

# News

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **ONEIDA BOCES PROPOSES \$38 MILLION CAPITAL PROJECT**

*Residents will be asked to vote to renovate and reconfigure Middle Settlement Road campus to correct overcrowded classes, 30-year old technical facilities and comply with state requirements.*

**Nov. 2, 2006 (New Hartford, N.Y.)** – The Oneida-Herkimer-Madison (OHM) BOCES will ask voters in its 12 component school districts to vote on a \$38.55 million capital project that will renovate and expand the facilities at the Middle Settlement Road campus in New Hartford.

If approved, the project will cost the homeowner of a \$100,000 house no more than 55 cents per month, or less than \$7.00 per year. The costs of the project are eligible for state aid and will have a minimum impact on households when spread across the 12 component school districts.

The Oneida-Herkimer-Madison BOCES serves the following 12 component school districts: Brookfield, Clinton, Holland Patent, New Hartford, New York Mills, Oriskany, Remsen, Sauquoit Valley, Utica, Waterville, Westmoreland and Whitesboro. Voting is tentatively set for Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2007, in each of the component districts. If approved, construction and renovation could start in the spring or summer of 2008.

BOCES provides programs such as career and technical education, special education and alternative education in a cost-effective manner. These programs enable local school districts to share the cost of educational services, reducing the burden on local property taxpayers. Most school districts are unable to offer these specialized programs to their children if the taxpayers have to pay their entire cost.

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## **BOCES Capital Project/2 – 2 – 2**

“This proposal is designed to continue the BOCES tradition of excellence,” Howard Mettelman, OHM BOCES district superintendent said. “The need to improve our facilities is paramount. Our goal is to prepare all students for the rigor of education after high school, the world of work and the responsibility of citizenship. BOCES is a valuable cost-efficient resource serving our schools and communities.”

The BOCES facility was built in 1974 and is now experiencing overcrowding. Enrollments are continuing to rise for Career & Technical Education, Special Education, Alternative Education and Continuing Education adult learners and current facilities lack the space needed to provide quality programs.

“The good news is that our enrollments are increasing because students, parents and employers recognize what a good job we do,” Mettelman said. “But, increasing enrollments mean that our current facilities need to be upgraded to accommodate the students.”

State requirements for special education and alternative education students mandate the offering of a full Regents program. Building renovations are necessary to meet these increasing requirements. Currently, alternative education programs are being housed in rented facilities.

Highlights of the proposed additions and renovations include 90,000 square feet of new space, renovations to existing space and adjoining the two main buildings.

- Renovated Career & Technical Education work areas to provide learning in an environment that closely resembles present-day workspaces and technologies like those students will experience working in business and industry today.
- New space and renovated classrooms for both the junior and senior high alternative education programs to move to the Middle Settlement Road campus from their current rented off-campus spaces.
- New space for special education classrooms to provide required core academic instruction in a small group setting that meets the New York State Education Department requirements for education in an integrated environment with non-disabled peers.
- Renovated space for Program and Professional Development to provide a learning center for staff and teacher training, and also to serve as shared space for events and classes administered through other OHM BOCES divisions.
- The facility upgrade will also allow BOCES to significantly increase the number and variety of adult learning courses offered to the community.

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