



■ 2008-09 school budget proposal

Residents Vote May 20 on Budget with 2.99% Tax Levy Increase

Schalmont Central School District residents can **vote on a \$41,550,000 budget for the 2008-09 school year on Tuesday, May 20**, from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. in the foyer of the Schalmont High School New Gym, 1 Sabre Dr.

Voters also will decide on a bus purchase proposition and pick candidates to fill two seats on the school board (see page 10).

Balancing the Budget

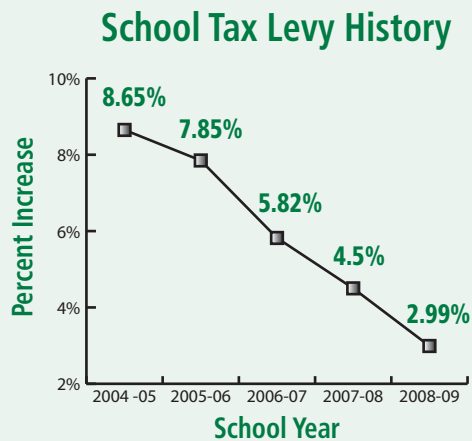
The proposed 2008-09 school budget is a \$1,456,248, or 3.63 percent, increase in spending over the 2007-08 school budget. The district will continue several cost-saving measures and cut some positions due to declining enrollment (see page 2), but most expenditure areas are expected to increase next year. The areas most significantly contributing to the spending increase include teacher salaries, health insurance and transportation (see pages 4-5).

Schalmont looks to all other revenue sources before it looks to local taxpayers to cover the cost of education. After factoring in other revenue, such as state aid, the proposal balances the budget with a 2.99 percent increase in the school tax levy (i.e., amount of

money the district collects from local taxpayers). This is the lowest percentage increase in the last five years (see chart).

“Our goal has always been to be fiscally responsible without losing sight of what students need to succeed in today’s world,” said Michael DellaVilla, president of the Schalmont Board of Education.

The school board adopted the Homestead Tax Option last year in response to the Town of Rotterdam property reassessment (see page 8). District officials will not set school tax rates (i.e., amount of tax residents pay per \$1,000 of home value) for homestead and non-homestead properties until August 2008. In the meantime, the school board has approved all possible school tax exemptions, and many taxpayers may be eligible for a STAR exemption (see page 7).



Creating the Budget

Board members and administrators began planning the 2008-09 budget in the fall of 2007 and sought feedback from community members before adopting the current proposal in April.

DellaVilla said, “Our community places a high value on their children’s education, but they’re feeling the pinch everywhere – gas,

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Budget Summary

2008-09 School Budget	\$41,550,000
Budget-to-Budget Increase	\$1,456,258 (+3.63%)
Estimated Tax Levy Change	+2.99%

food, even paper. We kept their concerns in mind and looked for ways to provide a great education and still cut costs.”

The proposed budget focuses on: maintaining and expanding existing instructional programs; taking cost-saving measures and making cuts where appropriate; increasing fiscal responsibility, maintaining and updating facilities, and continuing to improve school security.

Read on for more details on the proposed budget.

Budget focus area #1

Maintain and Expand Existing Instructional Programs

Education in Schalmont is designed to help students meet high standards in basic subject areas and advanced specialties so they can successfully compete for colleges and jobs. The Schalmont community is facing some financial constraints, but it is important that students not lose the educational opportunities made possible in recent years. For that reason, the 2008-09 school budget proposal maintains and expands **existing** instructional programs.



Summer Enrichment: These two elementary students took part in the August 2007 Math and Science Summer Academy.

- ▶ Continue to provide high school students with:
 - Classes in the Project Lead the Way (PLTW) pre-engineering program (expand to all four grades)
 - Advanced Placement (AP) classes in Calculus, English, Java, and U.S. History
 - Distance learning options in psychology, sociology, French, computer science, theater arts, and Mandarin Chinese
 - The opportunity to take courses for college credit from Schenectady County Community College, SUNY Albany and Syracuse University
- ▶ Continue to provide middle school students with:
 - Classes in the Gateway to Technology program (expand to sixth and seventh grades)
 - Access to accelerated math and science programs
- ▶ At the elementary schools, continue the:
 - Rollout of the Everyday Mathematics program (expand to kindergarten through third grade)
- ▶ Continue to give students access to occupational education opportunities through BOCES
- ▶ Continue to participate in Tech Valley High School (Last year's student will return for 10th grade and a new student will enter ninth grade.)
- Elementary Literacy Initiative designed to have all students reading at a third-grade level by third grade
- Summer Literacy Program for incoming first-, second- and third-graders receiving remedial reading services (funded by a grant)
- Math and Science Summer Academy for incoming fourth- and fifth-graders (funded by a grant)

Budget focus area #2

Take Cost-saving Measures and Make Cuts

The proposed budget includes several measures that would help lower the cost to operate the district. It also includes cuts in instructional positions due to declining enrollment and the merger of some non-instructional positions where appropriate.

- ▶ Continue to participate in Schenectady County schools buying consortium for savings on bus parts, cafeteria food and supplies, computer supplies, paper, trash removal, etc.
- ▶ Continue to participate in BOCES energy consortium for savings in natural gas and electricity
- ▶ Continue an energy savings plan at all buildings
- ▶ Due to declining enrollment, cut 1 FTE position at the MS and 1.2 FTE at the HS
- ▶ Continue to combine supervisor of transportation and supervisor of buildings/grounds positions
- ▶ Provide stipend for head mechanic instead of filling bus repair supervisor position

Budget focus area #3

Increase Fiscal Responsibility

The 2008-09 school budget proposal includes several measures designed to ensure the ongoing financial health of the district.

Some measures are required by law, and others are based on recommendations from the state or independent auditors.

- ▶ Continue the Schalmont Board of Education Audit Committee
- ▶ Continue to implement GASB 45, a government accounting standard related to future costs for retiree benefits
- ▶ Continue the Tax Certiorari Reserve Fund and the Retirement System Reserve Fund

Budget focus area #4

Maintain and Update Facilities

In 2006, the Facilities Committee developed a comprehensive maintenance and renovation plan that was integral in the creation of the Bond 2007 capital project. The capital project was approved by voters in October 2007.

- ▶ Capital project plans under review at the New York State Education Department
- ▶ Work scheduled to begin in 2008 and be completed in 2010
- ▶ No budget impact until 2009-10

Budget focus area #5

Continue to Improve Security

The Schalmont Safety Committee – whose members include local safety professionals from the police and fire departments, Schalmont parents, a student, a board member, and school personnel – makes recommendations for the continual improvement of the Schalmont Districtwide School Safety Plan. Their recommendations helped shape security improvements included in the proposed budget.

- ▶ Add exterior security cameras, door alarms, security sensors, and building access key fobs at all three elementary schools
- ▶ Install security cameras in computer labs at the high school (three classroom labs, distance learning lab and library lab)



Securing Our Schools: The 2008-09 school budget proposal includes security improvements at all three elementary schools (left – Jefferson primary entrance) and in the computer labs at Schalmont High School (above – distance learning lab, below – Project Lead the Way classroom lab).



Where does the money come from?

▶ Revenue Summary

	Approved Budget 2007-08 (\$)	Proposed Budget 2008-09 (\$)	Percent Change
State and Federal Aid	11,420,242	11,834,426	3.63
Fund Balance Appropriations	400,000	200,000	- 50.00
Interest Earnings/Building Use/Refunds	748,500	452,500	- 39.55
Payments in Lieu of Taxes	375,000	900,000	140.00
Property Tax Levy for Budget	27,150,000	27,963,074	2.99
Revenue in budget	\$40,093,742	\$41,550,000	3.63%

▶ Expenditure Summary

	Approved Budget 2007-08 (\$)	Proposed Budget 2008-09 (\$)	Percent Change
Instruction	19,537,810	20,285,104	3.82
Employee Benefits	10,224,833	10,502,619	2.72
Operations and Maintenance	2,587,750	2,717,347	5.01
Transportation	2,623,393	2,804,489	6.90
District Support	1,266,706	1,323,981	4.52
Debt Service and Transfer	3,853,250	3,916,460	1.64
Expenditures in budget	\$40,093,742	\$41,550,000	3.63%

Where does the money go?

(see next page for details)

Schalmont Students in the Spotlight

Academic Achievements

- ▶ The majority of Schalmont High School students attend college after graduation. Of the Class of 2007, 91 percent went on to attend a two- or four-year college. Members of the Class of 2008 have been accepted at higher education institutions such as the Albany College of Pharmacy; Boston University; the Culinary Institute of America; Ithaca College; LeMoyne College; NY University; RPI; SUNY Geneseo, Binghamton and Albany; and Union College.
- ▶ The Class of 2007 average SAT critical reading score of 493 was higher than the New York State average of 491. Their average SAT math score was 520, again topping the state average of 505.
- ▶ The Class of 2007 average ACT composite score of 22.4 was higher than the national average of 21.2.



- ▶ Almost 90 percent of the Class of 2007 earned a Regents or Advanced Regents diploma.
- ▶ During the 2007-08 school year, 64 HS students participated in Advanced Placement (AP) classes. Senior Tiffany Milano earned the title of AP Scholar from the College Board association.

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▶ Instruction

48.82% of total budget	2007-08	2008-09
Teaching - Regular School	\$9,810,464	10,381,408
Occupational Education	568,746	597,980
Special Education	5,263,954	5,344,799
Curriculum Development	211,524	230,347
Supervision	1,055,730	1,082,500
Summer School	101,115	93,660
Library	310,348	328,649
Computer Assisted Instruction	657,074	612,885
Guidance	542,096	586,736
Health Services	289,355	317,460
Psychological Services	274,691	251,503
Co-curricular Activities	59,506	63,681
Athletics	393,208	393,497
Total	\$19,537,810	\$20,285,104
Percent Change		3.82%

▶ Employee Benefits

25.28% of total budget	2007-08	2008-09
Health Insurance	\$6,798,250	\$7,031,619
Teachers' Retirement	1,263,500	1,250,000
Employees' Retirement	380,000	380,000
Social Security (FICA)	1,430,000	1,501,500
Worker's Compensation	209,000	190,000
Unemployment	30,000	30,000
Life Insurance	89,600	95,000
Disability Insurance	24,483	24,500
Total	\$10,224,833	\$10,502,619
Percent Change		2.72%

▶ Operations and Maintenance

6.54% of total budget	2007-08	2008-09
Custodial Services	\$2,170,173	\$2,210,871
Maintenance	417,578	506,476
Total	\$2,587,750	\$2,717,347
Percent Change		5.01%

▶ Transportation

6.75% of total budget	2007-08	2008-09
Transportation	\$2,184,102	\$2,345,263
Garage	109,291	119,326
Contracted Transportation	330,000	339,900
Total	\$2,623,393	\$2,804,489
Percent Change		6.9%

▶ District Support

3.19% of total budget	2007-08	2008-09
Board of Education	\$7,836	\$7,999
District Clerk/Meeting	3,205	3,301
Central Administration	191,223	199,223
Business Administration	338,939	365,316
Auditing	46,400	47,630
Treasurer	77	80
Tax Collection	10,583	10,820
Purchasing	9,306	9,585
Fiscal Agent Fees	735	757
Legal Services	105,000	108,150
Personnel	45,377	48,048
Public Information	92,579	95,919
Central Printing	57,228	59,883
Insurance	160,000	168,000
School Dues	16,000	16,480
Assessment	0	0
Tax Refunds	0	0
BOCES Administration	178,099	178,632
Census	4,120	4,244
Total	\$1,266,706	\$ 1,323,981
Percent Change		4.52%

▶ Debt Service and Transfers

9.43% of total budget	2007-08	2008-09
Buses	\$359,019	\$372,420
Construction	2,717,199	2,701,209
Tax Certioraris	478,032	477,831
Interfund Transfer	299,000	365,000
Total	\$3,853,250	\$3,916,460
Percent Change		1.64%

Q&A ABOUT THE PROPOSED SCHOOL BUDGET

Q. How was the budget proposal developed?

The Schalmont Board of Education and administrators began crafting a proposal in the fall of 2007. To estimate operational costs for 2008-09, they looked at the current costs to operate the district, local and national trends in the costs of applicable supplies and services, feedback from community members on educational priorities, and non-instructional factors such as employee contract negotiations.

Community volunteers served on the Budget Advisory Committee and helped move the budget from the draft stage to a final proposal. Members included: Mary Carolus, Paul Chevalier, Kerry Frank, Dominic Gallo, Amelia Hallam, Arlene Lindell, Debbie Lynch, Paul Notar, Dave Piotrowski, and John Saccocio. Community input also was solicited and received at board meetings and budget forums.

Q. What increases are included in this budget?

The proposed 2008-2009 school budget of \$41,550,000 represents a 3.63 percent spending increase over the 2007-08 school budget. The proposed budget reflects the school board's commitment to maintaining and expanding existing programs while being mindful of the financial constraints facing the Schalmont community.

The district will continue several cost-saving measures and cut some positions due to declining enrollment, but most expense areas are expected to increase next year (see pages 4-5). The areas most significantly contributing to the spending increase include teacher salaries (regular school), health insurance (active and retired employees) and transportation (diesel fuel).

Q. What does the district do to limit spending and contain costs?

By law, school districts are required to competitively purchase goods and services. As a routine part of its purchasing practices, the district uses a competitive bidding process, and wherever possible, makes purchases through cooperative arrangements with BOCES or New York State. The district also is a member of the Schenectady County Schools Buying Consortium, which provides savings in areas such as supplies, heating fuel and energy.

For 2008-09, the district also will cut some instructional positions at the middle and high schools (due to declining enrollment), combine some non-instructional positions and not add new educational programs (see page 2).

■ Schalmont Students in the Spotlight

— continued from pg. 4

- ▶ The Varsity MasterMinds Team came in first for Albany Area League 2, with senior Bart Comegys scoring the highest individual points in the league.
- ▶ The Schalmont Middle School Engineering Club won an award for "Best Air Transportation Design" at the Future City Competition this January.
- ▶ Schalmont sent eight elementary teams to this year's NYS Region 7 Odyssey of the Mind Tournament. One of the teams from Jefferson Elementary School came in third in their division.

Athletic Achievements

- ▶ The NYS Public High School Athletic Association recognized the following varsity teams as scholar-athletes: fall – Boys Cross Country, Boys Soccer, Girls Cross Country, Girls Soccer, Girls Swimming and Div-



ing, Girls Volleyball, Golf; winter – Boys Basketball, Boys Bowling, Girls Basketball, and Girls Bowling. To be named scholar athletes, a team must maintain a grade point average of at least 90 percent or higher.

Q. How are efforts to raise educational standards impacting the budget?

State and federal mandates, such as No Child Left Behind, are aimed at making students more competitive by raising educational standards. District costs associated with meeting mandates – for things like administering and grading tests and providing struggling students with individualized/small group support – are often not covered by the state or federal government. Schalmont must turn to local taxpayers to fund any mandated initiatives not covered by state aid.

Q. Why is the budget increasing more than the rate of inflation?

It is not accurate to compare a school district spending increase to the core rate of inflation because the latter is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). CPI only represents goods and services purchased by consumers (e.g., food, housing, clothes, vehicles, prescriptions, TVs, software).

School districts purchase some things included in the CPI, such as food and fuel, but must also cover faculty and staff salaries, health insurance, pensions, and the costs associated with meeting unfunded mandates – all of which are rising by more than the rate of inflation. Also, while CPI measures expenses over the previous 12 months, school budgets are an attempt to predict expenses over the next 12 months.

Q. How will this budget affect school taxes?

The proposed 2008-09 school budget includes a school tax levy (i.e., total amount of money the district collects from local taxpayers) of \$27,963,074, which is a 2.99 percent increase over last year. This is the lowest percentage increase in several years, reflecting district officials' efforts to continue to lower the increase in the school tax levy.

The 2008-09 school tax rate (i.e., amount of tax residents pay per \$1,000 of home value) for residential property owners (homestead) will be less than the school

tax rate for all other property owners (non-homestead), but rates will not be set until August 2008.

Taxpayers may be able to reduce their school taxes through exemptions. The school board has approved all possible school tax exemptions, and exemption applications are available in your town assessor's office. Visit http://www.orps.state.ny.us/home/tpe_index.cfm for more information.

Q. How do STAR exemptions reduce school taxes?

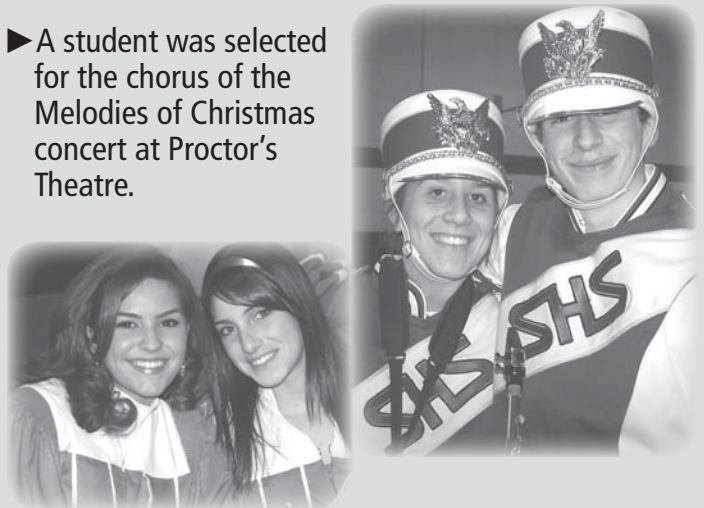
All New Yorkers who own a home can significantly reduce their school property taxes through a School Tax Relief (STAR) exemption. There are two standard STAR exemptions: Basic STAR for owner-occupied, primary residences regardless of owners' ages and incomes; and Enhanced STAR for primary residences of owners aged 65 and older with yearly household incomes below the state standard. The Middle Class STAR program, introduced

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- ▶ The following varsity teams were Section II Class B Champions: Boys Soccer and Golf (pictured page 6).
- ▶ The following varsity teams were Colonial Council Champions: Boys and Girls Bowling.
- ▶ Boys Varsity Swimming Team member Devin Hallam qualified for the NYS competition.
- ▶ Three Varsity Wrestling Team members placed in the Section II State Qualifier: Billy Chandler (third team), Vincent Gallo (second team) and Sammy Shields (third team).
- ▶ Varsity Hockey Team member Kyle McKelvey set a state record for the number of goals scored in one hockey game (9).
- ▶ Several HS students were named "Dunkin Donuts High School Players of the Week" by WNYT News-Channel 13: team roper Eric Fabian and wrestlers John and Billy Chandler.

Art and Music Achievements

- ▶ Two HS students were selected to perform at the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) All-State Festival (women's chorus, mixed chorus) and six HS students were selected for the NYSSMA Area All-State Festival (choral, instrumental).
- ▶ A student was selected for the chorus of the Melodies of Christmas concert at Proctor's Theatre.



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Budget Q&A

– continued from pg. 7

in 2007, will continue to provide a further benefit to taxpayers, on a sliding income scale, through a rebate check. Homeowners can apply for a STAR tax break through their town assessor's office. Visit <http://www.orps.state.ny.us/star/> for more details.

Q. Are taxpayers' STAR savings factored into the budget?

No. The STAR program is tax relief for homeowners paid for by New York State through state taxes. It is NOT a new source of funding for schools or a consideration in developing the annual school budget.

Q. How did the Rotterdam property reassessments affect school taxes?

Property reassessments are designed to bring properties up to full market

value. Last year, the Town of Rotterdam completed a reassessment of all properties within the town for the first time in more than 50 years.

The reassessment did not change the total amount of money that the school district collected from local taxpayers (i.e., school tax levy), but it did change how the school tax levy was distributed. While some residents saw an increase in their taxes, others saw a decrease. The reassessment did not raise any additional funds for the school district.

Q. How will the Homestead Tax Option affect taxes?

In March 2007, the Schalmont Board of Education enacted the Homestead Tax Option for all five towns in the district. It allowed for the creation of a dual tax rate for homeowners (residential property owners) and non-residential property owners, with property designations determined by each town's assessor.

The 2008-09 school tax rate for residential property owners (homestead) will be less than the school tax rate for all other property owners (non-homestead), but the rates will not be set until August 2008.

Q. How will state aid affect school taxes in Schalmont?

Schalmont looks to all other available revenue sources – state and federal aid, interest earnings, facility rental fees, etc. – before it turns to local taxpayers to help pay for education. Revenues in the proposed budget include \$11,834,426 in New York State and federal school aid.

A portion of state aid labeled "Foundation Aid" is determined based on a formula that takes into account factors such as the number of total students, disadvantaged students, special education students, and Limited English Proficiency students in a district.

The recently approved state budget included Foundation Aid increases for all

Schalmont Students in the Spotlight

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- ▶ Five students were selected for the Capital District Youth Chorale.
- ▶ The HS Marching Band and Wind Ensemble were selected for Disney Magic Music Days. They performed for thousands of people at Walt Disney World during winter break.
- ▶ MS students Elizabeth Glick and Grace White wrote essays that were included in a Empire State Plaza display celebrating the life of Dr. Martin Luther King.

Community Service Achievements

Schalmont High School and Middle School

- ▶ Middle and high school students went caroling in the community to raise funds for local charitable organizations. They raised over \$800.



- ▶ National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) members collected more than 60 gifts with their Giving Tree for children who use the services of the City Mission of Schenectady (pictured above). They also sold over 250 pink sneakers to raise funds for the American Cancer Society and collected \$926 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital during their Math-A-Thon.

school districts, ranging from a low of 3 percent to a high of 15 percent. Though Schalmont fell on the low end with a 3 percent increase, the district was still able to continue a five-year pattern of lowering the percentage increase in the school tax levy by implementing cost-saving measures and making cuts where appropriate.

Q. What happens if the school budget proposal is voted down?

Under state law, if the school budget proposal is defeated, the school board can put the same budget up for a revote, put a revised budget up for vote or go directly to a contingency budget. If the board decides to put the proposed budget up for a revote or to put a revised budget up for a vote and either one is voted down, the board must adopt a contingency budget.

The proposed 2008-09 school budget was built as close to contingency as possible without affecting existing programs. It is a 3.63 percent increase in spending over the 2007-08 school budget.

Q. What is a contingency budget?

State law mandates that under a contingency budget a school district may not increase spending in *most* expenditure areas by more than 120 percent of the Consumer Price Index or 4 percent, whichever is less. For 2008-09, the spending cap for *most* expenditure areas is 3.36 percent.

Certain expenditures are exempt from this spending cap, for example tax certiorari settlements and debt service.

If forced to adopt a contingency budget, Schalmont will need to cut \$231,321 from the proposed 2008-09 school budget. Reductions would be made at the discretion of the board from various non-mandated programs and transportation. Some examples of non-mandated programs include: equipment purchases; community use of school facilities, unless a facilities use fee is charged; kindergarten; library services; art, music and physical education programs; summer school; elective courses; and interscholastic/intramural sports.

The 2008-09 School Budget Notice on page 11 shows that a 2008-09 contingency budget would be an *overall* 3.06 percent spending increase from the 2007-08 budget.

Q. What is a tax certiorari?

The district currently is subject to more than \$17 million in tax certiorari claims, which are court cases brought by businesses or property owners seeking a reduction in their property tax assessments. If the claimants win their cases, the district will have to pay them using savings from a certiorari reserve fund and/or by borrowing money. Schalmont's financial planning strategies include setting aside money in a Tax Certiorari Reserve Fund in preparation for a verdict against the district. It contains approximately \$3 million at this time.

- ▶ The Key Club organized a food collection for local families in need.
- ▶ The Students Against Drunk Driving (SADD) Club sponsored a "Giving Tree" for three local families at Christmas and collected about 30 gifts.
- ▶ The MS NJHS, Service Club and Student Council members together collected more than 400 food items for the City Mission at Thanksgiving.

Elementary Schools

- ▶ Students at Jefferson and Mariaville brought in hundreds of food items to be included in holiday baskets for local families.



- ▶ Jefferson students, teachers and parents sponsored 30 local families in need at the holidays.

- ▶ The Mariaville PTO sponsored a toy drive to benefit Capital Region families with members in the military service.

- ▶ The Woestina Student Council and the Mariaville Service Club sold Wish Angels and together raised over \$450 for the Capital Region chapter of the Make-a-Wish Foundation.

- ▶ Third-grade students at Jefferson Elementary collected almost \$200 for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

■ Also on the ballot:

School Board Candidates, Bus Purchase Proposition

School Board Candidates

On May 20, voters will help fill two seats on the Schalmont Board of Education. The candidates at right have submitted petitions to run for the two three-year seats available on the school board. They are pictured in the order that they will appear on the ballot.

The school board is made up of seven non-paid citizens elected to serve overlapping terms of three years each. New York State law does not limit the number of terms a board member may serve. Together, school board members:

- Establish district policies;
- Develop an annual budget for public approval;
- Approve or disapprove the superintendent's recommendations on personnel matters and contracts;
- Review courses of study and textbooks; and
- Act as a communication link between residents and the superintendent.

They also help define district philosophy, set goals to achieve academic objectives, plan for future needs, and authorize certain contracts.

Bus Purchase Proposition

The May 20 ballot will include a separate proposition asking voter permission to **purchase three large buses and two small buses for \$381,000**. Schalmont

Carl Strang



Carl Strang is running for his third term on the board. He is the director of the Northeastern Regional Information Center (NERIC), which provides enhanced technology services, support, hardware and training to 137 school districts.

Strang previously served as the director of technology at Saratoga Springs City Schools, a teacher and coach at Mohonasen High School, and a U.S. Army officer in Europe.

In May 2007, Strang was selected by Microsoft Corp. to serve a three-year term on its National K-12 Advisory Council. He also volunteers for the Schalmont Dollars for Scholars, coaches Jefferson Cyber Challenge and Rotterdam Youth Soccer, and serves on the Schalmont Technology Committee.

He earned a bachelor's degree from Union College and a master's degree from SUNY Albany.

Strang lives in Rotterdam with his wife, Kimberly, and their three children.

is eligible for state aid reimbursement on a portion of the total cost, so the real cost to the district for all five buses would be \$163,865.

If voters pass the proposition, Schalmont's current fleet will not increase because older buses will be traded in towards the purchase of new buses.

This proposition is part of an ongoing five-year bus replacement plan designed to keep the district transportation program up-to-date and buses in safe, working order.

Kevin Thompson



Kevin Thompson is running for his second term on the school board. He is the Chief Financial Officer of Quandt's Foodservice Distributors Inc. He also is licensed in New York State as a Certified Public Accountant (CPA).

Thompson has coached Rotterdam Little League for the past several years. He also volunteers his time as an instructor for business/accounting courses at SUNY Cobleskill's Community Outreach Program. Prior to serving on the school board, he served on the Schalmont Budget Advisory Committee for more than 7 years. His professional memberships include the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the NYS Society of CPAs.

Thompson received his bachelor's degree from the University at Albany.

He and his wife, Carol, have two children who both attend Schalmont schools.

Just last year, Schalmont buses together racked up over 617,000 miles transporting students. The replacement plan takes advantage of the trade-in values

of older, heavily used buses before they exceed their life expectancy. It also provides students with new buses constructed based on the latest safety standards.





2008-09 SCHOOL BUDGET NOTICE

School districts are required by state law to mail this information to all households within the district. If you would like more information about the budget, please call the superintendent's office at 355-9200.

DEFINITIONS

The state requires school districts to present their annual budgets in three parts: program, administrative and capital.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS:

Salaries and benefits of all professional staff members who spend 50 percent or more of their time in administration and supervision. Also included: salaries and benefits of clerical staff for administrators; public relations; central printing; curriculum development and supervision; research planning and evaluation; central data processing; tax collection; most legal services; and school board costs.

2. PROGRAM COSTS:

Salaries and benefits of all teachers, guidance counselors, speech therapists, nurses, psychologists, social workers, aides, monitors, etc. Also included: district transportation costs (except bus purchases); interscholastic athletics; in-service training; computer assisted instruction; library, audiovisual and educational TV costs; and co-curricular recreation, youth and civic programs.

3. CAPITAL COSTS:

Debt service on buildings; leases; school bus purchases; tax certiorari and court-ordered costs; operation and maintenance costs, including salaries and benefits of all janitorial staff.

	Budget Adopted for the 2007-08 School Year	Budget Proposed for the 2008-09 School Year	Contingency Budget for the 2008-09 School Year
Total budgeted amount	\$40,093,742	\$41,550,000	\$41,318,679
Increase/decrease for the 2008-09 school year		\$1,456,258	\$1,224,937
Percentage increase (decrease) in each proposed budget		3.63%	3.06%
Change in the consumer price index		2.80%	
Resulting est. property tax levy for the 2008-09 school year		\$27,963,074	\$27,731,753
Component Breakdown			
1. Administrative Component	\$2,318,316	\$2,402,238	\$2,388,864
2. Program Component	\$31,356,426	\$32,598,192	\$32,416,708
3. Capital Component	\$6,419,000	\$6,549,570	\$6,513,107

What happens if the 2008-09 school budget proposal is not approved by a majority of voters?

Under state law, school boards can submit a budget to voters a maximum of two times. If the budget is defeated twice, the board must adopt a contingency budget, which would put a cap on new spending. Based upon a formula, this year's spending cap is 3.06 percent. (Some exclusions are allowed.) A contingency budget deducts equipment purchases and support for community use of school facilities. Further reductions would be made at the discretion of the board, and could be made from various non-mandated programs such as: kindergarten; library services; art, music and physical ed. programs; summer school; elective courses; interscholastic/intramural sports; and non-mandated transportation.

If the contingency budget is put in place as the result of two defeated budget votes, under current state law there can be no more votes on a budget for this year. Also, there can be no referendum to reinstate any of the specific components that were removed from the budget to meet the spending cap imposed by a contingency budget.

Basic STAR Exemption Impact

Estimated Basic STAR* Exemption savings are based on a hypothetical home within the district with a full value assessment of \$100,000.

	Budget proposed for the 2008-09 school year
Basic STAR Tax Savings	\$584.73

*The Basic School Tax Relief (STAR) exemption is authorized by section 425 of the Real Property Tax Law.

The budget vote for the fiscal year 2008-09 by the qualified voters of Schalmont Central School District will be held in the foyer of the Schalmont High School New Gym on Tuesday, May 20, 2008, between the hours of 6 a.m. and 9 p.m., at which time the polls will be open to vote by machine.

Photo ID or other proof of residency is required to vote.



2008-09 School Budget Vote

What exactly am I voting on?

- ▶ A \$41,550,000 budget for the 2008-09 school year, which is a 3.63 percent increase in spending from the 2007-08 school year
- ▶ Two seats on the Schalmont Board of Education (see page 10)
- ▶ The purchase of three large buses and two small buses for \$381,000 (see page 10)

When and where is the vote?

This year's vote will be held on **Tuesday, May 20, 2008, from 6 a.m. – 9 p.m. in the foyer of the Schalmont High School New Gym, 1 Sabre Dr.** Voters are encouraged to park in the lot closest to the athletic fields at the rear of the HS.

What should I bring with me?

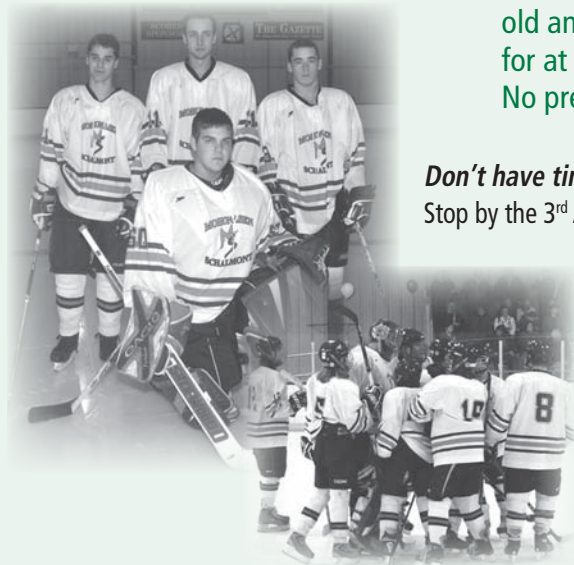
Personal identification/proof of residency is required (e.g., driver's license with current address, utility bill showing your name and current address). You will not be allowed to vote without I.D.

Who can vote?

A U.S. citizen who is 18 or more years old and has been a district resident for at least 30 days prior to the vote. No pre-registration is required.

Can I vote by absentee ballot?

If you are unable to appear in person on May 20, you may vote by absentee ballot. To receive an absentee ballot, voters may obtain an application from the district office (DO) or download one at www.schalmont.org. The application must be returned to the DO by May 13 if the absentee ballot is to be mailed to the voter or by May 19 if the absentee ballot is to be picked up personally by the voter at the DO between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Absentee ballots must be returned no later than 5 p.m. on election day. For more information, call Donna Siska at 355-9200, x4002.



Don't have time to vote and make dinner?

Stop by the 3rd Annual Hockey Association Cookout for a sausage and pepper sandwich (\$5), hot dog or chili dog (\$3). Each is served with a dessert and drink. The cookout will be held from 1 – 7:30 p.m. near the rear entrance to the HS. (Pictured: top - Schalmont HS senior hockey players, bottom - the Varsity Hockey Team)



Produced in cooperation with the Capital Region BOCES Communications Service.

Schalmont

CENTRAL SCHOOLS

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