

SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER



Woodbridge Township School District, 428 School St, Woodbridge, NJ 07095
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Spring Is Here (FINALLY)!

By Robert Zega

Let me make it official: Thank goodness spring is here! This has been an eventful winter to say the least. Realize that this winter: 1) we had snow on the ground for about three months, 2) we used six snow days and 3) I spent way too much time watching the weather at four o'clock in the morning.

The onset of spring means that (believe it or not) the school year is winding down. It also means test season. Our high school students have already completed the last HSPA ever. The HSPA, as you may be aware, is the state required, high school graduation requirement test that will be replaced next year with the PARCC. The next round of tests for our high school folks will be the SAT's in March, May and June. They will also be prepping for the Advanced Placement tests in May. Our middle and elementary school students will be taking the NJ ASK test in May. We are also one of the districts selected to participate in the PARCC field test. Select schools at each level (HS, MS & Elementary) will be taking this on-line test during the spring. This test is a "practice run" for both the state and the district and will not be used for any type of student evaluation. For more info see: <http://www.woodbridge.k12.nj.us//site/Default.aspx?PageID=16399>.

The NJ Department of Education has released the School Performance Reports for the 2012-2013 school year. These reports publish findings related to school performance and the extent to which our students are college and career ready. The DOE link can be found on our website at: <http://education.state.nj.us/pr/nav.php?c=23;d=5850> Spring also means budget season. The Woodbridge Township School District 2014-2015 School Budget is scheduled for tentative adoption at the regular BOE meeting on March 20, 2014 at 7 pm at Woodbridge Middle School. Once the tentative budget is adopted, more details will follow.

One of our goals for this year was to construct a strategic plan for the school district. The new

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administrations as well as the board both feel strongly that our district needs direction for future decisions and a new philosophy. We felt that with all of the changes being implemented in public education, we need to formally plot a course to navigate the uncharted waters in the sea of change. Our core beliefs supply the foundation for all we do:

- 1. We will continue to strive to employ, train and retain excellent teachers who provide continuously effective, engaging instruction.**
- 2. All children can learn, but learning takes effort.**
- 3. Each child deserves our best every day.**
- 4. Every lesson should be a positive learning experience for every child.**
- 5. We are here to help our children.**
- 6. We need to give the children what they need.**



Winter Sports Standouts

We are proud of all of our high school sports teams from this past winter. We know that when our student athletes wear their school colors they represent their families, coaches and schools with pride. Listed below are some of our accomplishments from the winter season. Congrats to all!

Woodbridge High School

- Girls Winter Track: GMC White Division Relay Champions, GMC White Division Champions, NJSIAA Group III Champions. Coaches Norma Grasso & Jesse Angatia GMC White Division Co-Coaches of the Year. Brittany Gasser, 400 and 800 Meter GMC Champion, 400 Central Jersey Group III Champion. 4 x 400 Relay Team – Brittany Gasser, Ellie Yopez, Temi Odukale, Olivia Martinez and Elisanette Marine – Central Jersey Group 3 Champions.
- Ice Hockey: GMC Red Division Champions.
- Girls Bowling: NJSIAA Group III Sectional Champion.
- Boys Bowling: GMC Red Division Champions.
- Wrestler Bobby Jordan: 100+ career victories (129), GMC Champion, NJSIAA District 19 Champion at 112lbs, NJSIAA Region 5 Champion at 112lbs and 7th Place at 112lbs in the NJSIAA Individual State Championships.

Colonia High School

- Head Boys Basketball Coach Chris Chiera named GMC Red Division Coach of the Year

John F. Kennedy Memorial High School

- Girls Basketball: GMC Blue Division Champions! Record 21–4. Head Girls Basketball Coach Heidi Hodnett GMC Blue Division Coach of the Year. Girls Basketball Player Taylor Freeman scores 1000+ points (1304)
- Girls Bowling: GMC Sportsmanship Award
- Wrestler Brandon Farrell: GMC Champion.
- Wrestler Carl Buttitta: Breaks school record for career victories (141), NJSIAA District 19 Champion at 145lbs, NJSIAA Region 5 Champion at 145lbs and places top 12 at 145lbs in the NJSIAA Individual State Championships.
- Boys Winter Track: High Jumper Joe Egri was GMC Champion. High Jumpers Joe Egri & Collin Puff were GMC Champions

Woodbridge HS Seniors Complete "We Feed Walk"

On Thursday, March 6, over 200 seniors from WHS participated in the "We Feed Walk" to benefit the St. James Food Pantry. As part of a community service project, seniors were invited to bring a non-perishable food item to school. There they assembled in the auditorium and proceeded to walk *en mass* to the St. James Food Pantry. The walk not only provided a large quantity of food for local residents, but it helped raise awareness for the need for food in our community.



Above: WHS students begin the very chilly We Feed Walk up Richie Sambora Way



Above: Students walk down Freeman St

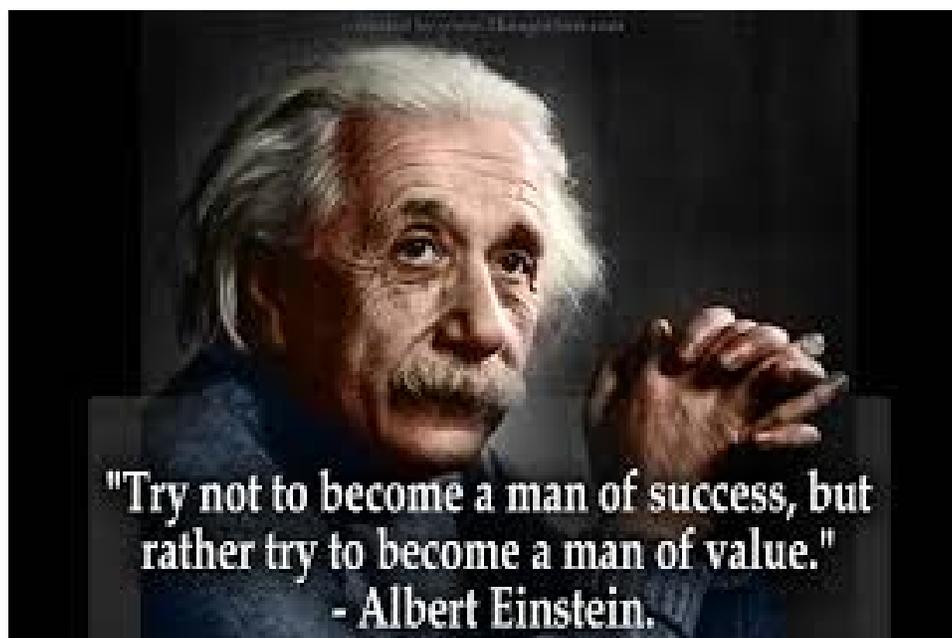


Above: WHS students arrive at the St. James Food Pantry

Woodbridge Township Board of Education

<p><u>Brian Molnar</u> <i>President</i></p>	 A portrait of Brian Molnar, a man with short dark hair and a goatee, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and light-colored tie. He is standing in front of a bookshelf filled with books and an American flag to his left.	<p>Term - 2014</p>
<p><u>John Golden</u> <i>Vice President</i></p>	 A portrait of John Golden, a man with short hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie. He is smiling slightly and looking directly at the camera.	<p>Term - 2016</p>
<p><u>Frank DellaPietro III</u> <i>Board Member</i></p>	 A portrait of Frank DellaPietro III, a man with short hair and a mustache, wearing a dark suit, light blue shirt, and patterned tie. He is standing in front of a bookshelf.	<p>Term - 2014</p>
<p><u>Daniel Harris</u> <i>Board Member</i></p>	 A portrait of Daniel Harris, a man with short hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie. He is smiling and looking at the camera. An American flag is visible to his left.	<p>Term - 2015</p>
<p><u>Judy Leidner</u> <i>Board Member</i></p>	 A portrait of Judy Leidner, a woman with long brown hair, wearing a blue blazer over a patterned top. She is standing in front of a bookshelf and an American flag.	<p>Term - 2015</p>
<p><u>Brian F. Small</u> <i>Board Member</i></p>	 A portrait of Brian F. Small, a man with short hair, wearing a dark suit, light blue shirt, and patterned tie. He is standing in front of a bookshelf and an American flag.	<p>Term - 2016</p>

<p><u>Monica</u> <u>Michelle</u> <u>Smith</u> <i>Board Member</i></p>	 A portrait of Monica Michelle Smith, a Black woman with short dark hair, wearing a red jacket and a pearl necklace. She is standing in front of a bookshelf and an American flag.	<p>Term - 2014</p>
<p><u>Ezio</u> <u>Tamburello</u> <i>Board Member</i></p>	 A portrait of Ezio Tamburello, a man with short blonde hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and blue tie. He is standing in front of a bookshelf and an American flag.	<p>Term - 2015</p>
<p><u>Jonathan</u> <u>Triebwasser</u> <i>Board Member</i></p>	 A portrait of Jonathan Triebwasser, a man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a striped button-down shirt. He is standing in front of a bookshelf and an American flag.	<p>Term - 2016</p>



Invention Convention at Kennedy Park

On Wednesday, March 5, students at Kennedy Park Elementary School held their second annual Invention Convention. Students displayed inventions they designed in a symposium-type setting. Kennedy Park teacher Michelle Ginfrida organized the event that was attended by teachers, parents and Mayor McCormac.



Pictured above are invention Convention participants Anaina Vineeth, Kavya Patel, Nirmal Patel, and Pari Jain.

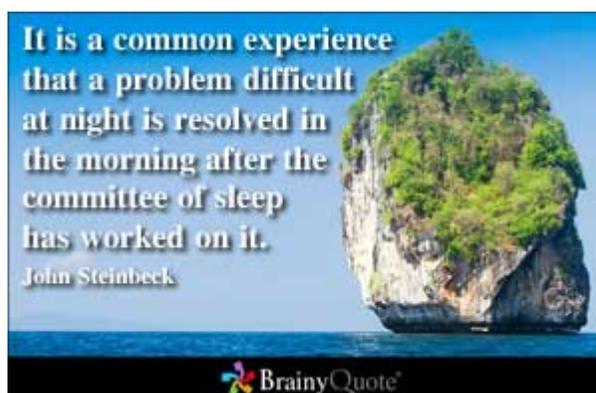
If change is the norm for this century, then innovation is the engine of change and knowledge is its fuel.

Nido Qubein, President, High Point University

Colonia High School Gifted & Talented Design Project Presentations



On Friday, March 7, Colonia High School G&T students presented their high school design projects. Students were asked to redesign their school with practical, environmental-friendly, budget-gentle upgrades. Students presented ideas that included windmills and new athletic fields. Pictured above are juniors Kunj Shah, Charlie Confino, Aaron Christie, David Matuszewski and Kaelyn Herrera.



High School Play Schedule

Woodbridge High School

In the Heights

March 20, 21 & 22 @ 7:00 pm and Sunday, March 23 @ 2:00 pm

For more information and a promotional video see:

<http://www.woodbridge.k12.nj.us//site/Default.aspx?PageID=16473>.

John F. Kennedy Memorial High School

West Side Story

March 13, 14 & 15, 2014 @ 7:00 pm

Colonia High School

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

April 3, 4 & 5 @ 7:00 pm and Sunday, April 6 @ 2:00 pm

*Music expresses that which cannot be said and on
which it is impossible to be silent.*

Victor Hugo

St. Patrick's Day Parade in Woodbridge





Student Letter

Each month we hope to publish a letter from a Woodbridge Township School District student. This month's letter comes from Jessica Lowrie, who is a senior at Colonia High School. After high school, Jessica plans to attend Ramapo College of New Jersey where she will major in Social Work. She hopes to pursue a career helping children with the problems in life that they may have. Jessica is in Journalism 2 and is thrilled to have the opportunity to write for the school newspaper again. She has two jobs – working as a recreation leader at the Evergreen Youth Center and does clerical work at a local accounting firm. When she isn't at school or working, Jessica likes to hang out with friends and read.

My name is Jessica Lowrie and I'm a senior at Colonia High School. Aside from my busy life outside of school, I am involved with multiple extracurricular activities including being editor of the school's newspaper. One of the articles I wrote for *The Declaration* highlighted the college planning process and after recently committing to Ramapo. I find it important that students understand the multiple steps it takes to ensure a successful future. An aspiring college student should not begin planning at the start of their senior year. When the time comes and they are called down to talk about their future plans with their guidance counselor, they should know at least the basic outline of what they want to accomplish in life. However, how does one, at the age of 17 or 18, know what they want to do with the rest of their lives? Completely understandable – they don't. There are, however, ways to prepare so that Student A isn't confused in the guidance counselor's office while Student B is already accepted into Harvard.

The process truly begins freshman year. A student should get involved within the school. Join a sport, a club, or become a class officer-- getting a foot in the extracurricular door will help an individual with their future. Also, a student should search within the community and look for community service options. Colleges LOVE seeing a student that not only achieves their full potential academically but one that is also associated with extracurricular activities.

During sophomore year, students are introduced to the PSAT test. The PSAT test is basically a "pre-test" to the actual SATs. After taking the PSATs, a student should look at their strongest and weakest testing sections and assess what skills they should practice more. This test can serve as a baseline; for the weaknesses, students should search for online courses and resources or attend classes to help them improve in those areas. This will ultimately help the individual with the actual SATs that they should take during their junior year of high school.

Junior year is said to be the hardest of all four years in high school. This is a myth; however, it is really stressful. A student should register to take the SATs during the second semester. The test isn't that bad, especially if the student cautiously went over the areas in which they needed more work during their sophomore year. Juniors shouldn't psych themselves out over the test; it's the worst thing that they can do. Also, during junior year, a student should start to make a list of potential colleges that they would like to attend and start to visit them when they have an open house. All colleges schedule a personal tour if the open house's time frame is not manageable. The "feel" of the school can help a student make the right decision.

After this, a student should start to examine themselves and ask what they like to do because this can help them decide on a major that they would like to study in college. Then they should develop an idea on what they want to accomplish in life but like previously stated, the decision doesn't have to be made right then and there, since a student also shouldn't settle. This will also help with picking a college since many young adults end up changing their majors.

Finally senior year is here. The beginning of senior year, students should meet with their guidance counselor and become organized with due dates, what needs to be sent in, and options as to a fee waiver or what onsite visits the high school hosts. Guidance counselors recommend

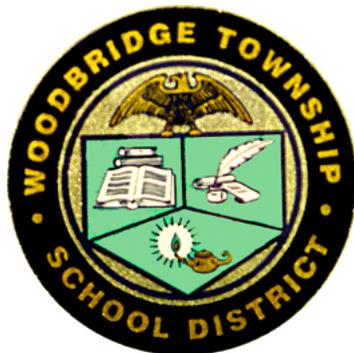
that a student should apply to at least five schools – reach schools, moderate schools, and a safety net. Seniors should also keep the deadlines in mind. Deadlines are super important. Don't start the application two days before it's due. Also, see if they college has an Early Decision option – doing this allows an applicant to get their acceptance letter sooner. However, some early decision applications are binding (if an applicant is accepted, they HAVE to go there). If these special cases don't suit the applicant, then they should wait until the regular decision deadline.

Parents and their future college student should then file the FAFSA. The Federal Application for Student Aid has to be filled out by the parents. Their tax return is needed, as well as the student's, if they are working. This form, if filled out correctly, can help any student with paying for college. Filling out the FAFSA is important because this is the key to be taken into consideration to receive financial aid. Finally, a student should select a school. May 1st is the deadline, however, a student shouldn't decide on a school until all award packages come in. A student should choose the school that has multiple options, that is affordable, and that they can see themselves attending. After this, send in all necessary requirements – meaning that some schools request another transcript or other credentials. Plus, deposits need to be in by a certain date. The student should also attend another open house at the college they chose and join their social networking groups on Facebook/ Twitter. Most schools have a “social” group that the whole class can join and interact with the people also going to the school. It's a great experience to meet new people and see who the next four years will be spent with.

All in all, the process for college can be easy if done correctly. The worst thing to do is to fall behind. Good Luck to all!

*If I were again beginning my studies, I
would follow the advice of Plato and start
with mathematics.*

Galileo Galilei



Woodbridge Township School District

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Wisdom ceases to be wisdom when it becomes too proud to weep, too grave to laugh and too selfish to seek other than itself.

Khalil Gibran