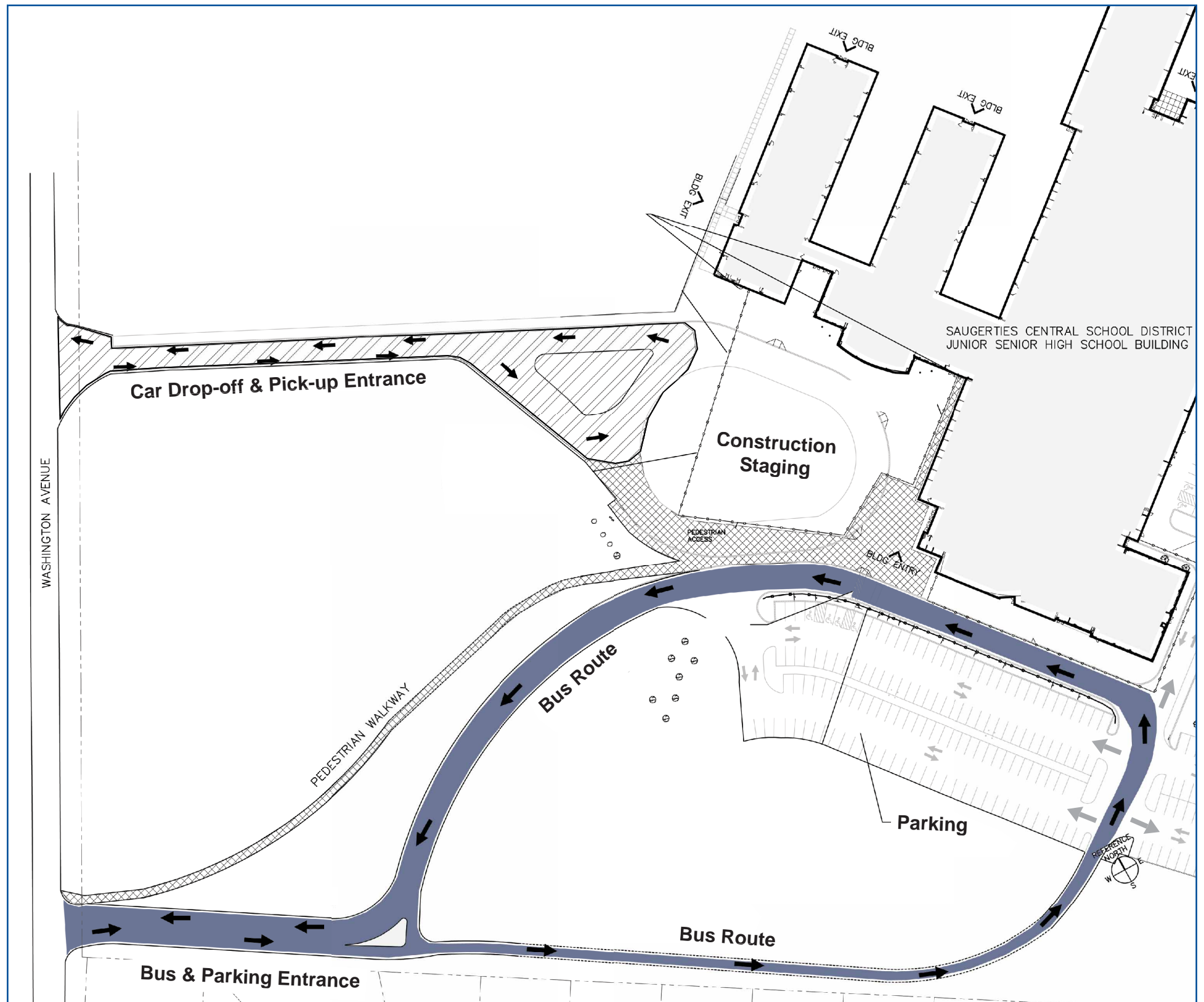
CAHILL

- Replace Floor Tile in Corridors
- Replace Classroom Carpeting w/ VCT
- Remove Boiler Heat Exchanger
- Replace Gymnasium Lighting
- Masonry Repairs
- Miscellaneous Painting
- Improve HVAC System
- Add Isolation Valves to Water Distribution
- Install Security System: Security Cameras
- Add Electrical Panels: Additional Circuits & Surge Suppression
- Convert RTU Coils to Glycol
- Add Water Treatment System

RICCARDI

- Replace Roofs: Cafeteria, Music, Kitchen
- Replace Ceiling & Lighting: Cafetorium
- Replace Window Air Conditioners w/ Rooftop Unit
- Replace Kitchen Grease Trap
- Replace Storm Drains
- Provide Expansion Joint at New Wing
- Replace Exterior Doors
- Replace Windows w/ Thermal Double-Glazed
- Replace Interior Doors w/ Flush Solid Core & New Hardware
- Replace Toilet Partitions w/ High Density Polyethylene
- Replace Classroom Casework & Cubbies w/ Plastic Laminate
- Replace Clock & Intercom System

Changes to Traffic Pattern Effective April 10



- Replace Gymnasium Windows
- Replace Water Piping
- Replace Gas Service
- Miscellaneous Painting
- Install Elevator
- Provide ADA Compliant Signage
- Create Area of Refuge
- Reconfigure Toilets for Handicapped Access
- Install Smoke Doors – Create Separate Smoke Zones
- Provide Acoustical Tile on Gymnasium Walls
- Upgrade Building Electrical System: Additional Circuits & Surge Suppression
- Improve Playfield Drainage
- Convert Existing Locker Rooms into Instructional Space
- Upgrade Fire Alarm System
- Upgrade HVAC System – Install Unit Ventilators
- Add Water Treatment System
- Increase Parking and Lighting
- Install Security System: Add Security Cameras

SENIOR HIGH

- Replace Roofs (partial - 90,000 sq ft): All except Auditorium, Music Rooms & 600 Wing
- Repair & Topcoat Asphalt Paving
- Additional Parking at South Lot
- Replace Sidewalks & Curb at Main Entrance, Music Addition & South Lot
- Replace Asphalt at Bus Loop; Remove Existing Entry Canopy
- Replace Catch Basins
- Replace Classroom Ceilings & Lighting not done as part of Energy Performance Contract

- Replace Fascias & Soffits
- Replace Roof Exhaust Fans
- Replace Exterior Doors
- Replace Interior Doors & Classroom Door Hardware
- Replace Corridor Lockers; Replace Athletic Lockers
- Replace Toilet Partitions w/ High Density Polyethylene; Reconfigure Toilet Partitions
- Replace Sewer Ejector System
- Replace Bleachers
- Replace Boilers: Convert from Steam to Hot Water
- Replace Clock & Intercom System
- Replace Hot & Cold Water Piping in Building Crawl Space
- Replace Electrical Distribution System including Underground Service
- Miscellaneous Painting
- Provide ADA Compliant Room Identification
- Repair, Improve & Update Athletic Fields
- Install Water Treatment System
- Renovate Shower Rooms
- Renovate Science, Physics & Chemistry Labs; Add 2 New Science Labs into Courtyard
- Renovate & Expand Music Wing; Additional Casework for Music Instrument Storage
- Create CAD/Computer Graphics Lab
- Reconfigure Supply Area to Accommodate Program Changes
- Renovate & Expand Library Media Center
- Wire for CATV
- Upgrade Fire Alarm System; Add Fire Hydrant at Rear of Building
- Upgrade Plumbing Valves & Fixtures
- Install Security System: Add Security Cameras

- Add Adaptive Physical Education Station
- Hazardous Material Abatement

JUNIOR HIGH

- Replace Roofs (partial - 27,000 sq ft)
- Replace Gas Piping to Science Labs
- Replace Windows w/ Thermal Double-Glazed
- Replace Air Conditioning Units
- Replace Fascias & Soffits
- Replace Roof Exhaust Fans
- Replace Food Equipment; Reconfigure Food Service Areas; Expand Food Storage
- Replace Gymnasium Flooring: Add Perimeter Drainage
- Replace Exterior Doors
- Replace Toilet Partitions w/ High Density Polyethylene; Reconfigure Toilet Partitions
- Miscellaneous Painting
- Install Elevator
- Provide ADA Compliant Room Identification
- Create Second Floor Area of Refuge
- Create Art/Technology Center
- Renovate & Expand Library Media Center
- Renovate Shower Rooms
- Upgrade Sewage System
- Install 3 Smoke Doors
- Replace Clock & Intercom System
- Wire for CATV
- Install Security System: Add Security Cameras
- Update Server for Classroom Voice, Power, Data
- Renovate Junior High Science Labs
- Hazardous Material Abatement

** This scope of work is contingent on the final awarding of bids, the actual construction process and the finalized scope of "as built drawings".

Behind the Scenes of the District's

With more than 100 years of combined experience among the five-member Saugerties Central District Maintenance Department, there are very few areas of building and grounds repair and maintenance in which the crew is not familiar.

"We each have our own niche," says Randy Ricks, acting maintenance foreman with 19 years of experience under his belt. "We've got a good core of guys here." Ricks, who is also a volunteer fire chief for the Centerville-Cedar Grove Fire District, and his team are responsible for overseeing the maintenance of approximately 402,300 square feet of building space, as well as 105 acres of grounds and athletic fields.

His crew – Bill Bach, 19 years with the District; John Finger at 18 years; Richard Prinz at 15 years (also a volunteer firefighter); and veteran Bobby Moore with 29 years experience and an associate's degree in horticulture from the University of Louisiana – will tackle just about any maintenance job from a quick repair to a major overhaul. These five men perform all the plumbing, heating, carpentry, masonry, grounds work (including the athletic fields), and snow removal for the District, which includes four

"The talent that these gentlemen have – from carpentry to plumbing to electrical skills – is amazing."

— Joseph Dziadik
School Business Official



With temperatures in the teens, Bobby Moore (left) helps acting maintenance foreman Randy Ricks repair a cracked hydraulic line on one of the District's snowblades after a February snowstorm.

Elementary Schools and the Junior/Senior High School complex. "The talent that these gentlemen have – from carpentry to plumbing to electrical skills – is amazing," says school business official Joseph Dziadik. "They are always ready, willing, and able to do whatever it takes, be it on weekends or the middle of the night." According to Mr. Dziadik, many instances where a building problem may have necessitated the closing of school have been avoided because of the crew's efforts and willingness to come in at all hours.

His men work hard, Mr. Ricks agrees, and are ever mindful of reducing costs through preventive maintenance of District assets, including classrooms, equipment, and grounds. When tackling a project, they must be sure work complies with all federal, state, and local fire, safety, and building codes, as well as ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) and EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) regulations.

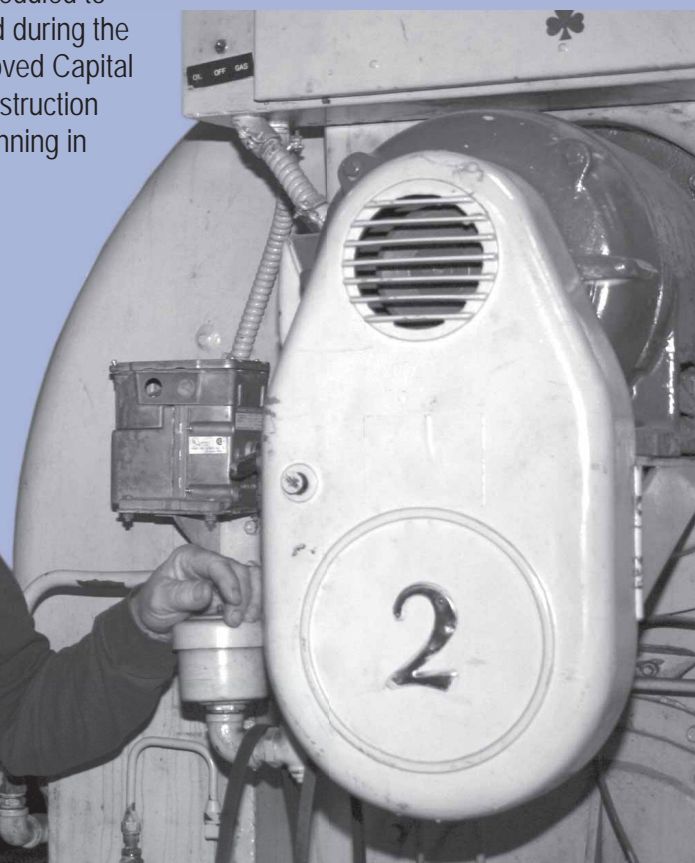
When time allows, the crew can be found in their workshop using their carpentry skills on more sophisticated projects, such as a large storage cabinet recently built

Unsung Heroes

Talent is abundant in the Maintenance workshop located on the Junior/Senior High School campus. With more than 100 years of combined experience among the five-member crew, there are very few areas of building and grounds

John Finger (18 years with the District) checks on the boiler used to heat the Junior/Senior High School. The aged boilers require a lot of attention from the maintenance crew, but are scheduled to be replaced during the voter-approved Capital Project construction that is beginning in April.

Bill Bach (19 years with District) examines the District's salting equipment, used to address icy pavements, after the Valentine's Day snowstorm.



Buildings and Grounds Department

to the specifications of the Music Department. "We built the unit for about \$200 worth of materials," Mr. Ricks says. "It would probably cost around \$1,000 to \$1,500 if it were purchased at retail price." Mr. Dziadik adds that he is always impressed by the craftsmanship of the furniture and cabinetry the crew builds in their shop, at a great cost savings and of a much higher quality.

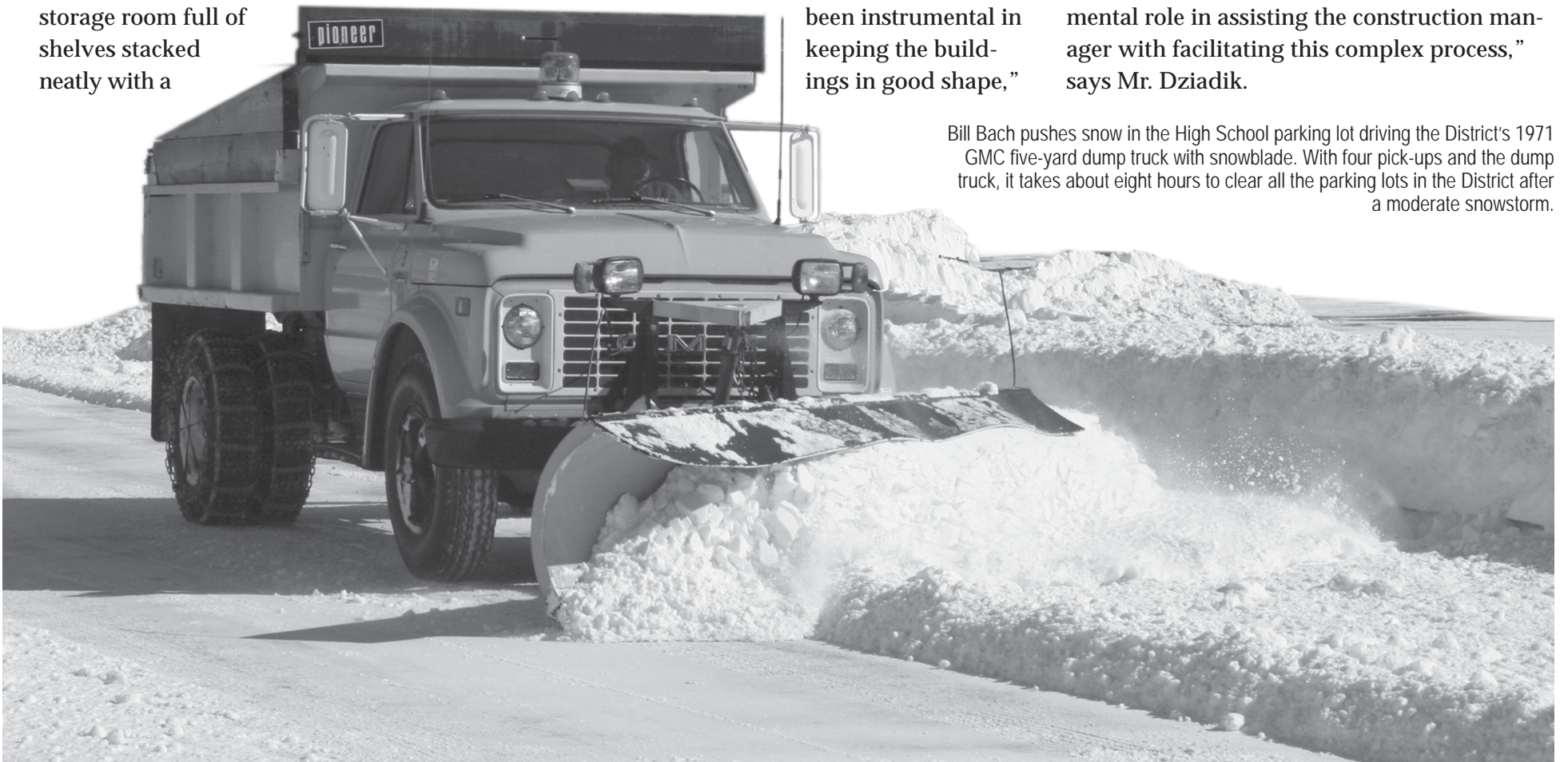
The men keep a well organized shop with everything in its place. "We never throw anything away," Mr. Ricks says standing in the middle of a storage room full of shelves stacked neatly with a

variety of spare parts. Anyone who has ever experienced the aggravation of a broken belt on a piece of machinery – usually right in the middle of a job – can understand Mr. Ricks' pride in an impressive wall display of engine belts from the shortest to the longest. "We try to keep a backup on hand for every piece of machinery we have," he explained. Preparedness like this contributes to the efficiency of the District's daily operation, which translates to a better learning environment with fewer disruptions for students.

"This group has been instrumental in keeping the buildings in good shape,"

says Mr. Dziadik, who credits their diligence with keeping the buildings safe, secure, and warm on their own, often saving the District from paying outside contractors to make repairs to aged infrastructure. With the ground breaking of the voter-approved Capital Project only days away, Mr. Ricks and his crew have been busy working with the construction manager on planning the implementation process for the hundreds of projects that will be taking place across the District. "These men know where every screw, nail, and bolt are in our buildings, and they will play an instrumental role in assisting the construction manager with facilitating this complex process," says Mr. Dziadik.

Bill Bach pushes snow in the High School parking lot driving the District's 1971 GMC five-yard dump truck with snowblade. With four pick-ups and the dump truck, it takes about eight hours to clear all the parking lots in the District after a moderate snowstorm.



repair and maintenance in which there is not an expert.

The ability for school to be opened after a snowstorm or an issue with a building (such as an equipment breakdown of some sort); often relies upon the outstanding efforts of

this team to correct the situation in time. By maintaining the buildings, and creating a safe and comfortable environment conducive to learning, these men play an important role in providing the children with a quality education.

Acting maintenance foreman, Randy Ricks (19 years with the District), works on repairing a plow blade's hydraulic line after cracking while clearing accumulation from the Valentine's Day snowstorm.

Richard Prinz (15 years with the District) services the District's "salt shaker" (equipment used to distribute salt across icy pavements). While other staff and students enjoyed a snow day, Prinz and his colleagues spent the day on-site clearing snow from sidewalks and parking lots to prepare school to safely open after the storm.

Bobby Moore (29 years with the District) replenishes windshield fluid in the District's snow plowing fleet after a long day of use clearing the District's parking lots.



Riccardi Student Named Annual Spelling Bee Champion

It was the last round in the District's Spelling Bee and the Junior High School Library was filled to capacity with students, parents, and teachers, who had come to be a part of the excitement. All eyes were on Maureen Ball, a sixth grade student from Riccardi Elementary School, who had outlasted the District's top spelling champions. The word she was given to spell was "adamant." She pronounced it carefully – before and after spelling it correctly, which brought an explosion of cheers from the audience. Maureen grinned from ear to ear while her family and friends rushed to congratulate her.

Winning the District-level competition means Maureen will represent Saugerties at the regional competition on March 15, which will be held at SUNY Ulster, says Don Farris, Saugerties Junior High School principal. The regional winner will go on to compete in the annual Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. in May.

As effortless as Maureen made it look that afternoon in the school library, being a spelling champion isn't easy. "It requires lots of practice and preparation," confirmed Mr. Farris.

Spelling success in the English language depends to some extent on memorizing the many rules and exceptions to the rules. For example, most people are familiar with the rule: "Put I before E except after C, or when it sounds like A, as in neighbor or weigh." Then there are the rules about swallowed syllables, the silent letters, and those exasperating homophones (words that sound the same but are different in spelling or meaning) – just to name a few.



Maureen Ball (with her father Bill) is the District Spelling Bee champion. She will go on to compete at the regional competition at SUNY Ulster.

"I've learned a lot of rules that help," says the Saugerties spelling champion when asked how she became such a good speller. But Maureen first points to her reading habits as the major key to her success. "I read a lot," she says.

A number of studies show positive correlations between spelling competence and the amount of reading done. This is supported by research showing that each time individuals read a passage containing words they cannot spell, they make a small amount of progress in acquiring the correct spelling, as well as by studies showing that spelling gets worse when misspelled words are read repeatedly. More evidence is the awareness felt when a person is about to make a spelling mistake and the ability to recognize the correct spelling of a word when presented with alternatives on a spell-checker. Many experts believe this

"feel for correctness" or "spelling sense" comes from extensive reading.

The National Spelling Bee got its start in 1925 when nine contestants were sponsored by the *Louisville Courier-Journal*. In 1941, the *E.W. Scripps Company* took over the sponsorship of the national contest, which has been held every year since, with the exception of during the war in 1943-1945.

According to Scripps, more than 10 million children between the ages of 8 and 15 competed in local spelling bees in 2006, with 275 champion spellers making it to Washington, D.C.. It was there in 2006, at the 79th annual Scripps National Spelling Bee, that New Jersey teenager Katharine Close earned the top prize of \$42,000 by spelling the word "ursprache" correctly.

Engineers Week Focuses on Value of Innovation *Story continued from page 1*

In celebration of national Engineers Week and to dramatize the value and relevancy of math, science, and technical training, an entourage of engineers from IBM East Fishkill in Dutchess County visited with students in Grades 3-6 at Cahill Elementary School.

"It gave our students a wonderful opportunity to learn firsthand how engineers use math and science to solve problems," says Susan Gies, Cahill principal.

Engineers Week is sponsored nationwide by the National Society of Professional Engineers, a coalition of more than 70 engineering, education, and cultural societies, as well as more than 50 corporations and government agencies. The annual program promotes literacy in math and science while increasing an understanding of – and interest in – engineering and technology careers among students. Last year, more than 2,700 IBM volunteers participated in Engineers Week reaching nearly 200,000 students nationwide.

This year, in their recognition of Engineers Week, John Paulus, John Cubito, Diana Amell, John Affronti, Annmarie Wheeler, John Bride, Alyce Keenan, Lynn Irizarry, Chuck O'Donnell, and Jim Pezzo, who usually spend their days in the MLC (Multi-Layer Ceramic) facility at IBM, reported instead to the science laboratory at Cahill Elementary School. The group's assignment was to increase awareness and appreciation of engineering careers and encourage the youngsters in their studies

of science, math, and technology. They also hoped the students would have a lot of fun in the process.

"We really enjoy doing this," explained John Paulus. "The students are very smart. They come up with some amazing solutions to the problems they are given." These problems involved the structural strength and design of bridges, using a pneumatic energy storage device to propel a vehicle, and building an electro-magnet that moves steel. In the exploration of these problems, the students conducted experiments that gave them an opportunity to learn about a variety of engineering concepts and even more important, the value of innovation.

In the bridge building experiment the engineers challenged students to design and create a bridge out of "spaghetti and marshmallows" that would support a "bucketful of pennies." The engineers provided some valuable pointers on bridge building – with the unusual materials provided – and the students went to work.

When the bridges were complete the fragile structures were subjected to a "stress test," which involved hanging the "bucket" from the strongest point on the bridge and filling it – one by one – with pennies. The winning bridge – built by an innovative team of five girls using a well triangulated design – held 60 pennies in the bucket before it collapsed.

"What did you learn?" Mr. Paulus asked the students.

"We learned how to build bridges," a stu-

"The students are very smart. They come up with some amazing solutions to the problems they are given."

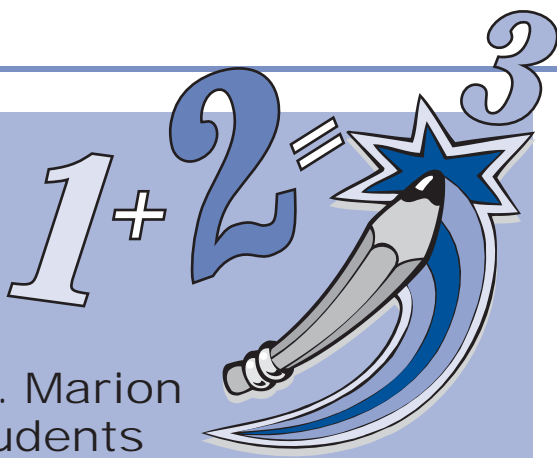
*—John Paulus
IBM Engineer*



dent answered. "We learned how to collaborate and work together as a team," added another. "We learned that girls can build bridges," a member of the winning team responded.

Engineering Education

Students interested in engineering should take the following courses in high school: algebra, trigonometry, biology, physics, social studies, fine arts/humanities, computer programming or applications, geometry, calculus, chemistry, English, and foreign languages. Honors level and advanced placement courses are recommended. For more information about engineering curricula and fields, check out the Junior Engineering Technical Society website at www.jets.org.



Mt. Marion Students Hone Math Skills and Help Children's Hospital

The Mt. Marion Elementary School has joined more than 25,000 schools and thousands of students participating in the annual St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Math-A-Thon program.

"It's a wonderful cause," says Tim Farley, principal at Mt. Marion. "Mt. Marion students have raised approximately \$6,000 each year. This is our fourth year and we're already beyond the \$20,000 mark."

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital is internationally recognized for its pioneering work in finding cures and saving children with cancer and other catastrophic diseases. Founded by the late entertainer Danny Thomas and based in Memphis, Tennessee, St. Jude freely shares its discoveries with scientific and medical communities around the world. No family ever pays for treatments not covered by insurance, and families without insurance are never asked to pay. St. Jude is financially supported primarily by public contributions through programs such as Math-A-Thon.

"Students ask family and friends to sponsor them for correctly answered math problems in the *Math-A-Thon Funbook*," says Mr. Farley. The *Funbook* contains a variety of math problems including hidden messages, puzzles, and pure arithmetic operations. Students and the School can also earn exciting prizes – from globes to digital cameras to power telescopes – based upon the amount of donations raised.

"Not only do our students hone their math skills, but they help fight childhood cancer," Mr. Farley says. Discoveries at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital have completely changed how doctors treat children with cancer and other catastrophic illnesses. Since St. Jude was established, the survival rate for acute lymphoblastic leukemia, the most common type of childhood cancer, has increased from 4 percent in 1962 to 94 percent today.

Renovations Help Meet Rigors of Regents Requirements

Math and science have been identified by top business and higher education leaders as vital skills for students to have to ensure that the United States maintains its competitive edge in the global marketplace. William H. Swanson, Chairman and CEO of Raytheon Company and Co-Chair of the nationally-recognized Business-Higher Education Forum Initiative on Mathematics and Science Education (a non-profit membership organization of leaders from American businesses, colleges and universities, museums, and foundations)

has stated, "Technology is the lifeblood of our country because innovation builds prosperity and good, quality jobs for our increasingly diverse workforce. If we don't invest in and improve student achievement in math and science, there are serious implications for the business community, the US economy, and our quality of life."

The Saugerties community made this important investment when they approved the Capital Project in 2005, and the science teachers at the Senior High School are looking forward to the renovations planned for their 1963 vintage classrooms and labs, which include replacing gas piping, repairing ventilation hoods in the chemistry lab, adding electrical and Internet wiring to allow technology integration into instruction, and adding two labs by closing in a small courtyard.

State Learning Standards put a strong emphasis on student development of laboratory skills in all science courses, as do Saugerties science teachers. "Students are apprised at the beginning of each course of the importance of the laboratory component in their study and of the Board of Regents requirements," says Mary Bishop, ninth grade science teacher and chair of the District's science department. For example, students in all science classes must have a minimum of 1,200 documented minutes of lab experience before they can sit for the Regents exams. This is in addition to the seat time requirement of 180 minutes per week. Students have a minimum of two periods of lab time a week, and the building enhancements to the science classrooms will improve the District's ability to provide students with the required instruction needed to take and be successful on science Regents exams.

In the meantime, Saugerties teachers are doing their best to prepare students for the new Regents exam in Physical Setting/Earth Science, which will be given across the State for the first time in June 2008, and will include a new hands-on performance component.

"We've been anticipating the change for quite some time," says Ms. Bishop. "In fact, at Saugerties we've had a hands-on lab compo-



Ninth grade students in Mary Bishop's class identify the physical and chemical characteristics of minerals and rocks. The New York State Regents exam in Physical Setting/Earth Science will include a hands-on laboratory performance component for the first time in June 2008.

nent in place since the 1970s with the current form being used since 1993."

According to the New York State Education Department, all laboratories completed by students should be hands-on. Students should be actively engaged in laboratory work. While computer programs, research

conducted in libraries or on the Internet, and worksheets may be a part of the laboratory experience, they should not comprise the sole experience. Teacher demonstrations, followed by student reports are also not considered to be a hands-on experience.

The extent of laboratory information that students must be familiar with to be successful on the exam is quite extensive, she says, but they will be performing similar tasks during the normal course of instruction throughout the year, which will give them the understanding and practice that will be needed.

"Students will need to know how to make measurements," Ms. Bishop says. Other tasks they may be asked to perform include how to assemble and interpret data, measure angles, calculate density, as well as identify minerals and rocks. "It's actually the only one of four Regents exams that has a hands-on assessment of skills."

The New York State Regents Examination in Physical Setting/Earth Science consists of two components: a laboratory performance test and a written test. A new form of the laboratory performance test ("Part D") is currently in the test development process and will be administered for the first time in June 2008. The performance test is expected to consist of hands-on tasks set up at four "stations." The tasks are designed to measure student achievement based upon the New York State Learning Standards for mathematics, science, and technology as included in the Physical Setting/Earth Science core curriculum. According to the State Education Department, the four stations currently being considered for the new hands-on component are "Mineral and Rock Identification," "Locating an Epicenter," "Density of Fluids," and "Constructing and Analyzing an Elliptical Orbit."

Students in all science classes must have a minimum of 1,200 documented minutes of lab experience before they can sit for the Regents exams.

Budget Calendar

March 20, 2007

Special Board Meeting: Budget Discussion

April 11, 2007

Regular Board Meeting @ Morse: Budget Discussion

April 17, 2007

Special Board Meeting: Budget Discussion & Board Adoption

April 25, 2007

Special Meeting: Vote on BOCES Administration Budget & BOCES Board Members

May 8, 2007

Regular Board Meeting: Annual Public Budget Hearing

May 15, 2007

Budget Vote @ 4 Elementary Schools: 12:00 noon – 9:00 PM

Significant Progress Made in District's Standardized Test Process

Results of the New York State School Report Card indicate Saugerties Central Schools is on the right path to providing children with a quality education, but assistant superintendent Cheryl Nuciforo stresses there is still much work to be done to continue meeting the requirements of the New York State Learning Standards and the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. "We need to stay the course to ensure continued success in meeting these rigorous standards," encouraged Mrs. Nuciforo.

As a whole, achievement was at or above State expectations and some areas demonstrated considerable improvements. Due to a former lack of participation on exams at the secondary level, the school was once at risk of being identified for improvement. After aggressively examining the causes for the low participation and addressing them, and by working intensely with data to ensure that

what is reported is accurate, the District was removed from the watch list. Another area where marked improvement has been noted is participation and performance on the Math B exam, which was up substantially from the previous year. "Our next step is to have more and more students attempt to take the Math B exam," says Mrs. Nuciforo, who notes the course is an important indicator for entrance to some colleges.

Although overall everything is positive, Mrs. Nuciforo does not want anyone to become complacent and think the work is done. "While we do have a lot to be proud of, each year the standard used to measure student achievement (called AYP for adequate yearly progress) is raised, thereby pushing schools to continually improve teaching and learning and achieve higher and higher standards." This is not accomplished without aggressively working towards improvement.

Important Update for Parents

Another factor driving the need for further academic improvements is a recent change in the passing score on Regents examinations that is required for earning a diploma. In the past, students had the option of earning a local diploma with a score of at least 55% on their Regents; however this year's sophomores now must achieve a minimum score of 65% on at least two exams. The next year, this requirement increases to 65% on three exams, the following year to 65% on four exams, and so on. By the time the current seventh grade students are ready to graduate, they will be required to earn a minimum score of 65% on every one of their Regents exams.

According to Mrs. Nuciforo, the District's current graduation rate (as defined by number of students graduating after only four years) is currently 79% and is above the State standard; however in the past approximately 10-15% of students have relied upon the local option of 55% to graduate. "We will need to continue to stress improvement in this area and address any impacts the new passing rate has on graduation requirements."

At the elementary level, although the District is meeting its target performance levels, scores are stronger in Math than in English Language Arts and various initiatives are in place to strengthen achievement. Student performance is measured on a scale of 1 to 4 with 3 and 4 being the best. "We want to improve the students scoring at Level 2 and turn them into 3s and 4s," she explains.

The area where the most focus is needed is seventh grade performance by students with disabilities on the English Language Arts exam. One of the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act is that all students, regardless of disability, achieve the same high standards. This is a new way of looking at expectations for this particular group of students, and although many steps have been taken to reach them, it will take time to fully achieve.

For this year's report card, the group's performance did not make its yearly progress and was therefore labeled as a School Requiring Academic Progress. This designation requires the District to prepare an improvement plan identifying areas of weaknesses and strategies for achieving success. Mrs. Nuciforo and representatives from the Junior High School are in the process of doing the plan now.

In the meantime, Mrs. Nuciforo is hopeful that initiatives already in place will have positive impacts for these students in the future. Multi-sensory reading classes were designed to meet the needs of certain students, and the use of specialized reading software has everyone excited about the foundational skills it can help to build. The District is also in the midst of an internal review of the Special Education program, which has already resulted in an increase in the number of integrated classes offered. When students are integrated, they benefit from a higher level of instruction.

"We have a lot of really exciting initiatives in place," says Nuciforo, "but to remain in good standing we continuously have to reevaluate and ask ourselves, 'Where do we need to go next and what do we need to accomplish to get there?'"

Students at Morse Elementary Win Big in Reading Initiative

With the intriguing theme of "Morseopoly" to inspire them, students at Grant D. Morse Elementary School learned how enjoyable and worthwhile reading can be during this year's PARP (People as Reading Partners) program.

"We challenged the students to read 4,500 books during the four-week program, but by the end of week two, they had already read 5,595 books, so we increased the challenge to 8,000," says principal Seth Turner.

The students didn't stop at 8,000 books though – by the end of the program they had read a grand total of 11,075 books.

"It was very exciting," adds Mr. Turner.

"We are very proud of our students." In fact, Mr. Turner and Richard Greco, the School's official greeter, promised students that they would serve lunch dressed in "jailhouse stripes" if they met their reading goals. So in early February, much to the students' delight, Mr. Turner and Mr. Greco donned black and white stripes (and aprons and hairnets!) to serve lunch to a long line of very accomplished readers.

The Morse PARP program, a collaborative effort among parents, school staff, librar-

ies, and the community to build a reading partnership between the home and school, encourages parents and other adults in the parental role to read with their children for at least 15 minutes a day. Literacy based activities (i.e., discussions about reading materials, writing activities, word games, listening to

books on tape, a trip to the library, turning off the TV and telling a story) are also encouraged and can be lots of fun.

Morseopoly, a major component of the four-week PARP program, is based on the well-known game of Monopoly. The game pieces (one for each class) moved around the board based on the amount of time students spent reading. For each hour

Illustrator Visits Students



Through the PARP program, fifth grade students and *Just Print It* staff members (Kayla Hicks, Cierra Guerriero, Sierra Hartrum, Larissa Vickery, and Chris Smith) met with illustrator James Ransome during his visit to Morse Elementary School. The students interviewed and photographed Mr. Ransome for an article they were writing for the school newspaper. Mr. Ransome, who has illustrated a long list of popular children's books including *Uncle Jed's Barbershop*, *Under the Quilt of Night*, *Bruh Rabbit* and *the Tar Baby Girl*, and *Aunt Flossie's Hat*, introduced students to the many stages of the children's book writing and illustrating process.

the class read, the game piece was moved one space. The more time spent reading, the more spaces the game piece would move. It was the students in Heather Fanelli's fifth grade class that accumulated the most hours spent reading and they celebrated their efforts with a special class party.

"The Morseopoly theme is one of the best reading initiatives I've been part of," Mr. Turner says. "The students were tremendously responsive."