

Bethpage Union Free School District BETHPAGE

NEWSLETTER



KRAMER LANE: NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

Kramer Lane Elementary School has been selected by the U.S. Department of Education as a recipient of the National 2013 Blue Ribbon School Award and has been designated an Exemplary High-Performing School. Kramer Lane received this honor based on its 2012 English language arts and mathematics assessment scores. Exemplary High-Performing Schools are ranked among the best-performing schools in the nation. To be considered for the award, the school's test scores must meet or exceed the average of the state's cut scores at the 85th percentile for all grades tested in both reading and math.

"Excellence in education matters, and we should honor the schools that are leading the way to prepare students for success in college and careers," U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said in his announcement speech. "National Blue Ribbon Schools represent examples of educational excellence, and their work reflects the belief that every child in America deserves a world-class education."

Kramer Lane was one of only 236 public schools in the nation to be selected for this honor. Superintendent of Schools Terrence Clark, Kramer Lane Principal Kerri McCarthy and first-grade teacher Marian Siegel will accept the award on behalf of the school on Nov. 18-19 at a ceremony in Washington, D.C.



Students illustrated how tall the blue ribbons would stand if every student in the school stacked theirs on top of each other.



A Sea of Blue Ribbons

Two days after Kramer Lane was named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence, Principal Kerri McCarthy held a special celebration for staff, students, administrators and Board of Education members. Everyone was asked to wear blue and students designed their own blue ribbons to hang in the main hallway.

"We are here to celebrate a very big, big honor," Mrs. McCarthy said. "I'm especially proud because it is an award you can only win if everyone is doing their part - you, your teachers, your principal, your parents, your superintendent...this is OUR award and it is an example of how when you work as a team, you can accomplish anything."

Kramer Lane was one of only 18 schools in New York State to receive this designation and one of only four on Long Island. During the program, students shared their blue ribbon words

to describe Kramer Lane, among which were inspiring, creative, caring, intelligent and fun. Math was also incorporated into the celebration, as the principal asked students how tall all of their 339 blue ribbons would be if they were stacked one on top of the other.

Superintendent Terrence Clark added, "This is an incredible honor that represents the hard work every single person in this building has done. I am very proud of all of you and it is an honor to be your superintendent. Thank you for all that you do."

Legislator Rose Walker and members of the Board of Education also spoke to the group and the official announcement from Arnie Duncan was played for all to hear just how special the designation really is. The ceremony concluded with the introduction of a new school song, "Blue Ribbon Strong."

Bethpage Union Free School District
Bethpage, New York 11714

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MESSAGE

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Residents,

At our recent Parent Academy, I noted how much change is taking place in the world of education. I know these changes have caused anxiety and stress for many students, parents and teachers and I want to briefly outline the challenges we all face together (the full presentation is on our website).

The most significant change is the implementation of the new Common Core Standards. New York State has adopted the CCS in both ELA and math along with 44 other states. There are several themes that run through these new standards. The first is that less is more. The designers of CCS believe that too often schools cover material without students mastering concepts. CCS includes far fewer topics, but hopes to build greater fluency in those areas that are emphasized. In ELA, there is a shift over time toward more non-fiction texts, a broadening of academic vocabulary and a greater concentration on close reading (referring back to text for answers). In mathematics, there is a clearer coherence to curriculum as students master concepts and only move on when true understanding is demonstrated. There is an appreciation for how math is so critical to our everyday lives.

The teachers and administrators of Bethpage have embraced these standards along with the New York State PTA. They offer an opportunity to stop every once in a while and really study a topic as a historian,

scientist or mathematician would examine a subject in their area of expertise. At the Parent Academy, we discussed the landings on the staircase of complexity where we stop and monitor student mastery of learning before moving on to the next topic.

These shifts are fundamental to how curriculum is changing in our classrooms. Unfortunately, New York State was determined to simultaneously introduce new assessments based on the new standards. Despite all the talk of how this was a multi-year process and habits of mind would need time to adapt, the New York State Education Department rushed to introduce new assessments that asked students Common Core questions while the Common Core curriculum was still being unveiled by the state. That was unfair to students and caused too much anxiety and stress. It was also unfair to teachers whose evaluations are now based in large part on these very tests. Even the state described this process as being similar to building an airplane in mid-air, not the most encouraging situation we want for our children.

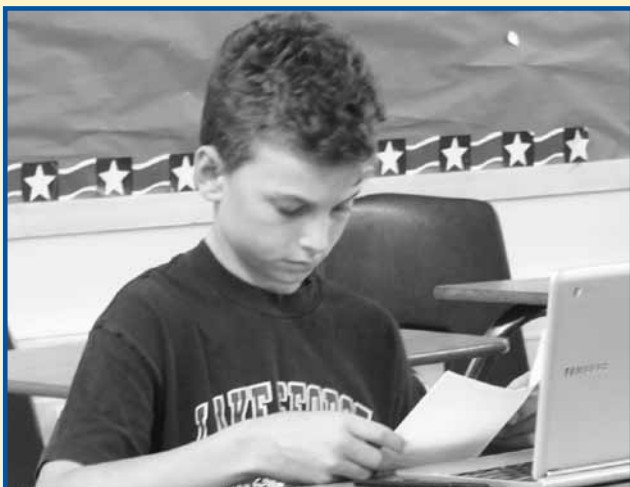
With all that, we are nevertheless encouraged by some recent developments. The New York State Education Department has been seeking ways to reduce the sheer volume of mandated testing. In Bethpage, we are seeing changes in students' reading habits coupled with rising Lexile scores. Our NWEA exams are providing us with a great deal of valuable data on our students' strengths and

weaknesses. We are expanding our use of adaptive software like Achieve3000 which challenges children at their own learning levels and allows teachers to personalize learning to a greater degree than previously imaginable.

If you were unable to attend the recent Parent Academy, I would encourage you to go to our website and look at the many presentations on the Common Core. They are well done and quite informative. I ended my portion of the presentation with a plea for us all to remember that Bethpage is a high-performing school district with a terrific faculty that has received accolades from news media as well as the state and federal governments. I am proud of our academic accomplishments, but always want to make sure that our commitment to the fine and performing arts, athletics and creative programs like our 21st Century Scholars continue to thrive because they foster attributes like respect, creativity, innovation and collaboration that differentiate Bethpage students and make this a special school community.

Sincerely,

Terrence Clark
Superintendent of Schools



JFK Goes Chrome

As a new 21st Century technology initiative, all students at JFK Middle School received their own Google Chromebooks. Parents and students attended orientations in the week prior to opening day, which included workshops run by teachers and trained student facilitators. During these sessions, the students were introduced to the Chromebook and Google Apps, a suite of applications including word processing, spreadsheet, presentation and email.

JFK has offered several teacher trainings, and will continue to offer professional development opportunities throughout the year. In addition, students can seek out help and support through the Academic Center, computer labs and library.

Principal Kevin Fullerton thanked the Board of Education, as well as the upper administration, for having the desire and foresight to bring this new technology into the lives and classrooms of our students.

Mr. Fullerton added, "JFK students are the pioneers for our district in using the Chromebooks, and we are all looking forward to the learning opportunities in this exciting school year. The individual use of Chromebooks is a way to empower students to maximize their full potential and to prepare them for post-secondary education and the modern workplace."

Pictured are students receiving their Chromebooks for the first time.

National Merit Semifinalist

High school senior Anthony Saya has been named a semifinalist in the National Merit Scholarship Program for 2014. The district has consistently had students selected for this honor, demonstrating its continued dedication to academic excellence. In addition to this latest recognition, Anthony has also been named an AP Scholar with Distinction by the College Board and is a member of the National Honor Society.

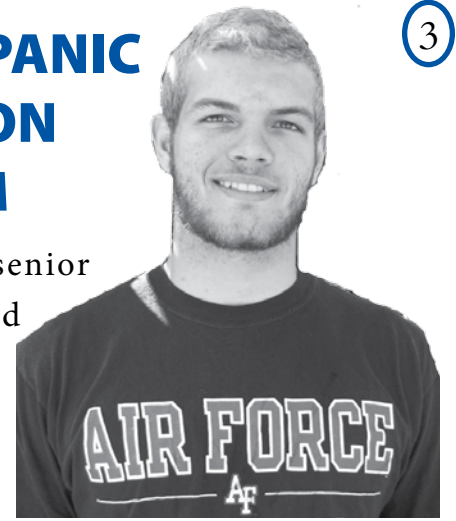


Semifinalists represent the top one-third, or about 16,000, of approximately 50,000 high scorers who took the PSAT/NMSQT, which has a total of 1.5 million entrants, according to the National Merit Scholarship Program. Students are ranked with a selection index score based on their combined scores in critical reading, writing and math. Semifinalists can compete to be named finalists and continue in the process to receive corporate and college-sponsored scholarships, as well as the esteemed National Merit Scholarship. Those advancing to the finalist stage will be notified in February of their standing.

The district congratulates Anthony on this impressive achievement and wishes him continued academic success in the future.

NATIONAL HISPANIC RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Charles Bachmeier, a senior at BHS, has been named a 2013-2014 National Hispanic Recognition Program Scholar by the College Board. Chosen for excellence



in academic achievement, only 5,300 students from the more than 259,000 Hispanic/Latino students in the country who took the 2012 PSAT/NMSQT/PAA exam received this recognition. In order to qualify for scholar status, Charles had to score well on the exam, as well as maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher throughout his junior year. Although there is no monetary award for the designation, it is an honor that postsecondary institutions hold in high regard.

Charles has also been named an AP Scholar with Distinction, is a member of the National Honor Society, is captain of the varsity football team, and is president of the Philosophy and Robotics clubs at the school. The district congratulates him on this tremendous honor.

'BLUE STAR' FOR FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

For the fourth consecutive year, Bethpage High School has been named a Blue Star School by the WISE organization, the company that runs the financial literacy program. This award is given to schools in which 75 percent or more of the students in the financial literacy program have proven to be financially literate via the financial literacy exam.

"We are truly proud of your students' accomplishments and are equally proud of the teachers in your schools who helped them become certified financially literate," Executive Vice President David Anderson said in his letter recognizing the school. "Because of your dedicated and tireless commitment, your students have been given vital knowledge about their personal finances and the tools they need to become financially capable young adults."

The Blue Star School banner will be presented to the district during the MoneyPower Conference in New York City in November.

Reward School 2013 ★ 2014

New York State Education

New York State Education Commissioner John King recently announced that Bethpage High School has been designated a Reward School for the 2013-2014 academic year. This prestigious designation classifies the high school among the highest achieving schools in New York, as it represents one of only 353 schools awarded this recognition throughout the state. NYSED granted Bethpage the award based on high student performance on state assessments and overall academic progress. Go Eagles!



EAGLE PRIDE

Reigns During Homecoming

The entire community gathered on Oct. 12 for the district's annual homecoming parade and game day celebration. The parade, with a new route this year, made its way down Stewart Avenue and around the high school loop, showcasing the magnificent floats of each high school class and club. The kickline team won the competition for their exceptional float, spirit, attire and theme. Homecoming King John Paul DiGiovanna and Queen Briana Saur brought up the rear of the parade donning the classic crowns, sashes and bouquets.

Prior to game kickoff, students, parents, teachers and community residents visited booths set up by various school clubs and organizations. From face painting and pumpkin decorating booths to those selling balloon hats, community coupon books and Eagle apparel, there was something for everyone to enjoy.

After senior Maura McGovern sang the national anthem, the Eagles varsity football team took on the Plainedge Red Devils, ending in an Eagle victory.





Eight Inducted INTO HALL OF FAME

The district hosted its first Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Dinner for six individuals and two sports teams that have had a positive impact on the district. The event was sponsored by the Bethpage Educational Foundation, which has raised more than \$100,000 over the past six years in support of programs and scholarships for Bethpage students. Honored during the evening were past principals, notable staff members and former students, all of whom were nominated and chosen for their dedication to the district and perseverance to excel above and beyond "Golden Eagle" characteristics.

The evening began with a stellar rendition of the national anthem by student Lauren Conway, after which Superintendent of Schools and emcee Terrence Clark delivered a welcoming address. "We could not have chosen among more deserving Golden Eagles," Mr. Clark said. "This was a very tough selection and we look forward to honoring the highest caliber of BHS alumni and staff in the many years to come... There is true civic spirit in Bethpage. These individuals have contributed to extending that sense of community and have impacted the lives of thousands of people with their kindness, dedication and willingness to help others. We salute these very special Golden Eagles."

Legislator Rose Walker, Bethpage Educational Foundation President Marc Sieben, High School Principal Michael Spence and JFK Middle School Principal Kevin Fullerton also made remarks about the longstanding traditions of excellence in Bethpage and their exceptional experiences within the district.

HONOREES WERE:

- **Anne DiPrima** – A 42-year staff member who was an athletic coordinator at JFK Middle School for 27 years and coached sports at the middle school and high school levels.
- **Tom Frost** – A 1968 graduate of the district who ran the Bethpage unit of PAL and served on the Bethpage School Board for 21 years.
- **Edward Mangano** – A 1980 graduate and the current Nassau County executive whose family resides in and is still heavily involved with the district.
- **George McElroy** – A 19-year principal of Bethpage High School who was and continues to be extremely active in the Bethpage community.
- **Mary Morante** – A 46-year staff member in the district whose entire family resides and is active in the district.
- **Patrick Rhatigan** – A 1987 graduate who recently obtained the rank of colonel and is currently commander of the 19th Airlift Wing at Little Rock Air Force Base in Arkansas.
- **The 1981-82 Girls Swim Team** – Team was among the most successful teams of any sport in the district's history.
- **The 1993 Varsity Football Team** – First team to win the coveted Rutgers Cup, starting a 32-game winning streak.

All honorees and their families were served a catered dinner by volunteering high school seniors, followed by coffee and cake. Attendees were invited to continue the celebration at a local restaurant after the ceremony. The Hall of Fame induction was held following the high school's homecoming celebration on Saturday, Oct. 12.





Fiesta for All

Commended Students

Three academically outstanding seniors have been named Commended Students in the 2014 National Merit Scholarship Program. The district congratulates the following deserving students: Sarah Ciresi, Matthew Josephs and Eric Yurman.

Approximately 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Although they will not continue in the 2014 competition for National Merit Scholarships, Commended Students placed among the top 5 percent of more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2014 competition by taking the 2012 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

Sarah, Matthew and Eric are all AP Scholars with Distinction and members of the National Honor Society, as well. They will be able to share their latest accomplishments with the colleges and universities to which they apply. They are pictured with Bethpage High School Principal Michael Spence.

Bethpage High School's Spanish Club hosted its second annual Spanish Fiesta in October. Under the guidance of Spanish teacher and club advisor Jennie Hauschild, the students organized an extraordinary day filled with culture from many Spanish-speaking nations. Students in the Spanish classes were asked to bring in cultural dishes such as queso manchego de Espana and tortilla de patata, while local vendors supplied additional Peruvian, Mexican and Spanish fare. "It really allows students to experience different food and cultures," Ms. Hauschild said of the fiesta. "It's important for them to know that there is more to Spanish foods than rice and beans." For the event, the club set up a photobooth, displayed a video slideshow of past Spanish Fiesta events, and sold raffle tickets as a fundraiser.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT HONORS

Bethpage High School students have been recognized by the College Board as Advanced Placement Scholars due to their outstanding success on Advanced Placement exams. Students took AP exams in May 2013 after completing college-level courses in the district in a variety of subjects.

According to the College Board's website, the AP Program offers willing and academically prepared students the opportunity to take college-level courses while still in high school, and to earn college credit, advanced placement or both for successful performance on the AP exams. The College Board recognizes several levels of achievement based on students' performance on these exams. The students who have been recognized are from the classes of 2013 and 2014.

Congratulations to the following individuals:

NATIONAL AP SCHOLAR

Granted to students who receive an average score of at least 4 on all AP exams taken and scores of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams.

Tyler H. Albert, Jessica S. Dabrowski, Anthony J. Giordano, Lucas M. Levy, Rima Madan, Luke A. Norris and Nisha Shah.

AP SCHOLAR WITH DISTINCTION

Granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.5 on all AP exams taken and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.

Tyler H. Albert, Andrew J. Aquino, Amanda N. Arnold, Usman Asif, Charles A. Bachmeier, Keren N. Benalcazar, Eric Bergersen, Lauren M. Birck, Frank Blesi, Brittany A. Bungert, Gabriel Chan, Kelly J. Chan, Jonathan A. Chao, Sarah H. Charles, Sarah A. Ciresi, Jessica S. Dabrowski, Akash Dagur, Caitlyn M. Darcy, Anthony J. Giordano, Samantha R. Ingenito, Matthew Josephs, Michele A. Kappel, Patrick O. Kobel, Lucas W. Lee, Lucas M. Levy, Gary Liang, Rima Madan, Christopher Mastanduno, Luke A. Norris, Joseph Renna, Luke S. Richardson, Anthony Saya, Craig T. Schmier, Nisha Shah, Kristie L. Testa, John F. Tierney and Eric P. Yurman.

AP SCHOLAR WITH HONOR

Granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.25 on all AP exams taken and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams.

Shilpa Basu, Josett Bernberg, Brian P. DiThomas, Emily E. Fischer, Sana Fujimura,

Ryan Gray, Chang Jeong, Nicholas A. Kideris, Elizabeth J. Klauer, Gina M. Lopresti, Nicholas W. Maresco, Michael Mascio, Conor J. Nimmo, Taylor P. Russo, Jessica M. Seiter, Kyle A. Tengco, Daniel J. Varley, Emily E. Walker and Samantha N. Zito.

AP SCHOLAR

Granted to students who receive scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP exams.

Kanza Ahmad, Genna Amick, Alexander Andreades, Ian M. Beck, Emily A. Brass, Alexander E. Cerza, Jessica Cipolla, Christopher Dane, Kate L. Dorney, Gabrielle Feliciano, Thomas F. Fraher, Harshil Garg, Daniel Gottlieb, Suzanne S. Gregorian, Leaf A. Gross, Tyler N. Hale, Kirsten Jedd, Jennifer H. Keylon, Ahmed S. Khokhar, Jeannie Kim, Jonathan K. Kim, Stefano Korkotas, William G. LaSalla, Thomas Lichtenberger, Stephanie R. Malatestinic, Alina A. Markarian, Ashley C. Martin, Ryan J. McManus, Marley N. O'Donnell, Emily K. Perrault, Courtney P. Radcliffe, Dylan J. Reggio, Amanda V. Rich, Hartej S. Saini, Daniel R. Stephens, Lauren E. Suran, Timothy F. Wakely and Tyler M. Walsh.



Difference A DAY MAKES

Bethpage High School Student Civic members Firas Akbik, Josett Bernberg, Melissa Cao and Deena Hadhoud served desserts, hot coffee and sandwiches at Mercy Inn Soup Kitchen at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Wyandanch. Accompanied by advisor Jacqueline Jill-Rito, the students spent the morning and early afternoon preparing the sandwiches, serving the food and cleaning up after the lunchtime rush.

Mercy Inn staff is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit, non-sectarian, community-based organization that believes that all human beings are interdependent and that society heals itself by caring for the least of its brethren. Mercy Inn, affiliated with the Interfaith Nutrition Network, serves approximately 100-plus hot, nutritious lunches on a daily basis to friends and neighbors in need.

The four students are pictured in the kitchen at the Inn in October.



Looking to the Future

Bethpage High School hosted its second annual college fair for students and their families throughout the district. The event featured more than 80 college admissions counselors, as well as representatives from all branches of the military. Hundreds of students and their families participated in the evening's events, which served to prepare high schoolers by offering them early opportunity to explore colleges of interest.

Colleges in attendance included local and regional institutions, as well as some highly regarded schools of interest such as Penn State, James Madison University and UCLA. Students and their families were able to visit with representatives, obtain important admissions information and explore many options without having to travel out of town. The fair also featured workshops for juniors and seniors on topics such as the SATs and college essay writing.

The evening program was supported with the addition of three mini college fairs, which were held during regular school hours in September and October.

The New Faces of Instruction

Prior to the first day of school, all new instructional team members of the district were formally welcomed to the district during the annual new teacher orientation. The daylong orientation featured breakfast, welcoming remarks from central administrators and district directors, a bus tour of the community (including a stop at local supporter Cablevision), and time for incoming staff to get acquainted with their new principal and school.

The district would like to welcome the following individuals who were chosen after a rigorous application and selection process:

ADMINISTRATORS

Thomas Kenny – Guidance Director
Scott Zanville – Assistant Principal at JFK

BETHPAGE HIGH SCHOOL

Jillian Casey – Social Studies
Brittany DeVecchio – Special Education
Gina DeTillio – Health
Kelsey Lohson – Teaching Assistant
Kristina Maguire – Special Education
Gregory Sagistano – Social Studies
Adeline Scibelli – ELL

JFK MIDDLE SCHOOL

Darline D'Astolfo – Teaching Assistant
Erin Hayes – Social Worker
Llana Huerta-Strongin – Teaching Asst.

CENTRAL BOULEVARD

Juliana Becker – Teaching Assistant
Jessica Caccamese – Teaching Assistant
Noelle Daversa – Teaching Assistant
Christine Fishbein – Speech Pathologist
Kristin Harris – Speech Pathologist/Sp. Ed.

Keri Kearney – Reading and ESL
Samantha Kokoris – Speech/Language
Isabel McGlynn – Teaching Assistant
Daniel Rouse – Music
Caitlin Scurachio – Reading
Steven Waters – Teaching Assistant

KRAMER LANE

Jackie Cordiner – Reading
Meaghan Falci
Krysta Kolasinski

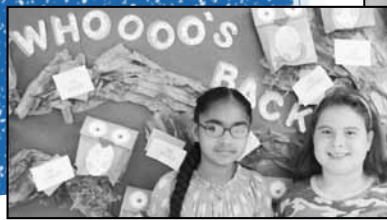
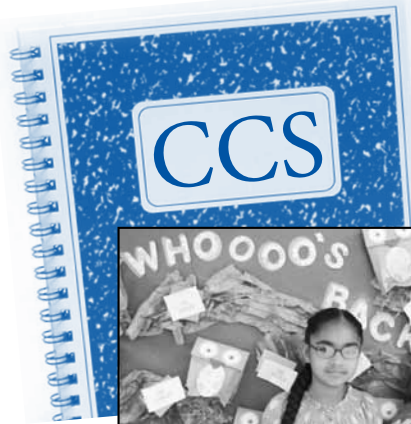
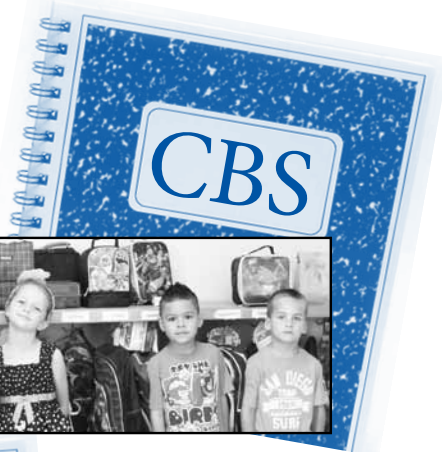
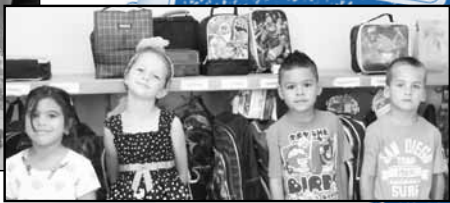


STAR Rebate Reminder

New York State is asking all homeowners to reapply for their STAR exemptions this year. New applications are due by Dec. 31, 2013. Failure to file a new application for exemption will result in loss of the BASIC STAR rebate applied to your taxes. Visit: www.tax.ny.gov/pit/property/star13.

Smiles for Back-to-School

Students of the district made their way back to the classroom and welcomed a new school year on Sept. 3. For those entering kindergarten, it was the first of many "first days" to come, but for the returning students and their teachers, it was an opportunity to reunite with familiar faces, discuss summer happenings and plan for the year ahead. Pictured are some highlights of students from the first week of school at Charles Campagne, Central Boulevard and Kramer Lane elementary schools.



Warm Welcome to the New School Year

After an eight-week hiatus, Superintendent of Schools Terrence Clark delivered his annual welcoming remarks following a breakfast for all Bethpage teachers and staff on Aug. 29. His positive and heartfelt speech was filled with congratulations for the retirees, newlyweds and newborns, as well as thank-yous to each of the district's civic partners and community organizations.



Bethpage Educational Foundation President Marc Sieben was on hand to speak about the upcoming year and reflect on the district as a whole. "As much as things change, the educational system here in Bethpage has never been better," he said. "We have an incredible district with a very rich history."

Mr. Clark discussed the importance of college and career readiness in students, citing a recent study which found that job growth has been decreasing in recent years for those with only a high school diploma. "What we do here is critically important for students," he said emphatically. He proceeded to review several advancements for the coming year as well as accomplishments from the past one. Here are some of the highlights:

- Every middle school student has been given a personal Chromebook for use during the school year (approximately 700 total).
- The Achieve 3000 program has been made available to all middle school students, following a highly successful pilot program with it last year.
- Upgrades have been made to the Wi-Fi network.
- Approximately 100 security cameras have been installed districtwide, with live access for administrators from any computer.
- There have been no changes in the elevation levels from the plume, as reported by the district's independent environmental study this summer.
- 100% of Bethpage teachers were rated "Effective" or "Highly Effective" under APPR rules outlined by New York State.
- Despite the recent change to state assessments, third-graders were No. 6 in Nassau County on ELA assessment results.
- Bethpage was in the top one-third overall on every state exam, grades 3-8, in Nassau County.
- Every NWEA test that was administered showed growth in each student.
- All schools in the district were categorized as "In Good Standing" by the State Education Department, and Kramer Lane has qualified for designation as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence.
- 71% of Bethpage residents voted "yes" on the 2013-14 school budget – among the highest voter approval of a budget in Nassau County.

"You have created a welcoming, nurturing environment that places a priority on total student success," Mr. Clark said in praise of the district's teachers as the reason for such a high voter approval. In terms of the budget, he shared that the district is in a "solid" financial position, with buildings that are in excellent condition.

Following his remarks, teachers reported back to their individual buildings where staff development and department meetings were held for the new year.

Union Free School District
BETHPAGE

NEWSLETTER

A Publication of the Bethpage School District's
Community Relations Office

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