

EDUCATOR

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Restructuring Creates OPPORTUNITIES

The West Hempstead School District went through a restructuring process to begin the 2018-19 school year, and the benefits are already evident. The changes have resulted in opportunities for new initiatives and greater collaboration among teachers and specific grades.

The most prominent positive outcomes are the expansion of whole-grade collaboration, improvements to consistency in classroom practices and resources, more comprehensive programs in each school, more consistent class sizes throughout the district and increased budget efficiencies.

Because whole grades are able to come together for extracurricular activities, new clubs have been formed at the schools. The new Girls on the Run program at Cornwell Avenue Primary Center, for example, was created to help young girls build their self-esteem while working toward

the goal of completing a 5K. Led by the school's social worker, Elizabeth Lindner, and school psychologist, Elyssa Mayer, the group of third-graders has been meeting every Monday and Wednesday after school in preparation for a race on Dec. 2 at Hofstra University.

Opportunities have also been expanded at George Washington Intermediate Center. With fourth-through sixth-grade classes coming together in one building, the school has been able to cultivate a drama club and an engineering club. Additionally, STELLAR projects led by Dara Perlow have been more focused for each of the grades. Students have started a weekly news broadcast titled "GW Today." The series debuted at the October Board of Education meeting, where student representatives in every grade throughout the district said thank you to Board members in different languages.

The middle school is experiencing new advantages through the school's Challenge Up Program. The program allows eighth-grade students to earn high school credits as a way of



Girls at Cornwell Avenue now have the opportunity to participate in the Girls on the Run program.

“Uniting our grade levels in one building allows teachers to collaborate and co-plan with grade-level colleagues while providing all students with access to important services that support teaching and learning.”

— Dina Reilly, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction

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A Message from the SUPERINTENDENT

Creating a Culture of High Expectations

Dear Residents of the West Hempstead School District,

It seems hard to believe that the first few months of the 2018-19 school year have already passed. What a terrific start to the year it has been for our district! Due to our district's restructuring, I know that many students were entering new buildings this year. It was an extremely smooth transition for most. I thank our dedicated administration, faculty and staff members for ensuring that all students felt welcome, at ease and excited for the year ahead. As you'll read about on page 1, the restructuring has afforded our students additional opportunities this school year – and we look forward to additional opportunities in the future!

The theme we've adopted for this school year is "Creating a Culture of High Expectations." My hope is that this theme applies to all aspects of our district – including the education provided to our students, the way we communicate with our parents and greater community, and how the district operates. Quite simply, we won't settle for "status quo" – West Hempstead students have proven time and time again that they are capable of great success. We must support their endeavors in every way possible!

As we move through the school year, I encourage your input. I've established a series of "Coffee and Conversations with the Superintendent." Please stop by to introduce yourself and offer any feedback or ideas you may have. The schedule can be found on the district's

website, www.whufsd.com. I look forward to meeting more of our community members over the next several months.

Again, thank you to the entire school community for a smooth opening to the school year. I wish you and your family a wonderful holiday season ahead and encourage your continued involvement in our schools.

Sincerely,
Daniel Rehman
Superintendent of Schools



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Restructuring Creates **OPPORTUNITIES**

providing pathways to students. As a result of these pathways, students can enroll in college-level classes during their high school careers.

Teachers are benefiting from the district's restructuring as well. The staff members at each school are able to collaborate with colleagues to create similar curriculums across the grades. Additionally, with similar grade-level teachers at each school, a better teacher-to-student ratio has been created for a more hands-on education.

"The restructuring of our schools provides an array of opportunities for our entire student body," said Dina Reilly, assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction.

"Uniting our grade levels in one building allows teachers



STELLAR Teacher Dara Perlou, left, and Director of IEO/ART/Music Ryan Emmanuel-Cooke, right, have helped create the student-run GWToday.

to collaborate and co-plan with grade-level colleagues while providing all students with access to important services that support teaching and learning. Additionally, we expanded the co-curricular activities in our schools, which assists our students in building strong school connections."

Welcome to *New Administrators!*

Dina Reilly: *Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction*



Dina Reilly shifted from middle school principal to assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction during this past summer after spending the past two years at Nassau Boulevard.

While at the middle school, Reilly

saw an overall increase in New York State assessment scores for 2017. The school was also recognized by Better Outcomes Research as a School That Boosts Achievement for Disadvantaged Students for the 2017-18 year. She also helped to introduce the school's Pay It Forward, Valentines for Vets and P.S. I Love You Day campaigns.

Previously, Reilly was an assistant principal at East Rockaway Junior-Senior High School for three years. She implemented the Honors by Achievement model, supervised students and teachers in sixth through eighth grade, and created the Ambassadors of Character program to

assist in unifying school buildings.

Reilly was also chairperson of the Languages Other Than English/English as a New Language department. In this role, she was responsible for overseeing Foreign Language Association of Chairpersons and Supervisors benchmarks, monitoring the midterms and final examinations of all students, reviewing weekly lesson plans and departmental exams, and ensuring proper screening, placement and accommodations of all English as a New Language students.

Earlier in her career, she taught Spanish and Italian to students in grades 6-12 in the Garden City School District for 15 years.

Joel Press: *Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations*



Joel Press joined the district this summer after spending a year and a half as assistant business administrator in the North Babylon Union Free School District. Press has additionally been a member of the Baldwin Union Free School District Board of Education since 2013 and has served as president since 2016.

While in North Babylon, Press served as the purchasing agent in addition to managing and assisting in the development

of the annual BOCES and special education budgets. He was also responsible for the district's document retention practices.

Press previously worked for DC Comics for more than 14 years. He also spent time at Conde Nast Publications Inc., as well as Tavel, Thea & Baker, LLC, Law Offices of Clayton Knowles, and Lugo & Press, P.C., where he was the founder and managing partner.

Bridget Karis: *Director of Pupil Personnel Services*



Bridget Karis joined the West Hempstead High School staff as director of pupil personnel services prior to the start of the 2018-19 school year. She was previously a member of the Massapequa School District since 2003, after beginning

her career in education at Walt Whitman High School in the South Huntington Union Free School District in 1999.

Karis started at Massapequa High School as a collaborative, self-contained and resource room teacher. For seven years, she developed and implemented unit plans for inclusion and self-contained students in various subjects, in addition to planning resource room lessons that pre-teach, teach and re-teach targeted skills necessary for student success in the general education classroom. She was named chairperson of the special education department in August 2007, with duties that included the supervision of special education teachers

for grades 10-12.

Following her time at the high school, Karis became the district's supervisor of special education, a role which she held for eight years. In this capacity, she supervised, observed and evaluated special education teachers, speech language pathologists, psychologists, social workers and teaching assistants. She was also part of the development, implementation and supervision of the B.A.S.E. alternative learning program for students with emotional disabilities at the middle school level.

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Photos by Steve Orlando

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Bond UPDATE

Shortly after the district welcomed back students for the 2018-19 school year, it was proud to officially cut the ribbon on the newly renovated high school football field – one component of the resident-approved bond referendum in 2016. The opening of the football field was celebrated at homecoming on Sept. 22.

With the field at the high school completed, the middle school field is halfway complete, while the middle school roof renovation is nearly finished. Completions of both these projects will conclude Phase 1 of the bond project.

Phase 2 is nearing its start, as walkthroughs have begun throughout the district for each project. Included in Phase 2 will be renovations at Chestnut Street School, Cornwell Avenue School and George Washington School, in addition to renovations in the STEM labs at both the high school and middle school.

An up-to-date progress chart on the bond referendum can be found on the district's website, www.whufsd.com. Click on "Bond Referendum" under "District" to view the latest updates on each capital improvement project.

Thank you to the community for your ongoing support and participation in our schools.

STUDENTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT: Senior Named National Merit Commended Student

West Hempstead High School senior Theodore Kim has been recognized as a Commended Student in the 2019 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Theodore is one of about 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation that are being honored for exceptional academic promise. Being honored as a Commended Student demonstrates that Theodore was among the top 50,000 scorers of more than 1.6 million students who entered the 2019 competition. Students entered the competition by taking the 2017 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

The entire West Hempstead School District congratulates Theodore on this accomplishment!



Achieve 3000 Honorees

At the October Board of Education meeting, students and teachers from the Achieve 3000 program were honored for their substantial improvement in reading scores. The district congratulates eighth-graders William Bowman, Jurrell Hall and Alyssa Horgan, along with seventh-graders Oceann Miller and Steve Soriano. The district also congratulates teachers Laurie Kaminsky, Christa Spano and Jim Hume.

