Greetings, retirees! I hope you’re well.

Here in the ICSD, we’re gearing up for our May 21 budget vote. We have worked diligently to develop a spending plan for the 2019-2020 school year that funds quality programs and services for our students, meets the needs of our teachers and staff, allows us to maintain our facilities, and has a minimal impact on taxpayers. For more information, I encourage you to visit the 2019-2020 Budget Development page on our district website.

On May 21, we will also be asking voters to authorize a bond to support our 2019 Capital Project, an overview of which can be found in this issue of the ICSD Legacy. Also included in this issue is information on recent Social Security Administration (SSA) scams, a wellness article on heart disease, a list of upcoming events in the district, and a profile of fellow retiree Carrie Kerr, who coordinates transportation solutions for ICSD students and families.

I appreciate your ongoing engagement with the ICSD. Be well!

Dr. Luvelle Brown
Superintendent, Ithaca City School District

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2019 Capital Project Vote May 21

On May 21, Ithaca City School District voters will have the opportunity to authorize a $120 million, tax-neutral capital improvement bond.

The bond would support the 2019 Capital Project, a large-scale facilities plan to address imminent issues that can’t be tackled through regular maintenance and repair, or within the scope of the district’s annual budget. With a capital improvement bond, the ICSD would be able to pay for these larger upgrades and renovations over time and with partial state aid reimbursement.

The total cost of the 2019 Capital Project would not exceed $120 million, and this expense would be spread out over the life of the project. More than half of the cost would be reimbursed through state building aid and the district would pay for the remaining “local share” by making strategic debt service payments. Doing so would stabilize the debt service line in the ICSD’s annual budget and, as a result, the proposed project would be tax-neutral.

(continued on page 3)
Retiree Information

REMINDERS: Ask your provider if they take Medicare, rather than the Hartford. Providing your Social Security number when seeking medical care is NOT required. Simply present your Medicare card.

Keep Us in the Loop!

Please notify us of any changes in family status, mailing address, or phone number so we may keep your information up to date.

Please contact TST BOCES at the email address or phone number listed on page 1 to inform us of any significant changes related to you or any member covered on your plan.

Social Security Administration Warns of Impersonation Scams

Recently, the Social Security Administration (SSA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) has warned the public about ongoing telephone impersonation schemes, in which callers claim to be SSA or OIG employees in attempt to extract personal information or money from citizens.

On April 1, 2019, the OIG released a statement about the latest scam, which involves callers falsely displaying the OIG Fraud Hotline number of (800) 269-0271 on caller-ID screens. The callers then use a variety of false scenarios or threats—such as stating that citizens’ Social Security numbers have been involved in fraudulent activity, accusing citizens of committing crimes, and threatening arrest by Federal marshals—in order to request personal information or money from citizens.

The OIG warns citizens to never engage with these calls. Although SSA and OIG employees do call citizens for official purposes, **the calls do not appear on caller ID as the Fraud Hotline number**. Furthermore, SSA and OIG employees will never threaten citizens, nor promise any type of official action in exchange for personal information or payment.

If you receive a suspicious call from someone alleging to be from the SSA or OIG, you can report the information to the OIG at [https://oig.ssa.gov/report](https://oig.ssa.gov/report), or to the Federal Trade Commission at [https://identitytheft.gov/ssa](https://identitytheft.gov/ssa).

Focus On Wellness: Heart Disease

Content provided by Interactive Health.

Cardiovascular disease (also called heart disease) is a term used to describe diseases of the heart and blood vessels. These conditions can lead to many life-threatening health problems such as heart attack and stroke.

A major contributor to heart disease is atherosclerosis (the buildup of plaque in blood vessels). If blocked, the blood vessel can no longer supply blood and oxygen to the heart, brain, and other areas of the body. High blood pressure also causes damage to blood vessels and can overwork the heart.

Some heart attacks happen quickly and cause severe pain, but most occur slowly with mild discomfort. According to the American Heart Association, several symptoms can indicate a heart attack may be occurring, including:

- Chest discomfort. This feels like uncomfortable heaviness, squeezing, fullness, or an ache in the middle of the chest. The pain may come and go or last more than a few minutes.
- Other areas of discomfort, including the jaw, neck, stomach, or arms.
- Shortness of breath: may occur even without body discomfort.
- Cold sweat, lightheadedness, and/or nausea

Take immediate action when suspecting a heart attack! Call 9-1-1 or your local emergency medical service, even if you are not sure that you are having a heart attack. The sooner you receive treatment, the less damage that is done.

There are multiple ways to lower your cardiovascular disease risk:

- Be active. Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity 5 days per week.
- Eat well. Choose foods low in saturated fat, free of trans fat, low in sodium, and free of added sugar, and increase your intake of high-fiber foods.
- Achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
- Don't smoke.
- Keep your blood pressure and blood sugar within normal ranges.
- See your doctor regularly and take any prescribed medication.

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2019 Capital Project Vote May 21

All improvements included in the 2019 Capital Project are designed to enhance safety and security, upgrade teaching and learning spaces, and improve infrastructure at all schools in the district. Construction would be completed in multiple phases over the course of 10 years, with the first phase scheduled to begin in 2020.

Key scope items for the first two phases of the project are listed in the table below. Additional scope would be reviewed, prioritized, and phased over the life of the project.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>TL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase I</td>
<td>Secure Entrances at Elementary Schools</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upgrades to Moresco Stadium, Tatascore Field, &amp; Natatorium/Pool</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Entryway at Ithaca High School</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Septic System at Caroline Elementary</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Roof at South Hill Elementary</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reconfiguration of York Lecture Hall at Ithaca High School</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paving of Transportation Facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase II</td>
<td>Secure Entrances at Middle Schools &amp; Lehman Alternative Community School</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Entrance &amp; Parking Improvements at South Hill Elementary</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Auditorium Upgrades at Boynton and DeWitt Middle Schools</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Roof Replacement at Ithaca High School</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New Boilers at Enfield Elementary</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SS = Safety and Security; I = Infrastructure; TL = Teaching and Learning
After retiring from a 33-year career in elementary and special education, Carrie Kerr continues to help students and families by coordinating transportation solutions.

Kerr has served as coordinator of the Student Success Transportation Coalition for about 11 years, working to eliminate transportation as a barrier to student and family engagement. The coalition’s initiatives include free bus passes, a volunteer driver pool and facilitation of ride-sharing programs to enable students and caregivers to attend school activities, meetings and events.

Kerr was inspired to work on the issue while serving as one of the ICSD’s equity mentors. In that role, she saw firsthand how lack of transportation limited students’ and families’ ability to participate in school, particularly in co-curricular activities, parent-teacher conferences or evening events.

The issue is even more pronounced in the district’s rural areas and for families who live far from their children’s schools. The ICSD covers 155 square miles, and Kerr said the availability of public transportation is limited outside the city of Ithaca and even within parts of the city. According to Kerr, only about half of the district’s families live along or near a TCAT route.

Seven years ago, Kerr started a volunteer driver program to better reach families who can’t easily access bus service. The program was initially named Retired Educators Drive (RED) to encourage retirees to participate, but all interested volunteers are welcome.

Drivers transport families to open houses, curriculum nights and meetings, as well as events like storytelling night, concerts, Ithaca Youth Bureau basketball, or awards nights.

Volunteers receive an email each time a ride is requested and can accept or decline the ride based on their availability, making RED a flexible volunteering option.

Kerr is also driving the creation of a culture of ride-sharing among various co-curricular activities. Some sports and activities already have formal ride-sharing programs, while others rely on informal arrangements between families that leave some members out. The coalition is working to institutionalize ride-sharing for activities across the board.

Coaches in each sport are expected to find a parent to coordinate ride-sharing among teammates, and Kerr says a similar system is being established for arts and other activities. “It’s a culture change,” she said. “It’s slow work. Change is a long-term process.”

The Student Success Transportation Coalition also trains one staff member at each school to serve as a transportation liaison. The liaisons provide information to staff, students and families and help solve any transportation challenges that arise. Liaisons receive a small yearly stipend paid by Way2Go, a transportation access program of Cornell Cooperative Extension.

The coalition works with several community partners, including TCAT, which donates bus passes; Gadabout, which serves as the volunteer driver pool of last resort when no RED volunteers are available; and Ithaca Dispatch, which provides affordable taxi rates when needed. Coalition members also meet monthly with ICSD administrators to address ongoing issues.

Are you interested in driving or helping with budgeting, website updates or other coalition needs? To join the coalition or serve as a volunteer driver, email redschoolrides@gmail.com or call Kerr at (607) 659-5003.