



News Bulletin

EAST ISLIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

SUMMER 2014

A MID-SUMMER MESSAGE

Linda J. Rozzi, Superintendent of Schools

Dear East Islip Families,

I hope this summer message finds you enjoying all the beauty that summertime brings – time with family and friends, and time to relax and unwind as we prepare for a new academic year.

The summer session is always a very busy time for us, as our team is preparing for a welcoming opening day for all students on Sept. 4. Our buildings are being readied, thanks to the terrific efforts of our outstanding buildings and grounds crews. Our faculty is busy preparing for high-quality instruction, and our leadership team is putting the final touches on the small details that make everything come together for a wonderful start to the new school year. As I reflect on the past year, I'd like to highlight some East Islip accomplishments that were guided by the district's 2013-2014 strategic plan as the chapters of our remarkable history continue to be written.

First and foremost, join me in congratulating the 391 graduates from our senior class who walked across the field at graduation and who are now proud alumni representing the East Islip Class of 2014. Their accomplishments are impressive, and I have no doubt that each and every graduate will go on to represent our community with pride. Our graduates were awarded more than \$6.5 million in scholarships, and many walked away with a significant number of college credits that will now count toward their post-secondary degrees. Special congratulations must be given to all of our families for raising such fine young men and women, as well as to all faculty and staff who helped them on their educational journey.

During the last year, we made many improvements in the instructional environment that are worthy of mention. Our instructional team of primary school educators researched and recommended the implementation of a K-2 balanced literacy

initiative that returns readers' and writers' workshops to our classrooms so that our youngest students develop into engaged and thoughtful readers and writers during their formative years.

We also worked diligently this past year on restoring many programs our East Islip students want and deserve. This coming September, you will see the return of third-grade instrumental music, sixth-grade foreign language study and middle school robotics, all of which have been proven to advance critical thinking skills and learner engagement, in addition to positioning students for a successful high school entry.

Additionally, much of the past year's work focused on strategic goals that bring value to an East Islip diploma. We will enhance Advanced Placement opportunities for our high school students with the September addition of two popular courses, AP Music Theory and AP Psychology. Moreover, our teachers of AP classes have been studying outside the district this summer, gearing up to deliver these college-level curricula that are approved by the College Board.

In September we will also see a new career academy in culinary arts and hospitality at the high school level. This new academy complements our three other existing career academies: the International Business Globalization Career Academy, the Environment Green Academy and the Medical and Health Technology Career Academy. These academies are driven by project-based learning and content-area integration in their finest forms. They also carry the very prestigious New York State-approved Career and Technical Education endorsement on an East Islip diploma, which my team worked diligently to attain this year from the New York State Education Department.

In the area of technology, we have also accomplished a great deal, expanding our wireless access and capacity throughout all of our buildings, procuring new technology for world computing and equipping classrooms with computer projector capabilities.

Please partner with us as we enter a very exciting school year. Our student performance demonstrates incredibly high achievement, and our athletic and extracurricular programs are outstanding. Although there are significant challenges facing public schools today, know that we will continue to embrace the opportunity to be leaders in all endeavors. After all, our commitment is to ensure that our students have the critical thinking skills and leverage they need to be successful in the world beyond East Islip. I have no doubt that we will lead the way.

Have an enjoyable summer!

Very truly yours,
Linda J. Rozzi
Superintendent of Schools

New Start Times for Reconfigured Elementary Schools

- In conjunction with the grade span reconfiguration of the district's four elementary schools, beginning in September, new start times will be in effect.
- For Connetquot and Timber Point, which will now educate students from prekindergarten through second grade, school hours will begin at 9:42 a.m. and end at 3:42 p.m.
- At John F. Kennedy and Ruth C. Kinney, now both for grades 3-5, the new school hours start at 9:12 a.m. and end at 3:12 p.m.

Graduation Day



With the strong sunlight appropriately reflecting the bright hopes and dreams of the Class of 2014, East Islip held its 87th commencement on June 26.

As family and friends cheered wildly, the seniors marched in to Boomer Esiason Stadium to the traditional sound of Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstance," performed by the school's orchestra and directed by Susan Rydzeski and Alyssa Sciarrino. Emily DeMaio sang "The Star-Spangled Banner," followed by a rousing rendition of East Islip's alma mater by the vocal quartet of Janine Alto, Paige Epstein, Nicholas Rocco and Maxx Vogelsberg.

Principal William Brennen made the audience smile with his humorous but apt listing of the appropriate lessons in comparing life beyond high school to the song "Copacabana." "Life will not always be easy, but with hard work and determination, you can achieve your goals," he told the students he had watched over for the last four years. "It is our hope that you always choose paths of integrity."

On this day of honoring the future and remembering the past, outgoing Assistant Superintendent for Business Carl Fraser was

given an honorary diploma, and Brennen welcomed 16 members of the Class of 1964, who were congratulated and presented with special certificates.

Salutatorian Grant Stroehlein spoke to his fellow seniors about the necessity of failure in providing opportunities to grow and become a better person, noting, "The only true failure is one of effort. Always keep trying, as only you can decide when you've reached your goals." He described his personal disappointment in not being accepted to his dream college, but explained how the setback enabled him to reassess and reset his life. "The silver lining was personal growth," he said.

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Valedictorian William Meehan decried the lack of sleep common to studious seniors, and shared his personal motto, instilled in him by his mother, "Don't be an ingrate – be great." In closing, he assured his classmates, "We aren't leaving our time here behind, we're taking it with us."

"Let it be known that this year's graduating class has written a wonderful chapter in the rich history of East Islip High School and our community," said Superintendent of Schools Linda J. Rozzi. She urged the graduates to

work hard at developing likeable, pleasing personalities. "In doing so, you'll find yourself naturally acting morally and ethically without realizing it," she said. "Be likeable if you really care about your reputation."

Board President Louis F. Raffone's speech was short and sweet, urging the students to



applaud their parents for their crucial role in getting them to where they are today.

Following the presentation of diplomas, Class of 2014 President Amanda Garcia gave a farewell address, thanking everyone in her class. "This is the future right here, and we have exceeded all expectations," she said. "Let us throw our caps!"

Red headgear flew skyward, and as the orchestra played the recessional march from Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, the new alumni filed proudly out of the stadium to begin their celebrations.

