



# Chatham Connections

**SPECIAL BUDGET ISSUE**

SPRING 2016

A NEWSLETTER FOR CHATHAM STUDENTS, PARENTS & COMMUNITY

## < BUDGET VOTE >

**Tuesday, May 17, 2016**  
9 a.m. – 9 p.m.  
MED Elementary School

### What will I be voting on?

#### A \$30,542,416 BUDGET FOR THE 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR

- This budget is \$641,375 (2.14 percent) more than the 2015-2016 budget
- This budget carries a projected 0.8856 percent tax levy increase which is the limit set by the NYS property tax cap

#### SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

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

1. **Craig Simmons**
2. **Steve Gilger**
3. **Wayne Coe**
4. **Muriel Faxon**
5. **Melony Spock**

### ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE ON MAY 17?

To be eligible to vote 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, you must register with the School District Board of Registration. The next **Voter Registration Day is Tuesday, May 10** from 2:00-7:00 p.m. in the MED Elementary School Lobby.

## 2016 – 2017 BUDGET:

### Strengthening Our Educational Program

On May 17th, 2016 Chatham Central School District residents will head to the polls to decide on a \$30,542,416 budget for the 2016-2017 school year. This budget contains no cuts to our educational program and strengthens what we offer our students. The budget carries a projected tax levy increase of 0.8856 percent, which is the limit set by NY State's property tax cap. Because CCSD's budget stays within the cap, most District homeowners will be eligible to receive NY State's new STAR Property Tax Rebate in the fall.

Voting on the budget will take place from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. in the Mary E. Dardess Elementary School gymnasium. Voters will also be asked to elect three candidates to the Board of Education.

The budget is up a total of \$641,375, a 2.14 percent increase from the current budget, the result of inflation, contractual obligations, program initiatives, rising health insurance premiums, and an increase in costs associated with special education services.

The 2016-2017 budget is part of a five-year fiscal plan designed to balance the financial stability of our school with the needs of students and taxpayers. District officials focused on providing a strong educational program that gives all our students what they need to succeed while remaining sensitive to our taxpayers. A significant bump up in state aid for next year helped the District offset cost increases. New spending was also offset with budget reductions in other areas and through efficiency measures. As it has in past years, the District applied reserves and appropriated fund balance to further reduce the impact of budget increases on the tax levy.

"Employing sound, long-term fiscal management strategies puts our District in the position where we can balance our budget and provide additional opportunities for our students, all while keeping the tax increase under one percent," said Superintendent Cheryl Nuciforo.



Program initiatives include a summer program for grades four and five as well as professional development for mindfulness/meditation instruction at MED; an Entertainment Marketing course, a Sports Marketing course, a Chamber Ensemble music course, a Graphic Design course, and a summer Career Exploration Internship Program at CHS; and increased technology in the classroom.

Staffing levels were adjusted to match program needs and efficiency measures. The District added one psychologist position, one school social worker position, one network engineer, and one part-time secretarial position. One bus run was eliminated.

Included in the budget are the purchases of one large school bus, two medium wheelchair buses, one suburban bus, and one minivan bus. These buses replace older, high-mileage vehicles as part of the District's ongoing bus replacement plan. In response to a student government proposal, the District will install water coolers in the high school. There is also money in the budget to replace certain water fountains and allow for potential other work related to water testing being conducted this spring. Also included in the budget is a small capital project to install carbon monoxide detectors in all buildings.

**A Public Hearing on the budget is scheduled for May 10, at 6:30 p.m. in the Chatham High School library.**

## HOW IS THE DISTRICT REDUCING COSTS?

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The District continues to look for ways to minimize budget increases through efficiency measures and other cost-saving initiatives. Examples of measures Chatham CSD took this budget cycle to offset budget increases include:

### **Finance**

The District shopped different banks this year to maximize interest returns on District funds. By switching banks, the District was able to boost its annual interest income by \$65,000.

### **Transportation**

Transportation routes were restructured resulting in two bus runs being consolidated into one, providing savings in personnel and fuel costs.

### **Cafeteria**

This year, kitchen staff began producing more food items in house rather than purchasing ready-made items from vendors (such as pizza). This provides fresher options for students and an annual cost savings of approximately \$5,000 for the District.

### **Energy**

Chatham CSD participates in an energy consortium which combines the buying power of multiple school districts to lock in lower electric rates.

Solar panels installed on the roof of MED in 2011 provided the District with approximately \$5,000 in energy savings a year, with a total of \$25,000 in energy savings to date. The panels were paid for entirely through a grant from NYSEERDA.

The District reduced its heating oil budget by \$15,000 & transportation fuel budget by \$25,000 to reflect lower oil prices.

### **Contracts**

Additional Affordable Care Act reporting requirements are carried out by existing District staff rather than a private contractor, providing \$15,000 in cost avoidance.

## WHAT ARE THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO STAFFING LEVELS?

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Based on program needs, wellness initiatives, and efficiency measures, Chatham Central Schools made a number of position changes for the 2016-2017 school year.

To provide additional mental and emotional health support services for our students, K-12, a school psychologist position and a school social worker position were added.

A network engineer position was added to support our District's increasing use of technology to enrich instruction, such

as classroom iPads, laptops, smart boards, and other computer-based platforms.

A part-time (.5) secretarial position was added to the MED office to increase the office's ability to meet the daily needs of students, their parents, and school staff.

Our transportation department consolidated two bus runs into a single run, thereby eliminating one driver position. The staffing reduction was through attrition (a retirement) and not a layoff.

## HOW DID CHANGES TO STATE AID AFFECT THE BUDGET THIS YEAR?

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For the 2016-17 school year, Chatham CSD will receive a total of \$7,478,486 in aid from NY State, an increase of \$557,819, or approximately 8 percent, over the 2015-16 budget.

Most significantly, on April 1st the NY State legislature ended the state's Gap Elimination Adjustment, which for the past seven years had diverted state funding away from schools. The restoration of this funding alone resulted in a \$349,891 increase in foundation aid for Chatham next school year. Chatham will also see an increase in aid for transportation and BOCES programs,

due to an overall decrease in area property values.

The increase in state aid, along with the District's ongoing efficiency efforts and use of reserves and fund balance as revenue in the budget, allowed the District to avoid cuts to school programs, maintain our educational opportunities for students, and strengthen our education program while at the same time holding the tax levy increase to the District's 2016 tax cap of 0.8856 percent.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF THE BUDGET IS DEFEATED?

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If voters do not approve the proposed budget on May 17th, the Board of Education has the following options: put the same budget or a revised budget up for vote on June 21st, or adopt a contingency budget. If the budget is again defeated on June 21st, the Board must adopt a contingency budget.

NY State's property tax cap law holds a contingency budget's tax levy increase at 0 percent. This means the District would be required to levy the same amount of taxes or less as in 2015, regardless of inflation, contractual obligations, and other cost drivers. A contingency budget prevents spending on new equip-

ment, except when concerning safety. It also limits public use of District facilities. However, all state mandated programs, whether funded by state aid or not, would need to be retained.

These regulations mean that in a contingent budget, the Board would need to make \$580,241 in cuts from the current budget proposal. Therefore, the District would be required to eliminate any projected purchases of new equipment from the budget, including replacement buses, and would consider other cuts to our instructional and non-instructional budgets.

## CCSD Homeowners Eligible for STAR Property Tax Rebate

NYS has created a new STAR Rebate program for the years 2016 through 2019, which replaces the Property Tax Freeze Credit it offered in 2014 and 2015. The new rebate will apply to homeowners who receive the STAR Exemption and who live in school districts that pass budgets at or below their tax levy cap. Because Chatham's 2016-2017 budget stays within our cap of 0.8856 percent, eligible residents earning \$200,000 or less will receive a \$185 rebate check from NYS in this fall. The STAR Rebate is in addition to the tax savings residents already see through the STAR Exemption.

### HOW IS THE DISTRICT STRENGTHENING OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS?

Board of Education goals this year focus on providing a strong academic program that prepares our students for college and career and allows them to maximize their individual potential, as well as providing increased resources in the areas of student mental and emotional health, and increased integration of technology in the classroom. Below are highlights of program initiatives included in the 2016-2017 budget and educational plan:

#### **Technology in the Classroom**

Part of Chatham's mission to give students a first-class 21st Century education is to provide them with the tools necessary to succeed in our increasingly technological society and to use technology as a tool to enhance collaboration and creative problem solving. The budget includes funding for the purchase of technology in every building as part of a plan to increase the number of computer-based personal devices available for student use over the next few years.

#### **Mental and Emotional Health**

The budget adds a school psychologist and a school social worker to increase resources and programming related to student mental and emotional health.

At MED, teachers will receive professional development focusing on bringing mindfulness (a meditative practice) instruction into their classrooms. Having students learn mindfulness has been shown to increase their ability to concentrate and reduce personal stress and conflict with others.

#### **MED Summer Program**

To keep students' skills in ELA and math sharp over the summer, MED will offer a new summer program for students entering grades four and five (see write up on back page).

#### **Visual Arts**

For next year, CHS reconfigured its fine arts offerings to better enable students to acquire skills that are essential to future opportunities in art. This includes combining half-year courses Adobe Photoshop and Studio in Design to create a full-year Graphic Design course. This new course will allow students to develop skills and use technology to effectively communicate in a visual manner, and will prepare them for career or college experience in fine arts and communications.



#### **Music**

At CHS, our music performance study offerings were reconfigured to better meet the needs of our most highly able musicians. A half-credit Chamber Ensemble class will be added to give advanced orchestral, choral, and winds/percussion musicians access to in-depth study on their specific instrument and increase their access to music staff. To offset staffing issues and costs, Jazz Band will move to every other day and the Chamber Ensemble class offered opposite it. There will be little impact on Jazz Band as the current class set up allows the full jazz band to rehearse every other day, while some of the students pursue other elective opportunities on the opposite days.

#### **Summer Career Exploration Internship Program**

CHS currently partners with some local employers to offer students a Career Exploration Internship Program (CEIP) during the school year, but students' busy schedules with school and extracurricular activities can make it difficult for them to take on an internship. The budget includes a new CEIP course over the summer to allow these students more free time to pursue this rewarding opportunity.

#### **Sports and Entertainment Marketing**

CHS offers a Sports & Entertainment Marketing course that has proven to be a very popular elective. Beginning next school year, this course will be expanded into two electives, with both a Sports Marketing course and an Entertainment Marketing course being offered to allow students to delve deeper into these areas of interest.

## HOW WAS THE BUDGET DEVELOPED?

Chatham follows a number of basic guiding principles when developing its annual budget: provide a strong educational program that prepares students for college and career success; remain sensitive to the economic climate and to taxpayers; maximize available resources; seek savings through efficiency measures; offset new spending with budget reductions where possible; base staffing on enrollment and program needs; and do not use one-time funding sources for ongoing expenses.

The proposed budget is part of a long-term fiscal plan for the financial stability of our school. School officials carefully weigh how budgeting decisions will affect not only the current budget year, but also how they will impact District finances over the next five years.

In January of this year, the District began to develop revenue projections for next school year, based on Governor

Andrew Cuomo's proposed state budget, which called for partial restoration of school aid that, for many years, schools had lost to the Gap Elimination Adjustment (which shifted money set aside for schools to other areas of the state budget).

In February, the District calculated its tax levy cap using the formula provided by the state. For 2016, Chatham's tax levy increase was capped at 0.8856 percent.

As they do every budget cycle, District officials completed a line-by-line review of the budget to identify areas where efficiencies could be realized. Staffing, equipment, and supplies were adjusted to meet program needs, enrollment, efficiency measures, and state mandates. The District also applied money from reserve accounts and allocated fund balance to help reduce the tax levy to the limit set by the cap.

On April 1st, the NYS legislature adopted a budget that ended the Gap

Elimination Adjustment, as well as raised aid for BOCES services and student transportation. In total, Chatham saw a state aid increase of \$557,819, or 8 percent. This increase in aid allowed the District to make program improvements and reduce the amount of reserves it used to balance the budget, while also holding the tax levy at the limit set by the property tax cap.

The Board of Education adopted a proposed 2016-17 budget on April 12 that totals \$30,542,416, a spending increase of 2.14 percent.

Public budget presentations were made at regularly scheduled Board of Education meetings beginning in January. Copies of these presentations and other budget information are posted to the school website as they become available.

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

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

For the past several years, the District has used money held in reserve accounts and fund balance to help keep the tax levy down. Due to an increase in state aid for next year, this District was able to use less in reserves than in previous years. The District allocated \$80,000 in reserves (down from \$212,671 in the 2015-16 budget) to offset expense increases in the 2016-17 budget. School officials will also use further reserves to cover costs in the areas of retirement health insurance, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, and tax certiorari, as costs commonly fluctuate in these areas.

The District also allocated \$1,341,600 of fund balance to reduce the tax levy increase. Fund balance is a reserve much like a savings account. When District expenses are less than what was

expected, or revenues are higher than expected, the money is held in the fund balance. The District utilizes fund balance each year as revenue in the budget to minimize spending cuts and hold down tax increases.

Use of reserves and fund balance are part of the District's multi-year fiscal plan designed to provide for the long-term financial well-being of the District. Utilizing reserves and fund balance helped the District hold the projected tax levy increase to 0.8856 percent, the limit set by Chatham's 2016 property tax cap.

Chatham's 2015-2024 Financial Reserve Plan is available on the Budget Information page found at [www.chathamcentralschools.com](http://www.chathamcentralschools.com).

## CO Detectors to be Installed in All District Buildings

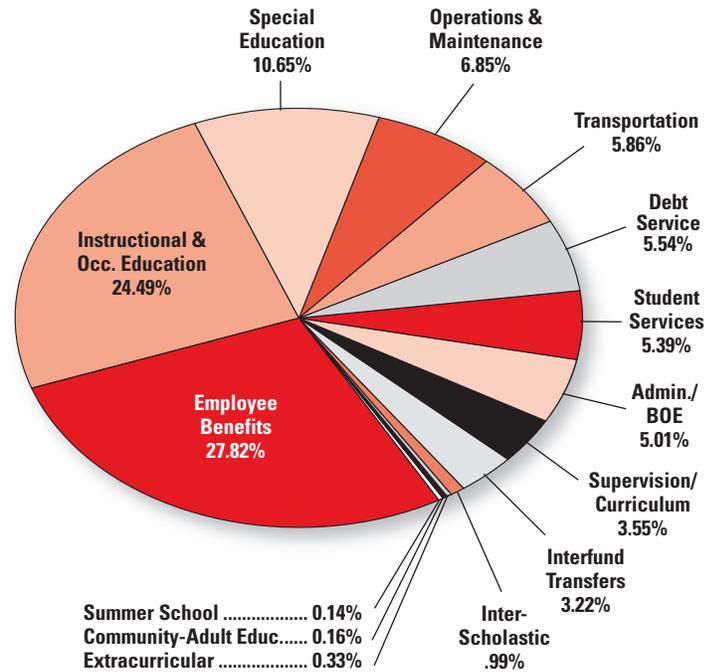
Included in the 2016-17 budget is a small capital project to install carbon monoxide detectors in all of CCSD's buildings. This will increase the safety of our schools and allow the District to comply with new state mandates requiring carbon monoxide detectors in places of employment. The project is not to exceed \$100,000 and would be completed during the 2016-17 school year. The District is paying for the project largely with money already built into the budget for emergency costs and unanticipated repairs, and therefore it will have only a slight impact on next year's budget. Additionally, Chatham is entitled to approximately fifty percent state aid on capital projects, meaning the District would be reimbursed for approximately fifty percent of the project cost.



*Environmental Science students created their own miniature ecosystems as part of a class experiment.*

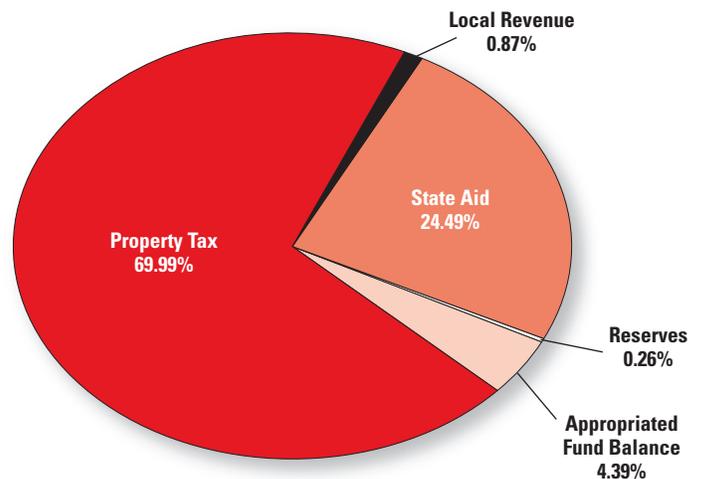
# 2016-2017 Proposed Budget

	<b>BUDGET 2015-2016</b>	<b>PROPOSED 2016-2017</b>
Instructional & Occ. Education	\$7,389,704	\$7,481,047
Special Education	\$3,070,613	\$3,253,821
Summer School	\$22,275	\$41,975
Student Services	\$1,428,513	\$1,647,223
Extracurricular	\$100,900	\$100,900
Inter-Scholastic	\$301,039	\$301,039
Community-Adult Education	\$47,718	\$47,718
Administrative/BOE	\$1,490,921	\$1,528,778
Supervision/Curriculum	\$1,018,895	\$1,084,789
Transportation	\$1,867,616	\$1,790,657
Operations & Maintenance	\$2,022,356	\$2,092,638
Employee Benefits	\$8,468,075	\$8,496,890
Debt Service	\$1,692,755	\$1,692,205
Interfund Transfers	\$979,660	\$982,736
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$29,901,041</b>	<b>\$30,542,416</b>



## Estimated Revenues

	<b>BUDGET 2015-2016</b>	<b>BUDGET 2016-2017</b>
Property Tax	\$21,187,925	\$21,375,578
Local Revenue	\$238,177	\$266,752
State Aid	\$6,920,667	\$7,478,486
Reserves	\$212,671	\$80,000
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$1,341,600	\$1,341,600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$29,901,041</b>	<b>\$30,542,416</b>



## Property Tax Report Card

	<b>2015-2016</b>	<b>2016-2017</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Total Budgeted Amount, not Including Separate Propositions	\$29,901,041	\$30,542,416	2.14%
Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy	\$21,187,925	\$21,375,578	0.89%
Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit	\$849,621	\$887,987	
School Tax Levy Limit, <u>Excluding</u> Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$20,384,817	\$20,487,591	
Total Proposed Tax Levy for School Purposes, <u>Excluding</u> Permissible Exclusions	\$20,338,304	\$20,487,591	
Difference: (G - H); (negative value requires 60.0% voter approval)	46,513	-	
Public School Enrollment	1,074	1,058	-1.49%
Consumer Price Index			0.12%

# 2016 Board of Education Candidates

There are five candidates running for three open seats on the Board of Education. All seats are for three-year terms that run July 1st, 2016 through June 30, 2019. The three candidates who receive the most votes will be elected to fill these terms. The candidates were asked to write a brief article about why they are running for the Board of Education, which appear here unedited. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are those of the candidates and do not necessarily reflect any official policy or position of the Chatham Central School District.



## **CRAIG SIMMONS**

As a lifelong resident of this community and a graduate of Chatham Central School, I would like to continue serving as a member of our school board.

Our vision and goals for the district are very important to me as well as knowing our fiscal responsibilities.

Owning a successful business for over 30 years, I feel I can bring some good common sense thinking to the School Board.

My goal as a Board member is to give our kids the best opportunity to succeed. I am very proud of our community and our school district.



## **STEVE GILGER**

I am a concerned taxpayer & parent who seeks reasonable, ethical, sustainable change. I am the parent of a child in the CCSD. I hold a degrees in Fine Arts & business and a diploma in construction management. I bring over 30 years of experience in building and facilities management to the table. I am a member of Northern Columbia Rotary, the Red Rock FD and a volunteer for Chatham Boy Scouts. I am running for school board because to say it bluntly- I would like to see a more transparent process of open meetings and workshops free of propaganda or public manipulation - a process free of patronage and politics which allows for differences of opinion. I want to help create a common sense system that works not for itself, but for everyone concerned. I want to reign in unnecessary spending and reduce our 11 million dollar debt. I want to be part of a plan for change that makes a child and their education the

most important part of the school system.



## **WAYNE COE**

Look at the incumbent's plummeting test scores: 66% non-proficient in ELA and 56% non-proficient in Math — the incumbent's ceiling-shattering \$30,000,000 budget. I can do better. Union-puppet incumbents are only interested in Union wealth, costing \$26,850 per student, among the most expensive in the nation. I've watched our best teachers (those my children loved), sports and building administrators, the smartest parents and honors students flee the district because the incumbent's disastrous consolidation, bond and forced testing. We can do better. The NY State Comptroller audit exposed the incumbents overtaxed us about \$500,000 per annum for six years, hiding \$2.9M from "productive use" in violation of NYS Real Property Tax statutes. Let's do better. I will focus on making education fun, reducing administration, armed police, Common Core and Albany contractors. Students want sports and arts opportunities,

Parents want their wisdom reflected in local education, we all want our best teachers retained. Tell your friends, vote creative, vote Coe.



## **MURIEL FAXON**

I was born in Chatham and graduated from Chatham High School, as did my five children. When they were in school I spent 15 years on the school board and left when I bought the Chatham Bookstore, always thinking that I would return someday. When I retired the voters decided to give me another chance. It has been an honor and a pleasure to work for the past three years with such a strong board, administration and staff that has the same dedication to our school district as I do. I am ready to commit the time that I know it takes to serve another term.



## **MELONY M. SPOCK**

I have been on the BOE for seven years and currently serve as President. I am running for another term because I care about kids. I want to continue to collaborate with all stakeholders in our community to develop a vision for our future that benefits our students and community.

I have been involved with my three children's education. I have participated on various school committees, I am a firm believer in that you can't complain unless you are willing to jump in and work on change. I am a "team player" and love working with kids, parents, teachers, staff and the community. I care about our community and I am committed to working to improve it for everyone.

I am a good listener, approachable and open-minded. I always try to be fair when it comes to tough decisions. Being fiscally conscious is important, there has to be a balance so that our taxpayers are not overburdened. I am committed to providing the students of Chatham with the best education while also maintaining fiscal integrity.

# The Senior Program

Becoming a Chatham graduate takes more than just passing your classes. Chatham High School has a unique graduation requirement known as the Senior Program, designed to prepare seniors for success after high school and give them a sense of progression into adulthood and personal ownership of their education.

The Senior Program has three components - the Curriculum Vitae, the Senior Project, and the Senior Expo - which together form a graduation portfolio representing skills in presentation, writing, speaking, and use of multiple forms of technology and communication.

"As our graduates return to visit and say hello we are routinely thanked for providing them experiences through the Senior Program that have prepared them for the challenges they face daily in their college studies and careers," said CHS principal John Thorsen.

**The Curriculum Vitae** is a formal compilation of a resume, writing sample, letter of recommendation, transcript, references, community service, and other evidence of a student's achievements, which all students complete in the fall of their senior year.

**The Senior Project** (also known as Senior Exhibition) is an in-depth oral presentation each senior must deliver on a thesis of their choosing, presented to a panel of five or more faculty evaluators.

On Senior Exhibition Day in April, CCSD closes down all schools for the afternoon and the District's entire faculty descends on the High School to be a part of these presentations. To successfully complete the senior project, students must demonstrate and articulate their ability to conduct research, think analytically and creatively, and integrate experiences, knowledge, and multiple sources of media into a public presentation.

**Senior Expo Night** is a community celebration of education and a "thank you" to

the taxpayers, parents, relatives, friends, teachers, administrators, Board of Education, and other staff who make it all possible. Each senior creates a display of his or her most valuable experiences and

**"The Senior Team works extremely hard to provide our seniors with learning experiences that enhance many skills our students will need in order to be successful in their future endeavors."**

– CHS Principal John Thorsen

is there to personally share it with visitors to the school. This year's Senior Expo Night takes place June 8th from 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. in the high school gym and is followed by the Senior Awards Ceremony at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium.

Students are expected to complete most of the research and activities for the senior program outside of class time, however, they have the support of staff advisors and of the High School's dedicated Senior Team, led by CHS teacher Wendy Diskin and fellow faculty

members Chelsea Donovan, Donna Eager, Sandy Fischer, Ashley Keegan, and Mark Pearson. They oversee delivery of the Senior Program and provide guidance to the students as they progress through each phase of the program.

"The Senior Team works extremely hard to provide our seniors with learning experiences that enhance many skills our students will need in order to be successful in their future endeavors. Each year the team reflects on the program and seeks out critical feedback from students and their colleagues in order to make appropriate changes to enhance the product," said

Thorsen. "This past year several key changes were made to the Exhibition Rubric, and these changes were evident in our student presentations. I am proud of the work our Senior Team puts in on behalf of our students, and I am proud of the seniors for the high quality presentations I have the privilege of evaluating each year."

For an outstanding performance in all three components of the Senior Program, a student earns a designation of "Exemplary Portfolio" on his or her diploma.



Senior Expo 2015



## CAR-RT SORT POSTAL CUSTOMER

Produced in cooperation with the Questar III Communications Service

### ADMINISTRATORS

Cheryl Nuciforo, Ed.D.	392-1501
<i>Superintendent</i>	
Michael Chudy	392-1534
<i>School Business Administrator</i>	
Brian Simon	392-2417
<i>Director of Special Education</i>	
Kristen Reno	392-2255
<i>Mary E. Dardess Elementary School Principal</i>	
Lindsay Morris	392-2255
<i>Mary E. Dardess Elementary School Assistant Principal</i>	
Amy Potter	392-1560
<i>Chatham Middle School Principal</i>	
John Thorsen	392-4142
<i>Chatham High School Principal</i>	
Terry Bordell	392-4142
<i>Chatham HS Assistant Principal</i>	

### BOARD MEMBERS

	<i>Term Expires</i>
Melony Spock	2016
<i>President</i>	
Teri Conte	2017
<i>Vice President</i>	
Denise Barry	2018
Muriel Faxon	2016
Beth Hover	2018
Chris Kelly	2017
Edward Knight	2017
David O'Connor	2018
Craig Simmons	2016
Jack McKeon	2016
<i>Student Representative</i>	

## MED to Offer Summer Program

With students spending extended time away from school over the summer months, many can begin to lose the skills they learned throughout the school year. When students regress academically, it can create gaps in their learning and negatively impact their schoolwork and self-esteem. With this in mind, one program initiative included in the budget is the addition of a summer program at Mary E. Dardess Elementary School (MED).

The goal of this program is to provide students entering fourth and fifth grades with an opportunity for enrichment over the summer while helping reduce regression of skills in both English language arts and math.

"This is not a remedial program, but more like a school camp," said MED principal Kristen Reno. "We want it to be a fun summer experience where they also learn a little and keep their skills sharp."

Students will get to work on theme-based projects all over the school - in the classroom, computer lab, media center, and do a lot outdoors as well.

While the MED summer program will target students most at risk for losing academic skills over the summer months, it is open to any and all MED students entering fourth and fifth grade, free of charge. The program will run weekday mornings from July 5th through July 29th and limited transportation will be provided. To sign up or learn more, contact the MED school office.

Chatham Middle School continues to offer a summer program for students entering grades six, seven, and eight. This year's theme is entrepreneurship, where students will focus on developing and pitching a business to a panel of "sharks," and then participate in a money making adventure to support a charity of their choice! Contact the CMS office to learn more.

## New Voting Machines

New for 2016, voting at CCSD will be done using ballot-scanning voting machines, which replace the lever-operated mechanical voting machines, as required by law. Trained polling staff will be on hand to demonstrate how to vote using the new machines, which are very simple to operate.

### BUDGET DETAILS AVAILABLE ONLINE!

Information about the 2016-2017 budget is available on the Chatham Central School District webpage at:

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