



## 2011-2012 BUDGET

# An Investment in the Future

On May 17th, Chatham Central School District voters will go to the polls to decide on a \$27,138,001 budget for the 2011-2012 school year. This budget, which carries a projected tax levy increase of 1.98 percent, provides the foundation to strengthen Chatham's educational program, improve operational efficiency, and manage the District's financial resources in challenging economic times.

The budget is the result of a multi-year approach designed to balance the resources of the community with the educational needs of the students. Faced with a \$326,701 reduction in state aid in 2011-12, the District carefully reviewed operations and program to realize savings and efficiencies wherever possible. The District also applied funds from reserve accounts to further offset the impact the reduced state aid and increasing costs would have on the tax levy.

Spending is up \$523,314, a 1.97 percent increase from the current budget, largely due to increases in operational and personnel costs. Staffing was adjusted to reflect program needs and declining enrollment, with the elimination of 2.9 instructional positions and one administrative position. Two bus runs were also eliminated. The budget also calls for the addition of one enrichment teaching position and one special education teaching position.

Voting will take place from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. in the Mary E. Dardess Elementary School Gymnasium. Residents will also elect candidates to fill four open seats on the Board of Education and decide on two propositions. Proposition #1 calls for the allocation of \$103,959.44 from the 2010-2011

budget for the purchase of two school buses. Proposition #2 allows for a Chatham student to be appointed to the Board of Education as a non-voting member.

The 2011-2012 budget was developed with a focus on current economic climate and the long term financial health of the district. "Through careful utilization of existing resources and a focus on efficiency, this budget allows Chatham to strengthen our educational program, keep taxes low and offer more educational opportunities for our students," said Superintendent of Schools Cheryl Nuciforo. "We are fortunate that reserves set aside in more favorable economic times give us the means to minimize the tax increase without sacrificing the quality of our program."

### What will I be voting on?

#### A \$27,138,001 budget for the 2011-2012 school year

- This budget is \$523,314 (1.97 percent) more than the 2010-2011 budget.
- This budget carries a projected 1.98 percent tax levy increase.

#### Proposition #1- Bus Purchase

- Allows the District to use \$140,850.44 for the purchase of one 66-passenger school bus and one 7-passenger school bus.

#### Proposition #2- Student Representative on the BOE

- Allows for a Chatham High School student to be appointed to the Board of Education to serve as a non-voting member.

#### School Board Election

Selection of candidates for the Board of Education, who will appear on the ballot in the following order:

1. Francis Iaconetti
2. James Marks
3. James Toteno

### < BUDGET VOTE >

Tuesday, May 17, 2011

9 a.m. – 9 p.m.

MED Elementary School

Program initiatives include increased academic opportunities for students at all three schools, creation of a self-contained special education class for grades 3-4, creation of part time middle school and high school deans, and increased communication services.

Information on the 2011-2012 budget and educational plan is posted on the district website at [www.chathamcentralschools.com](http://www.chathamcentralschools.com). A Public Hearing on the budget is scheduled for May 10, at 6:30 p.m. in the HS Library.

## HOW IS THE DISTRICT REDUCING COSTS?

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*Through efficiency measures, rightsizing of staff to match declining enrollment and other cost saving measures, the Chatham Central School District has reduced its budget by \$4.3 million over the last two years. Examples of cost cutting measures include:*

### Facilities

- This spring the District will undertake a facilities study to determine the feasibility of consolidating Chatham's three school buildings into two and provide data on any potential cost savings closing a building would realize. Once the study is completed, the District will hold community discussions to determine if consolidation is the best course of action for our educational program.

### Personnel

- Teaching staffing has been reduced to match declining enrollment and program needs.
- The District is in its second year of an administrative restructuring that will result in the elimination of one administrative position by July 2011. In 2010, a co-principal position at the High School was eliminated and replaced with an assistant principal. Beginning in July, this assistant principal position will be shared with the middle school, as retirements occur in that building.
- Use of substitutes and overtime has been reduced whenever possible.
- Following a retirement, clerical duties were consolidated, resulting in the reduction of one clerical position.

### Energy

*The District has implemented long and short term actions to increase efficiency and reduce energy consumption. They include:*

- Installation of solar panels on the roof of the MED building in March and April of 2011. These panels provide clean electricity for the building and lower energy costs. The panels were paid for entirely through a grant the District applied for from NYSERDA.



- Consolidation of transportation services, resulting in the elimination of two bus runs.
- The installation of software that now automatically shuts off computers at the end of the day.
- Using the capital improvement project to increase energy efficiency, such as installing occupancy sensors in classrooms and energy efficient lighting and equipment in cafeterias and gymnasiums.

### Supplies and Equipment

- Copy machines were consolidated to a central location, allowing the District to spend less on photocopier leases over time.
- General supply and equipment budgets were carefully examined and spending reduced where possible.
- The District is going "paperless" in certain areas.
- A 66 passenger bus will be used to replace two 65 passenger busses, reducing the fleet to reflect ridership.

## HOW IS THE DISTRICT USING RESERVES TO LOWER THE TAX LEVY?

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The District utilized a total of \$626,860 in reserves to help lower the tax levy. The funds were drawn from four reserve accounts created to offset expenses in the areas of workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, tax certiorari and retiree health insurance.

These accounts exist to allow the District to avoid steep increases in the tax levy during times of limited financial

resources. The use of these reserves allowed the District to hold the 2011-2012 projected tax levy increase to 1.98%, despite a significant decline in state aid and increasing operational and personnel costs.

The careful use of these funds at this time will not overly deplete these accounts, and reserves will remain available to provide the District with financial security in the future.

## WHAT ARE THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO STAFFING LEVELS?

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Based on current program needs, Chatham Central Schools is eliminating or reducing a small number of staff positions in the 2011-2012 budget. Because of declining enrollment, these reductions will not adversely affect programing.

Due to the lower enrollment, one full-time elementary teacher position, one full-time social studies teacher position, and one part-time (.5) art teacher position are being eliminated. Family & consumer sciences and music staffing levels will each be reduced by a partial (.2) position.

At the middle school, the assistant principal position will be eliminated following a retirement. The current high school assistant principal position will assume duties at both schools in the capacity of a shared high school/middle school assistant principal.

The District is also consolidating its transportation services. As a result of fewer students needing bussing, two transportation runs will be eliminated.

Program initiatives include the addition of one enrichment teaching position and one special education position.

## HOW WAS THE BUDGET DEVELOPED?

The 2011-2012 budget was built “from the ground up” utilizing a zero-based budget development process to allow for a thorough review of all budget codes and allow for savings to be realized wherever possible. The process was guided by a commitment to preserve and improve Chatham’s core educational program, remain sensitive to the current economic climate and provide for the long-term financial well-being of the district.

In late January/early February, school officials began to develop revenue projections and analyze the impact of Governor Cuomo’s proposed cuts to state education aid.

Program delivery was examined and enrollment predictions were reviewed. Ways to operate more efficiently were explored and implemented wherever possible.

Staffing levels were reviewed and adjusted to reflect program needs and declining enrollment. Based on this review, instructional staffing levels were reduced by 2.9 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. One assistant principal position was eliminated as part of a two-year plan to restructure and reduce administrative costs. Transportation services were consolidated and two bus runs were eliminated. Staff additions included one enrichment teaching position and one special education position.

Beginning in February, budget presentations were made at each regularly scheduled Board of Education meeting. Additional budget presentations were scheduled in each of the District’s townships and were made available to community groups that requested one. Copies of these presentations along with other budget information were posted on the district website. Residents were encouraged to participate, ask questions and make comments at meetings and through the website.

On March 31, the New York State Legislature adopted a state budget that included significant cuts to education aid. Under the state budget, Chatham schools face a \$326,701 reduction in state aid for the 2011-12 school year.

To reduce the impact of dwindling state aid and rapidly increasing costs in the areas of operations and personnel, the District applied \$948,260 in reserves and fund balance to lower the tax levy.

The Board of Education adopted a budget on April 12 that called for \$27,138,001 in spending and held the projected tax levy increase to 1.98 percent.

A Public Hearing on the adopted budget and educational plan is scheduled for May 10 at 6:30 p.m. in the Chatham High School Library.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF THE BUDGET IS DEFEATED?

If voters do not approve the budget on May 17, the District has three options: put the same budget up for a second vote, put a revised budget up for vote, or adopt a contingency budget.

If the budget is defeated twice, the board is required by law to adopt a contingency budget, which caps spending based on a state formula and restricts how schools operate.

A contingency budget limits spending for equipment, supplies, furniture, and new capital projects. However, all state

mandated programs, whether funded by state aid or not, would be retained.

These regulations mean that in a contingent budget the Board would have to cut \$90,564 from the proposed budget to lower the contingency budget to \$27,047,437. This would include the elimination of any projected purchases of new equipment. It is also possible that staffing positions and certain non-mandated and enhanced programs could be lost.

## Shaping Chatham’s Future: The Strategic Planning Committee

“The Strategic Planning Committee is an opportunity to be involved in the overarching goals of the District,” explains committee member Lucas Christensen, who, as a music teacher at Chatham Middle School and president of the Chatham Central Schools Teachers Association, has been on the Strategic Planning Committee for the last four years. “It is a productive body that is really creating positive change in the District.”

At meetings held several times each year, Christensen joins the committee’s more than fifty members to weigh in on current initiatives, challenges and future plans of the District. The committee represents a cross-section of the school community and includes teachers, parents, students, Board of Education members, administrators and non-instructional staff.

“I am on the committee because, as a parent, I want my kids to have an excellent education,” says Jim Marks, a father of two MED students and a Board of Education member, who has been on the Strategic Planning Committee for the last five years. “I believe community partnership is paramount for the District to succeed.”

As a collective group, the committee works to shape the future

of education in Chatham by providing input on the wide variety of topics that affect the District; from 21st century learning, to bullying prevention to District consolidation. Feedback collected at these meetings is used to guide the development and implementation of District initiatives and goals, as outlined in the Strategic Plan.

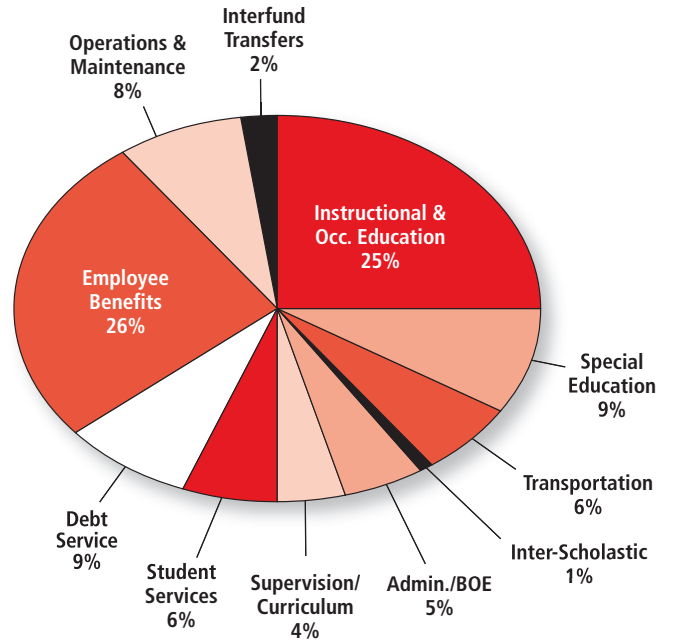
“I feel the school really cares about what we have to say,” says Olivia Klingler, one of the committee’s newest members. The eighth grader joined in November 2010 because she wanted to make sure the programs she values at the middle school were not overlooked. “I feel like, if the student body gets to speak, I should do my best to make this place the best it can be.”

“We are seeing changes being made as a result of this committee,” adds Christensen. “It has breathed new life into the forward momentum of the district.”

Any Chatham CSD resident may join the Strategic Planning Committee, learn about the issues affecting our schools and participate in shaping the future of our District. Interested persons should contact the Office of the Superintendent of Schools for more information.

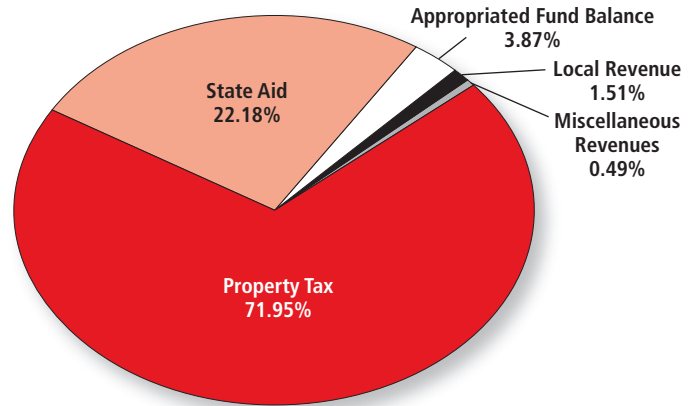
# 2011-2012 PROPOSED BUDGET

	BUDGET 2010-2011	PROPOSED 2011-2012
Instructional & Occ. Education	\$ 6,637,477	\$ 6,767,975
Special Education	2,448,661	2,771,578
Summer School	21,892	21,194
Student Services	1,502,914	1,532,466
Extracurricular	76,294	78,557
Inter-Scholastic	242,760	265,863
Community – Adult Education	26,363	33,500
Administrative/BOE	1,459,072	1,487,762
Supervision/Curriculum	1,045,829	1,066,393
Transportation	1,717,791	1,720,463
Operations & Maintenance	2,010,068	1,992,884
Employee Benefits	6,822,152	6,790,303
Debt Service	2,089,740	2,069,740
Interfund Transfers	513,676	539,323
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$26,614,687</b>	<b>\$27,138,001</b>



# ESTIMATED REVENUES

	BUDGET 2010-2011	BUDGET 2011-2012
Property Tax	\$ 19,146,293	\$ 19,525,975
Local Revenue	82,620	410,481
State Aid	6,340,774	6,018,940
Miscellaneous	195,000	132,620
Appropriated Fund Balance	850,000	1,050,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$26,614,687</b>	<b>\$27,138,016</b>



# PROPERTY TAX REPORT CARD

	2010-2011	2011-2012	% Change
Total Proposed Budget	\$26,614,687	\$27,138,001	1.97%
Total Estimated Tax Levy	\$19,246,293	\$19,525,975	1.98%
Public School Enrollment	1,217	1,218	0.008%
Consumer Price Index		1.60%	

## Are you registered to vote on May 17?

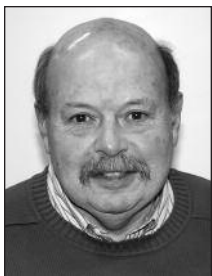
To be eligible to vote on May 17 you must be...

- a citizen of the United States, 18 years of age or older,
- a resident of the Chatham Central School District for a period of 30 days or more preceding the day of the vote,
- registered to vote with either the School District or the Columbia County Board of Elections.

If you have not previously registered and you would like to vote in this election, you must register with the School District Board of Registration. The next Voter Registration Day is Tuesday, May 10 from 1:00-6:00 p.m. in the M.E.D. Elementary School Lobby.

# 2011 Board of Education Candidates

Three candidates are running for four open seats on the Board of Education. One seat may be filled by a write-in candidate. Three seats are for three year terms beginning July 1, 2011 and ending June 30, 2014. The candidate who receives the fourth most votes will fill the remainder of the unexpired term caused by the resignation of Fred Hutchinson. That term runs from May 18, 2011 through June 30, 2013.



## Francis Iaconetti

I was raised in Chatham and have lived here for most of my life. I graduated from Chatham Schools and have a degree in Landscape Architecture from the University of Georgia. My wife, Beth, and I live in the Village of Chatham. Our two daughters are graduates of Chatham High School. Beth and I do volunteer work in the community.

For the past 15 years I have served on the Board of Education. Over this period of time I have served as Board President and as a member of the Capital Projects and Negotiations Committees. I am currently a member of the Finance, Audit, Facilities and Strategic Planning Committees.

Now retired from the N.Y.S. Dept. of Transportation, I have considerable experience with the development of capital projects as well as operations and maintenance of facilities. My experience and interest in finances has proven to be a benefit to the District.

I believe the District's biggest challenge is to provide a 21st century education for our students within the financial limitations that currently exist and most likely will continue. Decisions will need to be made that will affect us all. Residents of the District must become more involved to assist the Board of Education with its decisions. I am committed to plans and programs that will achieve high standards while recognizing the various constraints that exist and must be addressed.



## James Marks

I have been a resident of the Chatham Central School District for the past 15 years, with children in the District for the past 5 years. In that time I have tried to be an involved parent by volunteering in the classroom, chaperoning field trips, participating in Career Day events within the District, and for approximately the past five years I have been a member of the District's Strategic Planning Committee. The District has a very personal feel to it. The sense of community that we all share as residents

really comes through at the school. Being a member of the School Board is important to me; as much as I realize how difficult the times are we are facing, I also realize how very important our children's education is to them, and to us. We have difficult decisions ahead of us. How do we maintain the current quality of education while at the same time not tax the residents out of the district? As a member of the School Board, finding the best answer to that question will be my primary goal.



## James Toteno

My wife, Holly, and I have lived in the Chatham Central School District for 18 years. We have two sons, TJ, who graduated from Chatham in 2008

and Dylan, who is currently a Junior at Chatham High School. I am a Civil Engineer with the New York State Department of Transportation where I perform bridge inspections. I have been employed with New York State for 24 years.

I have been a member of the Chatham School Board for ten years. In those ten years I have been involved with the Strategic Planning, Facilities, Library, Finance and Liaison Committees.

Chatham has come a long way in the past 10 years. As a Board of Education, we have stabilized the District's leadership and enhanced the excellent educational opportunities for our District's children while dealing with the ongoing burden of State Aid reductions and State imposed mandates. We have also stabilized and upgraded our physical plant and infrastructure. The previous capital project and the current project are being completed with no additional tax increases to the District residents.

To continue to provide an excellent educational experience for our children, I believe we need continuity on the Board of Education.

## Bus Purchases

**Proposition #1** on the May 17 ballot will ask voters to approve the purchase of one 66-passenger diesel bus and one 7-passenger gasoline Suburban bus, at a cost not to exceed \$140,850.44. The purchases will be made with funds allocated from the 2010-2011 budget, allowing the buses to be purchased outright, without an additional levy of taxes and without the District incurring any debt.

This proposition is part of an ongoing bus replacement plan designed to keep the district's fleet in a safe, working order. New bus purchases replace old buses based on the vehicle's mileage, age, repair history and condition. This year, the plan calls for the retirement of two 14 year-old 65-passenger buses and one 9 year-old 7-passenger Suburban bus. With the plan calling for only two buses to be replaced, the overall transportation fleet will be consolidated by one 65-passenger bus.

## Student Representative on the BOE

**Proposition #2** asks voters to reapprove a provision that allows for a Chatham High School student to be appointed to the Board of Education. The student representative serves a one-year term as a non-voting member of the board and acts as a liaison between the student body and the Board of Education.

The provision was first approved by voters in 2009, and a student representative currently sits on the Board. However, Education Law requires the District to seek voter approval of this provision every two years. The current voter-approved provision will expire June 30, 2011.

# CHATHAM CSD BUDGET NOTICE

## ADMINISTRATORS

Cheryl Nuciforo 392-1501  
*Superintendent*

Chuck Snyder 392-1503  
*Interim School Business Administrator*

Jean Scheriff 392-2417  
*Director of Pupil Services*

Kristen Reno 392-2255  
*Mary E. Dardess  
 Elementary School Principal*

Gordon Fitting 392-1560  
*Chatham Middle School Principal*

Larry Burud 392-1560  
*Chatham Middle School Assistant Principal*

John Thorsen 392-4142  
*Chatham High School Principal*

Karen Bechdol 392-4142  
*Chatham High School Assistant Principal*

## BOARD MEMBERS

*Term Expires*

John Wapner 2012  
*President*

Elizabeth Macfarlane 2011  
*Vice President*

Michael Clark 2012

Gail Behrens Day 2013

Francis Iaconetti 2011

James Marks 2011

David O'Connor 2012

Melony Spock 2013

James Toteno 2011

Taylor Wenk 2011  
*Student Representative*

### Overall Budget Proposal

	Budget Adopted for the 2010 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2011 [+1] School Year	Contingent Budget for the 2011 [+1] School Year
<b>Total budgeted amount</b>	\$ 26,614,687	\$ 27,138,001	\$ 27,047,437
<b>Increase/decrease for the 2011 school year</b>		\$ 523,314	\$ 432,750
<b>Percentage increase (decrease) in each proposed budget</b>		1.97%	1.63%
<b>Change in the consumer price index</b>		1.60%	
<b>Resulting est. property tax levy for the 2011 school year</b>		\$ 19,146,293	\$ 19,055,729
<b>Administrative component</b>	\$ 2,346,734	\$ 2,392,877	\$ 2,392,877
<b>Program component</b>	\$ 19,486,884	\$ 19,870,047	\$ 19,779,483
<b>Capital component</b>	\$ 4,781,069	\$ 4,875,077	\$ 4,875,077
* Statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2011 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated. <sup>1</sup>			

### Basic STAR Exemption Impact

Estimated Basic STAR <sup>2</sup> Exemption Savings:	Budget Proposed for the 2011 [+1] School Year
Basic STAR Tax Savings	\$ 376.49

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2011-2012 by the qualified voters of the Chatham Central School District, Columbia County, New York, will be held at the Mary E. Dardess Elementary School in said district on Tuesday, May 17th, 2011 between the hours of 9:00 am and 9:00 pm, prevailing time in Chatham Central School District, the Mary E. Dardess Elementary School, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting machine.

<sup>1</sup> Provide a statement of assumptions made in estimating the contingency budget pursuant to section 2023 of the Education Law.  
<sup>2</sup> the basic school tax relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax law.

## BUDGET DETAILS AVAILABLE ONLINE!

Information about the 2011-2012 budget is available on the Chatham Central School District webpage at:

[www.chathamcentralschools.com](http://www.chathamcentralschools.com)



CHATHAM CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
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