

Keeping the focus on children

Budget spends more for elementary physical and enrichment education, a new class for children with autism and MS/HS athletics

The 2008-09 budget being considered by the community on May 20 continues a multi-year focus on programs that benefit children.

Among other proposals, the \$45.86 million budget plan:

- ▶ increases physical education time for students in grades 1 to 3. Time for students in grades 4 and 5 was increased this year;
- ▶ doubles the enrichment time for elementary students while keeping the full-day Young Scholars program for grades 4 and 5;
- ▶ establishes a class for children with autism, allowing Scotia-Glenville students to return to their home school district;
- ▶ adds modified and freshmen sports teams and offers new

SEE "BUDGET FOCUSES ON CHILDREN," PAGE 2

What will I be considering on May 20?

✓ **2008-09 budget proposal:** \$45,857,132
Spending is up \$1.29 million or 2.89%.

✓ **Bus purchase proposal** (see page 2):
\$435,000 to replace five aging school buses

✓ **Three candidates for three seats on the Board of Education** (see page 7):
Pamela Carbone, Ben Conlon and Brian McCann

Tax impact:
3.35% or less estimated tax increase

A maximum \$104.67 tax increase per year or \$8.72 per month on a Scotia-Glenville home with a \$160,000 assessment.

These figures are **BEFORE** savings from the state's STAR tax reduction program (see page 6).



show true teamwork and definite determination as they work together to balance a spinning plate with two sticks. Sponsored by the Lincoln PTA, the week-long program with The Incredible Larry showed students how to do a variety of circus tricks.

2008-09 budget highlights

The proposed 2008-09 budget contains \$282,475 in new initiatives that affect every academic level:

Elementary - grades K-5

▶ \$279,500 to establish a program for children for up to five children with autism in kindergarten to grade 2 instead of sending them to BOCES or other outside programs. A school district could expect to pay as much as \$100,000 *per child* in tuition for outside programs. By bringing the children back to S-G, most of the projected program cost cited above will be offset because the district will not be paying tuitions. The new program adds 5.8 full-time employees for up to 12 children. The class will be housed at Glen-Worden and will have extra

SEE "HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROPOSED...", PAGE 3

BUDGET FOCUSES ON CHILDREN, from page 1

classes at the middle and high schools, allowing more students to play an after-school sport or participate in intramurals. *See more details on the specifics on pages 1 and 3.*

The proposed budget would increase spending by \$1.29 million or 2.89 percent above the \$44.56 million budget approved by the community in May 2007.

Taxes to rise by 3.35 percent maximum

Taxes would increase by a maximum of 3.35 percent. For the typical Scotia-Glenville homeowner with a \$160,000 assessment, that means an increase of \$104.67 per year or \$8.72 per month. The current tax rate of \$19.55 per \$1,000 assessed value would increase by an estimated 66 cents.

“This budget is the result of many weeks of review,” said Margaret Smith, president of the Board of Education. “Although we did not all agree on every item, we feel that the budget proposal will add opportunities for our children at Scotia-Glenville.”

She said board members were very aware of the growing downturn in the economy and the need to keep any tax increase reasonable while still trying to provide quality programming.

While board members were very conservative in their budgeting, the proposed 3.35 percent tax increase is still slightly above the 2007 inflation rate of 2.8 percent. Just as homeowners have experienced higher costs in areas such as fuel and food, Scotia-Glenville has faced increased costs as well.

For example, this year’s budget for diesel and gasoline to fuel S-G’s 44 school buses was increased by \$30,000 to cover rising costs by June 30. The 2007-08 budget estimated fuel costs of \$150,000. During this school year, \$30,000 or 20 percent was added to that budget line for the rest of the school year for a projected total of \$180,000. The proposed 2008-09 budget estimates bus fuel costs at \$232,000.

Superintendent Susan Swartz presented a \$46.1 million budget to the Board of Education in February. Board members worked with administrators to modify the plan.

The budget proposals were developed by the school district’s Long Range Planning committee which studies a variety of proposals and requests from the six schools.

“I am pleased with the budget that we are presenting to the community on May 20 because it offers so many new opportunities for our children,” said Swartz. “The 2008-09 budget is a responsible proposal that provides more for our students while keeping a watchful eye on the bottom line during these difficult financial times.”

New bus proposal on May 20 ballot

State aid will refund 75% of cost; taxes to rise by one-half of one percent over five years

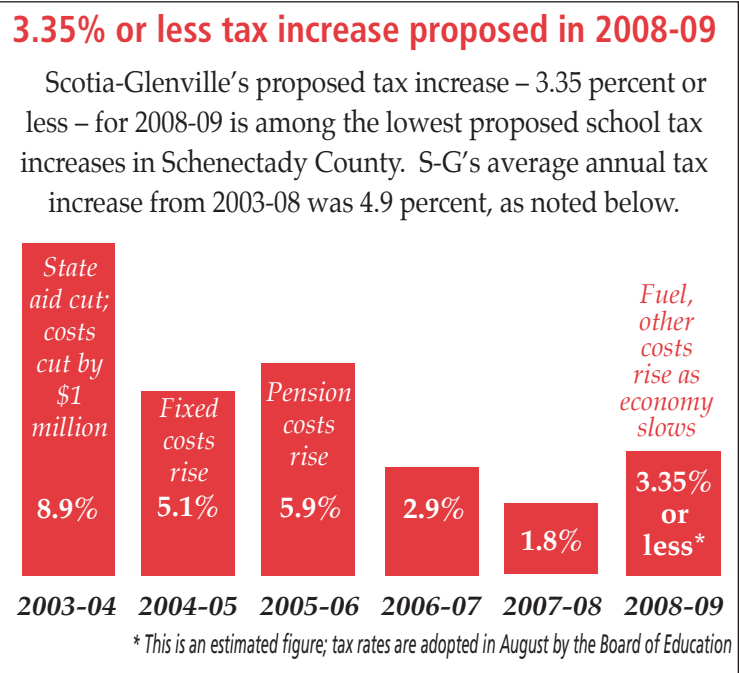
Five buses would be replaced if the community approves the May 20 proposal to buy five 65-passenger diesel buses for a maximum of \$435,000.

Transportation Director David VanSchaick said these five older buses – built in 1995, 1996 and 1997 – would need about \$75,000 in repairs because of corrosion, bad transmissions and other work to pass the required state inspections. S-G buses transport 2,300 students each day.

State aid will reimburse 75 percent of the cost over the next five years.



The net cost to the taxpayers – after state aid, interest and trade-ins – would be \$120,200. That is about one-half of one percent on the tax rate – to be paid over five years beginning in 2009.



Highlights of the 2008-09 proposed budget, continued from page

seats for unexpected children. The district will receive "high cost" state aid reimbursement for the program.

▶ **\$62,000** for an **elementary physical education teacher to provide an additional 40 minutes per week** (*total of 120 minutes per week*) of physical education for children in grades 1 to 3. This year, physical education time was increased for students in grades 4 and 5.

▶ **\$62,000** to add a **second teacher for the OPAL** (*Opportunities and Programs for Advanced Learners*) **elementary enrichment program**. The OPAL teacher now travels to the four elementary schools each week. The teachers would have less travel time and be able to spend more time in schools and with their students.

▶ **Maintain the current Young Scholars program** for advanced learners in grades 4 and 5. Young Scholar students spend a full day each week with a BOCES Young Scholar teacher intensively studying the humanities. The February budget proposal called for replacing the Young Scholars program with a Scotia-Glenville program to teach both humanities and math for advanced learners in grades 4 and 5. After discussion and review, the Board of Education decided to expand OPAL (*see above*) and keep Young Scholars.

▶ **\$10,500** increase in **social worker time at Glendaal**, making that position full-time. Glendaal's social worker serves the 300 students there as well as the students in the PSP and ESP skills classes for students with special needs.

▶ **\$2,000** to establish **more clubs for the nearly 1,200 elementary students**. The money will be used to pay for advisors to establish chess clubs, knitting clubs, etc.

▶ **\$62,000 savings by eliminating one elementary teaching position** at the Sacandaga Elementary School.

Secondary - grades 6-12

▶ **\$10,000** to **begin grade 7 baseball, soccer or softball teams and a grade 9 football team**. Grade 7 and 9 students are now included on larger combined 7/8 or 9/10 teams with older students. Many younger students on those teams get discouraged and do not continue with the sport. This would also provide \$2,500 toward the merged Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake/Scotia-Glenville hockey team.

▶ **\$0** for a **Teen Leadership elective class for grades 7 and 8 students**. Existing staff will be reassigned. The course will have a diverse group of students with leadership potential and emphasize positive decision-making.

▶ **\$0** for the **hands-on CISCO IT Essentials Class through the CISCO Learning Academy**. Existing staff will be reassigned for the program. Students will learn computer systems installation procedures, security protocols, back up procedures and remote access programs that are standard in setting up computer systems in homes and businesses.

▶ **\$9,700** (*one half day per week*) **increase in transitional assistance for students with special needs**. This will increase the time that S-G contracts with BOCES to help students with special needs plan for life beyond high school.

▶ **\$18,000** to send a **second student to Tech Valley High School** in North Greenbush. The Capital Region BOCES/QUESTAR III BOCES joint school provides students with high tech, hands-on skills. There is already one S-G student who will enter grade 10 next year at Tech Valley.

▶ **\$8,000 increase in the computer hardware budget to replace labs and teacher workstations at the high school**. This is part of the continuing efforts to stay on par and up to date with technology at all school buildings.

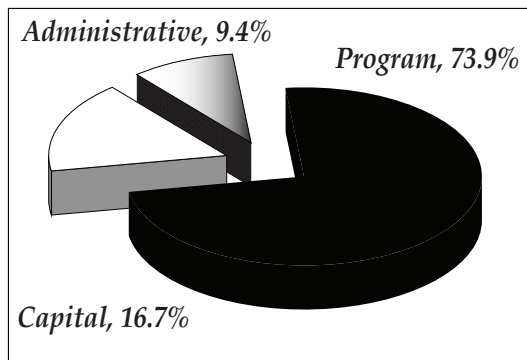
▶ **\$10,000 to offer on-line electronic resources to students and staff, such as textbooks and databases**. This is a new budget line. In the past, funding was taken from the computer software budget. With this new budget line, that amount will be left in the budget for software purchases.

Districtwide - grades K-12

▶ **\$7,500** to **cover entry fees and other costs for Scotia-Glenville students who compete in academic contests or participate in programs like Odyssey of the Mind, Scotia-Glenville Children's Museum and the Regional Spelling Bee**.

▶ **\$5,275** to **increase the head bus driver job at the bus garage to a 12-month position** from the current 10 months and 30 days. This is needed because of the increased transportation required in the summer as well as increasing reporting requirements to the state.

▶ **\$10,000** to hire a consultant to **study the anticipated upgrade of the district's computer and telephone network in 2009-10**. Part of the current network will be 10 years old in 2009 and is beginning to have problems. Parts of the network will need to be replaced in a few years. 📌



A three-way look at Scotia-Glennville's 2008-09 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 2008-2009 budget:

Program

73.9% of the proposed budget

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

2006-07 costs \$30,724,574 (73.1%)
 2007-08 costs \$31,878,847 (71.5%)
2008-09 costs \$33,873,042 (73.9%)

Capital

16.7% 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.

2006-07 costs \$7,313,168 (17.4%)
 2007-08 costs \$8,492,435 (19.1%)
2008-09 costs \$7,654,411 (16.7%)

Administrative

9.4% of the proposed budget

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

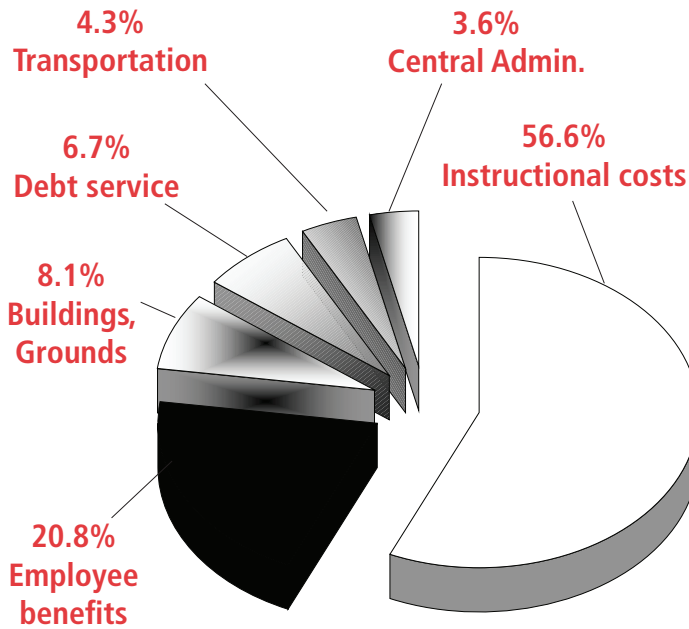
2006-07 costs \$3,972,657 (9.5%)
 2007-08 costs \$4,196,461 (9.4%)
2008-09 costs \$4,329,679 (9.4%)

PROJECTED EXPENDITURES

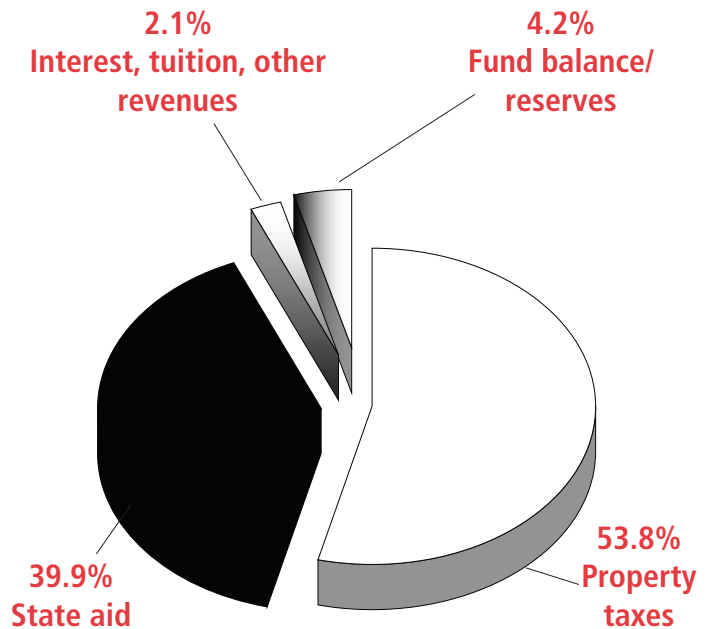
	2007-08 Adopted	2008-09 Budget	% of 2008-09 Budget	Change from 07-08 to 08-09
Instructional costs	\$24,601,305	\$25,947,944.	56.6%	+\$1,343,839
Employee benefits	\$8,952,603	\$9,522,028.	20.8%	+\$569,425
Buildings and grounds	\$3,630,562	\$3,708,978.	8.1%	+\$78,416
Debt service.	\$3,163,287	\$3,091,784.	6.7%	-\$71,503
Pupil transportation.	\$1,891,605	\$1,952,184.	4.3%	+\$60,579
Central admin. functions	\$1,528,381	\$1,634,214.	3.6%	+\$105,833
Transfer to capital fund\$800,000*	\$0.	0.0%	-\$800,000
Total expenditures	\$44,567,743.	\$45,857,132	100.0%	+\$1,289,389

* \$800,000 was included in the current 2007-08 budget as a one-time expenditure to replace the roof and make other improvements at Glendaal Elementary.

How would the 2008-09 budget be spent?



Where would the money come from?



The chart at the left shows how Scotia-Glenville spends its budget each year. Nearly 57% 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	2007-08 <i>Adopted</i>	2008-09 <i>Budget</i>	% of 2008-09 <i>Budget</i>	Change from 07-08 to 08-09
<i>Total state aid</i>	\$16,839,294	\$18,277,114	39.9%	+\$1,437,820
Foundation Aid	11,478,624	\$12,455,995		
Building	2,372,000	\$2,329,440		
Transportation*	1,200,000	\$1,435,049		
BOCES*	1,000,000	\$1,034,303		
High cost special ed.*	508,690	\$732,392		
Software, hardware, textbook, library aid*	279,980	\$289,935		
<i>Interest, federal aid</i>	\$311,000	\$319,000	0.7%	+\$8,000
<i>Tuition, admissions, etc.</i>	\$247,700	\$247,700	0.6%	\$0
<i>Payments in lieu of taxes</i>	\$215,000	\$211,000	0.5%	-\$4,000
<i>BOCES rental, miscellaneous.</i>	\$145,400	\$141,400	0.3%	-\$4,000
<i>Fund balance/reserves.</i>	\$3,172,733	\$2,000,000	4.2%	-\$1,172,733
<i>Property taxes</i>	\$23,636,616	\$24,660,918	53.8%	+\$1,024,302
<i>Total revenues</i>	\$44,567,743	\$45,857,132	100.0%	+\$1,289,389

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

Budget Questions and Answers

What has the district done to keep taxes and costs down?

▶ Scotia-Glenville is part of the **Capital Area School Health Insurance Consortium** (CASHIC) with other school districts and BOCES to help keep health insurance costs in check. S-G employees pay a share of their premium costs.

▶ **Heating and fuel costs** – Natural gas, electricity, bus fuel and oil is budgeted at a total of \$1.475 million in 2008-09. S-G has controlled these costs by participating in joint competitive bids with other school districts and municipalities. The combined bid purchases keeps costs under control despite rapidly rising retail costs for those products.

▶ **Staffing** – Two proposed classes – the CISCO II Essentials computer class at the high school and Teen Leadership elective at the middle school – will be taught by reassigning current staff. One elementary position was also eliminated from the proposed budget.

▶ **State aid** – The two largest sources of revenue in a school budget are state aid and property taxes. Both of these areas were factored into the budget to arrive at the proposed 3.35 percent tax increase. Scotia-Glenville budgeted an increase of about \$1.438 million from state aid as well as a \$225,000 increase from higher town tax assessments.

▶ **Fund balance** – The budget includes \$2 million to reduce taxes. These funds are projected because costs this year were lower than projected and revenue was higher.

Did the state Legislature change the STAR tax reduction program? What are the “Middle Class STAR” rebate checks?

The state’s Basic and Enhanced STAR (School Tax Relief) programs remain the same. For homeowners living in Scotia and Glenville, school tax assessments would be reduced by \$33,410 for Basic STAR recipients and \$63,240 for Enhanced STAR recipients (*those over age 60 with qualifying incomes*) before school taxes are computed.

Basic STAR recipients in Scotia-Glenville will have their tax bills reduced by about \$675; homeowners with Enhanced STAR would see bills about \$1,278 lower.

In addition to these tax bill reductions, the budget adopted by the state Legislature this year continued the Middle Class STAR rebate check program. Because of the economy’s downturn, the program was not expanded from 2007. The rebate checks are *in addition to* the Basic or Enhanced STAR exemption described above. Those receiving the Basic STAR exemption will have to apply for the checks once again this year.

Scotia-Glenville homeowners with incomes of \$90,000 or less received 2007 STAR rebate checks of \$450. The amount was less for homeowners with incomes from \$90,000 to \$250,000. Those with incomes above \$250,000 receive only the STAR exemption on their school tax bills and no rebate check.

Who can vote on May 20?

S-G community members may vote on May 20 if they:

- ▶ Have been a resident for at least 30 days before the May 20 election; and
- ▶ Are at least 18 years old.

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

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

▶ **Monday, May 19:** To request an absentee ballot in person, you must do so by this date.

▶ **Tuesday, May 20:** All ballots are due back to the district office by 5 p.m.

What if the budget were defeated?

By law, the Board of Education may:

▶ **Present another budget to the community.** The budget may be the same or a revised budget. If a budget were defeated twice, the board *must* adopt a contingency budget (*see next item*).

▶ **Adopt a contingency budget.** By state law, a contingency budget in 2008 may NOT increase spending by more than 3.36%, excluding debt service and other items. Contingency budgets require school districts to cut non-contingent spending. Scotia-Glenville estimates that \$618,793 in non-contingent items (*see page 8*) would have to be cut from the proposed budget. 🚫

Three candidates vie for three seats on the Board of Education May 20

Three candidates are running for election to three seats on the Board of Education. Each one is for a three-year, unpaid term. Board member Kurt Ahnert decided against seeking re-election to a fifth term. As their names will appear on the ballot, the candidates are:



BENJAMIN A. CONLON, of 235 Bolt Road, is seeking a third three-year term on the board.

He serves on the audit and policy review subcommittees of the Board of Education.

He works as an associate attorney with the state Department of Environmental Conservation and an adjunct professor at Schenectady County Community College.

He holds a bachelor's in accounting from Siena College; a master's in business administration from the College of St. Rose and a law degree from Albany Law School.

A 26-year district resident, he and his wife, Laurie Sweeney-Conlon, have three children: Christopher, grade 10; Nicholas, grade 8; and Brittany, grade 5 at Glendaal Elementary. 🍷



PAMELA S. CARBONE, of 20 Vista Drive, is seeking a fifth three-year term.

She is a science and math teacher at Steinmetz Achievement Academy in Schenectady.

She holds a bachelor's in math and physics from Transylvania University and a master's in physics from Wright State University.

A 23-year S-G resident, Carbone was active for 18 years in several PTAs.

Carbone is president of the Capital District School Boards Association, currently serving her fifth year in that position.

She serves on several committees for the New York State School Boards Association.

Her son, Drew, graduated from the high school in 2002. 🍷



BRIAN D. MCCANN, of 38 Baldwin Road, is seeking a first three-year term on the board.

He has been the assistant principal at Guilderland High School since 1991. He taught social studies in the Canton and Chittenango school districts in central New York for 12 years.

McCann holds a bachelor's degree in history from the State University of New York at Brockport and a master's degree and administrative certification from SUNY Oswego.

He has coached for Highland Soccer, Tartan Basketball, Tartan LaCrosse and Scotia-Glennville Little League for several years.

A 16-year resident, he and his wife, Susan Holub-McCann, have six children: Meaghan, Matthew Holub, Craig Holub and Molly are graduated; Kevin, grade 6; and Abigail, grade 3 at Glen-Worden Elementary. 🍷

State-Required School District Budget Notice

Overall Budget Proposal

	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	\$44,567,743	\$45,857,132	\$45,238,339
Increase/decrease for the 2008-09 school year		\$1,289,389	\$670,596
Percentage increase (decrease) in each proposed budget		2.89%	1.50%
Change in the consumer price index		2.8%	
Resulting est. property tax levy, 2008-09 school year		\$24,660,918	\$24,042,125
Administrative component	\$4,196,461	\$4,329,679	\$4,259,549
Program component	\$31,878,847	\$33,873,042	\$33,324,379
Capital component	\$8,492,435	\$7,654,411	\$7,654,411

*Statement of assumptions made in projecting a contingency budget for the 2008-09 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 the 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 for 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 for the 2008-09 school year
Basic STAR tax savings	\$675.08
Enhanced STAR tax savings	\$1,277.83

The annual budget vote for the fiscal year 2008-09 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 20, 2008, 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.

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Scotia-Glenville

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