

# CommunityLink

Winter 2019

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## Long-Range Plan Looks at the Next Five Years

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph L. Ricca presented a look at the district's newly-developed Long Range Plan at the January 14th Board of Education meeting, providing a conservative strategic vision of the next five years. He said that the planning process involves all of the financial pieces including enrollment projections, the analysis of facilities and their condition and the instructional priorities and program goals. A Master Planning Committee has been established to look at the District's long-term facility needs and will provide options for the Board to consider for the future.

Dr. Ricca thanked the Board of Education for doing such a good job over the years maintaining fiscal stability and for its continued support and guidance in the planning processes. Careful planning encourages efficiencies throughout the



District. The proper management and the reallocation of resources to maximize student outcomes provides ongoing stability.

In revenue assumptions, State and Federal aid have been projected to remain flat, along with local resources. The plan maintains the District's commitment to remain within the

*(continued on page 2)*

## Security Update New Visitor Check-In Process

In an ongoing effort to ensure the safety and security of students and staff, all visitors to District buildings are now screened using the Raptor Technologies K-12 Visitor Management System. This will allow us to monitor and track who is in our buildings at all times.

Each visitor must show a valid photo ID to the office staff and complete a registration process during the first visit. The ID will be passed through a scanner and checked against the national public database of registered sex offenders as well as any custom alerts we have programmed. The Raptor System does not check for outstanding warrants or immigration status. Once this check is complete, the visitor will receive a photo ID badge to display during the visit.

Raptor does not keep a digital copy of the ID, but stores the name, date of birth,

photo, and the first four digits of the license number. This data is not shared with third parties and is kept secure using the latest security processes.

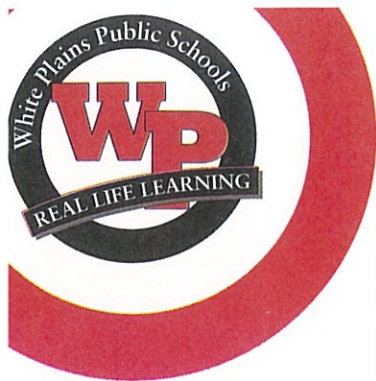
The Raptor system accepts drivers' licenses and state ID cards, passports, military and government IDs, Canadian and Mexican drivers' licenses, Mexican consulate IDs, and alien registration receipt cards. If you don't have a state or government-issued ID, or don't want your ID scanned, you may still enter our schools, but you will need to identify yourself and your reason for visiting and be escorted by a staff member. Office staff will manually confirm your identification and run a background check.

**“ Student safety is our highest priority, ”** said Superintendent Dr. Joseph Ricca. **“ This system will provide our school district team members with a quick and efficient way to welcome visitors in a manner that increases campus security. ”**



Visitor to the High School presenting his driver's license for scanning to Security Assistant Katie Young





## SCHOOL BUDGET UPDATE

Planning for the 2019-2020 school District Budget began last fall and included a public forum, hosted by Superintendent Ricca, which took place in October. The budget will be presented in plain language in three components – administrative, program and capital – at a Budget Hearing on May 13th and the Budget Vote will take place on May 21st, 2019. Details about the budget process and interim presentations at regular and special Board of Education meetings can be found online at [www.whiteplainspublicschools.org/budget](http://www.whiteplainspublicschools.org/budget).

## New App Tracks School Buses

The District, in partnership with our pupil transportation provider, National Express, has instituted a GPS bus tracking system, effective January 9th. The Durham Bus Tracker will allow parents/guardians to view the location of their child's school bus and see information about the route with scheduled and estimated arrival times. Each vehicle is equipped with GPS technology that will provide information in real time. Instructions have been sent to families on how to download the app and create a secure account using the child's student

ID number. The app will provide valuable information on changes in vehicles, substitute drivers and schedule delays. The

District will also continue the practice of notifying parents/guardians of any busing updates through K-12 Alerts. Additional information is available from the District's Transportation Department: 422-2056.



## Board of Education Adopts New Technology for Meeting Management



The White Plains Board of Education has adopted new technology to improve the process of Board governance. BoardDocs is a paperless management tool, designed to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of Board meetings with increased transparency and more open communication with the public. It will provide for electronic distribution of meeting agendas with unprecedented public access to related information. All documents associated with a meeting are archived and can be accessed using the system's search feature.

Eventually, the District will also use the system for online policy management, accessible by the public.

Meeting agendas are available at [www.boarddocs.com/ny/wpcsd/Board.nsf/Public](http://www.boarddocs.com/ny/wpcsd/Board.nsf/Public). Alternatively, go to the District's website: [www.whiteplainspublicschools.org](http://www.whiteplainspublicschools.org) → Board of Education → BoardDocs. Meeting agendas will be posted 48 hours in advance of meetings and will no longer be distributed via email. Additional information is available from the District Clerk: 422-2071.

### Long-Range Plan *(continued from page 1)*

spending guideline of the tax cap. In addition to contractual expenditures, some of next year's estimates include increases in the areas of Security & Safety, Food Service, and organizational support. The District also plans to establish a new Capital Reserve fund in 2019 to continue to defray future taxpayer expense by attending to capital needs without the use of bonding. Enrollment (without new housing development) is projected to remain substantively flat in the next two years.

With regard to Instructional Priorities, Dr. Ricca discussed plans for Pre-Kindergarten support, Social and Emotional Learning opportunities, Special Education, and all the curriculum areas – English Language Arts/Literacy, Dual Language, English as a New Language and World Language, Math, Social

Studies, Science & Stem, Physical Education and Health, Fine Arts and Technology. He discussed proposed enhancements to the program including exciting new course offerings and opportunities for our children to continue to have access to an exceptional educational experience.

Dr. Ricca thanked the Board of Education, the Cabinet and the staff for contributing to this important planning process and reminded everyone of the long-term impact of decisions made today. Future presentations will cover the 2019-2020 proposed District Budget. This year's Board of Education Election and Budget Vote will take place on Tuesday, May 21, 2019.

Readers may access the District's Long Range Plan at: [www.whiteplainspublicschools.org/Page/21330#calendar27917/20181019/list](http://www.whiteplainspublicschools.org/Page/21330#calendar27917/20181019/list).



## Swim Team Makes Waves!

The Women's Swimming and Diving team did exceptionally well at the State meet in Ithaca in November. Alexa Reyna finished 17th in the 200 free and 8th in the 500 free. She is the individual school record holder in both events. Lizzy Tirado was ranked 53rd in diving and finished in 16th place. She is the school record holder in 11 dives. Ava Iannetta represented White Plains in the 50 free and 100 butterfly; she is school record holder in the 50 free. Luisa Nierhoff in the 100 breast and Kayla Shannon in the 100 back both had excellent finishes. Margaux Reyna was integral in the 200 free relay team. The team had two additional school records. In the medley relay, Kayla Shannon, Luisa Nierhoff, Ava Iannetta and Alexa Reyna performed a 1:50.93. The same group set a new school record in the 400 free relay with a time of 3:38.83. The section, which includes schools from Westchester and Rockland, won States. White Plains Mayor Thomas Roach named December 22nd "Section 1 Swimmers and Divers Day."



## High School Hall of Fame

The White Plains High School Hall of Fame recognizes alumni who have distinguished themselves in their chosen careers and/or have had a significant positive impact on the lives of others. The 2018 inductees were: businessman and community leader Frank A. Bruni '53, award-winning Broadway producer Steven Baruch '56, former educator and NAACP Greenburgh Chapter President Lena Anderson '65 and Emmy-winning broadcast journalist Richard Schlesinger '72. Nominations for the 2019 Hall of Fame are being accepted now. Visit [www.whiteplainspublicschools.org/domain/12](http://www.whiteplainspublicschools.org/domain/12) for more information.



## White Plains Seniors Recognized in National Merit Competitions

White Plains High School Seniors Aaron J. Weiner, Eli S. Lichtblau, Daniel R. DeGenaro, and Kristina Z. Radulovic were named Commended Students in the 2018-19 National Merit Scholarship Competition. They placed in the top five percent of students who entered. Isabela M. Kent and Samuel D. Brown were honored in the National Hispanic Recognition Program. The National Merit Scholarship Corporation is a nonprofit organization which honors the nation's scholastic champions and encourages academic excellence.



Pictured:  
Aaron J.  
Weiner, Eli  
S. Lichtblau,  
Daniel R.  
DeGenaro,  
and Kristina  
Z. Radulovic

## Mayor Recognizes Youth of the Year

White Plains High School Senior Louis Melendez was named City of White Plains 2018 Youth of the Year. Mayor Thomas Roach presented this award at a recent Common Council meeting. Louis was nominated because of his outstanding academic record and extensive volunteer work with the Key Club at White Plains High School, the White Plains Youth Bureau and White Plains Hospital, to name a few of his activities. Louis says he has "a passion to help others and to make an impact on the lives of others."



## Athletics Hall of Fame

Thirteen exceptional alumni, recognized for their athletic achievements, sportsmanship and community contributions, were inducted into the White Plains High School Athletics Hall of Fame in November: Kimberly Adams '07, Sue O'Gorman Adams '78, Dominick James DePalo '31, William Drummond '64, J. Brian Hansbury '95, Greg Herzog '79, Mark Johnson '81, Sean Kilpatrick '08, Anthony Mazziotti '32, Dennis Morgan '70, George Rooks '88, Charles Young '51, Jermaine Young '94. Nominations for 2019 are being accepted now. Visit [www.whiteplainspublicschools.org/Page/16127](http://www.whiteplainspublicschools.org/Page/16127) for more information.



**KUDOS**



The mission of the White Plains City School District is to educate and inspire all students, while nurturing their dreams, so they learn continually, think critically, pursue their aspirations and contribute to a diverse and dynamic world.



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## Church Street 4th Graders as Panel of Experts

Dr. Monique Reilly, a 4th grade teacher at Church Street Elementary School, enlisted her students and their parents as experts on teaching at a recent panel event at Manhattanville College. Dr. Reilly teaches two graduate level courses at the college's School of Education and hosts this panel each year so that aspiring teachers and recent School of Ed graduates can hear firsthand from children and parents. She said that most of the 4th graders offered advice related to patience, kindness and respect. **“It’s important for teachers to realize that kids are more successful learners when they feel cared for and comfortable in their learning environment,”** said Dr. Reilly. **“Students will also be more willing to take risks, which is important for critical thinking. They need to know it’s ok to ask questions, and to be wrong sometimes.”**

## High School Tours Well-Attended

Each fall White Plains High School hosts parents of private and parochial school students, along with parents of Highlands students, to show them opportunities offered by the High School and have their questions answered. Visiting parents hear from each of the High School's Curriculum Coordinators, review the course catalog, learn about the Athletics Department and the extensive extracurricular activities, and are taken on a tour of the building led by current students. According to Principal Ellen Doherty, parents are interested to learn that White Plains High School has all the advantages of a large campus, with a wide variety of offerings to suit every learning level and interest, while maintaining a small-school feeling in regard to student-staff connection. Staff and extra help are always available and there is a club or group that appeals to just about every interest. Last year, a total of 14 students came in from private and parochial schools, nine to the High School.

## Books Donated in Memory of Alma Cormican

The Friends of White Plains Public Schools presented 60 art and music books to the elementary schools at a ceremony in the Church Street School Library on December 13th. The books were funded by contributions from dozens of colleagues and friends in memory of Alma Cormican, an esteemed teacher for 34 years and President of the Teachers Association. The event was organized and hosted by Ellen Epstein, a retired teacher and a Board member of the Friends. On hand to accept the books were librarians from four district elementary schools.

Librarians Ben Talbot from Church Street, Monnel Cremin from Mamaroneck Avenue School, Lauren Courtney from George Washington, Cathy O'Brien from Ridgeway School and Lucy Roman, the District's Director of Library Services.

