

# GNPS BULLETIN

a publication of the GREAT NECK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Where Discovery Leads to Greatness*

## Keeping Our Schools Safe

Following recent school shootings across the country, including the tragic events at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida on February 14, communities nationwide are re-examining school security. Here in Great Neck Public Schools, we are also evaluating our current security measures and discussing how we can best protect our children and our staff.

Our district has taken a proactive approach to security over the years, investing in technology and trained security personnel to help keep our schools safe from a wide range of potential security threats. As a result, GNPS has comprehensive security protocols and procedures in place, which are continuously practiced, evaluated, and revised by our building and district-level safety committees. Some of these safety measures include:

- State-certified **security guards** — including retired police officers — who are stationed at the main entrance of each school and patrol the district 24 hours a day. Our guards receive training from the Nassau County Police Department and the New York State Department of Homeland Security.
- A closed-circuit, streaming and recorded **video surveillance system** that provides a live feed from more than 600 cameras, 24 hours a day.
- The **LobbyGuard Visitor Management System**, which requires visitors to show identification upon entering all of our school buildings and checks drivers licenses against a state database.
- Our **enhanced 911 phone system**, which allows immediate, live communication to administrators and safety team members whenever a 911 call is placed from any land line in the district.
- Smart phone apps that can **remotely lock and unlock** access-controlled exterior doors in an emergency situation, as well as the **911 Rave Alert** app, which notifies police about an active shooter situation and immediately dispatches officers to the scene.
- **Evacuation and lock down drills** that are conducted throughout the year, incorporating variables to review procedures associated with different scenarios.

We also work cooperatively with local law enforcement here in Great Neck, in Nassau County, and with representatives from the Department of Homeland Security. Police are a visible presence around the district; officers visit our schools and have excellent relationships with our building administrators and security personnel.

In recent weeks, district leaders have met with school security experts, elected officials, and local law enforcement to discuss best practices. We have arranged for two separate security assessments — one by the NCPD and a second by an independent firm — where professionals will tour our facilities, review our procedures, and offer recommendations to further strengthen our safeguards.



*Members of the UPTC Legislative Committee discuss school safety during a joint meeting with Great Neck politicians Assemblyman Anthony D'Urso and Senator Elaine Phillips on March 2.*

The Board of Education and district administration have listened to security concerns from the community and are evaluating additional staffing and security enhancements to be considered as part of the 2018-2019 school budget.

“In addition to all of these security-specific measures, it is important to recognize the important role of our exceptional staff, who make meaningful connections with our students on a daily basis,” says Superintendent Dr. Teresa Prendergast. “This is critical when it comes to ensuring the physical, social, and emotional safety of our students.”

“It is our responsibility as a school community to remain vigilant in our efforts to provide a safe school environment for all students and staff,” Dr. Prendergast reminds residents. “If a parent or student sees or hears something that might threaten the safety of someone in our school community, it is important to report any concerns to the proper authorities.”

## GNPS Students Show Support for Parkland



*GNPS students have shared their support with the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School community through video messages and banners that were sent to Florida.*



*Our science specialists work with elementary students in a STEAM lab setting to provide hands-on lessons for topics such as robotics and programming, pictured here.*



*The SEEK enrichment program for grades 3-5 offers special projects and independent research opportunities.*



*Our schools and parent-teacher groups sponsor STEAM activities for families that demonstrate how students are learning in the classroom and encourage activities at home.*



*Students learn to identify an area of concern and use investigatory methods to find a solution. Here, middle school students work with a hydroponic tower garden to explore vertical agriculture as a means to feed the world's growing population.*

## FOCUS ON SCIENCE

Great Neck Public Schools is incredibly proud of the success of our science program at all levels. Our challenging courses are led by teachers who inspire, guide, and coach our students with extraordinary results. From elementary science projects through national high school science research competitions, our students demonstrate a strong understanding of science concepts and real-world applications.

Our students are introduced to science at the elementary level, where science specialists teach the curriculum and lead students in hands-on laboratory activities that develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. The SEEK (Supporting Educational Exploration and Knowledge) enrichment program for third, fourth, and fifth graders also offers special projects and independent research activities.

This school year, the New York State Education Department adopted the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) as part of the elementary curriculum. These new standards place an increased focus on science and engineering practices, as well as understanding how these skills can be applied in different subject areas. Our science, technology, and SEEK specialists are collaborating with classroom teachers to integrate these concepts of questioning, research, and discovery across our curriculum. Our elementary teachers also received training on NGSS at Superintendent Conference Day in November.



*On March 15, our district hosted a meeting of the Nassau County Elementary Schools Principals Association to showcase our outstanding STEAM initiatives. Science, Technology and SEEK specialists at John F. Kennedy School demonstrated how Great Neck Schools incorporate a variety of high-tech devices and low-tech activities into the curriculum to develop skills in science, technology, engineering, art, and math.*

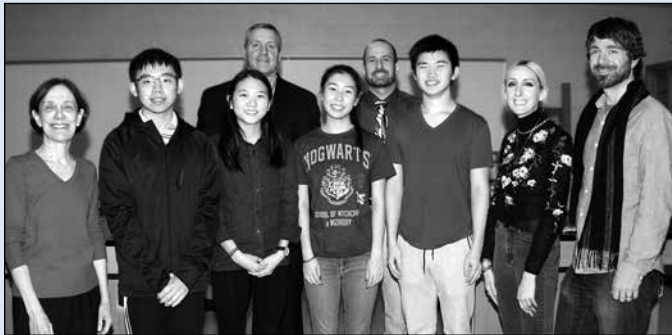
The secondary science program builds upon this strong foundation with an increased focus on research. Classroom lessons and lab experiments are designed to cultivate students' investigatory skills, which can translate into any subject area. At the high school level, a wide range of science electives supplement Regents and college-level Advanced Placement courses to help students expand their science studies and explore their interests in the field.

Our award-winning science research program, which begins at the middle school level, teaches students exemplary research strategies and presentation skills through constructive feedback from educators and peers alike. High school students who advance through our science research program are guided by our teachers during the school year and mentored by renowned scientists over the summer months at leading research facilities and universities across the country. Our students' cutting-edge research and remarkable presentations have earned recognition through several of the nation's most prestigious competitions, including the Siemens Competition and the Regeneron Science Talent Search.

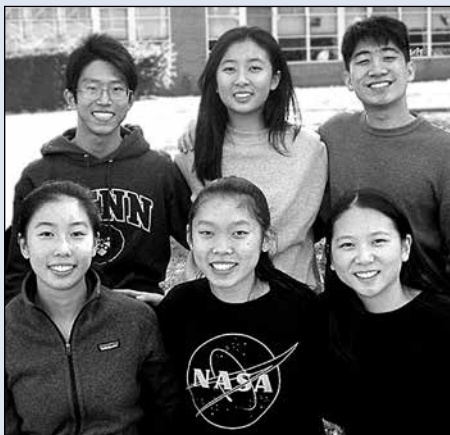
# Science Research Students Earn Top Honors

## 2018 Regeneron Science Talent Search

Seven high school students from GNPS — three from North High and four from South High — have been named 2018 Regeneron Science Talent Search Scholars. They are Natasha Dilamani, Amy Shteyman, and Megan Xu of North High, and Daniel Kim, Eric Kuang, Cindy Wang, and Michelle Xing of South High.



The Regeneron competition is the former Westinghouse and then the Intel Science Talent Search. The Talent Search, which started in 1942, is the nation's oldest, and often considered its most prestigious, pre-college science competition. GNPS has the second-largest number of Regeneron Scholars from a single district on Long Island.



## 2017 Siemens Competition

This past October, six South High students were named Semifinalists in the 2017 Siemens Competition in Math, Science, and Technology. The Siemens competition is one of the leading student research competitions in the science community. Research projects by Shao Chen, Kimberly Lu, Cindy Wang, Ethan Wang, Michelle Xing, and Ann Zhang were among 491 Semifinalists nationwide. More than 1,860 projects submitted for consideration in this year's competition.

## LI Psychology Fair



North High students Aaron Geula, Sage Sherry, and Emma Young received awards for their science research presentations at the Long Island Psychology Fair in January.



## Science Teams Win Regional Competitions

Four Science Olympiad teams from North High and South High finished in the top 11 at the Nassau West Regional Competition in February. The first place team from South High advanced to the state competition in March. Congratulations to team members Adrian Chen, Ann Zhang, Eric Kuang, Jennifer Wang, Kelley Chiu, Kimberly Lu, Michael Lu, Shawn Kang, Yuhan Liu, Katherine Hui, Daniel Xu, David Wang, Eric Bae, Veronica Khim, and Allison Zhang.



The team of Matthew Moy, Matthew Tsui, Jansen Wong, and Charlie Yin from South Middle (above, left) won first-place in the Long Island Middle School Regional Science Bowl at Brookhaven National Laboratory in March. The team of Adrian Chen, Shawn Kang, Yuhan Liu, Jennifer Wang, and Anthony Zhan from South High (right) came in second at the High School Regional Competition in January.

## LI Junior Science & Humanities Symposium

Four GNPS students — Simona Fine, Aaron Geula, and Amy Shteyman of North High, and Kelley Chiu of South High — received awards at the regional Long Island Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS) in February. Additionally, Amy Shteyman has been named a regional delegate and is invited to present her research at the National JSHS in Maryland in May.

Follow us on Facebook to see more of our students' awards and accomplishments!



# GREAT EDUCATORS NEVER STOP LEARNING

Great Neck Public Schools prides itself on quality staff development, which has a direct and positive impact on classroom instruction and our school environment. Throughout the school year, the district provides opportunities for our administrators, teachers, and staff to collaborate with one another and consult with education experts to write new curricula, share strategies, develop skills, and better understand new state and federal requirements. This approach of continuous improvement is reflected in the success of our academic programs.



*Administrators work with nationally-recognized experts to develop evaluation tools to maximize the benefits of classroom instruction.*



*Health and safety workshops led by our own certified staff, including CPR and AED training, are offered free-of-charge to all district employees to share life-saving skills.*



*Elementary teachers learn about the new Next Generation Science Standards on Superintendent Conference Day in November.*

Our faculty and administrators are education leaders who constantly strive to advance their programs and provide the best possible instruction for our students. Congratulations to the following staff members who have been recognized for their commitment to excellence:



Matthew Blackstone and Theresa Walters, members of the English department at North High School, are the first two GNPS teachers to achieve National Board Certification. This certification is awarded by the National Board

for Professional Teaching Standards following a rigorous program that requires several portfolio submissions and computer-based assessments to demonstrate excellence and leadership in education. Only 149 teachers from New York earned this certification this year; Mr. Blackstone and Ms. Walters join more than 118,000 National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) nationwide.



North Middle School Principal Gerald Cozine earned his Doctorate in Educational and Policy Leadership (Ed.D.) from Hofstra University. He successfully defended his dissertation titled, "Recess at the Middle Level: A Descriptive Case Study of an Impactful Recess" to a committee of

Hofstra professors and public school administrators, including GNPS Assistant Superintendent Dr. Stephen Lando and former GNPS Superintendent Dr. Thomas Dolan.



Alan C. Schwartz, music department head at South Middle School, was selected by the New York State English Council as a 2017 Educator of Excellence. While this award is usually presented to English teachers, Mr. Schwartz was recognized for his instructional approach that links music performance with English Language Arts. Mr. Schwartz accepted the award during a presentation at the New York State English Council's annual conference in Albany this past fall.



## New Polling Locations

Effective December 2017, there are four polling locations for school district elections. The new election districts are indicated on the map below. Registered voters will only be allowed to cast a ballot at their assigned polling location.

**Saddle Rock School**  
*new location*

**E.M. Baker School**  
*existing location reconfigured*

**Lakeville School**  
*new location*

**South High School**  
*existing location reconfigured*



## WHERE DO I VOTE?

A new online tool on our website allows residents to confirm their registration status as well as their assigned polling location. Scan the QR code, or visit the district website at [www.greatneck.k12.ny.us](http://www.greatneck.k12.ny.us) and click on Budget—Voter Registration.

This information is also available by calling the District Clerk on school days between 9:00 AM–4:00 PM at (516) 441-4020.

## Important Budget Dates

Public budget meetings to discuss the 2018-2019 school budget started in March and will continue into May. Residents are encouraged to attend these meetings and take an active role in the budget process. The 2018-2019 preliminary budget is posted on our district website and copies are available in our schools, at all branches of the Great Neck Library, and in the District Clerk's office in the Phipps Administration Building. Printed copies will also be available at the following meetings:

### Informal Budget Hearing

Monday, April 9 • 7:30 PM at South High\*

### Official Budget Hearing & Budget Adoption

Tuesday, April 17 • 7:30 PM at North Middle\*

### Budget Hearing (discussion only)

Monday, May 7 • 7:30 PM at South Middle\*

### Budget Vote & Board of Education Election

Tuesday, May 15 • Polls open from 7:00 AM - 10:00 PM

*\*Hearing follows a Student Recognition ceremony, which starts at 7:30 PM.*

## Energy Performance Contract Generates Real Savings

Energy-efficient changes implemented throughout the district ten years ago have generated more than \$5.3 million in savings from lower electric and fuel expenses — exceeding projections by more than \$240,000.

The Great Neck Public Schools entered into an Energy Performance Contract (EPC) with Honeywell in 2007. Professionals from Honeywell conducted an energy audit and recommended improvements for lighting, heating/cooling systems, and weatherizing our facilities. These energy-efficient upgrades were completed at no additional cost to our taxpayers, as the improvements are funded over an 18 year period using the district's savings from lower electric and fuel costs.

We are more than half-way through the payback period, and the savings generated by these energy-efficient upgrades have exceeded expectations by almost a quarter of a million dollars.

These upgrades are guaranteed to provide significant savings through 2025. The district is pleased with the success of this initiative, which has improved our facilities, generated real savings for our taxpayers, and reduced our impact on the environment.



## GREAT NECK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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### Mission Statement

The Great Neck Public School District provides an innovative and collaborative educational environment that supports academic excellence and the social and emotional growth of all students so that they may become life-long learners and compassionate, productive members of a diverse, global society.

### Board of Education

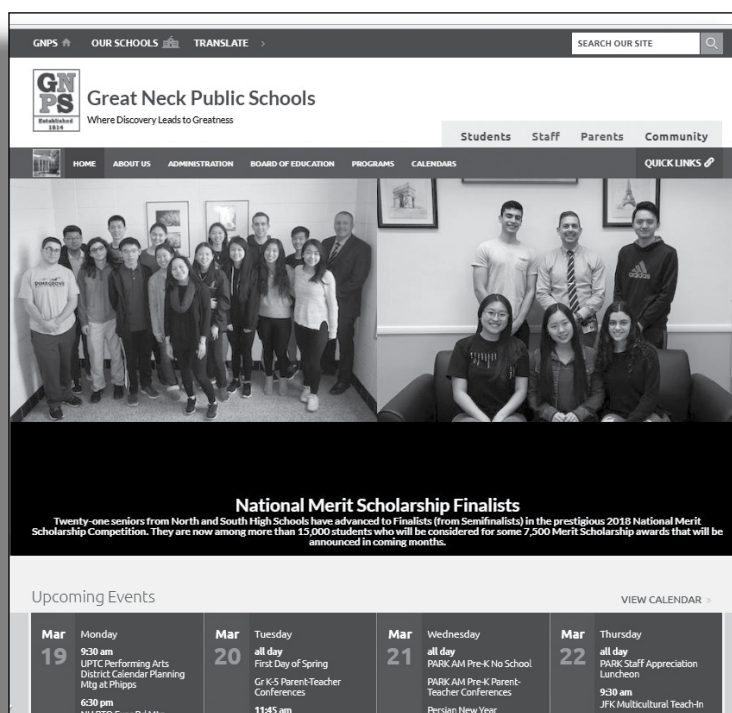
Barbara Berkowitz, president  
Donald L. Ashkenase, vice president  
Donna Peirez, trustee  
Rebecca Sassouni, trustee  
Jeffrey Shi, trustee

### Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Teresa Prendergast

[www.greatneck.k12.ny.us](http://www.greatneck.k12.ny.us) Great Neck Public Schools #GNPSEducationalExcellence #DiscoverGreatness

## COMING SOON...New District Website



Twenty years after the debut of the district's first website in 1998, the Great Neck Public Schools will launch a completely redesigned website this spring.

### The new website will feature:

- a fresh, clean look with modern aesthetics
  - consistent navigation
  - built-in language translation
  - social media integration
  - an interactive online calendar
- ...and much more!*

The site will be ADA compliant and display responsively on all devices, delivering a quality experience whether you're using your PC, tablet, or smart phone.

While our online home will look completely different, the address will remain the same:  
[www.greatneck.k12.ny.us](http://www.greatneck.k12.ny.us)

## SAVE THE DATE

### Community Health & Wellness Fair • May 8, 2018 • North High School

The Great Neck Public Schools, in partnership with the United Parent-Teacher Council (UPTC), will host a Community Health and Wellness Fair for the entire community on May 8 at 6:30 PM. The Fair will feature a keynote speaker, break-out sessions by a variety of health and safety experts, and an exhibitor's space in the gymnasium. All residents of all ages are encouraged to attend — there will be something for everyone!