

SCHOHARIE CENTRAL SCHOOL



Schoharie, New York



Vol. LXXXIII, No. 1

“Learning is the Mission”

SEPTEMBER 2009

From the Superintendent’s Desk . . .

Let me take this opportunity, on behalf of the Board of Education and the Staff at Schoharie Central, to welcome you and your children back to school. First and foremost on our minds has been to make sure the buildings are ready for your children and that the first days back are bright, cheerful, and positive experiences for them. They will see some significant changes as they travel through the hallways and go to classes. Those changes go well beyond the exceptional summer cleaning efforts by our maintenance staff this year.

The EXCEL project is drawing to a close and the all-weather track has been completed, fenced in and the field events elements built. For the first time in many, many years Schoharie will be able to host sectional competitions at home. The safety and emergency lighting upgrades throughout the district have been completed and the renovation of the auditorium will be 99% complete when our students arrive. All that remains to be done is to install the daytime house lights (fixtures delayed by the manufacturer). The chimneys have been re-pointed and the scaffolding is being removed. At the Elementary School, the hallways in the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth grade wings have been re-painted to the school colors and the bathrooms have seen major improvements. The Special Education Office has also been moved to where the Art room once was, and the Art room is now located in the fourth grade wing. An additional soccer field has been developed over the past two years (preparation and then a season to grow grass) and is ready for use by our students and the youth soccer program. Some climbing elements have also been added to the playground.

Aside from the major changes in the theatre at the high school, there is a new mini-TV studio that will be used with our media production students and it will receive cameras, recorder/editors, and lights through a grant with SchoPeg. The outdoor athletic fields have new drainage modifications that are working very well, and the fencing issues around the tennis courts have been addressed.

More important than facilities, is addressing student success. The Leadership Team at the Elementary has been working diligently throughout the summer to address issues related to our status as a School In Need of Improvement (SINI). A Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) has been developed and submitted to the State Education Department. There will be a literacy coach working with all of our elementary students and the teaching staff this year. Curriculum alignment to the state standards is a priority, as is staff development on strategies to address the differentiated needs of students. It is important to note that our focus is upon improving the delivery of instruction to ALL of our students, which will provide for greater success in addition to improving the success of our at-risk children. Much more detailed information will be shared in the very near future on this topic, both on our website and in letters to our parents.

At the Jr./Sr. High School, we have several new staff coming on board. A major emphasis has been placed on improving our family and consumer science program, and we have new courses in media production and mathematics. As many of you know, Mr. Barnes has taken a new position as the High School Principal at Canajoharie Central. His replacement is Mr. Steve Hoard, recently appointed as an Assistant Principal Intern for this school year. Mr. Hoard is already a member of our Jr./Sr. High School staff and has been serving as a secondary social studies teacher for seven years.

Again, let me take the opportunity to welcome your children to school. We look forward to providing a positive, educational, and enjoyable year of experiences to our children.

Sincerely,
Brian Sherman
Superintendent



STUDENT HEALTH EXAMINATIONS



As part of a required school health examination, a student is weighed and his/her height is measured. These numbers are used to figure out the student's body mass index or "BMI". The BMI helps the doctor or nurse know if the student's weight is in a healthy range or is too high or too low. Recent changes to the New York State Education Law require that BMI and weight status group be included as part of the student's school health examination. A sample of school districts will be selected to take part in a survey by the New York State Department of Health. If our school is selected to be part of the survey, we will be reporting to the NYS Department of Health, information about our students' weight status for groups in grades: Pre-k, Kindergarten, 2nd, 4th, 7th and 10th. Only summary information is sent. No names and no information about individual students are sent. However, you may choose to have your child's information excluded from this survey report.

The information sent to the New York State Department of Health will help health officials develop programs that make it easier for children to be healthier. If you do not wish to have your child's weight status information included as part of the Health Department's survey this year, please contact Suzan Weber at 295-6634, for High School students, and Sherry Roy at 295-6660, for Elementary School students.



GET READY FOR SYSTEM SOCCER!

Schoharie Youth Soccer is making plans for the fall! Serving children & families of the Schoharie Central School District for over two decades, SYStem soccer provides a co-ed recreational program for boys & girls from ages 4-13. Emphasizing sportsmanship, skill development and teamwork, the program offers all children the opportunity to enjoy themselves in a low-key, fun-filled setting.

The SYStem regular season will begin with the annual registration day at Schoharie Central between 2-4 pm on Sunday, September 6th. Following the registration, the SYStem coaches will meet to set up teams, and call team members to advise them of practices. Games will begin on Sunday, September 20th and run 6 weeks. Children residing within the Schoharie School District with birth years 1996-2005 will eligible to register. Financial hardship should not be a limitation to participation in the regular season program - Families are encouraged to reach out to the League Officers to discuss individual circumstances.

Applications were sent home with children in grades K-8 in June, and are available in the Elementary and High School Offices. Anyone with questions regarding the SYStem program or parents wishing to volunteer can contact League Officers, Ed Labadia (868-2020), Reed Sholtes (295-7058), Tammy Cleveland (295-7345), Ken Cross (295-8939) or Pete Lopez at (295-7476).

STATE FFA CONVENTION CHALLENGES LOCAL STUDENTS

Nearly 1000 students throughout New York descended upon Tri-Valley Central School to participate in the New York State FFA Convention on May 7-9, 2009. The event theme, "Here's to You", placed a clear focus upon celebrating the students who attended the three-day convention. Schoharie Valley FFA students earned scholarships Elizabeth Goblet was recognized as the state winner of the Robert Watson Scholarship and Christopher Liddle and Elizabeth Goblet won SUNY Cobleskill Scholarships. In addition, Schoharie Valley FFA members received cash prizes, plaques and were recognized onstage in front of the 1000+ individuals who attended. Elizabeth Goblet was elected as the new State FFA Treasurer and will serve her term as a 2009 - 2010 State FFA officer. Other outstanding recognitions included State proficiency winners competing at the National FFA Convention, Elizabeth Goblet 1st place gold Sheep Production, Greg Lloyd 1st place gold Forage Production, James Goblet 1st place gold Diversified Agriculture Production, Julia Bogardus placed 2nd gold in Dairy Production. The Farm Business Management Team of Jeremiah Borst, Julia Bogardus, Greg Lloyd and Robert Vanderwerken placed 3rd and Robert and Greg were 5th and 6th placed individuals respectively. Allison Briggs, Jeremiah Borst and Robert Vanderwerken were presented with their State FFA Empire Degrees at the final session.

"This is what FFA is all about," said State FFA Advisor Eric Larsen. "These are students, who have been encouraged to pursue excellence, and these are the results - FFA provides opportunities for these teenagers to challenge themselves and accomplish something significant that is individualized and preparing them for their career."

James Goblet was the chairperson of the district line officer nomination committee, which kept him busy for two of the three days interviewing candidates, reviewing test scores and applications. James and Julia also represented the Schoharie Valley FFA chapter, as it was one of eleven chapters to receive the Superior Chapter Award.

The FFA is a national youth leadership organization for students enrolled in agriculture classes in their middle and high schools. School districts with agricultural education programs are preparing their students for some of the most up-and-coming careers available to graduates today. Agricultural education is proven to improve student success, graduation rates and matriculation rates. Alternative and renewable energy, natural resource management, "Green" technologies and the production and transportation of an affordable and safe food supply are all career areas that are thriving and growing. One in every five Americans is employed in the agriculture industry.

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LEGAL NOTICES

Pesticide Neighbor Notification Law

The Schoharie Central School District is taking an aggressive, yet precautionary approach to dealing with pesticides in and around its schools. The development and implementation of the District's integrated pest management (IPM) program is the key in achieving pesticide use reduction, while providing effective and economical pest control. Any public or nonpublic elementary or secondary school that decided to use a pesticide product as a last resort in addressing a pest problem must comply with the Pesticide Neighbor Notification Law (section 409-h of the Education Law). This notice is to inform all parents, guardians and staff that pesticide products may be used periodically throughout the school year. Anyone who wishes to receive a 48-hour written advanced notice from the school of an actual pesticide application should contact Shawn Gathen, Buildings and Grounds, Supervisor at 295-6689.

Parents' Right To Know

In accordance with the Federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, parents/guardians have the right to request information about the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teachers. Specifically, you have the right to request the following information concerning your child's teachers:

- Whether the teacher has met NYS qualifications and licensing criteria for the grad levels and subject areas he/she teaches
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status under which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived
- The teacher's college major
- Whether the teacher has any advanced degrees, and if so, the subject of those degrees
- If your child received services from any instructional assistants or similar paraprofessionals, the qualifications of those individuals.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act

Please take notice that the Schoharie Central School District has performed the annual reinspection and updated its files in accordance with the Federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) with regard to all school buildings in the district. Periodic surveillances are performed every six months. Interested persons may review a copy of the AHERA management plan in the Business Office, 136 Academy Drive, Schoharie, New York daily during regular business hours.

Firearms Prohibited

By Board of Education policy, no student shall bring a firearm on any portion of the premises of a school owned or controlled by this school district. In accordance with the Gun Free Schools Act of 1994, any student who, after a hearing held pursuant to Education Law Section 3214, is found guilty of bringing a firearm onto the premises of any school owned property by Schoharie Central School will be subject to a penalty of at least a one-year suspension from school. However, in determining an appropriate penalty, the Superintendent of Schools may modify the suspension requirement on a case-by-case basis, considering among other things the totality of circumstances surrounding the offense and the student's previous record. These may include, but are not limited to, the age of the student; the student's grade in school; the student's prior disciplinary record; the Superintendent's belief that other forms of discipline may be more effective; and other extenuating circumstances. Police officers on duty are the only people permitted on

school property to have a weapon in their possession. NYS Penal Law Section 265.01 (d) addresses possession of firearms on school property.

Emergency Management Plan

The Schoharie Central School District has developed an Emergency Disaster Preparedness Plan as required by the State Education Law, Section 155.13. It is required that each public school district has emergency plans in place and that the information on emergency procedures be provided to all students and staff. We will provide training throughout the school year and conduct at least 12 fire drills as well as a "Go Home" drill to test the transportation and communication systems. Emergency evacuation information is posted in each classroom and if you desire more information, please contact Brian Sherman, Superintendent of Schools and Emergency Coordinator at 295-6679.

Release of Student Directory Information

From time to time, student directory information (name, grade, awards, activities, photographs, etc.) are published on the Schoharie Central School Web Site, in school publications or released to the media to recognize student achievement or depict activities of the Schoharie Central School District. Parents who object to the disclosure of their child's directory information should notify BOTH the superintendent of schools and their child's building principal - in writing - on or before October 15th of each school year.

Drug Free/Tobacco Free School Zone

Schoharie Central School is considered a Drug Free/Tobacco Free School Zone. Anyone arrested and convicted of selling or using illegal drugs within 1,000 feet of school property will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, by civil authorities. Penalties are harsher in this zone than in the community at large. Signs are posted at the entrances to our buildings and on the grounds, to serve as a warning that our District has no tolerance toward illegal drugs.

Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of Schoharie Central School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, religion, marital status, sex, age, sexual orientation, or disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment, as required by Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Therefore, the Schoharie Central School District hereby advises students, parents, employees, and the general public that it offers employment and educational opportunities, including vocational education opportunities, without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, religion, marital status, sex, age, sexual orientation, or disability. Inquiries regarding this non-discrimination policy may be directed to the Title IX Officers, Mrs. Linda Nevulis at 295-6657 or Mr. Bob Bonaker at 295-6673.

Access to Student Records

Schoharie Central School District complies with the Federal Family Rights Law of 1974. This law states that parents or legal guardians and 18-year old students may arrange an appointment to review official records relating to them, including: progress reports, grades, aptitude and achievement test scores, psychological tests and teacher evaluations. Appropriate school personnel must be present at the time of inspection to prevent any misinterpretation of



USE OF ELECTRONICS IN SCHOOL

In the Student Handbook under the dress code section, students are told that their dress should “not include



Walkman, headphones, beepers, cell phones or any electronic games, as they are not to be displayed during school hours unless authorized by school personnel.” This means that teachers and staff should not see students in class or walking around in the hallways with ear phones on or talk-

ing on cell phones unless they have permission to do so. A situation where such permission is typically granted is during lunch time in the cafeteria. We ask that parents assist us by discouraging children from bringing these items to school and by abiding by this rule.



There are reasons why we ask this. One of these, and a frequently occurring problem, is the risk of theft. MP3 players, video game players, and cell phones are expensive items and are easily stolen. While no one should take someone else’s property, theft does occur. Students are regularly instructed to lock up valuables in lockers, either in the hall or in locker rooms, yet many leave valuable electronics in gym bags or on bleachers. They then get upset when the item disappears. The simplest solution is not to bring them to school at all. If leaving an electronic home is not possible, students MUST securely lock them up when in gym class or hall locker. Students MUST not display them in classes or the hallway.

Another reason is that these electronics can create a disruption in class rooms. Students often try to listen to headphones during class when they should be paying attention and participating in the lesson. Your child’s main purpose during class time should be learning, not listening to music or watching downloaded videos on I-Pods or MP3s. Cell phone calls during class time are also disruptive and inappropriate. Often times students will call or text other students. It is especially frustrating

when the person calling is a parent. Sometimes students and parents will claim that the call is an emergency. In the event of an emergency you should call the office first so we can assist your child in dealing with the emergency rather than have that student upset in a classroom.

Another reason for this prohibition is the potential for cheating during exams and quizzes. Students with cell phones have the ability to text other students with test answers. During Regents examinations, students are directed to remove these items from their proximity or face disqualification and a zero on the exam. The final reason is safety. We ask students not to wear headphones in the hallways because we need to be able to communicate with students in the event of an emergency.

Unfortunately, many students with headphones on are not able to hear staff directives (or ignore them). In the event that we need to evacuate the building, we need students to be able to hear directions.

The student handbook states that students who violate this policy will be asked to put away the electronic item. Refusal to comply with this request may result in having the item taken away for the remainder of the day or longer, depending on the situation. Any student who refuses to do so shall be subject to discipline, up to and including in-school suspension for the day. Any student who repeatedly fails to comply will be subject to further discipline, up to and including out of school suspension. We certainly do not want to see this happen. We realize that we live in an electronic age and that today’s children are ready users of electronic media. We realize that many parents want students to have cell phones so they can be in touch about sports or after school activities. What we ask is that you teach your children to be responsible and appropriate users of electronic technology.

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, contact the Jr.-Sr. High School at 295-6601.

LEGAL NOTICES *(continued from page 3)*

the records. If you would like to review a student’s records, please contact the Guidance Department at 295-6611, for an appointment.

Student Privacy

The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation requires that schools establish or revise existing policies and procedures regarding student privacy. Parents may exercise their right to opt their child out of participation in any survey that reveals information on certain types of personal behavior or political beliefs. In addition, parents will be given the opportunity to exclude their child from any activities in which personal information will be gathered from students and used for marketing purposes. Policies are also in place to address the administration of physical exams and screenings by the district, other than those required by state law.

Special Needs

Children with special needs may be entitled to additional services from the school district. If your child has special needs and is not known to the school administration, please call the Special Education Office at 295-6657. NYS Education Law also

requires that each public school district account for the education of all resident minors. Please help SCS comply with this requirement. If your child is home-schooled or attends a private or parochial school and has not previously been registered, please call the Elementary Office (K-6) at 295-6651 or the High School Guidance Office (7-12) at 295-6611.

Homeless Students

Parents of homeless students and unaccompanied youths (youths not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian) have the following rights:

- The right to attend the school they previously attended or to attend school in the district of current location
- The right to be enrolled even though the admission requirements have not been completed and prior student records are not available
- The right to transportation to and from school

For more information regarding these rights, please contact the Homeless Children and Youth Liaison, Mrs. Linda Nevulis at 295-6657.

Help our School Get Free Equipment!

Log on to www.pricechopper.com to register your Price Chopper AdvantEdge card for our school code 15847.

This will automatically earn credit for the school every time you use your AdvantEdge Card.



If you signed up for our school last year, you do not need to re-register.

No Internet?

Send your full card number to: Bonnie Newberry at Schoharie High School, PO Box 430, Schoharie, NY 12157.

As a result of your shopping last year, you earned the school a total of 43,000 points, which were used to purchase an audiovisual cart, laminating pouches, and an MP3 Player/Recorder for our library media center. With your help, we can increase our total and purchase even more equipment. This year, the 2009-2010 program has been extended to begin on August 2 and will continue until February 13, 2010. Thank you for your support and KEEP SHOPPING!



CLASS OF 1969 REUNION

The Schoharie Central School, Class of 1969, announces their 40th year reunion. The reunion picnic will be held on Saturday, September 26, 2009, at Fox Creek Park on Route 30, Schoharie, NY, from 2 – 10 PM.

FIGHTING HUNGER



Last year's ninth grade advisory group worked on community service projects for the last 20 weeks of the school year. One group participated in an "Empty Bowls" event. Empty bowls is an organization that helps raise money to fight hunger in local communities. Students created handmade ceramic bowls to be used for this purpose. At the event, guests were served soup (also made by students) in a handmade bowl in exchange for a cash donation. Now every time they use their bowl, they will be reminded that someone's bowl is always empty and that on this one occasion they helped alleviate hunger. All money collected was donated to the local food bank.



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BUS SAFETY PROCEDURES

District school bus drivers receive regular instruction about methods to maintain or improve safety on the bus and each year there is a thorough review of all safety procedures. All of our drivers consider the safety of the students to be of the utmost priority. Our drivers take great pride in their excellent safe driving record. Parental support plays a vital role in helping the school to safely transport your child. Please take the time to review with your children, the **10 RULES OF BUS SAFETY** that are posted on each bus. The rules include:

1. Observe same conduct as in the classroom
2. Be courteous, use no profane language
3. Do not eat or drink on the bus
4. Keep the bus clean
5. Cooperate with the driver
6. Do not smoke
7. Do not be destructive
8. Stay in your seat
9. Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus
10. Bus driver is authorized to assign seats



to cover the entire district and the number of students that stay for after-school activities on a given day will effect the time.

Over the years, many parents have called the bus garage (295-6684) to let us know their children won't be riding the bus that day. These calls are appreciated, especially when there are children at the end of the bus route. One of the best ways to cut-down on confusion between children and bus drivers is to have a consistent schedule. One spot for pick-ups and drop-offs is best!

Kindergarten Parents – You, or an authorized adult, are required to escort your child to and from the bus to ensure the proper release of your child. No kindergarten student will be dropped off without the presence of an authorized adult.

Field Trips, Sports Trips and After-School Bus Trips - All buses have forms to be utilized in case a student, staff member, or chaperone requires transportation to a hospital. The form has sections in which the nature of the injury or illness can be recorded, along with the name of the hospital. This would be helpful information for school officials and family members in case of a bus accident, especially out of the area. Also, an accurate roster of all students who are on the bus trip is completed and available to the bus driver. This procedure about incident forms and a roster of students was previously implemented on regular school bus runs many years ago.

Live animals, large objects (except band instruments) **and glass will not be permitted on buses.** Thank you for your assistance and cooperation in this matter.

Please note, after the first week of school the pick-up times will be firm. We urge you to have your children at their stop, ready to board the bus. Buses will not be permitted to wait for children that are not in sight. Drop-off times will vary, especially on late bus runs (3:30pm). There are only two late buses

Thank you for your continued support of the Schoharie Central School transportation department. We look forward to a safe and happy school year for all!

Prepaid Lunch Ticket Prices for 2008-09

Elementary

1 Week \$8.75
2 Weeks \$17.50



Jr/Sr High

5 day ticket \$10.00
4 day ticket \$8.00
3 day ticket \$6.00
2 day ticket \$4.00



SCHOHARIE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
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Schoharie, New York 12157

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Car Rt. Sort

RURAL ROUTE

STAR ROUTE

BOXHOLDER

S.C.S. LUNCH MENU

Served daily in the Elementary:

- Chicken Patty on Whole Wheat Roll
- Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwich
- Chef Salad and Roll

Weekly Specials will be offered in the High School

Served daily:

- 4 choices of fruits and/or vegetables
- 5 choices of milk: \$.45
 1% chocolate, 1% strawberry, white: whole, sklm & lowfat

Elementary Breakfast \$1.00
Jr./Sr. High School Breakfast . \$1.25
Elementary Lunch \$1.75
High School Lunch \$2.00
Second Entree \$1.00
Snacks \$.60

Visit Schoharie on the Web at: www.schoharieschools.org

