

# SAVE OUR SCHOOLS

## Quality Opportunities for Public School Children

February 26, 2015 – 7:00 pm

Colonie Central High School  
1 Raider Boulevard  
Albany, NY 12205



### Purpose of the Event

- Draw attention to the on-going fiscal crisis confronting public schools – GEA and reduced state aid.
- Inform and energize parents and educational professionals.
- Help our elected state representatives understand their responsibility to act with urgency to discontinue the Gap Elimination Adjustment (GEA) and adequately and equitably fund the foundation aid formula.
- Energize grassroots efforts and public information campaigns to let New York residents know the “rest of the story” – that opportunities and quality education are critical for our public school children.

### Our Three Key “Goals”

- Discontinue the Gap Elimination Adjustment now and increase foundation aid.
- Maintain local control of public schools. Allow educational professionals to make critical policy decisions.
- Share information in regard to appropriate testing designed to evaluate and support student growth.

### Event Agenda

- 6:30 pm Arrivals / Photo Slide-Show – *Colonie Chamber Orchestra – Peter Cannistraci, Director*
- 7:00 pm Event Logistics – *Tim Backus, Assistant Superintendent, South Colonie Central School District*
- 7:05 pm Pledge of Allegiance – *John Cogan, Student, South Colonie Central School District*  
National Anthem – *Colonie Chamber Singers; Carol Ann Weeks, Director*  
Welcome – *Tim Ryan, Board of Education President, South Colonie Central School District*
- 7:10 pm Parent Perspective – *Mike Keane, PTA Council President, South Colonie Central School District*
- 7:15 pm Stand Up for Upstate Schools and Introduction of Legislators & Honored Guests – *Jonathan Buhner*
- 7:20 pm **Topic #1 – Public School Funding**
  - \* *Lori Caplan, Superintendent of Schools, Watervliet City School District*
  - \* *Jeff Masline, Board of Education President, Menands Union Free School District*
  - \* *Laura Bellinger, Teacher, Oppenheim-Ephratah-St. Johnsville Central School District*
  - \* *Theresa DeChiaro, Student, Watervliet City School District*
- 7:40 pm Legislative Discussion Regarding Public School Funding
- 7:55 pm **Topic #2 – Local Control of Public Schools**
  - \* *Jonathan W. Buhner, Superintendent of Schools, South Colonie Central School District*
  - \* *Ann Reilly, Board of Education Member, Schenectady City School District*
  - \* *John Rickert, High School Principal, Niskayuna Central School District*
- 8:15 pm **Topic #3 – Appropriate Testing in New York State: Forget New York State Politics, What Does Best Practice and Research Say About How We Should Be Assessing Our Students?**
  - \* *Jessica Melchior, Teacher, Schalmont Central School District*
  - \* *Bill Schmidt, Student, Schalmont Central School District*
  - \* *James Duffy, Parent/Teacher, South Colonie Central School District*
- 8:30 pm Legislative Discussion Regarding Local Control of Educational Policy and Appropriate Testing in New York State
- 8:50 pm **Final Comments from Legislators**
- 9:00 pm Thank you for attending!