

- Bus Schedule Changes
- Parent Nights and Open Houses
- Tax Levy Set for 2009-10



OVERVIEW

School Year Starts Tuesday, September 8

Schodack students return for the 2009-10 school year on Tuesday, September 8, looking to build on last year's successes while experiencing changes including new start/end times and fourth grade returning to CES.

New K-12 bus routes will mean MHMS students start and end their days an hour earlier, moving to a schedule similar to CES and MHMS which will only change by minutes. (See story on page 2.)

Fourth grade returns to CES after years at MHMS. Students won't be impacted greatly, however, as last year's third graders stay at CES and last year's fourth graders stay at MHMS for fifth grade.

At CES, K-3 students now will have physical education classes four days a week instead of two days like last year. Fourth graders will attend three days a week, but for longer class periods so all CES students will have 120 minutes a week, in addition to recess.

"It's an effort to keep kids healthy and more active," Principal Jason Chevrier explained.

CES will take advantage of its new library with a library media specialist who will work with teachers to integrate research skills with classwork. "The library was designed for the 21st century," Chevrier said. "We'll be able to enhance curriculum with literature, research and technology."

Morning Program will continue, with K-2 on Mondays and Wednesdays and grades 3-4 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

At MHMS, the school day will change from a block sched-

ule to a more traditional nine period schedule. "We've been planning this for two years," explained Principal Michael Bennett. "I think it will benefit students because they'll now be able to see teachers in English, Math and other core areas every day."

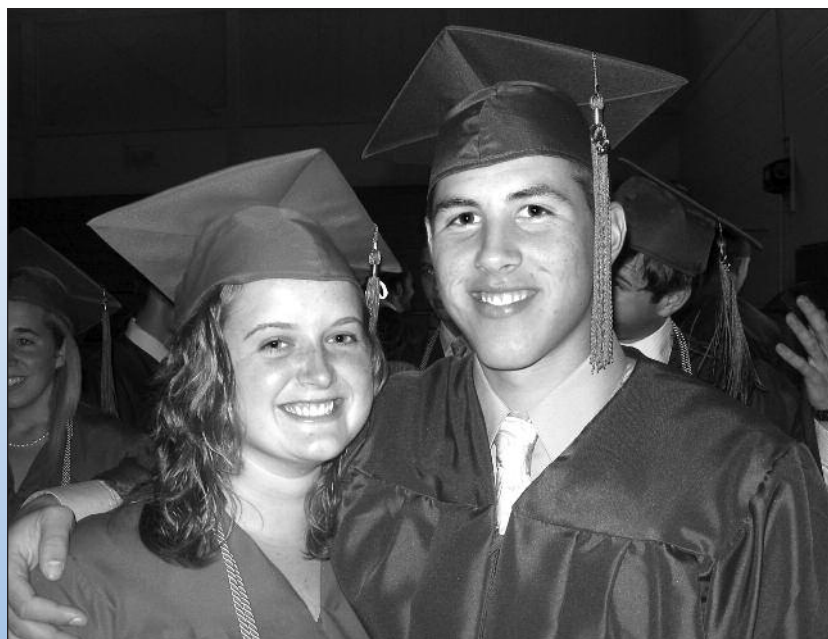
Wildcat Pride – the school's character education program that encourages students to be safe, kind, respectful, and responsible – will expand this year to include more programs.

Like CES, MHMS will integrate its renovated library more into curriculum this year. The school also will provide additional assistance to students who require it. "We're coming off an excellent year, we did very well in assessment tests," Bennett said. "It will be exciting to build on that."

MHMS will continue to build curriculum around 21st century skills, preparing students to succeed in a rapidly changing world, noted Principal Robert Horan. Providing opportunities for parents to get involved, such as involving them in college visits, will also be a focus. A College Information Night will be held Sept. 16 at 6 p.m.

Horan encourages parents and community members to let him know about student accomplishments, both in academics and community work with EMTs, fire departments, Eagle Scouts or other areas.

"I always tell our students, colleges are interested in more than just your grades," Horan said. "They want to see community involvement and other extracurricular activities. We need to recognize those students for that."



Congratulations Class of 2009!

A total of 93 Maple Hill High School seniors walked across the stage for this year's Commencement Ceremony as proud parents, family members and friends snapped photos and applauded the accomplishments of Schodack schools' newest alumni.

"I'm incredibly proud of the Class of 2009," said High School Principal Robert Horan. "They were a great group of students and certainly will be missed. I know they will go on to do great things."

Graduates went on to such colleges as Cornell University, Brown University, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Syracuse University, Clarkson University, University at Albany, and University at Buffalo. Four graduates also entered the U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Navy. The Class of 2009 earned a total of \$4,544,240 in scholarships.

To see photos from graduation, please visit the school website, www.schodack.k12.ny.us. Congratulations to our newest alumni!

Opportunities for Parents

From open houses to parent-teacher conferences, Schodack schools offer opportunities for parents to meet with teachers about their children's education in the first few months of school.

Here is a list of upcoming events. For a full list of events, including parent group meetings such as the PTO, download the district calendar from the school website, www.schodack.k12.ny.us or call your child's school.

Castleton Elementary School

- Sept. 8 & 9 K & New Parents Coffee Hour, 9 a.m.
- Sept. 16 Grades K-2 Parents Night, 6:30 p.m.
- Sept. 17 Grades 3/4 Parents Night, 6:30 p.m.
- Oct. 6 – 9 K Parents Luncheon with Teachers, noon
- Nov. 3 Parent Teacher Conferences

Maple Hill Middle School

- Sept. 11 MS PTO Ice Cream Social, 6 – 7:30 p.m.
- Oct. 1 Grades 5-8 Parents Night, 6:30 p.m.
- Oct. 14 Parent Teacher Conferences, 5 – 8 p.m.

Maple Hill High School

- Sept. 16 College Information Night, 6-7 p.m.
- Sept. 24 Back to School Night, 7 p.m.
- Oct. 22 Parent Teacher Conferences, 5 – 8 p.m.
- Nov. 19 College Financial Aid Information Night, 6:30 p.m.



New Bus Routes This Year

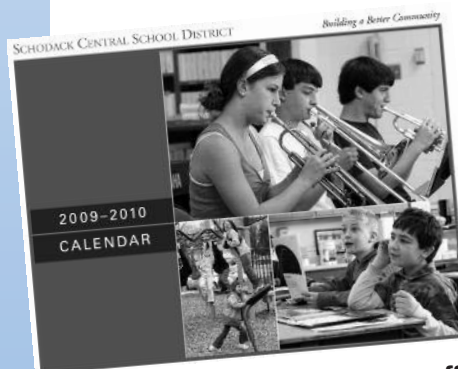
Schodack Central School District is changing its bus routes this year to a K-12 system that will allow students in all three schools to start and end their school days at approximately the same time.

The change will impact Maple Hill Middle School the most with the school day starting and ending about an hour earlier. Maple Hill High School and Castleton Elementary School times will also change slightly. The new times are:

	School Start Time	Dismissal Time
Maple Hill High School	7:35 a.m.	1:55 p.m.
Maple Hill Middle School	7:40 a.m.	2:07 p.m.
Castleton Elementary School	7:55 a.m.	2:25 p.m.

Letters were sent home to all parents in early August detailing the changes in bus route times. If you did not receive a letter or have further questions, please contact Transportation Supervisor Mary Mabb as soon as possible at (518) 732-2070. Additional information is also available on the school website, www.schodack.k12.ny.us

This change to a K-12 bus route system is expected to save the school district \$32,100 a year in reduced fuel and personnel costs.



District Calendar Available Online

Schodack Central School District's 2009-10 school calendar is now available on the school website, www.schodack.k12.ny.us, in an easy to print format.

Please note, due to the district's efforts to cut costs, the calendar will not be mailed to residents this year. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause; however we feel this is a prudent cost-saving measure given the current cost of mailing and printing.

If you would like a calendar and do not have access to a computer, please stop by any one of Schodack schools' main offices to pick up one of a limited number of printed copies. You can also contact the District Office at 732-2297 if you need one mailed to you.

Sign Up for eNewsletters

In an effort to provide our community with more news about their schools, Schodack eNews will be expanded this year to feature monthly eNewsletters.

The eNewsletters will feature stories about student and faculty success, announcements of upcoming events, and challenges facing Schodack schools. To receive the eNewsletters, just visit the school website at www.schodack.k12.ny.us and sign up to receive Schodack eNews.

Last year, hundreds of parents and community members subscribed to Schodack eNews, receiving announcements about upcoming tests, student concerts and other school news in their e-mail inboxes.

With the cost of printing and mailing continuing to climb, we hope our community finds these eNewsletters to be an effective way to learn about your schools at no cost. However, since we realize not everyone has access to the internet, we will continue to mail all district residents five print newsletters throughout the school year to ensure our entire community receives information about its schools.

District Discusses Shared Services with Ichabod

In a search to reduce operating costs, Schodack Central School District has entered preliminary discussions with Ichabod Crane Central School District to look for ways to consolidate services.

“We are not looking to merge with Ichabod Crane,” stressed Superintendent Doug Hamlin. “We want to explore opportunities to save money while maintaining the identities of both schools.”

Officials from both school districts had a positive initial meeting, Hamlin said, where services such as transportation and special education were discussed. The districts plan to continue research into potential shared services.

Last school year, the Community Budget Advisory Committee suggested the District look at the possibility of such shared services as a way of reducing costs.



Tax Levy Set for 2009-10

In order to avoid a tax rate increase caused by a loss of assessment, the Schodack Central School District Board of Education set the tax levy for the 2009-10 school year at its August 20 meeting at \$10,501,739, lower than originally proposed.

The projected tax rates (per \$1,000 of assessed value) is \$18.30 for both Schodack and Stuyvesant.

The District originally proposed a tax levy of \$10,723,414 but decided to lower it as the Town of Schodack's assessment dropped from \$580 million to \$568 million when it was finalized at the end of July.

The reduction is largely a result of a reduction in the assessment of the Epcor power plant on River Road by \$10 million. The District used additional fund balance and reserves to make up for the lost revenue caused by the lower tax levy.

Last spring, the District was concerned that reducing the tax levy could cause the District to lose federal stimulus funding. But with the drop in assessment, the District appealed to the State Education Department which informed the District that lowering the tax levy appeared reasonable given the tax rate was not decreasing.

Please note that New York State also reduced the property tax exemption levels for its School Tax Relief (STAR) program for next year. This change by the state may cause a homeowner's school taxes to increase despite the tax rate remaining the same. The school district has no control over this change.

The Schodack Central School District provides continuing education opportunities to promote lifelong learning in the community.

General Information and Registration

Eligibility — Registration is open to all residents of the Schodack Central School District. Nonresidents may enroll in courses on a space-available basis.

Senior Citizens — District residents who are age 60 or older may attend many courses tuition free or at a reduced rate. Courses that are not free or offered at a reduced rate are noted in the course description. All materials fees are the responsibility of the participant.

Continuing Education is self-supporting, with no bearing on the district's tax rate. It is only through the continuing support of the community that this program is possible.

Fees — All course fees must be paid by the first course meeting. Registrations are binding because financial commitments are made based on the number of registrants for each course. We are sorry, but no refunds will be made unless the class is canceled due to insufficient enrollment or the class is filled to maximum capacity. Each class must meet a minimum enrollment. If a course is canceled due to insufficient enrollment, or over-enrolled, notifications and refunds will be sent by mail.

Registration must be made in advance. Mail registrations are due by Sept. 11. On site registration is held Thursday, Sept. 10, from 6 to 7 p.m. in the Maple Hill High School lobby.

Early-Start courses — Please call or send in registrations now for early start courses.

To register, please fill out a separate registration form provided for each course, enclose tuition and any materials fee (if noted in the course description) with a check payable to **Schodack Central Schools to:**

**Director of Continuing Education
Maple Hill High School
1216 Maple Hill Road
Castleton, NY 12033-1699**

You will be notified only if a class is canceled.

Sports, Fitness & Fun!

** Please check with your physician prior to beginning any new physical activity*

YOGA

Each day more people are experiencing the benefits of yoga, reducing stress, enhancing powers of relaxation, and increasing physical strength and flexibility. Our yoga class is designed for beginners who are looking for an introduction to yoga or people with experience who prefer a slower, gentler class.

The class is taught by Ellen Sadowski, a certified Hatha yoga teacher and licensed massage therapist who has been practicing yoga for 25 years. Tuition is \$60. No senior discount. Participants should wear comfortable clothes and bring a yoga mat. Classes meet for eight weeks on Tuesdays from 7:30 - 8:45 p.m. in the CES auditorium (old gym). Classes begin Tuesday, Sept. 22.



CARDIO KICKBOXING

Cardio-kickboxing is a workout that's fun for everyone! This class incorporates kickboxing-style cardio movement and toning exercises into a power-packed 45-minute class. The class is taught by Aileen Flach, who holds a BS in physical education and adult fitness. Classes meet for eight weeks on Mondays and Wednesdays from 7:30 until 8:15 p.m. in the CES auditorium (old gym). Classes begin Monday, Sept. 14 (no class Oct. 5 & 12 and Nov. 11). Tuition is \$60. No senior discount.

OVER 30 BASKETBALL

There are a limited number of openings in Over-30 Basketball, which meets at 7 p.m. in the Middle School gym on either Monday or Wednesday evenings. The Monday night basketball program begins Oct. 5; Wednesday night begins Oct. 7. The cost of this course is \$50. Please call to register, as space is extremely limited.

HALL WALKERS

Walk in a safe, warm place — Maple Hill Middle School! The Middle School is open from 6:45 to 7:45 a.m., Monday through Friday, when school is in session, for district residents who wish to walk. The program is free and self-monitoring; walk when you wish, at a pace that is comfortable. Walkers no longer need to sign in and out, but will be issued a special visitor's badge to wear while in the building. To register and receive a badge, call Theresa Hovish at 732-7708.

AEROBIC DANCE AND FLOORWORK

Keep in shape while having fun this fall. This diversified program combines a cardio workout, toning, balance, flexibility and fun. Classes meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7 to 8 p.m. in the Middle School gym. Classes begin Sept. 15 (no class Nov. 3). Tuition is \$60. Register directly with instructor Debi Filkins at 708-9238.

CO-ED VOLLEYBALL

Join other intermediate players for an evening of fun and competitive volleyball play. This course offers no instruction, coaching or officiating — warm-ups and games will be self monitored. Players should play at an intermediate to advanced-intermediate level to participate and must wear kneepads. Volleyball meets for 10 weeks on Sundays from 6:45 to 8:45 p.m. in the High School gym beginning Sept. 13. Participants must pre-register by calling 732-7708, as class size is limited. Tuition is \$45 plus a \$2 materials fee.

Chinese Language, Pre-Licensing, and More!

BEGINNERS BALLROOM DANCING

If you want to “Dance with the Stars”, here’s your chance to learn how to in a relaxed, comfortable setting that’s affordable. Learn American style smooth ballroom dances consisting of Foxtrot, Waltz, Tango, and Viennese Waltz. Singles and couples are welcome. Karen Mason of Learntadance Dance Studio is an experienced ballroom dance instructor. Classes meet for eight weeks on Tuesdays from 7 to 8 p.m. in the Middle School cafeteria. Classes begin Sept. 15. Tuition is \$50. No senior discount. Register for Beginners Swing and Latin Dancing as well and receive 50 percent off the second class.

BEGINNERS SWING AND LATIN DANCING

If you want to “Dance with the Stars”, here’s your chance to learn how to in a relaxed, comfortable setting that’s affordable. Learn American style rhythm dances consisting of East Coast Swing, Rumba, Cha Cha, Mambo/Salsa, and Merengue. Singles and couples are welcome! Karen Mason of Learntadance Dance Studio is an experienced dance instructor. Classes meet for eight weeks on Tuesdays from 8 to 9 p.m. in the Middle School cafeteria. Classes begin Sept. 15. Tuition is \$50. No senior discount. Register for Beginners Ballroom Dancing as well and receive 50 percent off the second class.

INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

This class explores the basics of Mandarin Chinese, the most widely spoken language in the world. Students will also learn about the simplified writing character system that is taught to all Chinese students in mainland China. Schodack Chinese Language and Culture Instructor Mark Hoyt teaches the course. Classes meet for four weeks on Wednesdays from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the High School distance learning lab. Classes begin Oct. 7. Tuition is \$40.

CHINESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE II

This four-week course is a continuation of Introduction to Chinese Language and Culture class. Students will continue to explore the Mandarin form of communication. Some basic knowledge of Mandarin Chinese is required. Schodack Chinese Language and Culture Instructor Mark Hoyt teaches the course. Classes meet on Wednesdays from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the High School distance learning lab. Classes begin Nov. 18 (no class Nov. 25). Tuition is \$40.

5-HOUR PRE-LICENSING

Those holding a learner’s permit must complete this course before scheduling a road test for a driver’s license. A valid permit is required to attend the course. A photocopy of the learner’s permit must be included with the registration form and must be brought to class. This course is broken up into two separate evening sessions. Students must attend both days for the complete time required. There will be four separate five hours offered at Maple Hill High School this year. Fall five-hour dates are TBA. Tuition is \$35. Students must pre-register. MHHS students may drop off registrations at the Continuing Education office, MHHS Room 134.

NEW! ABSOLUTE BEGINNER GUITAR

For beginners who have never played guitar or tried and gave up. Basics will be taught with twin goals of playing real songs as soon as possible and providing a strong foundation for continued learning, either on your own or with an instructor. Students will need to bring their own guitars (acoustic preferred) to class. Classes meet for eight weeks on Wednesdays from 7 to 8:30 p.m. beginning Sept. 30 in MHHS Music Room. Tuition is \$75. No senior discount.



Financial Courses - Now FREE!

All one-night financial planning workshops offered at Schodack are taught by licensed financial advisors with the Halliday Financial Group in Albany. Workshops are all strictly educational – there will be no soliciting for any investments. All workshops are held in the High School distance learning lab, Room 113 (Oct. 28 class will be held in the High School library). Tuition is now free to all Schodack CSD residents. All participants must pre-register. For more information or to register, contact Theresa Hovish at 732-7708. For information about workshop topics, e-mail Frank Guiffre at fguiffre@hallidayfinancial.com.

UNDERSTANDING STOCKS, BONDS AND MUTUAL FUNDS

Learn the basics of stocks, bonds, and mutual funds, the backbone of most portfolios. Discover how to use the internet and daily newspapers to track your investments. This course will help you understand the differences and the similarities of various types of investments. Workshop is offered Thursday, Oct. 1 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

PLANNING STRATEGIES FOR SENIORS

You've worked hard for the majority of your life to build your wealth. Now, your concern may have shifted to preserving that wealth and passing it down to your family and loved ones. This educational discussion will concentrate on different aspects of accomplishing this goal. Friends and family members are invited as well as seniors themselves. Workshop is offered Tuesday, Oct. 6 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

LEAVING A LEGACY

Are you currently making or interested in making contributions or donations to support a cause that you are passionate about? This seminar will go into the tax efficient strategies that could be used to leverage your assets in order to create a lasting legacy for a charity that is near and dear to you. Workshop is offered Wednesday, Oct. 28 from 6:30 - 8 p.m. in the High School library.

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR LEGACY

Life insurance is often overlooked as part of one's financial plan. Learn how life insurance can replace lost income and or college funding for your heirs. There have been many changes in the insurance industry; therefore we will also discuss whether your current policy is adequate. Workshop is offered Thursday, Nov. 5 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

PREPARING TO CARE FOR YOUR ELDERLY PARENTS

A practical overview of the financial and personal impact of caring for aging parents. Gain an understanding of the trends and issues adult children face as they assist their parents with securing and paying for care. Learn tips on how to position you parents' health care goals and how to protect their assets. Make a plan before a crisis occurs. Workshop is offered Thursday, Nov. 10 from 6:30 - 8 p.m.

PAYING FOR COLLEGE WITHOUT GOING BROKE

Learn how to find the right college for your children and your budget and pay for it without sacrificing your retirement savings. This workshop will teach you how to maximize the college financial aid process, avoid costly mistakes when paying college bills, and avoid costly scams. Workshop is offered Thursday, Nov. 12 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

MOVING FORWARD THROUGH DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES

The year 2008 was a very difficult year for investors and many are left with questions about where to go from here. This course is designed to put the events of the past year into perspective and offer some insight into strategies, pitfalls and the importance of proper planning as we move forward into 2009. Workshop is offered Tuesday, Nov. 17 from 6:30 - 8 p.m.

MINIMIZE TAXES, MAXIMIZE MONEY

Tax laws and regulations change as often as the seasons. It's important to stay up to date on these changes so you can minimize your taxes. This informational course will answer common questions. Workshop is offered Monday, Nov. 23 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Would you like to take a course you don't see offered?
Would you like to teach a course?**

Please contact the Director of Continuing Education with your ideas!
Call Theresa Hovish at 732-7708, or e-mail at thovish@schodack.k12.ny.us.

There are a limited number of openings in Schodack's Continuing Education Fall Driver Education program. The semester-long driver education program is conducted in accordance with the state Education Department and Department of Motor Vehicles. Classes will begin in September and end in December. Each week, students attend one class and have one "car" session. Classes and car sessions will begin on Sept. 14. There is a limit of 28 students per semester. Students must be 16 years old and have a learner's permit by Sept. 14, 2009.

Because there are so few opportunities to make up missed classes, students may not take driver education during the same semester they are involved in sports, unless approved by their coach and the instructor. Preference will be given to Schodack Central

School District residents, older students and those with sports and work-related scheduling conflicts. If a student misses a number of classes for legitimate reasons, such as extended illness, accommodations will be made for completing the course at a later time. Those with incomplete class work or driving as defined by the instructor will not be issued a certificate of completion (blue card).

Tuition is \$325 for Schodack Central residents, \$350 for nonresidents. Register by sending check or money order made payable to Schodack Central Schools, along with a photocopy of the student's learner's permit or license to: Director of Continuing Education, 1216 Maple Hill Road, Castleton, NY 12033. Students are not considered registered just because their name is on the interest list; the Director must receive the tuition check and

paperwork for the student to be registered. The Director of Community Education will assign students their car times, making every attempt to accommodate students' special circumstances, (work, transportation, etc.), but cannot guarantee a specific placement. Please give details regarding car time needs when registering. The Director has the sole authority to assign students to a car, taking into consideration many factors. A student's car assignment may be changed up until two weeks after the course begins.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Code of Conduct of Maple Hill High School. Driver education classes will be held in High School Room 101. This course is taught by Maple Hill High School technology and certified Driver Education teacher Jason Derby.

Driver Education Registration Form

Attach photo copy of learner's permit, make check or money order payable to Schodack Central Schools and mail to: **Director of Continuing Education, Maple Hill High School, 1216 Maple Hill Road, Castleton, NY 12033-1699** (no cash through the mail, cash will only be accepted if registering in the Continuing Education office at Maple Hill High School).

Name: _____ Birthdate: _____

Address: _____

Telephone (home): _____ (work): _____

Special circumstances for car assignment? (Please describe): _____

Students are expected to behave in accordance with the Maple Hill High School Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may be cause for expulsion of the class with no refund. Students and parents/guardians must sign below to acknowledge their understanding and agreement.

Student Signature: _____ Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Continuing Education Registration Form

Please use a separate form for each course. Payments may be combined. Make check or money order (no cash through the mail, cash is OK at on-site registration) payable to Schodack Central Schools and mail to: **Director of Continuing Education, Maple Hill High School, 1216 Maple Hill Road, Castleton, NY 12033-1699.**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email (optional): _____

Telephone (home): _____ (work): _____

Course Title: _____

Tuition: _____ Fees (if any): _____ Total: _____

Resident of Schodack Central School District: Yes No

All information must be completed (address, including zip code, etc.) before this registration can be processed.

Fleck Named BOE President

Andrew Fleck was named President of Schodack Central School District's Board of Education at the Board's July 2 organizational meeting.

Fleck succeeds Paula Noll who served four years as Board President before deciding not to run again for the Board. Susan Megna was named Vice President of the Board of Education.

Two new members join the Board of Education this year, Michael Hiser and Linda Underwood. In May, voters elected Hiser to a three-year term and Underwood to a one-year term. Board members Kenneth Flood and George Warner also start new three-year terms this year.

Mark Your Calendars

Sept. 8	Classes Begin
Sept. 11	MHMS PTO Ice Cream Social 6 – 7:30 p.m.
Sept. 17	Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m.
Sept. 26	CES Community Fair
Oct. 4	CES Fishing Derby
Oct. 10 & 12	Fall Sports Weekend
Oct. 12	Columbus Day – No School
Oct. 15	Board of Education Meeting, 7 p.m.
Oct. 16	CES Artworks Night, 6 p.m.
Oct. 22	CES PTO Senior Citizen Dessert Hour, 12:30 – 2 p.m.
Oct. 27	Red Cross Bloodmobile, MHHS, 6:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Oct. 29	MHHS Meet the Coaches Night, 6:30 – 8 p.m.
Oct. 30	CES Halloween Parade, 8:20 a.m.
Nov. 3	Election Day – No School
Nov. 11	Veteran's Day – District Closed

Schodack Central School District
1216 Maple Hill Road
Castleton-on-Hudson, NY 12033

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