



Discovery

GREAT NECK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

BY KENNETH R. BOSSERT, ED.D.

We're only a few weeks into the new school year and already there is so much to celebrate within our school community. This fall newsletter is brimming with accolades for our students, staff and schools — an early indication of an outstanding year to come.

In the first month alone, Lakeville Elementary School was announced as a 2024 National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education, and E.M. Baker Elementary received international recognition as an Apple Distinguished School. Additionally, Great Neck continues to rank among the best districts in the state and nation according to Niche. These honors reflect our district's commitment to academic excellence and the forward-thinking practices that affirm Great Neck's position as a leader in public education.

I strongly believe that "The Race for Excellence Has No Finish Line," and our district is committed to continuously moving forward. Before students were welcomed on the first day of school, our staff attended a Superintendent's Conference Day program on Sept. 3 that outlined initiatives for the year ahead, including our ongoing focus on news media literacy, careful examination of the K-8 Literacy Program, effective uses of artificial intelligence (AI) in an instructional setting, and exploration of Restorative Practices to enhance and improve student discipline strategies, to name a few. We also continue to support anti-hate initiatives and programs that celebrate the diversities that exist within our exceptional community. These topics, along with many others, will be discussed in the Board of Education's newly formed curriculum committee. Please anticipate additional information regarding dates, times and locations of future meetings.

With school back in session, I enjoy visiting classrooms frequently to witness learning in action. I'm always impressed by the creative lessons, with students working together to explore new concepts under the guidance of our amazing faculty. I often highlight these moments on my X (formerly Twitter) account at [Dr.Bossert@GreatNeck_Super](#) along with the district's hashtag, [#DiscoverGreatness](#). Please also consider following the official GNPS Facebook and Instagram accounts, which showcase learning activities and achievements throughout our schools.

I look forward to opportunities to meet and connect at district events over the coming months, including our high school musical productions in November and winter concerts in December. Please take advantage of these opportunities to attend school events, become involved and Discover Greatness!



WELCOME BACK, GREAT NECK!

The 2024–25 school year kicked off with a sense of excitement and renewed energy for students and teachers throughout the district. We thank our entire school community for a successful start to the year and look forward to the year ahead!



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

BY GRANT TOCH

I hope all our families enjoyed a smooth start to the school year. It's been great to see GNPS school spirit on display at back-to-school events, including our high schools' Homecoming festivities in September.

As a Board, we are committed to working together — not only as Trustees, but also with the greater school community — to advance our programs and offerings, ensuring that Great Neck remains among the top districts in the nation. At our October meeting, the Board approved our annual goals which focus on enhancing student achievement, community unity and engagement; preparing students for the post-secondary experience; and supporting student well-being and a well-rounded student experience. The 2024–25 Board Goals are available in their entirety at www.greatneck.k12.ny.us/board-goals.

In support of these Goals, I'm pleased to announce the creation of three new Board Committees for this year: Budget Advisory Committee, Curriculum Committee, and Legislative Committee. Each committee is chaired by a Board trustee with a liaison from central administration, and meetings will be open to the community. We look forward to listening and engaging in healthy dialogue about topics that are important to residents, parents and students. Committee meetings will begin after the Holiday Recess; meeting dates, times, and locations will be shared through GNPS communication channels.

As a reminder, all Board meetings for the 2024–25 school year will take place at E.M. Baker School. It's our hope that hosting public meetings in a single, central location will improve accessibility and the recently-renovated auditorium at Baker provides a bright setting for community members attending in person or tuning in to the livestream from home. Meeting dates and recordings are available by visiting www.greatneck.k12.ny.us/meetings.

We are incredibly proud of our district's achievements, which are made possible through our community's continued support of our students and our schools. On behalf of the Board of Education, thank you for your partnership. We look forward to a successful year ahead.



NEW FACULTY

The Great Neck Public Schools is pleased to welcome more than 40 new teachers this year. In late August, the district hosted a two-day New Faculty Orientation program to provide new teachers with important information and tools for a successful start to their first year in the district.

New teachers and pupil personnel staff were greeted by Board of Education trustees, district administrators, building principals,

presidents from the Great Neck Teachers Association (GNTA) and the Association of Supervisors and Administrators (SAGES), who all expressed their support for our newest faculty. The orientation program included a bus tour led by guides from the Great Neck Historical Society, which highlighted Great Neck's deep history and several landmarks throughout the peninsula.



NEW FACES, NEW PLACES

The district welcomes several administrators to new positions for the 2024–25 school year. Some are familiar faces within the school community, while others are new to the Great Neck Public Schools.



KERRI O'ROURKE
Assistant Director
for Special Education

Kerri O'Rourke joined the Great Neck Public Schools this summer as an assistant director of special education, following the retirement of Ellice Geller. Ms. O'Rourke comes to Great Neck from the North Babylon School District, where she was an assistant director of special education.

Her 16-year career in education also includes 10 years as an elementary and high school social worker, and three years as a CPSE and elementary CSE chairperson. In addition to her work in public schools, Ms. O'Rourke has also served as a clinical social worker in a hospital setting.



ADAM HOPKINS
Interim Principal,
South High School

In July, the Board of Education appointed Assistant Principal Adam Hopkins to serve as interim principal for the 2024–25 school year. Mr. Hopkins is well-known to the South High community, as this is his fifth year as a member of the school's leadership team. Mr. Hopkins was first

appointed as a South High assistant principal in 2020, and his resume includes 10 years as a building administrator and eight years as a school counselor. Before becoming a public-school educator, Mr. Hopkins enjoyed a successful seven-year career as a lacrosse coach in college athletics.



BRENDAN NELSON
Principal, North Middle School

Brendan Nelson was named principal of North Middle School following the retirement of Dr. Jerry Cozine. Mr. Nelson has six years of experience as a middle school assistant principal, most recently serving as North Middle's assistant principal for the 2023–24 school year. His career in education spans 22

years as a high school social studies teacher, a middle school counselor and an administrator. Mr. Nelson first established a connection with the North Middle community when he served as a school counselor at North Middle from 2015–18.



MICHAEL DIPASQUALE
Assistant Principal,
South High School

Michael DiPasquale has spent his entire 24-year education career in the Great Neck Public Schools, most recently serving as the South High School science department chair since 2018. Prior to working at South High, Mr. DiPasquale taught science at North Middle School for

18 years, including seven years as the science department chair. In 2018, Mr. DiPasquale was named a Master Teacher through the New York State Master Teacher Program (NYSMTP).



JENNIFER BOOTH
Assistant Principal,
North Middle School

In August, Jennifer Booth was appointed as an assistant principal at North Middle School to fill the vacancy following Mr. Nelson's promotion to principal. Ms. Booth is a familiar face at North Middle, having worked in the building for the past 15 years as a Special Education teacher. In addition to her teaching

responsibilities, she has served as dean of students for the past seven years. Ms. Booth's 25-year career also includes two years as a special education teacher at Saddle Rock Elementary School.



THOMAS DEPAOLA
Acting Assistant Principal,
South High School

Thomas DePaola has joined the South High administrative team to serve as an acting assistant principal while Adam Hopkins fulfills his responsibilities as interim principal. Mr. DePaola is a veteran school administrator who retired this past June from his 12-year position as a middle

and high school principal in the Carle Place School District. Before becoming an administrator, Mr. DePaola taught secondary science for 18 years including biology, chemistry and life science.

Lakeville Elementary Named a 2024 National Blue Ribbon School

Lakeville Elementary School is one of only two schools on Long Island and 356 schools in the country to be recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a 2024 National Blue Ribbon School. This designation is one of the nation's highest honors awarded to schools in recognition of exemplary academic performance.

This is the second time Lakeville Elementary has achieved National Blue Ribbon School status since the program's inception in 1982. Lakeville was previously recognized in 2009.

"Being named a National Blue Ribbon School is an honor, and one that affirms the hard work of Lakeville's students, teachers and families," says Lakeville Principal Emily Zucal, who attributes the school's trajectory of high performance to students' investment in their own learning, talented teachers and staff who are committed to meeting the needs of each and every learner, and cooperative and supportive families who are eager to partner with educators to help students meet with success. "Lakeville is also fortunate to benefit from the expertise of district-level personnel and a supportive Board of Education who contribute to the success of our school community," she said.

District officials will represent Lakeville Elementary School at a two-day awards ceremony in Washington, D.C., in November to celebrate this prestigious recognition. The school is also in the process of planning a celebration of its own so the school community can participate.



E.M. Baker Elementary School Designated an Apple Distinguished School

The district is pleased to announce that E.M. Baker Elementary School has been recognized as an Apple Distinguished School for the 2024–27 program term. Schools apply and are selected for this distinction based on their commitment to continuous innovation in education and using Apple products to inspire, imagine and impact teaching and learning.

Apple Distinguished Schools are centers of leadership and educational excellence, with a clear vision for how technology-rich environments support learning goals. In Apple Distinguished Schools, forward-thinking leaders and their communities work to inspire, imagine and impact teaching and learning, and they have documented results of academic accomplishments.

Schools all over the world are using iPad and Mac to transform learning. As teachers incorporate technology into their lessons, they empower students to lead, learn and thrive, to discover new opportunities, and to make their world a better place.



Scan the QR code to learn more and watch a video on the district website.

GNPS/TV Wins Top National Award for Excellence



For the third time in six years, Great Neck Public Schools Television (GNPS/TV) has won the Overall Excellence in Educational Television and Broadcast Media Award presented through the Alliance for Community Media (ACM) 2024 Hometown Media Awards. This award recognizes the best educational channel in the country, focusing on TV programs produced throughout the year and overall operational activities.

Additionally, individual student-produced programs created by GNPS/TV have earned three national Hometown Media Awards and four international Telly Awards this year.

Musicians Selected for **All-State Ensembles**

Thirteen highly talented musicians from North High School and South High School have been selected for the prestigious and very competitive 2024 New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) All-State Conference, to be held in Rochester from Dec. 5 through Dec. 8. Additionally, six students have been named as alternates for the event. Thousands of students auditioned for this competition last spring at solo and ensemble festivals throughout the state.

North High All-State Musicians

Alexander Baluyut – trombone, Wind Ensemble
Nina Bikhman – alto, Mixed Chorus
Ian Loo – violin, String Orchestra
Julianna Miano – soprano, Mixed Chorus
Taj Malhotra – tenor 1, Mixed Chorus

Alternates

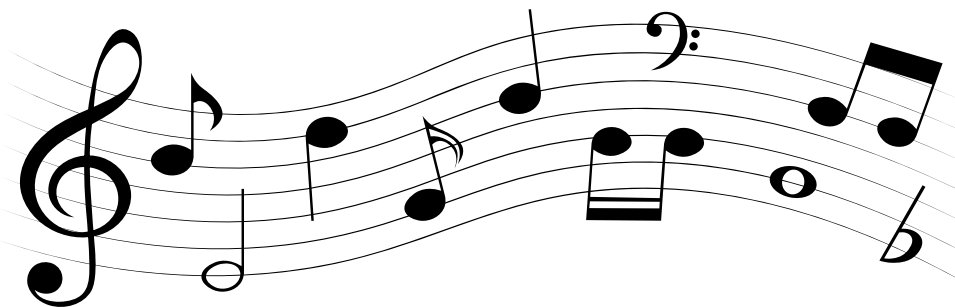
Nina Bikhman – jazz alto alternate
Ethan Lam – violin alternate

South High All-State Musicians

Christopher Fukuda – tenor, Mixed Choir
Olivia Gu – Bb clarinet, Wind Ensemble
Dylan Kim – violin, String Orchestra
Ruiqi Liu – flute, Wind Ensemble
Lana Miao – soprano, Treble Choir
Jinxian Elaine Su – viola, Symphony Orchestra
Sarah Sun – alto saxophone, Symphonic Band
Erin Wong – cello, String Orchestra

Alternates

Samuel Fisk – English horn alternate
Joanna Huan – violin alternate
David Kagan – bass alternate
Sophia Wu – flute alternate



NYSSMA Piano Showcase

North High School junior Dale Yang has been selected to perform in the NYSSMA Piano Showcase, part of the 2024 All-State Winter Conference. There were 148 applicants for this year's showcase and only 11 musicians were chosen for this prestigious honor. Dale will perform *Ballade No. 2 in F Major, Op. 38*, by Chopin. He was nominated for this honor by Jacquelyn Tomlet, North High band director.



National Merit Scholarship Program Honors 86 Students

2025 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists

The district is pleased to announce that 37 seniors have been recognized as Semifinalists in the prestigious 2025 National Merit Scholarship competition. Semifinalists represent less than 1% of all high school seniors nationwide. These students scored among the highest in New York State on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT), which they took last year.

Best of luck to Great Neck's Semifinalists from North High (pictured below left, with Principal Dr. Dan Holtzman), South High (below center, with Interim Principal Adam Hopkins) and Village School (below right, with Principal Stephen Goldberg) as they advance in the competition for National Merit Scholarship awards.

North High School

Johnathan Ahdout
Justin Chen
Valerie Lan
Jacob Levine
Ashley Liu
Aiden Maher
Dillan Palma
Daliah Segal
Lotus Shwe
Tamas Smulovics
Isaac Xu
Isaac Yan
Logan Ye
Zachary Zar

South High School

Luna Bae	Edward Xu
Christina Bai	Ivan Xu
Megan Chin-Lam Chan	Richard Xu
Edmund Gan	Edison Yuan
Jonathan Jia	Jixuan (Jason) Zhang
Ruiqi Liu	Laura Zhang
Paige Louie	Zican (Arthur) Zhang
Althea Ou	Kalli Zhu
Yilin Qiao	
Sarah Sun	
William Tsang	
Evelyn Won	
Erin Wong	
Yujin (Lily) Wu	

Village School

Calvin Chang



2025 National Merit Commended Students

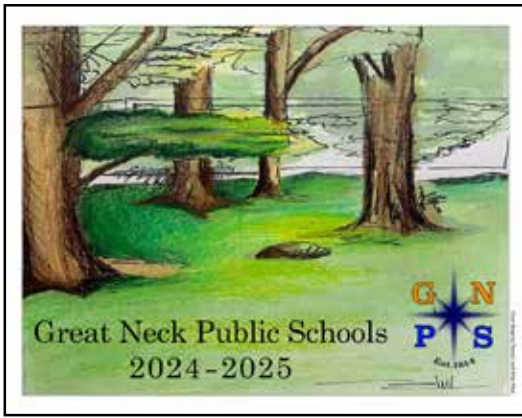
The National Merit Scholarship Program has named 49 seniors as Commended Students. These students placed among the top 50,000 of the more than 1.5 million juniors who took the 2025 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. Each honoree received a Letter of Commendation in recognition of exceptional academic promise. Although Commended Students do not continue in the competition for National Merit Scholarships, some become candidates for scholarships sponsored by corporations and businesses.

North High School

William Benjamin
Addison Chiu
Noam Hakimian
Gloria Hsia
Isabelle Ku
Andrew Law
Ian Loo
Katharine Park
Jeremy Shiu
Rebecca Slobin
Yilin (Lily) Wang
Katherine Zhao
Zheng (James) Zhou

South High School

Yule Bae	Wesley Joa	Aodi (Andy) Lin
Lauren Chen	Dylan Kim	Selena Lu
Zijian (Kent) Chen	Holly Krause	Gracie Meng
Adora Cho	Jinah (Gina) Kwak	Aarav Minocha
Akira Cho	Gloria Lee	Ryan Mohasin
Hugh Choi	Max Lee	Keon Woo (Richard) Oh
Omar Elkaray	Brandon Leung	Beatrice Pitt Stoller
David Feng	David Levy	Darren Sea
Samuel Fisk	Caden Li	Chiming Wang
Neha George	Jia-Dong (John) Li	Jinhong (Jessica) Wang
Anant Gupta	Danielle Liang	Victoria Wen
Colin Hu	Marisa Lim	Xinrui (Rebecca) Zhang



DISTRICT CALENDARS AVAILABLE

The district has many exciting events planned for the 2024–25 school year! Print copies of the District Calendar were mailed in August to district households with school-age children. Residents may request a copy of the print calendar by visiting the Phipps Administration Building (345 Lakeville Road) or calling (516) 441-4001. District events may also be viewed on the interactive calendar on the district website, www.greatneck.k12.ny.us.

GREAT NECK PUBLIC SCHOOLS NOW ON PARENTSQUARE!

The Great Neck Public Schools is now using ParentSquare for school communication, including email, text and app notifications. ParentSquare automatically generates an account for each parent using their preferred email address and phone number. Families are encouraged to download the ParentSquare app to enable stronger engagement and empower everyone in our school community to stay informed and connected.

Why Use ParentSquare?

- **Get Messages:** Receive important info by email, text and/or app notifications.
- **Stay Updated:** Choose to get messages right away or as a daily summary.
- **Consolidate Communications:** Review all messages in one location.
- **Keep in Touch:** Easily send and receive messages with your child's teacher.
- **Language Support:** Communicate in your preferred language.

Download the ParentSquare app today!

Download on the App Store | GET IT ON Google Play

ParentSquare

MUSICAL PRODUCTIONS

The performing arts departments at North High School and South High School will proudly present musical productions this fall. Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy Broadway-caliber productions right here in our schools!

North High Junior Players presents **Disney's Beauty and the Beast**

North High School Auditorium, 35 Polo Road

- Friday, Nov. 15 at 7 p.m.
- Saturday, Nov. 16 at 7 p.m.
- Sunday, Nov. 17 at 3 p.m.

Buy tickets online at www.greatneck.k12.ny.us/junior-players-tickets

Theatre South presents **Legally Blonde The Musical**

South High School Auditorium, 341 Lakeville Road

- Friday, Nov. 22 at 7 p.m.
- Saturday, Nov. 23 at 7 p.m.

Buy tickets online at www.gntheatresouth.com/tickets

Tickets for both performances will also be available for purchase at the door.



GREAT NECK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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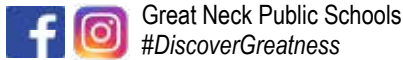
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Kenneth R. Bossert, Ed.D.

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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 lifelong learners and compassionate, productive members of a diverse, global society.

Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) Online Registration Opens Nov. 12, 2024

The online registration window for the district's Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) program opens on Nov. 12, 2024. Any child who legally resides in the school district and will be 4 years old on or before Dec. 1, 2025, is eligible for admission to the 2025–26 UPK half-day program. Only applications submitted online by Nov. 30 will be considered if a lottery is needed for placement in an a.m. or p.m. class. UPK is offered to district residents at no cost; a supplemental half-day, tuition-based enrichment program called Fun for Fours is also available with limited enrollment.

Kindergarten Online Registration Opens Jan. 2, 2025

Online kindergarten registration for the 2025–26 school year will open on Jan. 2, 2025. Any child who legally resides in the school district and will be 5 years old on or before Dec. 1, 2025, is eligible to register. All children who will attend kindergarten at a public or private school must register with the school district. Note: Students who currently attend UPK at the John F. Kennedy School or Parkville School do not need to reregister; parents of these students only need to complete a new kindergarten application.



For information about registering a child for school:

- www.greatneck.k12.ny.us/registration
- residency@greatneck.k12.ny.us
- (516) 441-4080

