

Community connection

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

NATIONAL MERIT HONORS

Continuing a strong commitment to academic excellence, four seniors from the district have been named semifinalists in the 2014 National Merit Scholarship Program. Aaron Goldstein and Brian Keohane from Wellington C. Mepham High School, Russell Miner from John F. Kennedy High School and Max Mogel from Sanford H. Calhoun High School have all been recognized with this prestigious honor.

"We are extremely proud that Aaron, Brian, Max and Russell have been recognized as semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program," said Superintendent of Schools John DeTommaso. "These four students represent what our district stands and strives for – academic excellence, integrity, scholarship and character. I wish all of these students the best of luck in their senior year in Bellmore-Merrick and in their bright futures."

Calhoun's Max Mogel is a self-motivated, enthusiastic scholar who is an active participant in his education. The challenging coursework he has chosen throughout high school and his extracurricular involvement are indicative of his commitment to his academic studies and his passion for learning outside of the classroom. Besides working to complete his Eagle Scout project, Max also worked alongside Dr. Xiu-Min Li this past summer at Mt. Sinai Hospital in her chemistry lab studying two experimental clinical trials that could possibly combat anaphylactic reactions to food allergies. Additionally, Max was recognized as an AP Scholar with Distinction and is a member of the Mathematics, Science, Italian and National Honor societies.

Passionate about his education and future, Kennedy's Russell Miner is a math enthusiast,

evident by his participation as a school team member in the Nassau County Math Tournament for the past three years, placing 14th in the ninth-grade division and ninth in the 11th-grade division. He's also received honorable mention in the Toshiba Exploravision Science Competition, a prestigious contest for K-12 students who focus on the research and development of technologies. Russell is also interested in film and hopes to become a math major in college next year.

Representing Mepham, Aaron Goldstein is an articulate, compassionate and principled young man. Throughout his high school career, Aaron has challenged himself with the most rigorous courses available, earning induction into the Science, Spanish, English, Mathematics and National Honor societies and being named an AP Scholar with Distinction. He has actively developed and conducted oncology research in the immunology program at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, where he worked for the last two summers. Aaron has also participated in the U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad Competition. Always giving back, he's an active participant in SADD, the literary magazine and Peer Leaders, as well as a mentor and tutor in the school's peer tutor and Student Network of Cooperative Science programs.

Brian Keohane, also from Mepham, is an unassuming, humble powerhouse and one of the school's most successful students. Brian's passion for science is evident in his successes as a member of the Science Olympiad team. Last year, he was the winner of the 2013 Long Island Physics Olympics and was named a U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad National Finalist. A leader both inside and outside of the classroom, he acts as a tutor through



Board President Susan Schwartz and Superintendent of Schools John DeTommaso with semifinalists Aaron Goldstein, Max Mogel, Russell Miner and Brian Keohane.

the peer tutor program, and is a member of Athletes Helping Athletes. Brian is a three-season varsity athlete on the basketball, track and cross-country teams, serving this year as captain of the latter two. He has devoted countless hours to community service within his school and community.

Semifinalists represent the top one-third, or about 16,000, of approximately 50,000 high scorers who took the PSAT/NMSQT, which has a total of 1.5 million entrants, according to the National Merit Scholarship Program. Students are ranked with a selection index score based on their combined scores in critical reading, writing and math. Semifinalists can compete to be named finalists and continue in the process to receive corporate and college-sponsored scholarships, as well as the esteemed National Merit Scholarship. Those advancing to the finalist stage will be notified in February of their standing.

Additionally, 12 district seniors have been designated as Commended Students in the program. Commended Students compose the other component of the top 50,000 high scorers. These remaining 34,000 high-achieving students were named Commended Students and will receive a Letter of Commendation from the NMSP to recognize their achievements.

Kieran Barrett-Snyder, Gabriel Jay, Eric Ravens, Daniel Sconzo, Duncan Sheridan and Nicholas Skarren were recognized from Calhoun. Shire Konigstein and Matthew Panzarino were acknowledged from Mepham, and Joshua Baron, Gregory Mora, Rohan Nagpal and Aaron Plass were recognized from Kennedy.

BELLMORE-MERRICK CENTRAL
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
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A Message from the Superintendent

Dear Members of the Community,

It is my pleasure to welcome everyone back for another exciting school year in Bellmore-Merrick. With deep gratitude and honor, I begin this new year as the superintendent back in the district where I carefully honed my teaching skills, learning from some truly incredible educators. In assuming my new role as superintendent, we now embark on this journey together, working diligently to ensure the best education for all students in the community. I'm proud to lead such a wonderful, kind and caring group of educators and staff members, all of whom make our students their number one priority.

The memories I have with Bellmore-Merrick have never left my heart. I got married while a teacher at Mephram. I can still so vividly remember my students genuinely getting excited when my beeper went off in my seventh-period class, letting me know my wife was about to give birth to our first child. I can remember the names of the students I worked with during a 15-year period of time, never more proud when they accomplished such wonderful things. I distinctly remember leaving Calhoun High School on a June day in 2003, wondering if I would ever return. When you invest your heart and soul into kids, your school and a community, the memories are rich and deep. So here it is 10 years later, and I cherish the opportunity I have been given to work in Bellmore-Merrick once again.

As I begin a new chapter in Bellmore-Merrick, I have a clear and distinct vision for the district. Our 2013-2014 theme is "One Voice, One Message," as all of our unique schools fall under the Bellmore-Merrick umbrella. Along with the Board of Education and our entire staff, the district will strive to close communication gaps that may exist, strengthen ties to the component elementary districts, remain fiscally prudent and responsible, renew our tradition of maintaining cutting-edge instructional and technological initiatives, continue to work closely with the community as our partners and, first and foremost, increase academic success and student performance. Additionally, we will further the reputation of the district and solidify its place as an educational powerhouse in the area.

Each and every day, our mission always starts and ends with the things we do for our students. All of us that make Bellmore-Merrick our home away from home will continue to reinvest in kids, families and our community.

Regards,
John DeTommaso
Superintendent of Schools



Front Row: Superintendent of Schools John DeTommaso, Board President Susan Schwartz, Vice President JoAnn DeLauter. Back Row: Trustees George Haile, Dr. Nancy Kaplan, Nina Lanci, Marion Blane, Janet Goller and Dr. Matthew Kuschner

Meet Your Board

The district is proud to introduce its 2013-14 Board of Education. The board dedicates countless hours to serving the schools and local community, ensuring that our students receive the best education possible.

Bond Information Vote Monday, December 2

The Board of Education voted unanimously to move forward with a community vote on a districtwide building renovation project, now set for Monday, December 2. The proposed plan will create more efficient buildings, improve resources for students and community members, and take advantage of smart financing options, while addressing critical building infrastructure and systems updates that are vital to the operation of the district. Renovations will take place at each of the district's schools, ensuring a safer and more supportive learning environment for students.

Among the proposed work is the replacement of all bathrooms throughout the district, upgrades to energy-efficient HVAC units that will also provide air conditioning in all classrooms and school auditoriums, conversion to dual oil/gas capabilities, roof repairs, security upgrades and enhancements, the addition of modern science laboratories at all schools and the installation of synthetic athletic fields at all five schools. The proposed project will ensure students have 21st-century facilities to support 21st-century learning each and every day.

The total anticipated cost of the project is \$49.896 million. Of this amount, 53.9 percent – or \$26.894 million – will be funded through New York State building aid. For the average household in the district, the project will cost approximately \$104 a year, or about \$8.67 a month.

On December 2, community residents will have the opportunity to vote on the proposal. Voting locations and hours are as follows: 7 a.m.-10 p.m. at the Shore Road School; 7 a.m.-9 p.m. at the Norman J. Levy Lakeside School; 6 a.m.-9 p.m. at the Newbridge Road School; and 2-10 p.m. at the Harold D. Fayette School.

For additional information on the project, including a list of improvements designated for each building, visit the district's website at www.bellmore-merrick.k12.ny.us.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY



Teachers participate in a workshop on Edmodo as part of the Professional Development Academy.

The new Professional Development Academy gives educators throughout the district the opportunity to participate in several different workshops this fall. These workshops enrich teachers with a vast range of information during after-school sessions taught by colleagues knowledgeable in a specific subject area.

“The Professional Development Academy is an important tool all teachers in our district can utilize to gain skills they may not have had before,” said Dr. Mara Bollettieri, assistant superintendent for personnel and administration.

Covering a range of topics, classes include “Deconstructing Common Core Algebra Modules 1 and 2” for grades 7-9, which offers instructional strategies and provides teachers with an opportunity to practice unfamiliar instructional techniques. In “Literacy Across the Content Areas,” participants explore tactics on how to incorporate reading strategies into their specific subject area. Additionally, instruction

on technologies such as Edmodo and Weebly are offered to supplement and enhance regular instruction.

The academies were developed as a way to offer staff members professional development in a convenient, useful and accessible manner. Many of the courses meet only two times, making after-school scheduling much easier. Staff members previously expressed interest through a professional development survey completed last year, requesting classes that focus on technology, as well as literacy across the content areas – a core pillar in the Common Core Learning Standards.

“Based on the survey, we are offering a range of courses to address the professional development needs of our staff members throughout this year,” said Caryn Blum, assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction and assessment. “It will be a valuable resource for all staff members.”

Assessments Update

Last April served as the launching point for the English language arts and mathematics assessments in grades 3-8 based on the newly implemented and more rigorous Common Core Learning Standards. The questions intertwine CCLS requirements, skills and abilities into the fully inclusive assessment. The tests require students and teachers to review material at a much quicker pace, with more in-depth, thorough evaluation and investigation of information.

The district had expressed concern to the New York State Education Department that much of the material was never taught to students and was significantly harder than previous years. Though the district’s test scores did drop, other districts across the island and state experienced the same decline. This is not a reflection of student performance; rather, it demonstrates that the assessments were implemented prematurely before students were fully instructed in the CCLS. Due to this factor, there is no way that these scores can be compared to those of previous years. In Bellmore-Merrick, we believe that these scores do not correlate with students’ readiness for their future college or career plans. These scores are not an accurate reflection of our students’ abilities and the instructional skills of our teachers.

The district remains committed to analyzing all assessment data, along with individual student classroom results, to best establish which students would best benefit from additional support. For questions, comments or concerns about assessments, please call Caryn Blum, the assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction and assessment, at 516-992-1040.



Administrators and department leaders work together to rewrite curricular material to align with the CCLS.

IMPLEMENTING THE COMMON CORE

The district continues to align its curriculum with the Common Core Learning Standards to provide students with the best educational opportunities and make them competitive candidates in the global marketplace. This state-led initiative provides unified learning standards and benchmarks for all students across the country, as well as baseline data for the Annual Professional Performance Review. Curricular guidelines, which are created by states but standard nationwide, set forth specific standards for English language arts and mathematics from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. The CCLS teach students to better rationalize and have a thorough understanding of the material, giving them the tools they need to be lifelong learners.

This year, the district’s curricular vision is to provide teachers with the knowledge necessary to infuse literacy across all content areas – a key component in the new standards. Students will be able to better comprehend text of increased complexity, equipping them to be active participants and ready to engage in a 21st-century workforce. An emphasis is placed on the ability to analyze complex information, as well as high-level critical and abstract thinking skills.

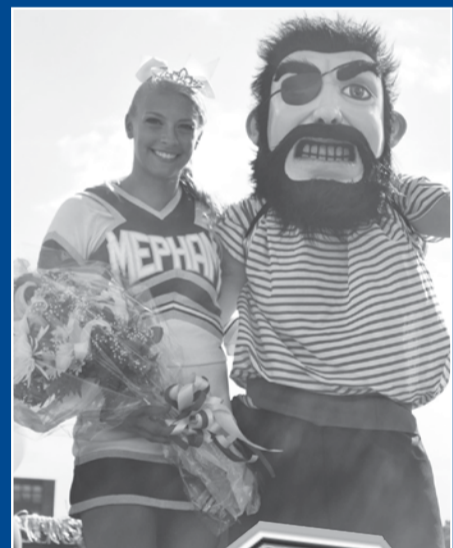
“The curricular theme for the year is literacy across the content areas,” said Caryn Blum, the assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction and assessment. “Every teacher will attend an hour-and-a-half workshop with a literacy/Common Core specialist with follow-up meetings by our chairs.”

Over the summer, administrators and department leaders met to review the district’s curriculum and discuss the implementation of the CCLS. Faculty members have been working diligently to ensure that all district curricula wholly align with the Common Core requirements, rewriting curricular material beginning last school year. The district has discussed, collaborated and trained its teachers to bring greater depth of material into the classroom on a daily basis.

As educational standards continue to shift, the district remains united and will work together for the betterment of our schools and quality of instruction for all students.



Mepham Pirates




Homecoming Celebrations

The district's three high schools celebrated their school pride during their respective homecomings this fall. Enthusiastic crowds filled the stands at all of the games, cheering on the home teams and showing off their school spirit. Halftime shows were filled with performances by cheerleading and kickline teams, getting fans revved up for the second half of each game.

Mepham kicked off their festivities with a pep rally the day before the game. Each class also had an opportunity to decorate one hallway in the school before the event to correspond to their class theme. "Seniors in the City" and "Juniors of the Jungle" represented the seniors and juniors, respectively, with sophomores following a luau theme and freshmen creating decorations related to Hollywood. Each class also used these themes to design a float or other decorations for the homecoming parade. Members of the school's alumni association, marching band and kickline, as well as the varsity and junior varsity cheerleaders and class representatives, made their way down the parade route. Assistant Principal Christopher Safina served as grand marshal of the procession.

Students, staff and community members cheered on the Pirates during the game, showing their team spirit by donning red and white. During halftime, the homecoming court – comprised of Julie Dijkstra, Chris Durkin, Nicole Jacobovics, Brian Keohane, Sabrina Mastrangelo and Chris Vento – were introduced, with several members traveling down the track on the school's pirate ship. Vento and Dijkstra were crowned homecoming king and queen.

"I think homecoming weekend is a reflection of the spirit and pride that is evident every day at Mepham," said Principal Michael Harrington.

Kennedy's Friday night game was the culminating event of a week's worth of school spirit activities. Students dressed up to follow several themes throughout the week, including Pajama Day on Monday, Throwback Tuesday, Cougar Nation Wednesday, Costume Day on Thursday and Blackout Day on Friday. They gathered to show their school spirit at the pep rally, which featured performances from cheerleaders, the kickline and the band, as well as the introduction of the school's sports teams. A sea of green filled the gymnasium, fostering a sense of Cougar pride before the nighttime game.

Prior to the contest, students attended a festival featuring a variety of food, games, a dunk tank, club tables and a photo booth. As the sun began to set, students headed to the bonfire – an annual Kennedy homecoming tradition. With the assistance of the Bellmore Fire Department, the fire burned high as students, faculty and community members looked on. During halftime, members of the homecoming court – including Rachel Acampora, Mike Kaplan, Jake Lapidot, Leiana Maiberg, Alexa Mirotznik, Josh Raber, Victoria Romano and Joey Salvaggio – were introduced to the cheering crowd, with Acampora and Lapidot crowned homecoming queen and king.

"Homecoming capped off a wonderful week of activities at Kennedy," said Principal Lorraine Poppe. "It brought students, staff, parents and community members together

to demonstrate their pride in our school and school community. School spirit was high throughout the week. It was a fun and enjoyable way to start off the year."

Colts fans cheered on Calhoun as they took on Elmont Memorial High School during their homecoming. Before the big game, students and community members attended the school's second annual Coltfest, which featured a vast representation of the school's clubs and student groups selling various items and hosting games. Calhoun's field featured pink yard lines and painted ribbons to mark a districtwide effort to fundraise and support Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Football players and cheerleaders donned pink socks during homecoming to support the cause.

Through the week, students showed their school spirit through several themed days, including Pajama Day on Tuesday, Pink Day for breast cancer awareness on Wednesday, Twin Day on Thursday and Calhoun Colt Day on Friday. On the evening prior to the game, Calhoun held its exciting annual pep rally. All of the school's sports teams were introduced, with members of the kickline, cheerleaders and band delivering several performances. Landon Cooper and Jenny McElwain were also crowned homecoming king and queen at the pep rally.

"We preach community. We preach doing things together and supporting each other," said Principal David Seinfeld. "When you have something like Spirit Week, it is about coming together as one community spirited for the same cause. Again, whether it is supporting breast cancer awareness or team spirit, it is about doing it together."



Kennedy Cougars



Calhoun Colts



Around the Schools

The Stable Offers Real-World Lessons

Calhoun has been providing training for its Prep for Life students through The Stable, a store opened by the district in 2012 to better prepare students to successfully tackle life after high school. Students perform various tasks associated with a general retail facility, including stocking, greeting customers, keeping inventory, using the register and managing money. The store is stocked with a variety of Calhoun attire and goods, as well as school supplies. Skills learned at The Stable help Prep for Life students become self-supporting adults, functioning successfully in a variety of environments.



Stephanie Zapta and Gerard Furey working at Calhoun's Stable.

The store serves as one of several work sites for the program and enables the Prep students to learn retail skills in a fully functioning on-campus setting under the supervision of special education teachers and job coaches.

"From the students who are being served by the lab, to the students who are actually customers, to the parents, teachers and administrators, it is a full community project," said Principal David Seinfeld.

MAMS Pride on Display

Students and staff at Merrick Avenue recently united to celebrate the school's spirit for a full week, culminating in a schoolwide pep rally. School spirit was on display throughout the week, with both students and faculty members participating in several themed days including Sports Team Day, College Day, Crazy Hat Day, Pajama Day and finally Black and Gold Day, representing Merrick Avenue's colors. During the pep rallies, which served as the final event for the week, student-athletes were honored, with each team introduced to the excited audience. Eighth-grader Sara Grossman sang the national anthem, with the MAMS cheerleaders and kickline team showing off their new routines in front of all students.



Members of the kickline team performed during Merrick Avenue's pep rallies.

"This is a great opportunity for the students to come together and show their unity as a school," said Principal Dr. Meador Pratt, who was very pleased with Spirit Week this year. "It was great to see so many students enjoying this week's events. This is what we call MAMS pride."

Mepham and Kennedy Unite for Breast Cancer Awareness

The Wellington C. Mepham High School and John F. Kennedy High School communities united for a special breast cancer awareness football game as part of an ongoing effort in the district to support Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Everyone in attendance – from spectators and teachers to players, cheerleaders and kickline members – wore pink to recognize the cause. Both schools, as well as Calhoun, have been working diligently throughout the month to spread awareness and raise money for breast cancer research. All proceeds from concessions, raffle baskets and the sale of specially made T-shirts with the saying "Let's Tackle This Together" will help fund the Adelphi NY Breast Cancer Hotline and Support Program.

"It is wonderful to see the community come together to support such a important cause," said Deputy Superintendent of Schools Cynthia Strait Régal. "Students, staff and community throughout the district have worked hard to raise money for breast cancer research. I sincerely thank each and every one of them for their dedication."

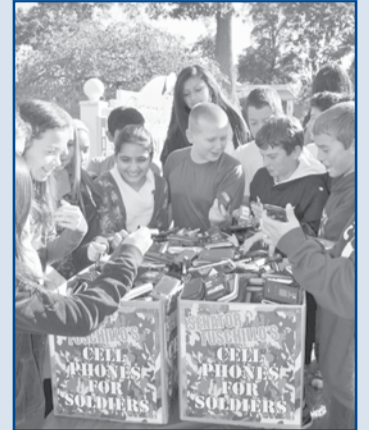
Sen. Charles Fuschillo was also honored by members of the administration and Board of Education during the game for his role in procuring a \$96,000 grant that secured a set of new bleachers on the visitors' side of Mepham's field.

Grand Avenue Collects Cellphones for Soldiers

Grand Avenue Middle School students collected cellphones from the end of September through the middle of October as part of Sen. Charles Fuschillo's "Cellphones for Soldiers" program. On Oct. 15, Sen. Fuschillo visited the school to pick up the 1,360 donated cellphones, meeting with students from seventh-grade team "Ronis," who collected the most phones – a total of 302. Students worked together in teams to collect cellphones during the program.

"This was a phenomenal cause to promote the contact for our soldiers to their homes and families," said Principal Carlo Conte. "An unintended, positive benefit was the school camaraderie and team-building experience that developed, as it became a competition between the teams for a good cause. Everybody wins."

This initiative provides soldiers who are stationed overseas with calling cards that they can use to stay in touch with loved ones. Students were asked to bring in old, unused or damaged cellphones for donation. Working through Sen. Fuschillo's office, a third party will recycle or refurbish the phones. The money donated from the cellphone recycling company will then be used to purchase calling cards for military personnel overseas. The program has raised more than 160,000 minutes of call time to date.



A seventh-grade team collected the most cellphones schoolwide for Sen. Charles Fuschillo's "Cellphones for Soldiers" program.

Seniors Selected as NHRP Scholars

Mepham senior David Kormos and Kennedy senior Gregory Mora have been selected as 2013-2014 National Hispanic Recognition Program Scholars. Established in 1983 to identify outstanding Hispanic and Latino students, the National Hispanic Recognition Program selected 5,300 students from an applicant pool of more than 259,000 who took the 2012 PSAT/NMSQT/PAA for the award. Those students with a grade point average of 3.5 or higher were designated as scholars.

Over the past three years, David has maintained an average above 95 percent and has consistently selected a rigorous academic program, including Advanced Placement and honors classes. He is a member of the National, English, Science, Spanish and Thespian honor societies, with physics and chemistry serving as his two favorite subjects. David transferred into Mepham at the end of his sophomore year to take advantage of the Project Lead the Way engineering program offered by the district. He is planning to study engineering next year in college.

An accomplished musician, Gregory plays double bass and is a member of the school's string ensemble, pit orchestra and jazz band. This past summer, he attended the New York State Summer School for the Arts, School of Orchestral Studies. Gregory is a member of the National, Tri-M Music, Spanish and Science honor societies, in addition to being the president of the Key Club and a biology peer tutor. He also volunteers at the Tackapausha Museum and Preserve and is a New York State Department of Conservation licensed state wildlife rehabilitator.



NHRP Scholar David Kormos with Board of Education President Susan Schwartz and Superintendent of Schools John DeTommaso.



NHRP Scholar Gregory Mora with Board of Education President Susan Schwartz and Superintendent of Schools John DeTommaso.



Members of the administration and Board of Education, as well as Assemblyman David McDonough and Legislator David Denenburg, thanked Sen. Charles Fuschillo during the game.



All-State musicians and alternates with their music teachers.

NYSSMA All-State Musicians

Several students from the district have been selected to perform with various New York State School Music Association All-State ensembles or serve as All-State alternates for the 78th annual NYSSMA Winter Conference in Rochester, to be held Dec. 5-8. Students were selected based on their performances at the NYSSMA solo and ensemble festivals held throughout the state last spring.

Representing Calhoun, Brendan Tucker was selected to play trumpet in the jazz band and Melissa Bianchi will perform as soprano I in the women's chorus. The following students will serve as alternates: Celia Bittman, cellist, orchestra; Dawn Meltzer, piccolo, symphonic band; Jeralayne Ruiz, soprano II, chorus; and Brice Vadnais, trumpet, jazz band.

From John F. Kennedy High School, Beatrice Brown was selected as a flutist for the wind ensemble, Gregory Mora will be playing double bass in the symphony orchestra, and Mara Friedman will sing as an alto I in the mixed chorus. Alternates include Arielle Berkley for soprano II, David Glaser on jazz trumpet and Diana Herrera on clarinet. Mara will also serve as a jazz alto voice alternate.

"The arts are an integral component to any well-rounded education," said Superintendent of Schools John DeTommaso. "These students have proven their dedication to their craft, carefully honing their talents with countless hours of practice – a feat that should be honored and recognized."

NafME All-National Mixed Chorus

Mepham senior Alana DeGregorio and Calhoun senior Lauren Lamonsoff have been selected as members of the National Association for Music Education All-National Mixed Chorus.



Lauren Lamonsoff and Alana DeGregorio with Board of Education President Susan Schwartz and Superintendent of Schools John DeTommaso.

Both students, who represent 37 selected singers from the state, will perform in Nashville, Tenn., in late October.

"Congratulations to Alana and Lauren on this impressive achievement and best of luck at the performance in October," said Superintendent of Schools John DeTommaso.

Lauren, an accomplished vocalist, has performed with the New York State School Music Association All-County Chorus and All-County Vocal Jazz Ensemble as an All-State vocalist in the Women's Choir, and with the NafME All-Eastern Honors Ensemble Mixed Choir. She is a member of the world-famous Virtual Choir and will be performing at Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall in March 2014. She is also a member of Calhoun's On Tour Company, choral program and Robe Management Committee for the school's concert choir. Lauren, currently an apprentice, expects to receive full membership in Calhoun's Tri-M International Music Honor Society in January.

Alana has performed with NYSSMA All-County and All-State ensembles, as well as the Mepham Vocal Jazz Choir and the Mepham "Skull and Bones" drama program. She serves as a first flutist with the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra of New York and danced with M&T Dance Unlimited Performance Company. Alana is also a four-year member of Mepham's kickline team, competing in both regional and national championships, and is dedicated to her community through service activities.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Calhoun

Spencer Glass from the Class of 2009 graduated from the Boston Conservatory with a BFA in musical theater in May 2013 and has signed a nine-month performance contract with Disney Cruise Lines to play Buzz Lightyear in "Toy Story: The Musical," as well as other Disney classics.

Class of 1979 member Major General John Uberti has received various military awards and accolades over his past 30 years of military service. During his time at Calhoun, he was the football team captain, as well as a member of the wrestling and lacrosse teams. He pinned his second star when he rose from the rank of brigadier general to major general last year. A graduate of the United States Military Academy, he served in Desert Shield and Desert Storm and currently serves as the chief of staff in the United States Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska.

Kennedy

Dr. Gary Morganstern, Class of 1973, holds a degree in dentistry and has a private practice in Merrick. He has served as a mentor to countless students and as the inaugural president of Kennedy's alumni association. Every year, he supervises students through the school's senior experience program and provides endless support for the current student body. Morganstern's contributions to the alumni association have enabled it to continually thrive, grow and flourish.

Fellow Class of 1973 member Col. Steven D. Hunte was the most decorated wrestler in Kennedy's history and served his country with great distinction for more than 32 years in the U.S. Army, retiring as a colonel in 2011. He also served as chief of physical therapy at various Army posts around the world. In 2007, he was selected by the surgeon general as the first installation management command surgeon at the Pentagon. A role model on every level, Col. Hunte is the recipient of numerous commendation medals and awards and, in his retirement, is studying public health.

Mepham

Seniors in the Uncovering the Past elective had the opportunity to interview Mepham alumni from the 1940s through the 1960s. The students listened intently to stories from the alumni about growing up in the Bellmore-Merrick community and attending Mepham in its earlier years. The seniors videotaped their interview sessions in order to preserve the stories of the alumni for future generations. Students marveled that while Mepham has certainly changed over the years, there is one thing that has remained the same – the immense Pirate pride shared by all who have walked its halls. All participants walked away from this experience with a newfound appreciation for the rich history of Mepham and all those who came before them.

Remember to vote on the district's bond referendum on Monday, December 2.

VOTER REGISTRATION REMINDER

Residents who live in the Central High School District, are U.S. citizens and are over 18 years of age are eligible to vote. Absentee ballot applications are available on the district's website at www.bellmore-merrick.k12.ny.us. Absentee ballot applications must be returned seven days before the vote to the component district clerk.

You can register in person until five days preceding the vote at the following component district locations:

Bellmore Union Free School District

Winthrop Avenue School
School days, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Merrick Union Free School District

All schools on school days, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

North Bellmore Union Free School District

Administrative Office and all district schools
School days, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

North Merrick Union Free School District

Harold D. Fayette School
School days, 9 a.m. -3 p.m.



Kennedy junior Vincent Bagnasco and his father William speak to University of Massachusetts Amherst representative Samantha Ryan.

COLLEGE AND CAREER NIGHT A HIT

The district's annual College and Career Night proved to be a successful opportunity for students and parents to learn more about numerous colleges and universities. Visitors from the district's three high schools were able to talk with representatives from more than 100 two- and four-year schools, both public and private, as well as representatives from several branches of the military. Representatives offered students additional information about schools they may be interested in attending and discussed everything from campus life and extracurricular activities to academic requirements and course rigor. Members of the National Honor Society at Sanford H. Calhoun High School, who hosted the event this year, welcomed guests and offered them information on the college search process.

"This is a wonderful event that gives students and their parents the opportunity to walk around together and see some things they ordinarily wouldn't get to see and decide where they want to visit," said Caryn Blum, assistant superintendent for curriculum, instruction and assessment. "It's really an informational time for parents and students to come together."

Winter Weather Update

As the winter months are quickly approaching, it's imperative that the district keeps the community up-to-date on any closures or delays caused by serious weather. When possible, a decision on closing will be made by 6 a.m. Always check the district's website at www.bellmore-merrick.k12.ny.us. Please do not call the district.

If you are doubtful that schools will be open because of weather conditions, tune in to any of the following radio or television stations for information:

Radio:

WINS (1010 AM)
WHLI (1100 AM)
WBAB (102.3 FM)
WBLI (106.1 FM)
WOR (710 AM)
WALK (97.5 FM)

WCBS (880 AM)
K-JOY (98.3 FM)
WMJC (94.3 FM)
WRCN (103.9 FM)/
LOVE (96.1 FM)
B103 (103.1 FM)

TV:

WNYW/Fox 5
WNBC
WABC-TV
News 12
Fios 1

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