

2009 budget, bus and building project vote – May 19



*... a student in **Laura Bonville's** class at Glen-Worden, works with school speech therapist **Diane Skibinski** to plant a Norway Spruce seedling behind the school. G-W students, with the help of Karen Kulak from Kulak's Nursery, planted 14 of the 18-inch seedlings for Arbor Day.*

Using a surgeon's scalpel

2009-10 budget maintains most programs while trimming \$1.3 million

Cutting through budget expenditures with a 'meat cleaver' would have been easy.

Wide, strong swings would have dismantled educational programs that have taken years to build.

Instead, Superintendent Susan Swartz and the Board of Education decided in early spring to use a surgeon's scalpel to trim around the edges and preserve most of

SEE "2009-10 BUDGET TRIMMED PROGRAMS," PAGE 3

What will I consider on May 19?

The Scotia-Glenville school community will consider four resolutions on the May 19 ballot as well as two candidates for the Board of Education.

#1 – 2009-10 budget: \$46,651,381

Spending is up \$794,249 or 1.73%

#2 – Bus purchase: \$475,000

Replace five aging school buses (see page 2)

#3 – Building project: \$9,317,000

Replace roofs, boilers, technology, the track and improve the high school library heating system (see page 6-7)

#4 – Building project: \$2,575,000

Upgrade and expand the middle school library and add a corridor around it (see page 6-7)

✓ Two candidates for two seats on the Board of Education (see page 7):

John Yagielski and Gary Normington

Budget tax impact: at least – 0.5% estimated tax rate decrease

An estimated tax rate decrease of 13 cents per \$1,000 assessment in Scotia and Glenville. For the typical home with a \$160,000 assessment, that works out to a tax decrease of \$21 per year.

Building projects' tax impact: 0%

By using state building aid, special EXCEL state aid, \$450,000 from a reserve account, \$150,000 savings from the Glendaal roof project and declining debt, there would be no tax impact (see story, page 6-7).

These figures are **BEFORE** savings from the state's STAR tax reduction program (see page 3).

2009-10 BUDGET TRIMMED PROGRAMS, from page 1

what the Scotia-Glenville community expects from its schools.

In the process, \$1.3 million was trimmed from the budget that Swartz first proposed in February.

This approach led to a reduction of 5.2 full-time positions (*most retiring teachers will not be fully replaced*); the Board of Education's own budget was cut; and funding for supplies, professional development programs, athletics, field trips, technology, academic contests was trimmed – but not eliminated. As well, budgets for unanticipated students in vocational and special education programs were trimmed.

Federal stimulus funding will be used to maintain three positions. Anticipated state aid cuts that were restored prevented deeper cuts. A full-day kindergarten state grant will be used to offset teacher salaries.

New budget initiatives?

After months of slicing, hours of debate and three drafts of the budget, what initiatives are included or were kept in S-G's budget proposal?

There are several items of note. Most will not add spending to the budget but will instead be covered by shifting staff and funds:

▶ **The enrichment program in grades 4 and 5 will add a half-day math and science component** and be taught by S-G's enrichment teachers. A half-day humanities enrichment program will be also taught by the

Young Scholars program through the Warren-Washington BOCES.

This mirrors how enrichment is taught in grade 6 – humanities with Young Scholars and math and science with S-G's Scotia Scholars.

▶ **Beginning in September, the 199 incoming kindergarten students will attend school for a full-day so that teachers and students will have more time to build a strong academic foundation.**

▶ **A second Cisco Networking Academy hands-on computer course and a college credit-bearing, three-year Science Re-**

search Course will be offered. Both high school courses will prepare students for the rigors of the work place and college.

▶ **A third S-G student will enroll at Tech Valley High School** – a venture of the Capital Region and Questar III BOCES.

▶ **Driver Education was maintained as a summer program**, but students will be charged \$150, up from \$3, to allow the district to recover some of the actual costs.

▶ **Class sizes will remain within the current ranges and secondary course offerings will remain about the same, based on enrollment.**

However, three small sections of classes at both Glen-Worden and Sacandaga will be combined into two sections at each school. 🍷

The community will consider the \$46.65 million proposed 2009-10 budget during voting at the high school gym on Tuesday, May 19, from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Scotia-Glenville tax rates would decrease slightly – by at least 0.5 percent – in the 2009-10 school year.

New bus purchases on May 19 ballot

State aid will refund 75%; taxes to rise by 1/10 of one percent over five years

With more than 100,000 miles on their odometers and a host of mechanical and body problems, five S-G buses must be replaced.

The community will be asked to consider a bus purchase plan on May 19.

The plan, part of a multi-year replacement program, calls for borrowing \$475,000 to buy five 65-passenger buses to replace current buses #141, 149, 150, 151 and 152.



The community on May 19 will consider replacing five aging buses.

Those buses are in good/poor or poor/poor condition (mechanical/body) and more than 100,000 miles on each vehicle.

Transportation Director David VanSchaick said the buses, because of corrosion in the wheel wells, battery boxes, doors and body panels, will not pass a state inspection in 2010 without about \$70,000 in repairs.

If approved by the voters, the proposal would be repaid over five years beginning in the 2010-11 school year. State aid would reimburse 74.7 percent of the cost and interest or \$383,681 over five years.

That would leave a total local cost of \$130,011 over five years or \$26,000 per year. That is about 1/10 of 1 percent on the tax rate each year, beginning in the 2010-11 school year. 🍷

Budget Questions and Answers

I thought education funding was cut by the state this year?

In December, Governor David Paterson proposed freezing basic state “Foundation Aid” while assessing a “Deficit Reduction Assessment” (DRA) against all schools. For Scotia-Glenville, a \$1.59 million DRA was proposed – equivalent to 6.7 percent on the tax rate. However, because the state received federal stimulus money, Paterson dropped the DRAs but kept Foundation Aid frozen at this year’s levels for two years. Building, BOCES, kindergarten and a host of other aid categories *were not* affected by the governor’s actions and are included in the state’s 2009-10 budget.

Why did Scotia-Glenville cut \$1.3 million from the budget?

It was a recognition of the souring economy and its impact on the community as well as the proposed cuts in state education support. Superintendent Susan Swartz and the Board of Education sought to methodically reduce spending to make up for the usual \$2 million in annual “rollover” costs (*increases in utilities, salaries, benefits and other inflationary budget items*) from year to year while maintaining programs, staff and initiatives.

Was the state’s STAR tax reduction program eliminated?

No. The 11-year-old state STAR school tax reduction program was *not* eliminated by the state budget – but the STAR rebate check program was ended (*see next question*). The STAR program is *not* administered by the school district and is a state-run program.

For the fall of 2009, Scotia-Glenville school tax bills will be computed after subtracting \$29,730 from a Basic STAR recipients’ assessment and \$56,280 from an Enhanced STAR (*homeowners over age 65 with qualifying incomes*) assessment.

That will result in a tax savings of about \$600 for Basic STAR homeowners and \$1,130 for Enhanced STAR homeowners.

The amounts used toward school tax assessment reduction reflect a town’s equalization rate – *which*

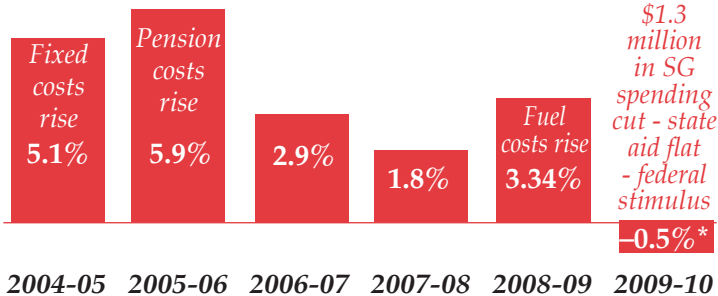
measures how closely home property assessments reflect actual values – and changes every year.

Because of a declining town equalization rate, the savings will be about \$75 less for Basic STAR and about \$150 less for Enhanced STAR recipients than in 2008.

So, while the S-G tax rate is declining, *actual* tax bills will increase by those amounts.

2009-10 tax rate expected to decline by 0.5%; lowest tax change in at least 20 years

Scotia-Glenville’s proposed tax *decrease* of at least 0.5 percent is the lowest in at least the past 20 years and the lowest in Schenectady County this year. S-G’s average annual tax increase from 2004-08 was 3.8 percent.



* This is an estimated figure; tax rates are adopted in August by the Board of Education

What about the “Middle Class STAR” rebate checks?

The state STAR rebate check program that began in 2007 *was* ended by the state. The checks were mailed in mid-October in 2007 and 2008 and were based on a homeowner’s income.

Who can vote on May 19?

Scotia-Glenville community members may vote in the May 19 school elections if they:

- ▶ Have been a resident for at least 30 days before the May 19 election; and
- ▶ Are at least 18 years old.

The district uses registration books from the Board of Elections during voting.

Voting will be held from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. at the old high school gym, Sacandaga Road.

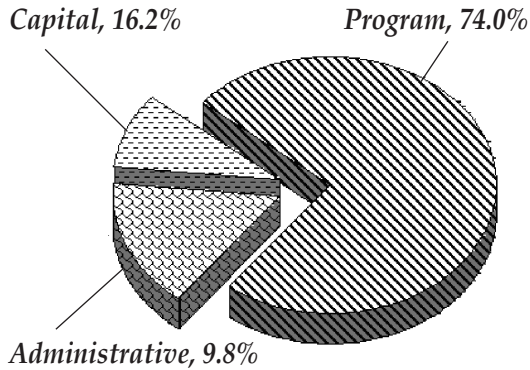
Can I vote by absentee ballot?

Residents who are either disabled, in the hospital or will not be in town on the day of the vote may cast their vote by absentee ballot. Absentee voters must *first* complete an application to vote and *then* the ballot.

▶ **Tuesday, May 12:** To have a ballot mailed to your home, you must have the application completed by this date.

▶ **Monday, May 18:** To request an absentee ballot in person, you must do so by this date.

▶ **Tuesday, May 19:** All ballots are due back to the district office by 5 p.m. 🗳️



A three-way look at Scotia-Glenville's 2009-10 budget

The state requires school districts to show their proposed budgets in three categories: program, capital and administrative. Here is that information for the proposed 2009-2010 budget:

Program

74.0% of the proposed budget

This part of the budget includes the salaries and benefits of teachers, teaching assistants, teacher aides and supervisors who spend a majority of their time teaching; instructional costs such as supplies, equipment and textbooks; and transportation operating costs.

2007-08 costs	\$31,878,847 (71.5%)
2008-09 costs	\$33,873,042 (73.9%)
2009-10 costs	\$34,535,033 (74.0%)

Capital

16.2% of the proposed budget

This part of the budget includes all purchase of buses; legal judgments and settled claims; salary and benefits for custodial and maintenance staff; all facilities costs, including service contracts, supplies, utilities, maintenance, repairs, construction, renovation and debt; leasing costs; and capital transfers.

2007-08 costs	\$8,492,435 (19.1%)
2008-09 costs	\$7,654,411 (16.7%)
2009-10 costs	\$7,548,057 (16.2%)

Administrative

9.8% of the proposed budget

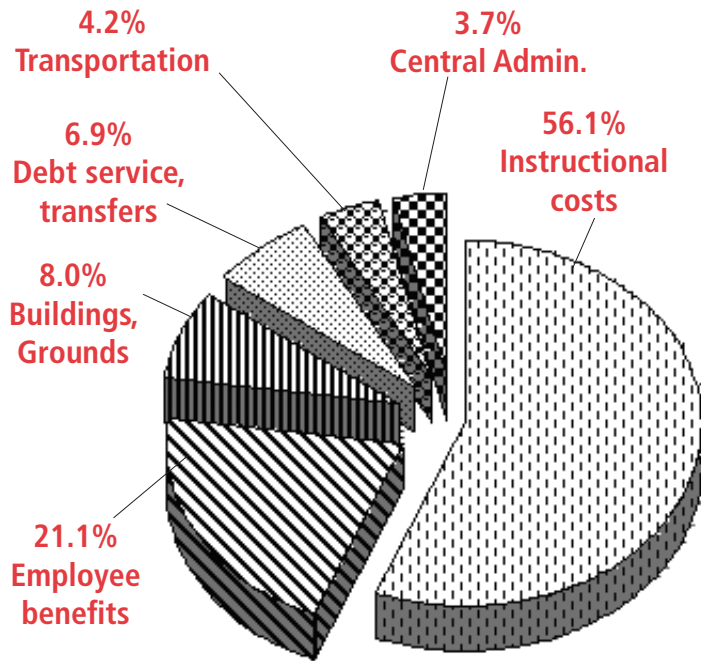
This part of the budget includes office and central administrative costs; salaries and benefits for certified and non-certified administrators who spend 50% or more of their time performing supervisory duties; data processing; supplies; legal fees; property insurance; and school board expenses.

2007-08 costs	\$4,196,461 (9.4%)
2008-09 costs	\$4,329,679 (9.4%)
2009-10 costs	\$4,568,291 (9.8%)

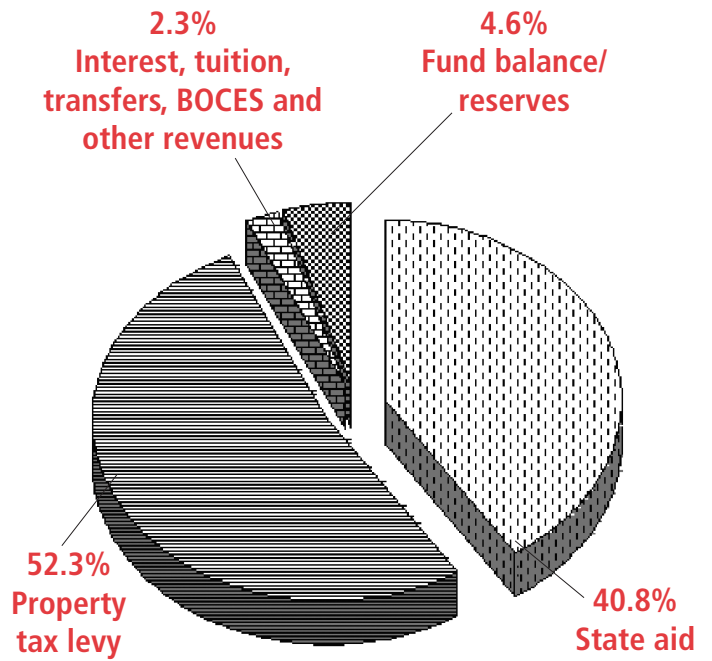
PROJECTED EXPENDITURES

	2008-09 Adopted	2009-10 Budget	% of 2009-10 Budget	Change from 08-09 to 09-10
Instructional costs	\$25,871,944	\$26,166,750	56.1%	\$294,806
Employee benefits	\$9,522,028	\$9,858,747	21.1%	\$336,719
Buildings and grounds	\$3,708,978	\$3,753,825	8.0%	\$44,847
Debt service	\$3,091,784	\$3,141,150	6.7%	\$49,366
Pupil transportation	\$1,952,184	\$1,939,913	4.2%	-\$12,271
Central admin. functions	\$1,634,214	\$1,711,956	3.7%	\$77,742
Transfer to capital fund	\$0	\$0	0.0%	\$0
Transfer to special aid	\$76,000	\$79,040	0.2%	\$3,040
Total expenditures	\$45,857,132	\$46,651,381	100.0%	+\$794,249

How would the 2009-10 budget be spent?



Where would the money come from?



The chart at the left shows how Scotia-Glennville spends its budget each year. More than 56% of the budget is spent for direct instructional costs. The chart at the right shows the district's four main sources of funding.

PROJECTED REVENUES

	2008-09 Adopted	2009-10 Budget	% of 2009-10 Budget	Change from 08-09 to 09-10
Total state aid	\$18,277,114	\$19,016,035	40.8%	\$738,921
Foundation Aid	\$12,455,995	\$12,510,682		
Building	\$2,329,440	\$2,385,241		
Transportation*	\$1,435,049	\$1,352,753		
BOCES*	\$1,034,303	\$1,142,906		
High cost special ed.*	\$732,392	\$544,189		
Software, hardware, textbook, library aid*	\$289,935	\$274,141		
Full-day kindergarten aid	\$0	\$806,123		
Interest, federal aid	\$319,000	\$200,000	0.43%	-\$119,000
Tuition, admissions, etc.	\$247,700	\$247,700	0.53%	\$0
Payments in lieu of taxes	\$211,000	\$120,382	0.25%	-\$90,318
Transfer from tax certiorari reserve	\$0	\$350,000	0.75%	\$350,000
BOCES rental, miscellaneous.	\$141,400	\$160,000	0.34%	\$18,600
Fund balance/reserves.	\$2,135,000	\$2,135,000	4.6%	\$0
Property tax levy.	\$24,525,918	\$24,422,264	52.3%	-\$103,654
Total revenues.	\$45,857,132	\$46,651,381	100.0%	+\$794,249

*Aid marked with an * is reimbursement for costs and programs already paid by the school district.*

Preparing for Tomorrow: May 19

Highlights of the two building renovation proposals

After the December defeat of the \$26.76 million building proposal, the Board of Education and administration promised to scale back the plans while still trying to make necessary improvements. School leaders have reviewed the original proposals and determined the best way to meet the buildings' needs at the lowest cost – in fact, neither project would increase taxes (see page 7). If approved, construction would begin in July 2010.

PROPOSITION #3 on the May 19 ballot

\$9.317 million – Renovations at six schools, bus garage and Beukendaal fieldhouses

Below are some of the key provisions of Proposition #3:

- **\$2.5 million to upgrade technology/computer network server capabilities, infrastructure** (wiring and cabling) and telephone system replacement at all six schools. The current 10+-year-old system is at the end of its useful life;
- **\$605,000 to replace the public address system and clocks** at all six schools – some are original equipment;
- **\$1.054 million to reconstruct aging roofs** at four schools – Glen-Worden, Lincoln, Sacandaga and the Middle School – and the bus garage. Glendaal's roof was replaced last summer and the high school's roof does not need work;
- **\$5.158 million in additional building items:**

High School: replace 11 pair of interior doors and four pair of exterior doors; upgrade library heating and ventilation system to reduce noise; reconstruct sidewalks at main entrance and remove front canopy; convert steam heating system to a more efficient hot water heating system; replace technology classroom ventilation system; and reconstruct the crumbling current six-lane track and replace 500-seat bleachers;

Middle School: replace bleachers in large gym and replace eight pair of interior doors;

Glendaal: replace rear canopy; asphalt pavement at rear play area and domestic hot water boiler upgrade;

Glen-Worden: replace entrance road, add catch basins and asphalt pavement at rear play areas;

Lincoln: reconstruct chimney;

Sacandaga: new access ladder and hatch to the roof;

Bus garage/District Office: upgrade electrical service at bus garage; reconstruct Beukendaal field houses to meet fire codes and handicapped accessibility laws; add salt storage building at rear of District Office.

PROPOSITION #4 on the May 19 ballot (NOTE: Prop. #3 must be approved in order for #4 to be approved.)

\$2.575 million – Expansion/renovation of Middle School library and hallway addition

Below are some of the key provisions of Proposition #4:

- **\$2.1 million to expand the Middle School library media center by 3,200 square feet, renovate the current classrooms in the open area and erect walls around the library.** Currently, the "open" library – a holdover from the building's construction in 1974 – doesn't provide an effective instructional space for students to work together on research and other projects; noise in the library affects the adjoining classrooms; and the area is not secure when the library is closed. Because the facility lacks space for additional computers, students use the current nine computers extensively. New books can not be added without discarding older books because of limited shelf space. Bookshelves currently create makeshift walls around the library; shelves and tables within the library are too close to allow access by students in wheelchairs or on crutches. When 200+ grade 6 students moved to the building in 2001, the library was left unchanged.

- **\$475,000 to add a corridor around the outside of the library** to improve student "traffic flow" between classes.

Why won't the building projects affect taxes?

The two proposed building projects – which total \$11.9 million – will not increase school taxes for several reasons:

▶ **The school district can expect \$11.6 million in state building aid from June 2011 until June 2026 to help pay for the project's costs and interest.** Building aid has not been frozen or affected by the recent state belt-tightening.

The estimated loan interest on the \$11.9 million would be \$4.596 million. The interest would be also partially reimbursed by state aid.

▶ **The special EXpanding our Children's Education and Learning (EXCEL) state fund will pay Scotia-Glenville \$934,781.** This fund was established to help schools improve their buildings; SG would use its share toward the project.

In total, the district would receive annual state building/EXCEL aid payments of **\$833,165 per year** during the 15-year repayment of the project.

▶ If both projects were approved, the district will use **\$900,000 from its debt reduction account.** The debt reserve account has been accumulating with interest over several years.

▶ **After work was completed on the Glendaal roof and playground replacement project from the 2007-08 budget,** \$150,000 remained that would be put toward this project.

▶ **\$100,000 from interest earnings on the invested borrowing** for the project and debt reserve account.

▶ **Declining/retiring debt in the coming years.** The district will pay \$437,000 less in debt payments in 2012 than it does today. By 2014, that district pays \$409,000 less annually; by 2023, total debt payments will be \$544,000 less annually. The declining debt more than pays for the \$116,190 average annual "local share" of the building projects over 15 years. 🍷

HOW WILL THE PROJECTS AND INTEREST BE PAID?

STATE BUILDING AID	\$11.6 MILLION
EXCEL STATE FUND	\$934,781
S-G DEBT RESERVE	\$900,000
INTEREST EARNINGS	\$100,000
GLENDAAAL ROOF EXTRA	\$150,000
DECLINING ANNUAL DEBT WILL PAY "LOCAL COSTS."	

Two incumbents vie for two seats on the Board of Education May 19

John Yagielski and Gary Normington are running unopposed for re-election to second terms on the board. Each is for a three-year, unpaid term.

John R. Yagielski, of 309 Lark Street, is an electrical engineer for General Electric and is currently a technical leader in the Generator Engineering Dept.

Yagielski holds a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Clarkson University and a master's degree in electric power engineering from RPI.



John Yagielski

He and his wife, Pam, have two children: Alexis, a grade 9 student at the High School; and Kyle, a grade 6 student at the Middle School.

He is a Middle School PTA and High School PTSA member, served as a teach coach and judge for the Odyssey of the Mind competitions and has been active in Youth Lacrosse and Tartan Recreational Basketball programs.

He has been a district resident for 15 years. 🍷

Gary T. Normington, of 12 Sanders Avenue, is a software trainer for Community Computers of Auburn, a medical software company.

Since July, he has been vice president of the Board of Education.

Normington holds an associate's degree in computer programming and marketing from Spencer Business Institute.

He and his wife, Karen, have three sons: Morgan, a grade 7 student at the Middle School; Nicholas, a grade 3 student at Sacandaga; and Colin, a grade 1 student at Sacandaga.



Gary Normington

He is a member of the Sacandaga PTA, Concern for the Hungry Thanksgiving Food Drive and attends St. Joseph's Church.

He has been a district resident for 17 years. 🍷

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SCOTIA-GLENVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

May 19 – 2009-10 budget

State-Required School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal

	Budget adopted for the 2008-09 school year	Budget proposed for the 2009-10 school year	Contingency budget for the 2009-10 school year*
Total budgeted amount	\$45,857,132	\$46,651,381	\$46,571,381
Increase/decrease for the 2009-10 school year		\$794,249	\$714,249
Percentage increase (decrease) in each proposed budget		1.73%	1.56%
Change in the consumer price index		3.8%	
Resulting est. property tax levy, 2009-10 school year		\$24,422,264	\$24,342,264
Administrative component	\$4,329,679	\$4,568,291	\$4,558,945
Program component	\$33,873,042	\$34,535,033	\$34,464,379
Capital component	\$7,654,411	\$7,548,057	\$7,548,057

*Statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2009-10 school year, should the proposed budget be defeated: **Reduction or elimination of spending for supplies, technology, maintenance, classroom and other equipment; non-instructional staff; other services; and community use of district facilities.**

Basic and Enhanced STAR Exemption Impact

The state's STAR program reduces a home's assessment before computing individual school tax bills. Applications are available from the town assessor's office in each town. The Basic STAR program is available to primary homeowners regardless of income; the Enhanced STAR program provides a larger savings for those over age 65 with qualifying incomes. Application deadlines are March 1. Call the Glenville town assessor at 688-1200 extension 403.

	Budget adopted 2008-09	Budget proposed 2009-10
School Tax increase (or decrease) on a \$100,000 full-value assessment	\$65.42	(\$13.67)
Basic STAR tax savings (full-value reduction of \$29,730) on a \$100,000 full-value assessment	\$675.08	\$596.66
Enhanced STAR tax savings (full-value reduction of \$56,280) on a \$100,000 full-value assessment	\$1,277.83	\$1,129.50

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2009-10 by the qualified voters of the Scotia-Glenville Central School District, Schenectady, Montgomery and Saratoga counties, New York, will be held at the Senior High School in said district on **Tuesday, May 19, 2009**, between the hours of **6 a.m. and 9 p.m.**, prevailing time in the **Senior High School**, at which time the polls will be opened to vote by voting ballot or machine. Voters must be 18 and a resident of Scotia-Glenville for 30 days.