



# Chatham Connections

SPECIAL BUDGET ISSUE

SPRING 2014

A NEWSLETTER FOR CHATHAM STUDENTS, PARENTS & COMMUNITY

## 2014 – 2015 BUDGET:

# Containing Costs, Strengthening Programs

### < BUDGET VOTE >

Tuesday, May 20, 2014

9 a.m. – 9 p.m.

MED Elementary School

### What will I be voting on?

#### A \$29,468,429 BUDGET FOR THE 2014-2015 SCHOOL YEAR

- This budget is \$293,413 (1.01 percent) more than the 2013-2014 budget.
- This budget carries a projected 0.66 percent tax levy increase, that is within the limits set by the NYS property tax cap.

#### SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

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

- |                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Wayne Coe     | 5. Chris Kelly      |
| 2. Edward Knight | 6. Gail Behrens Day |
| 3. James Marks   | 7. Teri Conte       |
| 4. Steve Gilger  | 8. Ted Miner        |

### ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE ON MAY 20?

To be eligible to vote on May 20 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 13** from 2:00-7:00 p.m. in the M.E.D. Elementary School Lobby.

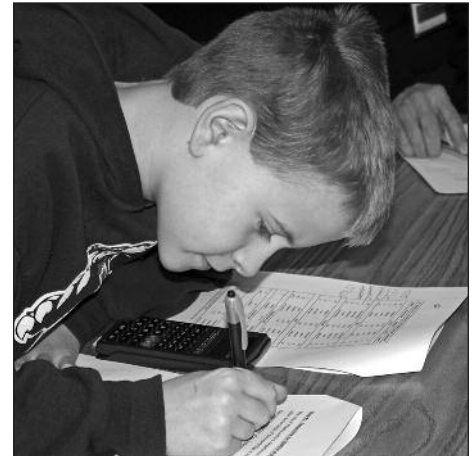
On May 20th, 2014, Chatham Central School District voters will be asked to decide on a \$29,468,429 budget for the 2014-2015 school year. The budget carries a projected tax levy increase of 0.66 percent, which is within the limit set by New York State's property tax cap. Because this budget is within the cap, most District homeowners will be eligible this year for NY State's new Property Tax Freeze Credit.

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 four candidates to the Board of Education out of eight candidates running.

Spending is up a total of \$293,413, a 1.01 percent increase from this year's budget, due largely to inflation, contractual obligations, and expense increases in the areas of pension costs and insurance premiums.

The 2014-2015 budget was developed as part of the District's five-year fiscal planning designed to balance the educational needs of students with the long term financial stability of our school. This budget development cycle marked a fifth straight year of low state aid and was further complicated by the lowest tax cap our District has seen to date. As in the past several years, school officials completed a thorough review of all operations and programs to realize efficiencies and savings while working to improve our academic and extracurricular program. The District also applied reserves and appropriated fund balance to lower the tax levy and offset the impact of cost increases and low revenue.

"For the past several years the District has successfully implemented efficiency measures to contain our costs without dismantling our educational opportunities for students," said Superintendent of Schools Cheryl Nuciforo. "This budget not only allows the District to provide our students with a stronger educational program, it



does so with the lowest tax levy increase in more than fifteen years."

Program initiatives call for the addition of a Pre-Kindergarten program at the Mary E. Dardess Elementary School, funding to partially support the High School's Shakespeare program, and the addition of an Advanced Placement Biology class.

Staffing levels were adjusted to match declining enrollment, program needs, and efficiency measures. One full-time special education position, one full-time art position, one part-time cafeteria position, and one bus run were eliminated. Also, the District's in-school suspension teacher position was replaced with a teaching assistant. These cuts were achieved without reducing or eliminating programs for students.

Also included in the budget are the purchases of two large buses, one medium bus, and a minivan bus. These bus purchases will replace older, high mileage vehicles as part of the District's ongoing bus replacement plan designed to keep our fleet in safe, efficient working order.

A Public Hearing on the budget is scheduled for May 13, at 6:30 p.m. in the Chatham High School library.

For more information on the 2014-2015 budget and educational plan, please visit [www.chathamcentralschools.com](http://www.chathamcentralschools.com).

## HOW IS THE DISTRICT REDUCING COSTS?

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Through efficiency measures, adjusting program and staffing to match declining enrollment numbers, and other cost saving initiatives, the Chatham Central School District was able to make \$503,000 in reductions to help balance the 2014-2015 budget. Examples of cost cutting measures this budget cycle include:

### Supplies and Equipment:

- The District auctioned off surplus equipment this year, which generated one-time revenue and reduced the need for a storage container rental, saving \$1,500.
- The District discontinued payphone service at our schools, saving \$2,500.
- We renegotiated an elevator service contract and an HVAC service contract for a combined savings of \$7,500.

### Personnel:

- Teaching staffing was reduced or reorganized to match program needs and declining enrollment, providing \$314,000 in savings.
- Following a study of our food service department, and based on enrollment, the District was able to eliminate one part-time food service position, saving \$9,600.

### Energy:

- The District participates in an energy consortium which combines the buying power of multiple school districts to lock in lower electric rates.
- The District has contracted to participate in a regional energy curtailment program, in which the District has agreed to go “off the grid” at times of high energy demand (during the summer) and free up electricity to be routed to areas with higher demand. During these brief intervals, the District will operate on its own power, produced by our emergency generators and solar panels, and will be reimbursed by the power company for doing so, therefore, generating an estimated energy savings of \$2,500.
- Solar panels installed on the roof of the MED building in April, 2011 have provided the District with approximately \$15,000 in energy savings so far. The panels were paid for entirely through a grant the District applied for from NYSERDA.

### Transportation:

- The District eliminated one bus run for next school year to match shrinking ridership, reducing costs by \$37,000.
- As part of its ongoing bus replacement plan this year, the District will replace a retiring Suburban bus with a less expensive and more fuel efficient minivan bus, saving \$13,000.

### Finance:

- A change in the law allowed the District to reduce the number of annual audits it performs by one, saving \$5,000.

### Facilities:

- In June, 2013 the Board of Education voted to consolidate our school buildings from three into two. Consolidation will be a multi-year process and will provide significant future cost savings.

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

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As it has for the past several budget cycles, the District utilized reserves and fund balance as revenue to help lower the tax levy and meet the threshold set by the property tax cap. For next year's budget, the District used \$375,671 in reserves to offset expenses in the areas of health insurance, unemployment insurance, workers' compensation, and tax certiorari.

The District also allocated \$1,341,600 of fund balance to reduce the tax levy. 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 stabilize tax increases.

Use of reserves and fund balance are part of the District's five-year fiscal plan designed to provide for the financial well-being of the District in a time of limited financial resources for schools. By utilizing these reserves, the District was able to hold the projected tax levy increase to its property tax cap of 0.66%, despite the District experiencing rapidly inflating costs and cuts to state aid as a result of the state's Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA).

## HOW DID STATE AID AFFECT THE BUDGET?

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Chatham CSD will receive a total of \$6,698,858 in state aid for next year, an increase of \$156,132, or 2.39 percent, over this year.

Even with the increase, Chatham's operating aid levels are still more than \$514,157 below what they were in 2008, a result of the state continuing its Gap Elimination Adjustment for the fifth straight year, which takes money allocated for schools and redirects it to fund other areas of the state budget. All the while, the District continues to see large cost increases that are beyond its control. This means that this year and for the past several

years, the District has had to make up the difference through budget cuts, use of reserves, and tax increases - though new tax revenue is limited by the NYS Property Tax Cap, which will cap Chatham CSD at a 0.66 percent increase in 2014.

As a result of efficiency measures taken by the District, long-term financial planning, and the allocation of reserves and fund balance, Chatham CSD was able to propose a budget that meets our tax levy limit yet continues to provide our students with excellent learning opportunities.

## HOW DOES THE DISTRICT USE BOCES SERVICES TO REDUCE COSTS?

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One of the ways Chatham Central Schools keeps down its costs is through shared services provided by our Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). Our local BOCES, known as Questar III, is a regional public education agency which functions as an extension of the public school districts in Columbia, Greene, and Rensselaer counties. It gives small rural school districts like ours a way to pool resources and share programs with other schools, and because Questar III services are shared between school districts, these services often cost our school less than if we were to provide them on our own.

NY State gives further financial incentive for school districts to participate in these shared services by offering additional state aid for BOCES services. Of the total \$1.8 million allocated for BOCES programs and services in Chatham's 2014-15 proposed budget, the District will get back \$389,658 from the state.

Questar III is probably best known for offering regional Career and Technical Education programs that Chatham and other schools use to offer elective opportunities to our high



*Chatham senior Sierra Shufelt at Questar III's Cosmetology program.*

school students in areas like healthcare, criminal justice, culinary arts, auto services, cosmetology, and information technology, to name a few. Our District also utilizes Questar III for a number of other services, including offsite special education for certain students who require a more intensive level of assistance than we are able to offer here in Chatham. The District also uses BOCES staff to provide professional development, claims auditing, data analysis, computer hardware and software support, equipment inventories, and communication services such as the district website and this newsletter.

Chatham also makes use of BOCES for guidance on state aid and other finances, recruitment of qualified teaching professionals, drug and alcohol testing for bus drivers, as well as our substitute calling service and emergency notification system. BOCES also allows us to pool our buying power with other schools to lower costs for cafeteria supplies using the economy of scale, and we participate in BOCES consortiums to get better rates on energy, workers' compensation, and health insurance.

## HOW IS THE DISTRICT STRENGTHENING PROGRAM?

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The District is working continuously to strengthen our academic program and provide students with a rich educational experience that will prepare them for success in college and the 21st Century workplace. Through restructuring of program delivery and efficiency measures, these program additions will have a minimal impact on the budget. Below are highlights of the program initiatives included in the 2014-2015 budget:

At the Mary E. Dardess Elementary School, a Pre-Kindergarten program will be offered for the first time. This program will target a specific population of students to reduce the types of deficits in Kindergarten readiness seen in previous years.

An Advanced Placement (AP) Biology class will be added at the High School. By adding this elective to our program, students with an interest in science will have more opportunity to advance their studies and earn college credit while still in high school.

The budget also includes \$5,000 to partially fund the High School's Fall Festival of Shakespeare. The program previously relied entirely on private donations for support, which of late have become more difficult to find. This intensive extracurricular theatre program is done in partnership with Shakespeare and Company of Lenox, MA and has proven to be highly popular with our high school students, as well as community audiences.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF THE BUDGET IS DEFEATED?

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If voters do not approve the budget on May 20, the District has the following options: put the same budget or a revised budget up for vote on June 17th, or adopt a contingency budget. If the budget is again defeated on June 17th, the Board is required to adopt a contingency budget.

The property tax cap holds a contingency budget's tax levy increase at 0%, meaning the District would be required to levy the same amount or less than the taxes in 2013, regardless of any increases to costs due to inflation, state mandated pension rate increases, contractual obligations, and other cost drivers. A

contingency budget also limits spending for equipment, supplies, furniture, and new capital projects, as well as puts limits on 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 be required to cut approximately \$463,000 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.



## HOW WILL THE NYS PROPERTY TAX FREEZE CREDIT AFFECT MY TAXES?

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The NYS budget, enacted on March 31, 2014, establishes what is being called a “Property Tax Freeze Credit” for NYS homeowners over the next two years. Because Chatham CSD’s proposed 2014-15 budget stays within the District’s tax cap of 0.66%, District homeowners will be eligible to receive this credit in 2014.

In 2014, the credit will apply to residential property owners who are eligible for a STAR exemption and who live in school districts that pass budgets that remain within their tax levy limit. Eligible

property owners will receive a tax credit equal to the greater of either the 2014-15 increase in school taxes or 1.46% of the 2013-14 school tax bill. The credit will be in the form of a rebate check issued to the homeowner in the fall by the NYS Tax Department.

Next budget year, for districts that stay under their tax cap and develop a plan to achieve savings through shared services, eligible homeowners within that district will again see a rebate to offset the tax increase.

## HOW WAS THE BUDGET DEVELOPED?

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Chatham CSD utilizes five year fiscal planning to provide for the long term financial health of our school. The 2014-15 budget was developed as part of this planning, which has, for the past several years, focused on efficiency measures to reduce spending, address the impact of insufficient state aid, and hold the tax levy to within the limits set by New York State’s property tax cap. Focus was placed on maximizing available resources to maintain and strengthen Chatham’s educational program, with program additions being offset by cost reductions in other areas of the budget.

In January, the District began to develop revenue projections and analyze the impact of Governor Andrew Cuomo’s proposed NYS budget, which extended the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) cuts to school aid funding for a fifth straight year. For Chatham, the GEA cut to school aid funding totaled \$640,387 for next school year, meaning state aid for the District continues to be well below the level of aid that the District received in 2008-09, the year before the state began the GEA. However, Cuomo’s budget did include a total state aid increase of approximately 1%, or \$65,563, over what the District received in aid this year.

In February, the District calculated its tax levy cap using the formula provided by the state. Chatham CSD’s tax levy cap fell to 0.66% for 2014 (last year, it was 4.34%).

The District was required to report this number to the state by March 1st.

After completing cost projections, school officials estimated that if the District were to rollover the current year’s budget to next year, expenses would go up by approximately \$850,000, due to inflation, contractual obligations, a mandated 7.8% increase in contributions to the NYS Teachers Retirement System, and an 8% increase in health insurance premiums.

Staffing was adjusted to meet program needs, efficiency measures, and projected enrollment. The District was helped in reducing costs this year by several retirements and resignations, which provided significant one-time savings. The District also benefited from lower debt service payments next year, the result of a portion of its existing debt being paid off this year. The District cut costs further by eliminating one bus run, renegotiating certain operations and maintenance contracts, and other efficiency measures.

Program initiatives included the addition of a pre-k program at MED, the cost of which will be offset by reducing next year’s Kindergarten class sections, due to declining enrollment. The budget also adds an Advanced Placement Biology class and partial funding for the high school’s Shakespeare program.

Bus replacement plan purchases of two large buses, one medium bus, and a minivan were also included in the budget.

On March 31st, the NY State legislature adopted a state budget that increased foundation aid for the district over Governor Cuomo’s proposal and reduced the GEA, giving Chatham an additional \$90,569 in state aid, bringing the District’s total state aid increase to \$156,132, or 2.39%, which further helped Chatham balance its budget.

The District also applied \$375,671 in reserves and allocated \$1,341,600 of fund balance to help reduce the tax levy to the limit set by the property tax the cap.

The Board of Education adopted a proposed 2014-15 budget on April 8 that called for \$29,468,429 in spending and held the projected tax levy increase at 0.66%.

Beginning in January, public budget presentations were made at regularly scheduled Board of Education meetings. Additional town hall budget presentations were scheduled in Austerlitz, Canaan and Ghent, and budget presentations were made available to community groups that requested one. Residents had the opportunity to ask questions and make comments at these meetings and through the District website. Copies of presentations and budget information were posted on the website as they became available.

A Public Hearing on the proposed budget and educational plan is scheduled for May 13 at 6:30 p.m. in the Chatham High School library.

## WHAT ARE THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO STAFFING LEVELS?

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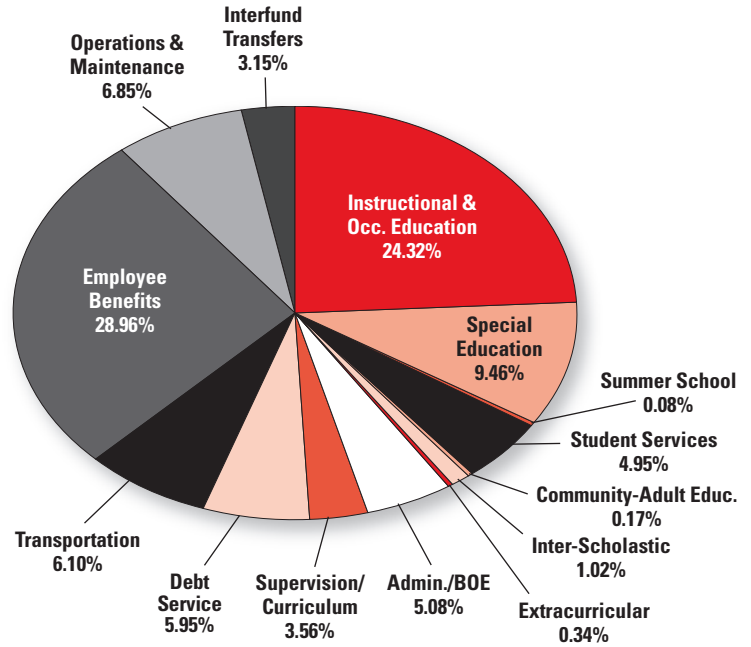
Based on current program needs and declining enrollment, Chatham Central Schools eliminated a small number of staff positions in the 2014-2015 budget. These staffing adjustments reflect efficiency measures, fewer students attending our schools, and changes to our staffing structure. There will be no loss of educational program as a result of these changes.

Due to changes to our staffing structure, one full-time special education position and one full-time in-school suspension teacher

position were eliminated from the budget, with the in-school suspension teacher position being replaced with a teaching assistant. Due to decreasing enrollment and program needs, one full-time art position was eliminated from the budget. These cuts were made through attrition, following retirements and a resignation, and will not reduce the level of programming we offer students. Also due to decreased enrollment, one part-time cafeteria position and one bus run were eliminated from the budget.

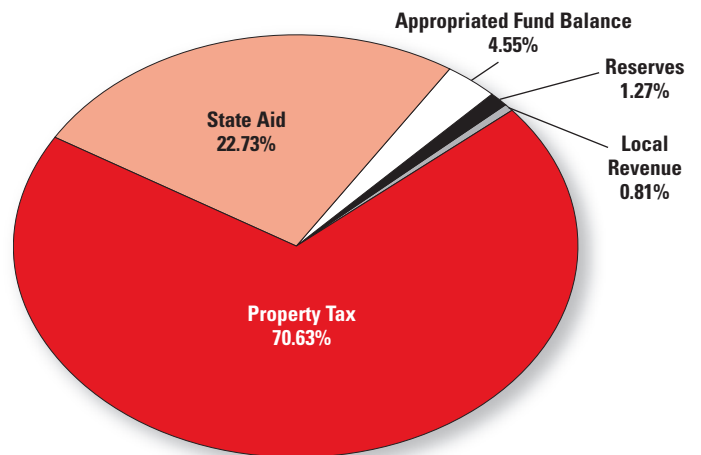
# 2014-2015 Proposed Budget

	BUDGET 2013-2014	PROPOSED 2014-2015
Instructional & Occ. Education	\$7,278,494	\$7,167,773
Special Education	\$2,592,409	\$2,788,382
Summer School	\$22,275	\$22,275
Student Services	\$1,422,997	\$1,458,230
Extracurricular	\$98,557	\$100,900
Inter-Scholastic	\$297,365	\$301,309
Community-Adult Education	\$49,566	\$49,668
Administrative/BOE	\$1,483,693	\$1,496,980
Supervision/Curriculum	\$1,042,189	\$1,049,024
Transportation	\$1,759,922	\$1,798,799
Operations & Maintenance	\$2,026,479	\$2,020,006
Employee Benefits	\$8,136,065	\$8,533,012
Debt Service	\$2,043,728	\$1,753,583
Interfund Transfers	\$921,277	\$928,758
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$29,175,016</b>	<b>\$29,468,429</b>



## Estimated Revenues

	BUDGET 2013-2014	BUDGET 2014-2015
Property Tax	\$20,677,499	\$20,814,123
Local Revenue	\$237,620	\$238,177
State Aid	\$6,542,726	\$6,698,858
Reserves	\$375,571	\$375,671
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$1,341,600	\$1,341,600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$29,175,016</b>	<b>\$29,468,429</b>



## Property Tax Report Card

	2013-2014	2014-2015	% Change
Total Proposed Budget	\$29,175,016	\$29,468,429	1.01%
Total Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Including Tax Levy to Support Library Debt	\$20,677,499	\$20,814,123	0.66%
Permissible Exclusions to the School Tax Levy Limit	\$1,272,176	\$833,271	
Proposed School Year Tax Levy, Not including Levy for Permissible Exclusions or Levy to Support Library Debt	\$19,405,323	\$19,980,852	
School Tax Levy Limit Not including Levy for Permissible Exclusions	\$19,553,011	\$19,980,952	
Difference	-\$147,688	-100	
Public School Enrollment	1,182	1,107	-6.35%
Consumer Price Index			1.46%

# 2014 Board of Education Candidates

Eight candidates are running for four open seats on the Board of Education. Three of these seats are for three-year terms that run July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2017. The candidate who receives the fourth most votes will fill the remainder of an unexpired term caused by the resignation of David O'Connor. That term will run from May 21, 2014 through June 30, 2015. Each candidate was asked to write a brief article about themselves.

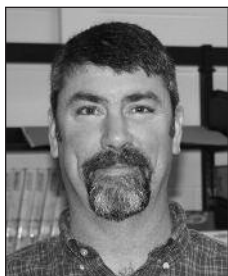


## WAYNE COE

From our home in the village of Chatham my three children walk to the High School and Chatham Middle School. I'm an independent businessman working in the film industry for companies like Purina and World Cup soccer, and movies like Spider-man I - III, Argo and Divergent. It's my job to envision ideas so other creative

people can build them. I bring 30 years of experience at imagining and articulating the future to the CCSD Board and I see the CMS open in that future.

I'm inspired every day by the semi-rural beauty of Chatham, and I've gotten involved in working to protect and sustain my community, first running for Village Board, then campaigning with a united community against the \$13,800,000 Capital Project. I'm a member of Rotary because I believe in uniting people through community service. I've attended CCSD school board meetings, work groups and focus groups for a year; I'm well-prepared for more responsibility. I'm running for Board to protect District taxpayers and students and support community empowerment through open government.



## EDWARD KNIGHT

As a life-long resident of Chatham, parent and area business owner, I have a vested interest in the welfare of our school district. My father was a teacher at Chatham for 30 years and I want to give something back to our school and community where I have chosen to raise my three children with my wife Amy.

A positive quality of the Chatham School District is it is made up of an exceptional group of students, administrators, teachers and staff and there is also a high level of family and community involvement.

I feel the School Board needs to work with the community to achieve a consensus of where the district is heading in the future. From issues concerning consolidation, to continuing a competitive education for our students, to keeping extracurricular activities on an upward swing.

I am fully committed to improve our school district. I feel I have had a positive impact in my recent role as incumbent member of the school board and hope to continue to serve our school district.



## CHRIS KELLY

As a parent, community volunteer, taxpayer, alumnus, veteran and spouse of a district employee I have a vested and diverse interest in the well-being of our district and the education it provides. My interest in serving is driven by the above relationships and the passion to ensure the best quality education to our next generation.

Our district provides exceptional and diverse opportunities in academics, extracurricular, performing arts and athletics programs. We must ensure the quality of this programming is expanded; the option of reducing these programs is not acceptable in my opinion. The ability to maintain these programs while staying fiscally responsible is a critical balancing act. If elected I will share my diverse experiences and knowledge acquired as a parent, local business manager, and US Army Veteran. I will also bring the ability to absorb and collaborate on community opinions and ideas. The key component of leadership is not making decisions but listening to and understanding the driving forces of those decisions. If elected I will provide that leadership.



## GAIL BEHRENS DAY

As a lifelong resident of Chatham, a graduate of its schools and parent of three Chatham graduates, I care deeply about the future of our children's education.

I am most committed to maintaining the strength and diversity of Chatham's educational programs, the quality of classroom teaching, and creating opportunities for the future of all our children in spite of current challenges such as declining enrollment, diminishing financial support from the state, and dealing with the complex array of federal and state mandates that face our district. Of special concern to me are the financial burdens our seniors, farmers and families face in supporting our schools.

I have been proud to serve on the Board of Education since my election in 2010. I find the commitment to the school district rewarding and demanding. I currently serve on the Policy and Negotiations Committees, Chatham Public Library Advisory Committee and serve as liaison to the Chatham Education Foundation.

## MEET THE BOE CANDIDATES MAY 15, 2014

A "Meet The Candidates" forum is scheduled for Thursday, May 15, 7:00 p.m. in the CHS auditorium. There are eight candidates running for four open seats on the Board of Education. David Colby, President of the Columbia County Chamber of Commerce, will be the moderator for the evening.



### JAMES MARKS

I have been a resident of the Chatham Central School District for the past 18 years, with children in the district for the past 8 years. In that time I have been an involved parent volunteering in the classroom, chaperoning field trips, participating in as many events within the district as I can and I have been a member of the

Chatham Board of Education for the past 4 years. Our community is going to be faced with many hard choices in the coming years, our financial resources continue to be stretched very tightly, we continue to be strapped with numerous mandates from state education with no hope for meaningful relief in the near future, and caught in the middle of it all is our children. As a member of the School Board my number one priority will continue to be providing the children of the district with a meaningful education that will truly prepare them for the world that awaits them, without overtaxing the residents of our community.



### STEVE GILGER

I am Steve Gilger and I want positive change. I am your neighborhood "concerned taxpayer." I have supported and been part of this community for 18 years. My 12 year old currently attends the CMS. I have a BFA, a minor in business, a diploma from NYU in Construction Management. I have extensive experience

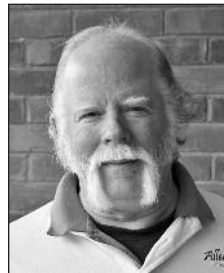
in building and facility management. I am running for the School Board because I am unhappy with the closing of the renovated Chatham Middle school without a community vote; the spending of taxpayer monies on unnecessary construction, when we already have a compliant building and are still paying down the bond debt on past renovations. I want open and transparent BOE meetings where parents and community are included and listened to. I want high quality education and a common sense administration working for the community and not for the Educational Industrial Complex. I want to reduce unnecessary spending. I want to reduce our present 12 million dollar bond debt and not add more bond debt. I want change—positive, reasonable, sustainable change.



### TERI CONTE

As an active volunteer in the Chatham Central School District for the past twenty years, I know that I have gained enough knowledge and will be an effective member of the CCSD School Board. I have worked diligently as a member of the MED PTA chairing many events such as "Tricky Trays" and afterschool

enrichment. As an involved member of the CMS PTSA, I donated many hours of service and was treasurer in the 2012-2013 school year. I've also served on various district committees, initiated the Staff Appreciation Program at the High School and am founder and current president of the Fine Arts Booster Club which operates in support of district students interested and excelling in the Arts. I am a concerned parent and tax payer looking to help the district move forward positively in building programs with the focus on student benefit.



### TED MINER

By now you may be wore out trudging through the candidates and "why one, not the other." Here it goes:

Father, grandfather, businessman, craftsman. Lifelong Lion, activist, Eagle Scout to lifetime scouts' support, schools' advocate, Little Brook Farm.

I graduated Chatham in '73 doing four years of senior high in the three years of, (the accursed), double sessions. Then worked at Skyline Corp., Valatie, promoted finally to Indiana. Moved back to the area to, (also), put my children through Chatham Schools.

I became "an operations" person. I like "white page thinking." Active at Chatham Schools for thirty plus years... "Coalition of Essential Schools," (mid 80's), the state aid reductions, (and accompanying threats), of the 90's, "No Child Left Behind," (early 2000's), and now "Common Core." Management by crisis?

I believe in: "Mastery," "Intrinsic," and "empowered by a supportive community." All originally in the Strategic Plan of sixteen years ago, now missing. Listening. Trust. Communication. Decision. Measured results. Thoughtful reaction. I believe I can be a responsible board member. I hope you do too.





## CAR-RT SORT POSTAL CUSTOMER

Produced in cooperation with the Questar III Communications Service

### ADMINISTRATORS

Cheryl Nuciforo <i>Superintendent</i>	392-1501
Michael Chudy <i>School Business Administrator</i>	392-1534
Brian Simon <i>Interim Director of Data, Assessment &amp; Special Programs</i>	392-2417
Tamara Thorpe-Odom <i>Director of Special Education</i>	392-1540
Kristen Reno <i>Mary E. Dardess Elementary School Principal</i>	392-2255
Amy Potter <i>Chatham Middle School Interim Principal</i>	392-1560
John Thorsen <i>Chatham High School Principal</i>	392-4142
Terry Bordell <i>Chatham HS Interim Assistant Principal</i>	392-4142

### BOARD MEMBERS

	<i>Term Expires</i>
Melony Spock <i>President</i>	2016
James Toteno <i>Vice President</i>	2014
Michael Clark	2015
Gail Behrens Day	2014
Muriel Faxon	2016
Edward Knight	2014
Jennifer Lindberg	2015
James Marks	2014
Craig Simmons	2016
Collin Anderson <i>Student Representative</i>	2014

## MED to Offer Pre-K in the Fall

This fall, the Mary E. Dardess Elementary School will offer a pre-kindergarten program for a targeted population of students. The Pre-K program is slated to begin this September and will be a full day class consisting of no more than 15 students. This initiative is being taken to address the number of students entering our kindergarten program who are underprepared for school.

“We are offering this program because we want to ensure more of our students will be prepared for kindergarten and success in school,” said MED principal Kristen Reno.

Our Pre-K will not be a “universal” program, but instead will target students with deficits in school readiness and family barriers that limit their access to existing preschool programs, such as private preschool or publicly supported programs like Head Start. It will serve only district residents, three and four years old, who meet this criteria and will be starting kindergarten the following year. The class will focus on building a foundation in reading and math and familiarize children with the school environment.

Pre-K is included in the proposed 2014-15 budget and will be paid for using local funds, however it will not add any significant increase to spending. MED will need one less section of kindergarten next school year, due to enrollment numbers dropping, which will allow one kindergarten teacher and one teaching assistant to be reassigned to the Pre-K program. Because NY has given priority to higher needs districts, Chatham is not eligible for funding from the state for this kind of Pre-K program.

If you have a child or know a child who may benefit from this program, please contact our school for more information. Questions about this program may be directed to MED principal Kristen Reno at 392-1530.

### SCHOOL BUDGET INFORMATION INSIDE

Information about the 2014-2015 budget is also available  
on the Chatham Central School District webpage at:

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