



# Minisink Valley CSD

*We teach someone you love.*

## Drama Productions

We are proud of the theater performed every spring in our schools and we invite you to join us once again this March and April for performances you won't soon forget. Save the following dates:

- Intermediate School  
*Blather, Blarney, & Balderdash*  
March 20 at 7:00 PM (snowdate 3/21)  
Intermediate School Auditorium
- Middle School  
*Cinderella*  
March 29 & 30 at 7:00 PM  
Middle School Auditorium
- High School  
*Into the Woods*  
March 22, 23, & 24 at 7:30 PM  
March 24 at 2:00 PM  
High School Auditorium



*Students learn about Braille.*



*Students participate in a Veteran's Day Memorial Service.*

**SAVE  
THIS  
DATE  
Saturday,  
April 21,  
2007**

## New & Improved

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

*Superintendent's Blog*

*Biweekly podcasts*

*Latest news on the front page*

*School closings and delays*

## COMING SOON

As part of our ongoing safety program, all visitors to any of our school buildings will be asked to show identification as well as to sign in.

The Orange County Heart Walk will be held on the Minisink Valley Campus on Saturday, April 21, 2007. More details to follow.



American Heart Association



*Learn and Live®*

# HEART WALK™

## Kiwanis can HELP!

Need a sign to let emergency personnel know where you live?

Kiwanis Club of Minisink Valley is performing a community service project called "H.E.L.P.", Home

Emergency Labeling Program. If you'd like to have a sign installed, or know of someone who needs one, please contact Kiwanis at

858-8920 or at [slapshot@frontiernet.net](mailto:slapshot@frontiernet.net).

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As we begin another calendar year, it's important for us to refocus on our central purpose here at Minisink Valley - the academic success of all of our children and their preparation for the lives they will lead after they leave us. We will be asking some tough questions:

1. Are our students meeting New York State Standards?
2. Are we doing everything we can do to help them meet those standards?
3. Should we do more?
4. Should we do things differently?
5. Are we giving our students everything they need?
6. How will we pay for what our students need?

While meeting state standards is important, it certainly should not be our sole focus. Traits needed for the twenty-first century work force include the basic skills called for in the state standards, applied skills, communication skills, and the ability to think creatively and work collaboratively. Beyond this skill set is a strong work ethic and a sense of professionalism. Preparing students to be a viable part of this work force is no small task, a real challenge for those who work most closely with our students - our teachers.

We also know that education does more than just prepare students to be part of a future work force. Education prepares students to take their places in society as strong, moral decision makers. This preparation for living a quality life is as important as preparing future workers.

Join us this winter to hear our discussions as we make decisions about our instructional program and the financial resources we will need to meet our goals. Our budget development meetings are listed in this newsletter and on our website. Our first meeting is Thursday, February 1, 2007 at 6:30 PM in the intermediate school auditorium.

I want to take this opportunity to wish you and your family all the best during this coming year. On behalf of the board of education and everyone who works here at Minisink Valley, Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

Dr. Martha Murray

## MINISINK CARES

Thank you to all of the students, parents, faculty, staff, administrators, and community members who helped over 100 children have a Merry Christmas this year. Under the leadership of teachers, Tricia Irwin, Judi Jakubowski, Florence D' Angelo, and



*Mrs. Walker's students help with Minisink Cares.*

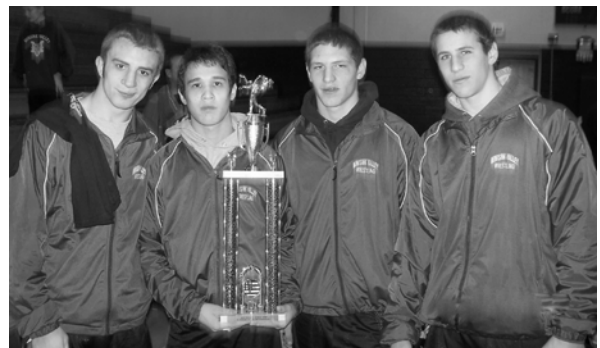
Laura Asaro, sponsors shopped for toys and clothing items for the needy children of our district. In addition, hundreds contributed to food baskets, which were distributed the third week in December. We thank the entire community for continuing the important tradition of caring for others.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SCHOLAR ATHLETES

We are very proud to announce that a record seven fall varsity sports teams have been named scholar athlete teams:

|                            |                      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Football                   | Girls' Tennis        |
| Volleyball                 | Girls' Cross Country |
| Girls' Soccer              | Boys' Cross Country  |
| Girls' Swimming and Diving |                      |

This honor is given each year by the New York State Public High School Athletic Association (NYS PHAA) to varsity teams whose members earn a cumulative average of at least 90 percent during the sports season. Congratulations to all of our scholar athletes and their coaches. They have proven the theory that students who are involved in their schools perform better academically.



*Wrestlers receive the champion trophy from Wilson Duels.*

# Budget Development Calendar

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| February 1, 2007  | Finance Committee Meeting – Budget Development - 6:30 PM                             |
| February 13, 2007 | Finance Committee Meeting – Budget Development - 6:30 PM                             |
| March 1, 2007     | Finance Committee Meeting – Budget Development - 6:30 PM                             |
| March 15, 2007    | Finance Committee Meeting – Budget Development - 6:30 PM                             |
| March 16, 2007    | Deadline for Propositions Submitted by Registered Voters                             |
| March 29, 2007    | Public Budget Presentation - 7:30 PM   |
| April 12, 2007    | Board of Education Approval of 2007-2008 Budget at Regularly Scheduled Board Meeting |
| April 16, 2007    | Submission of Petitions by Board of Education Candidates by 5:00 PM                  |
| April 16, 2007    | Absentee Ballot Applications Available   |
| May 3, 2007       | Public Budget Hearing - 7:30 PM  |
| May 10, 2007      | Last Day to Register to Vote   |
| May 15, 2007      | Budget Vote and Board of Education Election - Noon to 9:00 PM                        |

Intermediate  
School  
Auditorium

## EXCEL BUILDING AID

In 2006, the New York State Legislature established a new state building aid program called EXCEL (Expanding our Children's Education and Learning). They authorized a one time \$2.6 billion allocation, \$1.5 million of which has been designated for Minisink Valley. Districts must use the funds for one or more of the following purposes:

- Address health and safety issues
- Improve accessibility
- Enhance technology
- Increase instructional space
- Reduce energy costs

Our Growth Task Force met in January and will continue to meet in the next few months as we plan the best way to utilize our EXCEL funds.



## WORK STARTS ON THE NEW SCHOOL

Work has started on the new school in Mount Hope. During the month of December, the general contractor began working on fencing, tree protection, trailer staging, and general site work. In the coming weeks, contractors will excavate the curtain drain, remove the required top soil from the site, take down the trees that have been marked for removal and begin laying the footings for the building. Shown here is a rendition of the front view of the new school drawn by our architectural firm *Thomas Associates* from Ithaca, New York.

## IMPORTANT MESSAGE for MVCSD TAX PAYERS

STAR is the New York State Tax Relief Program that provides a partial exemption from school property taxes for owner-occupied, primary residences.

The *Basic STAR Exemption*, for all primary residence homeowners regardless of age or income, will provide a \$30,000+ full value assessment exemption for the school year 2007-08. If you are a new homeowner or have recently moved to a new residence, you must submit your application to your local assessor by March 1, 2007 to qualify for the exemption. You do not need to re-apply if you already receive this exemption and your residence is unchanged.

The Enhanced STAR Exemption is available to taxpayers who are 65 years of age or older by December 31, 2007 and whose total income does not exceed \$67,850. The Enhanced STAR Exemption provides a \$50,000+ full value assessment exemption on your school tax bill. You may need to re-apply each year to receive the Enhanced STAR Exemption.

STAR exemption forms are available at your local assessor's office or may be picked up in the Minisink Valley Central School District's business office. **Complete and submit your application form to your local assessor, along with proof of residency and proof of income (required for Enhanced STAR, only).** Your local assessor can advise you of what forms of proof are acceptable.

**STAR applications must be filed with your local assessor by March 1, 2007.**

## National School Lunch Free and Reduced Meal Program

Our school district participates in the federally assisted National School Breakfast and Lunch Program. This means that students whose family income falls within prescribed limits may participate in the breakfast and/or lunch program *free of charge* or at the reduced rate of *\$.25 per meal*. The state publishes income eligibility guidelines, based on household size, each school year. To learn if your child is eligible for free or reduced price meals, you can go to the district's website at [www.minisink.com](http://www.minisink.com) (forms/publications, free and reduced meal application) or contact the district registrar, Mrs. Ann Shand, at 355-5812. We encourage all eligible families to take advantage of this very beneficial program.



*Otisville third grade students work on a book project together.*

## Budget News

Next month the finance committee of the board of education begins reviewing the proposed spending plan for the 2007-2008 school year. The public is welcome to attend. The committee will meet at 6:30 PM in the intermediate school auditorium on February 1, February 13, March 1, and March 15.

### Minisink Valley CSD

P.O. Box 217, Rte. 6, Slate Hill, NY 10973

### Board of Education

John M. Lenane, *President*, Wayne Hawkins, *Vice President*  
David Dirks, Michelle McDonald, Shawn O'Connor, Gina Richichi, Joan Romanyschyn, Tracy Sutera, Victor Vignola

### Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Martha Murray

**Non-Profit  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Middletown, NY  
Permit No. 731**

**Newsletter**  
Debbie Roda