



Welcome Back!
2006

CAPITAL education

Back-to-School Edition

Transportation and Food Service Update

A message from the Superintendent

Welcome back! It's going to be a great year.

For many in our community, as the days grow shorter and the evenings get cooler in late summer, thoughts turn to the opening of a new school year. Our skilled administrative team has worked all summer thinking and planning ways to inspire our students and continuously improve their academic experience - and educational and social performance.

All of us at the City School District of Albany are truly excited about some important changes and increased opportunities for 2006-07.

As in past years, our students will meet challenges in the classroom, on the stage and on the athletic fields. We will put before them a challenging curriculum and obtainable goals, not only because our students' futures depend on their education, but because we *know* they can achieve whatever they set their minds on.

This will be the first full year that we will be working with the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education (NUA), an internationally renowned group of educators that have helped raise achievement goals and outcomes in several urban school districts across the country. The promise of this partnership knows no bounds. Through the NUA's professional development strategies, Albany educators will be dedicating themselves to even more effective and exciting instruction.

Continued on page 8

Wednesday, September 6 is the first day of school!



Superintendent Eva Joseph and North Albany Academy students Alani Robinson, Edward Blackman, Empress Victory, Arell Agapito, Isaiah Danzy and Zaccus Cancer were featured on the cover of the August edition of Visions, the magazine of the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce. The corresponding cover story is about LOVE SAM (Science and Math), a joint initiative between the Chamber, General Electric Co. and the district.

School bus transportation Q and A

Q: How does my child get to school?

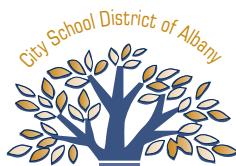
The City School District of Albany will transport all eligible children in grades K-6, as well as those who attend Philip Livingston Magnet Academy and Myers Middle School

on traditional yellow buses operated by Durham School Services. The Capital District Transportation Authority (CDTA) will transport students in grades 7-12.

Q: Who is eligible to ride the bus?

Students are eligible for transportation if the school they attend is 1.5 miles or more from their legal residence; if they live in a district-designated transportation zone or a child safety zone; or if there are not any

Continued on page 2



CAPITAL education

Welcome Back! 2006

School bus transportation Q and A

continued from page 1

CDTA routes available in their area.

Special education students who live closer than 1.5 miles to their school may still be eligible to receive transportation if their Individualized Education Plan specifically requires it.

Students may be transported to and from a location other than their legal residence (i.e., a child care provider) if the student's legal residence and/or the provider's location are 1.5 miles or more from the school the student attends. Parents must request such transportation in writing. Applications are available at your child's school or Central Registration, Sunshine Bldg., Lincoln Park, 462-7207. **Sorry, requests can not be taken over the phone.**

Students in grades K-6 in the district's open enrollment and magnet programs will be transported on yellow buses if the school is more than 1.5 miles from their home.

Eligible private, parochial, and charter school students will be provided transportation in the same manner as public school students only if the private, parochial, or charter school they attend is within the district's boundaries. Parents were required to make such requests in writing by April 1, 2006 for the 2006-07 school year. The district will make every attempt to honor late transportation requests, provided there is room on that particular bus, under the open seat regulations required by the State Education Department.

Q: How does CDTA transport middle and high school students?

A Swiper Card system is used for *eligible* middle and high

school students riding CDTA buses. The Swiper Card is valid school days only—Monday through Friday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Students who stay after school for special activities or sports will be provided with an activities pass for after-hours transportation. Parents must apply for a Swiper Card at their school's main office during the first week of school. Swiper Cards are available for *eligible* students at this time.

Q: How do I find out my child's bus number?

In late August, parents will receive a letter from the Albany School District Transportation Department that contains their child's name, address, bus number, and school bus pickup and drop-off site. (See page 4.) If any information in the letter about your child is incorrect, please inform Central Registration or your child's school.

Q: Where is my child's bus stop?

School bus pickup and drop-off sites are at designated neighborhood sites. Students will not have to walk more than one-half (0.5) mile between their home and their pickup or drop-off site. Parents are responsible for their child's safety until the child boards the bus and once the child steps off the bus.

Kindergarten and special education students will not be dropped off unless a parent, guardian, or other responsible adult is waiting for the student, or if the student is seen entering the building. If it is determined that no one is waiting for a child, that child will be brought to Giffen Elementary School, 274 South Pearl Street, where all attempts to notify a parent/guardian will be made. If these efforts are unsuccessful, Pupil Personnel Services will be notified.

Need to make a change? If your child needs to be picked up or

Continued on page 3

What you need to know about Transportation Requests

The district's goal is to provide students with safe, reliable, and efficient transportation. But, we can't do it alone; we need your help.

All bus routes and pickup times are planned using the information provided in the student transportation request applications. If your child was provided transportation last year, you should have received and resubmitted a transportation request form in June 2006. If you did not receive or submit an application at that time, or if your residence has since changed, please pick up an application at Central Registration, Sunshine Bldg., Lincoln Park. It should be submitted to Central Registration as soon as possible. **In order for your child to be assigned to a bus route for the start of school, transportation must receive the request by August 19.**

Your child will *not* be assigned to a bus route until a completed application is received. Busing for requests submitted after August 19 will begin according to the schedule below. We appreciate your cooperation and encourage you to contact the Transportation Department at 462-7320 if you have questions.

Timetable for Transportation Requests:

If your request is received by:	Your child's busing will begin:
August 18	September 6
Aug. 19-Sept. 1	September 11
September 2-9	September 18
September 9-15	September 25
September 16-29	October 4



Bus transportation Q and A

continued from page 2

dropped off somewhere other than your home (i.e., relative's home, child care location), parents must complete a "change of pickup and drop-off" form at least three school days in advance. These forms are available at your child's school. The new pick up/drop off site must meet eligibility requirements.

Q: What if my child misbehaves on the bus?

Students safety is a priority in the district. We expect all students to conduct themselves properly on the bus. Pupils who are disorderly will receive a written warning and may have their bus privileges suspended. Students who frequently misbehave may have their bus privileges permanently taken away. If this occurs, parents/guardians are responsible for getting their children to and from school.

2006-07 School Schedules

School	Breakfast start	Classes start	Classes end
Abrookin Vo-Tech Center	7:30 a.m.	8 a.m.	2:43 p.m.
Albany High School	7:30 a.m.	8 a.m.	2:43 p.m.
Arbor Hill Elementary School	8:45 a.m.	9:05 a.m.	3:20 p.m.
Albany School of Humanities	7:40 a.m.	8:00 a.m.	2:15 p.m.
Eagle Point (PS 27) @ PSES	7:40 a.m.	8:00 a.m.	2:15 p.m.
Giffen Memorial Memorial	8:45 a.m.	9:05 a.m.	3:20 p.m.
Hackett Middle School	8:10 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
Harriet Gibbons High School	7:30 a.m.	8:00 a.m.	3:16 p.m.
Montessori Magnet School	7:40 a.m.	8:00 a.m.	2:15 p.m.
North Albany Academy (PS 20)	8:10 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
Philip Livingston Magnet Academy	8:10 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
Schuyler Achievement Academy	8:45 a.m.	9:05 a.m.	3:20 p.m.
Sheridan Preparatory Academy	8:45 a.m.	9:05 a.m.	3:20 p.m.
Stephen & Harriet Myers Middle School	8:10 a.m.	8:30 a.m.	3:00 p.m.
Public School 16 @ PSES	8:45 a.m.	9:05 a.m.	3:20 p.m.
Public School 18 @ Montessori	8:45 a.m.	9:05 a.m.	3:20 p.m.
Public School 19	8:45 a.m.	9:05 a.m.	3:20 p.m.
TOAST	7:40 a.m.	8:00 a.m.	2:15 p.m.



Important Transportation Information

In case of bad weather:

- Tune in to the following local TV and radio stations for school closings and delay announcements: WRGB (Ch. 6), Capital News 9, WTEN (Ch. 10), WNYT (Ch. 13), WXXA (Ch. 23), WROW-AM 590, WGY-AM 810, WFLY-FM 92.3, WYJB-FM 95.5, WTRY-FM 98.3, WRVE-FM 99.5, WPYX-FM 106.5, WGNA-FM 107.7.

Call the Transportation Department at 462-7320:

- To determine if your child is eligible for transportation.
- If you have a temporary transportation need, i.e., your child has a broken leg or other injury.

Transportation Requests:

- To request a change in your child's pickup or drop-off site, contact the main office of your child's school. If you change addresses during the school year, please notify Central Registration immediately, 462-7207.

Call Durham School Services at 598-0600:

- If you have routing questions—i.e., pickup and drop-off places and times for your child.
- To alert us when your child will not be riding the bus for a period of time and to let us know when her/she will be returning.
- With any questions about transportation cancellations or late route times due to inclement weather.



CAPITAL education

Welcome Back! 2006

Sample bus stop information

In late August, Albany parents will receive a letter from the City School District of Albany Transportation Department informing them of their child's bus number, pickup and drop-off times, and the location of the neighborhood bus stop for the 2006-07 school year. (See *sample information at right.*) If any of the information is incorrect, immediately contact the Transportation Department at 462-7320.

Please have your child at the bus stop at least 10 minutes before the designated pickup time. If your child receives door-to-door pickup, he/she should be outside of your home when the bus arrives.

Please note: Pickup times, bus stops, and bus routes are subject to change during the school year.

SAMPLE bus stop information

Approximate Pickup

Bus Number: A3016A-23/BB **Time:** 7:30 AM
Bus Stop Location: Lancaster St. & N. Main Ave.

Approximate Drop off

Bus Number: P3016P-23/BB **Time:** 2:51 PM
Bus Stop Location: Lancaster St. & N. Main Ave.

Bus number in boxed area

Approximate time bus arrives

Attention parents of first graders: Door-to-door bus pickup and drop-off service is not typically provided to students once they begin first grade. Please pay particular attention to the location of your child's new bus stop. Students *will not* have to walk more than one-half mile (0.5) between their home and their pickup or drop-off site. If you have any questions about your child's bus stop, contact the Transportation Department at 462-7320.

The Journey Begins

Safety workshop for first-time riders, August 26

For children entering kindergarten, getting on a big, yellow bus is a new experience, one they may be apprehensive about at first.

Durham School Services, the school bus service provider to the City School District of Albany, is helping to make the transition smoother with "The Journey of Learning." This program provides children ages eight and younger with the opportunity to learn about school bus safety and to ride a school bus for the first time with their parents.



The hour-long program—which features videos, handouts, demonstrations and refreshments—takes place at Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science and Technology (TOAST), in Lincoln Park, Saturday, August 26 from 10 to 11 a.m. Experienced drivers will show children the proper way to walk to the bus, cross the street, board the bus, and how to exit the bus safely.

If you are interested in attending call Jason Burrick at 598-0600 to register.

Schools 16 and 18 going home; Hackett relocating

This school year as the facilities project continues to move ahead, School 16 and School 18 will be moving into brand new facilities on their former sites in January. With William S. Hackett Middle School set to undergo a complete renovation, its students will move into Philip Schuyler Elementary School on Western Avenue, starting in January also.

These adjustments are bound to change the transportation situations of some students who attend these three schools. Please look for more information regarding transportation arrangements from your child's school in the late fall, as this transition approaches.



Free and reduced price

school meals offered at Albany Public Schools

Children need healthy meals to nourish their bodies and help them learn. That's why the City School District of Albany offers students breakfast and lunch every school day. Breakfast costs \$1.00 and lunch costs \$1.25 at every school.

However, if your family qualifies for the free or reduced price meal program, eligible students can purchase reduced priced breakfast and lunch meals daily for \$0.25 each. If your family qualifies for the free school meal program, your children will receive school meals at no charge.

We encourage families who think they may qualify for the free and reduced price meal program to apply.

In the center of this newsletter is the free and reduced price meal application for the 2006-07 school year, and the guidelines to follow when completing the application. If you think your family qualifies, please complete the application and submit it to the district. You can mail your application or return it in person to the Food Service Department at Philip Livingston, Room 125, 315 Northern Blvd., Albany, 12210. If you need help completing the application, please call the Food Service Department at 462-7322.

If your children received free or reduced price meals last year, a new application must still be submitted in September to continue this program in the 2006-07 school year.

Please complete and return the free and reduced price meals application as soon as possible. Prompt submission will help avoid delays in the approval process. First-time applicants do not qualify for free or reduced price meals until an application is approved and a letter of notification is sent to the household.

If you receive food stamps or Aid to Dependent Children (ADC/TANF) you qualify for the free or reduced price meal program. (See page 6 for information about how to apply.) If you are not sure if you meet the income eligibility guidelines necessary to qualify for free or reduced price school meals, please call the Food Service Department at 462-7322.

Reduced price meal income eligibility chart

(Effective July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007)

This chart lists income levels according to household size and income levels received either yearly, monthly, or weekly. If your total household income is the same or less than the amounts on the income chart, your

children can receive reduced price meals, and may be eligible to receive free meals.



Household size	Annually	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$18,130	\$1,511	\$349
2	\$24,420	\$2,035	\$470
3	\$30,710	\$2,560	\$591
4	\$37,000	\$3,084	\$712
5	\$43,290	\$3,608	\$833
6	\$49,580	\$4,132	\$954
7	\$55,870	\$4,656	\$1,075
8	\$62,160	\$5,180	\$1,196
For each additional family member add:	\$6,290	\$525	\$121



CAPITAL education

Welcome Back! 2006

Application guidelines for free and reduced price meals

To apply for free or reduced price meals you can do one of the following:

- Complete the application included in this newsletter.
- Submit a Direct Certification letter from the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance upon receipt.
- **Return the application or Certification Letter to J.W. Gayle, School Lunch Director, Philip Livingston, Room 125, 315 Northern Blvd., Albany, NY 12210.**

If you currently receive food stamps or Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)/Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) for any children or participate in the Good Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), the application must include the children's names; the household food stamp, ADC/TANF, or FDPIR number; and the signature of an adult household member. All children with the same case number may be listed on the same application. Separate applications are required for children with different case numbers. If you do not list a food stamp, ADC/TANF, or FDPIR number for all the children for whom you are applying, the application must include the names of everyone in the household, the amount of income for each household member, and how often this income is received and where it comes from.

The application must also include the signature of an adult household member and that adult's social security number or the word "none" if the adult does not have one. Contact your local Department of Social Services for your food stamp or TANF number or complete the income portion of the application.

Income chart

The income chart (see page 5) lists income levels according to household size and income levels received either yearly, monthly, or weekly. If your total household income is the same or less than the amounts on the income chart, your children can receive reduced price meals and may be eligible to receive free meals.



Verification

The school may ask you at any time during the school year to verify your eligibility. You will be notified, in writing, if you have been selected for verification. School officials may ask you to send papers showing that your child should receive free or reduced price meals.

Reporting changes

The benefits that you are approved for at the time of the application are effective for the entire school year. You no longer need to report changes for an increase in income or decrease in household size, or if you no longer receive food stamps.

Income exclusions

The value of any child care provided or arranged, or any amount received as payment for such child care or reimbursement for costs incurred under the Child Care Development (Block Grant) Fund should not be considered as income for this program.

Foster child

Your foster child may be eligible for meal benefits. An application for a foster child must have the child's name, the child's "personal use" income, and an adult signature. If you have questions, contact the school for help in completing the application.

Nondiscrimination statement

This statement explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly, in accordance with federal law and the U. S. Department of Agriculture policy. This institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to the USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Fair hearing

If you do not agree with the decision on your application or the result of verification you have the right to a fair hearing. This can be done by calling or writing the following official:

continued on page 7



Reduced price meals guidelines

continued from page 6

Ms. Kathleen Wetmore, Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs, Administration Building, Academy Park, Albany, NY 12207, or by calling (518) 475-6020.

Meal services to children with disabilities

Federal regulations require schools and institutions to serve meals at no extra charge to children whose disability may restrict his/her diet. A student with a disability is defined in 7CFR Part 15b. 3 of federal regulations as one who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Major life activities are defined to include functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

You must request the special meals from the school and provide the school with medical certification from a medical doctor. If you believe your child needs substitutions because of a disability, please contact the district for further information as there is specific information that the medical certification must contain.

Confidentiality

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has approved the release of students' names, addresses, and eligibility status without parent/guardian consent to persons directly connected with the administration or enforcement of federal education programs such as Title I and National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which are the U.S. Department of Education's programs used to determine areas such as the allocation of funds to schools, to evaluate the socioeconomic status of the district's attendance area, and to assess education progress. Information may also be released to state health or state education programs administered by the state or local education agency (provided the state or local education agency administers the program) and to federal, state, or local nutrition programs similar to the National School Lunch Program.

Additionally, all information contained in the free and reduced price meal application may be released to persons directly connected with the administration or enforcement of programs authorized under the National School Lunch Act (NSLA) or Child Nutrition Act (NCA) including the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs; the Special Milk Program; the Child and Adult Care Food Program; the Summer

Food Service Program; the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Woman, Infants, and Children; the Comptroller General of the United States (for audit purposes); and federal, state, or local enforcement officials investigating alleged violation of the programs under the NSLA or NCA. The disclosure of eligibility information not specifically authorized by the NSLA requires a written consent statement from the parent/guardian.

Reapplication

You may reapply for benefits any time during the school year. If you are not eligible now, but during the school year become unemployed, experience a decrease in household income, or an increase in family size, you may request and complete an application at that time.

We will let you know when your application is approved or denied. Thank you for your ongoing participation in the school meal program.

Application glossary for reduced price lunch

Current income: Your income at the present time before deductions. Farmers, self-employed workers, migrant workers, and other seasonal employees may use their income for the past 12 months.

Direct Certification: If you receive food stamps or ADC/TANF, send in the Direct Certification letter that you receive from the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance instead of completing the application.

Financially independent: A person is financially independent and a separate economic unit/household when his or her earnings (income) and expenses are NOT shared by the family/household.

Food stamp, ADC/TANF, FDPIR number: This must be the complete number supplied to you by the agency including all numbers and letters. (For example, E 123456.) Refer to a previous letter you received from the Department of Social Services for your number or contact them directly. Separate applications are required for children with different numbers.

Foster child: A child who is living with a family but who is under the legal care of the welfare agency or court.

Gross income: Is money earned or received by each member of your household before deductions. Examples of deductions are federal tax, state tax, and Social Security deductions.

Income exclusions: The value of any child care provided or arranged, or any amount received as payment for such child care or reimbursement for costs incurred for such care under the Child Care Development (Block Grant) Fund should not be considered as income for this program.



CAPITAL education

Welcome Back! 2006

Superintendent's Message: Working together, we can achieve excellence

Continued from page 1

One of our most important goals is to close the achievement gap. As much as we want to raise test scores for all students, we also desire to instill in them a passion for knowledge, learning and academic success. Now **that** is how we can increase achievement for all.

As Albany public school students continue to excel in academic, artistic and athletic arenas, we invite you, our community members, to be a part of the process. There is a full slate of events throughout the year, ranging from academic honors ceremonies to student art shows and concerts to athletic contests. With everyone's support and participation, and all of us pulling in the same direction, there is no limit to what we can accomplish throughout our educational community.

Pursuing and achieving the excellence that all our students are capable of is a team effort. We're glad to have you on board!

Sincerely,

Dr. Eva C. Joseph
Superintendent of Schools

Pesticide notification

The City School District of Albany practices Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which is a process for managing, preventing, and suppressing pests with minimal impact on human health and the environment. The district hires pest control contractors who are required to follow IPM procedures.

IPM is most successful when teachers, students, employees, and the contractor work together to ensure a safe, clean environment. The district has not had to use pesticides in the past, and would only use them as a last resort if a situation arises that can't be managed through other means.

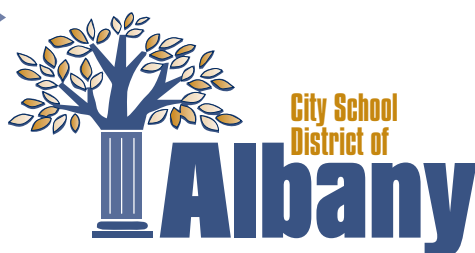
Schools are required to maintain a list of parents, guardians, and staff who would like to receive advance written notice from the district if pesticides must be used.

If you would like to have your name and address added to this list, please contact the Buildings & Grounds Office at 462-7323 to request a form. You also can download the form from our Web site at www.albanyschools.org.

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