

Our Schools

The Community Newsletter of the Farmingdale Public Schools • Winter 2012

Farmingdale Incorporates Common Core Standards to Help Every Student Succeed

In accordance with New York State's Common Core standards, all districts statewide must ensure that classroom instruction and curricular materials at the elementary, middle and high school levels abide by the six new English language arts (ELA) and literacy standards. The New York State Board of Regents recently approved these changes, proposed at the national level, along with changes to the mathematics standards. An enhanced set of pre-kindergarten standards has also been adopted by the Board of Regents. These shifts to the Core Curriculum are designed to ensure that students are receiving an education based on a consistent core curriculum from grade to grade and from school to school. Consistent standards will provide appropriate benchmarks for all students nationwide.

The ELA/Literacy Common Core standards, implemented in New York State last January, will assist Farmingdale students in acquiring the skills necessary to be proficient in college and in their professional careers. In addition to ensuring that all students benefit from a consistent curriculum, the new elements of the standards also require increased complexity in content and skills at each grade level, from kindergarten through grade 12. The K-12 standards define, for each grade, what students are expected to learn and be able to do at the end of each school year. The cumulative progression from one grade to the next will enable students to meet college and career readiness expectations by the end of high school.

Because the elementary level classroom is where children begin learning to think globally, it is imperative that they are exposed to a wide range of texts in science, social studies, literature and the arts. To accomplish this, the new additions to the ELA/literacy standards for students in pre-kindergarten through grade five call for increased informational reading in these subject areas. Half of our students' reading time in these grades will be devoted to informational texts that enable them to gain a global perspective.

Common Core shifts affecting students in grades 6-12 are aimed at developing higher-order thinking skills. To achieve this, teachers of subjects other than ELA will emphasize literacy experiences in their planning and instruction. In science and social studies classrooms, students will be expected to make inferences and learn from what they are reading, rather than simply referring to the text in their classroom discussions, homework and exams.

Other shifts in the Core Curriculum include the expectation that students will engage in rich and rigorous discussion based on a common text, will be able to develop written arguments that rely on evidence, and will develop vocabulary and understanding appropriate to the texts they are reading. Vocabulary from grade to grade will focus less on esoteric literary terms and more on helping students develop greater comprehension of practical words they will need to understand and use in order to progress. These shifts all require teachers to adapt their lessons in such a way that students will have both the time and the necessary assistance to achieve the expectations. Teachers will allow more time and space in the curriculum for close and careful reading, and will provide the support necessary for those students who may need additional help in grasping the materials.

Another shift in the Common Core is what has been termed a "staircase of complexity"; each grade level represents a step of growth on the staircase. In all classrooms at every grade level, instruction will be developed around central texts appropriate to the students' levels to enable them to make the step up to the next grade.

Farmingdale teachers are focusing their classroom instruction on reaching new heights for every student, and together with administrators and support staff, will use the District's best resources to ensure that students transition from each learning level with the skill sets necessary to excel.

Superintendent's Conference Day

Tuesday, May 1, 2012, has been chosen as the date for a Superintendent's Conference Day for grades K-8. Elementary and middle schools will be closed for students that day. Staff will report to score state assessments. High School students will have a regular day of school.

Did You Know...?

- In November, eight Farmingdale High School scholar-athletes signed letters of intent to play college sports. Family and coaches attended a ceremony in the Thomas W. Guilford Lecture Hall at Farmingdale High School, and the television network MSG Varsity featured the letter signing on its show, *High School Sports Desk*.
- New York Yankee All-Star Pitcher David Robertson visited Farmingdale High School in November to speak to FHS students about giving back to their community. Kevin Loud, a social worker who is leader of Farmingdale's SADD club, was honored for community service by the group "Winning Beyond Winning"; the same group who honored David.



New York Yankee All-Star Pitcher David Robertson reaches out to FHS students.

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For School District Information
and Board Meeting Agendas,
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A Message From Your Board of Education

We hope you all had a wonderful holiday season, and wish each of you a healthy and productive new year. January is a month of fresh beginnings, and we look forward to seeing progress throughout our District on many fronts.

Farmingdale administrators and Board of Education members have begun work on the 2012-13 budget proposal. A primary consideration in planning for this budget is the New York State property tax levy cap instituted this past June, which will take effect in the 2012-13 school year. The tax cap will limit annual increases in school districts' property tax collections to approximately 2 percent, or the rate of inflation, whichever is lower. The actual percentage varies from district to district, because it is contingent upon a number of different factors.

It is important to understand that the cap applies strictly to revenue raised through property taxes – the portion of the budget on which residents will pay taxes (the tax levy). A portion of the total budget is covered through state aid, various reserve funds and the District's appropriated fund balance. However, public schools continue to face rising costs, many of which are state-mandated. This includes health insurance and retirement fund contributions for school employees.

Because of the tax levy cap for the 2012-13 school year, the Board of Education has many decisions to make in preparing next year's budget to be proposed to the public on **May 15, 2012**.

At the Board of Education's meeting in December, the tax levy cap was explained, and we strongly encourage community members to continue voicing their opinions about the programs within the District. To further discuss tax cap related concerns and next year's budget, the Board invites the public to participate in the following meetings:

Wednesday, March 14

Board of Education
Special Meeting
Budget Workshop
Howitt E. Cafeteria • 8 p.m.

Tuesday, April 3

Board of Education Meeting
Adopt 2012-2013 Budget
for Voter approval
Howitt E. Cafeteria • 8 p.m.

Wednesday, March 21

Board of Education
Special Meeting
Budget Workshop
Howitt E. Cafeteria • 8 p.m.

Tuesday, April 17

Board of Education
Special Meeting
Adoption of BOCES
Administrative
2012-2013 Budget
Howitt E. Cafeteria • 8 p.m.

Wednesday, March 28

Board of Education
Special Meeting
Budget Workshop/
Public Input Session
Proposed 2012-2013 Budget
Howitt E. Cafeteria • 8 p.m.

Tuesday, May 8

Board of Education
Special Meeting
Public Hearing of 2012-2013
Proposed Budget
Howitt E. Cafeteria • 8 p.m.

Thursday, March 29

Community Summit Expo
and Health Fair
Voter Registration
Farmingdale High School
Gym • 6-8 p.m.

Tuesday, May 15

Budget Vote and Election
6 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Howitt E. Gym

We strongly urge you to attend these upcoming board meetings. While it is always important for community members to learn about the budget process and join the discussion, this year is an especially critical one. Please mark your calendar now and plan to take an active role in the budget process.

Very truly yours,

The Farmingdale Board of Education

Farmingdale Students Earn National Recognition for Academic Achievement



National Merit Semi-Finalists: (L-R) Alexandra D'Amprisi, Isabelle Mormile

National Merit Semifinalist Students

Congratulations to Alexandra D'Amprisi and Isabelle Mormile for earning the distinction of being named National Merit semifinalists. Each year, approximately 1,600 participants in the National Achievement® Scholarship Program are designated semifinalists. Semifinalists are named on a regional representation basis and are the highest-scoring program participants in the United States. These students now have the opportunity to advance to finalist standing in the competition and to be considered for a National Merit Scholarship award.



National Merit of Commendation students: Brian Entwistle, Anna Szilagyi, Zed Shabbir

Commended Students

Farmingdale High School students Brian Entwistle, Anna Szilagyi and Zed Shabbir have all been named commended students in the National Merit Scholarship competition. More than two-thirds of approximately 50,000 high scorers on the PSAT/NMSQT receive letters of Commendation in recognition of their outstanding academic promise. These students are candidates for special scholarships sponsored by corporations and businesses.

Advanced Placement (AP) Scholars

The Advanced Placement (AP) Scholar Award is granted to those students who receive scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP Exams. The following Farmingdale High School students have been recognized for this honor: Demitrios Anastasiadis, Alexandra D'Amprisi, Brian Entwistle, Steven Fishman, Robert Golebiewski, Devika Gupta, James Keenan, Caitlin Mazura, Isabelle Mormile, Tyler Nash, Zed Shabbir and Anna Szilagyi,



AP Scholars (L-R) Isabelle Mormile, Caitlin Mazura, Anna Szilagyi, James Keenan, Devika Gupta, Zed Shabbir, Alexandra D'Amprisi, Demitrios Anastasiadis, Steven Fishman, Brian Entwistle, Tyler Nash. Not pictured: Robert Golebiewski

Congratulations to all of our students who have earned recognition in these prestigious programs and to the families and teachers who have supported them in their efforts.

Farmingdale High School Boys' Lacrosse Coach Honored as National Coach-of-the-Year

Lacrosse coach Bob Hartranft has been selected as the inaugural coach-of-the-year by the National Interscholastic Lacrosse Coaches Association (NILCA). The award was presented during the high school coaches meeting on Saturday, December 3, at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel.

Coach Hartranft has been at the helm of the varsity program at Farmingdale High School for the past 43 years. This past June, the Dalers won their first-ever New York State Class A championship, marking the first time since 1986 that a Class A team from Nassau County took that honor.

Highlights of Coach Hartranft's career include 654 wins (second in New York State to Mike Messere), 37 consecutive non-losing seasons (1975-2011), 37 consecutive playoff appearances (1975-2011), 21 consecutive semifinal appearances (the longest streak in Nassau County history), 13 Nassau County championships and 32 All-Americans.

The Coach-of-the-Year Award will be presented annually to an individual selected by the NILCA Awards Committee from coaches who have been nominated by their peers. National nominations are accepted each year, and recipients will receive the award during the annual NILCA membership meeting each December.

What's Happening in Our Schools

Albany Avenue Elects New Student Council Members

In preparation for November's student council elections, each candidate presented a speech to the student body stating why he or she would be the best candidate for the position of treasurer, secretary, vice-president or president. Later in the day, students cast their votes for the candidates of their choice. After the students voted, the results were announced. Brandon Carbone won the position of president and Brian Hayden as vice-president. Nicole Manfreda won the position of secretary, and Anthony Raffaele won as treasurer.

Student council candidates speak to the student body encouraging them to vote.



Northside Students Explore Sink or Float

Northside students are discovering that science can be an exciting subject to study, especially when the lessons include fun and interesting experiments. Third grade students in Laura Caravella's class have been enjoying learning about buoyancy. The children completed various labs focusing on the concepts of sinking, floating and displacement. Afterward, each student constructed a boat out of ordinary household materials, tested how many grams the boat would hold, and recorded all of the data. Lots of good thinking followed when the students compared their data and boats with their classmates. Way to go Northside!

Northside students conducted their sink or float experiments in science class.

Saltzman East Memorial Students Help Local Families in Need

This past fall, Saltzman East Memorial School worked with social worker Ruth Martina to supply 25 local families with entire Thanksgiving dinners. Students and staff collected canned goods during the fall food drive sponsored by the PTA. To supplement the drive, the SEM Wellness Club organized and held its annual turkey trot, for which each participant was asked to bring a can of food. Children in kindergarten through second grade ran a half mile, while third, fourth and fifth graders walked or ran a full mile. To complete the Thanksgiving dinners, the Heart of Gold Foundation donated a turkey for each of the 25 families.

SEM students collect canned goods for the annual turkey trot.



Woodward Parkway Students and Families Join Together in Reading!

Woodward Parkway recently hosted its second annual Family Read-In Night. By promoting literacy at home and encouraging family members to be involved in their children's education, the event was aimed at motivating children to develop a love for reading. During this wonderful evening, Woodward Parkway families returned to school in the evening wearing pajamas and toting their pillows and blankets to read together. The event featured three 20-minute activities: the Bedtime Story Café, a bookmark making project and a Mystery Reader Read-Aloud, presented by various Woodward Parkway teachers. The entire evening was fun for everyone who participated!

Woodward students get comfortable as they participate in Family Read-In Night.

Two Howitt Students Recognized as Young Math Scholars

Howitt Middle School students Bailey Benzinger and Suraj Muralidharan were among 75 students this year to be named Long Island Young Scholars of Mathematics. Bailey and Suraj were accepted by the Institute of Creative Problem Solving for Gifted and Talented Students at SUNY College at Old Westbury to pursue mathematics and mathematical science applications. Acceptance to this program is based on five criteria: a rigorous entrance exam, nomination, school transcript, a recommendation by the student's last math teacher and a brief statement written by the student. Each student participating in the program is expected to spend 60 hours in class over the course of 20 Saturday mornings, as well as on related outside projects.

Congratulations to Bailey and Suraj on their outstanding accomplishments!



Bailey Benzinger Suraj Muralidharan



(L- R) Farmingdale High School Principal Glen Zakian, guidance counselor Jill Greeney, salutatorian Robert Brienza, valedictorian Brian Entwistle, guidance counselor Jacqueline Verre and Director of Guidance Maureen Moloughney.

Farmingdale High School Names Class of 2012 Valedictorian and Salutatorian

Farmingdale School District is proud to recognize Brian Entwistle as valedictorian and Robert Brienza as salutatorian for the class of 2012. These students have been commended based on their high achievements in academics and leadership among their graduating class.

Brian is a motivated student who succeeds in academics and leadership. He has earned distinctions as both a National Merit commended student and as an Advanced Placement (AP) scholar. His leadership qualities are also recognized through his membership in the National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, Science Olympiads, Key Club, Mathletes and Spanish Club.

As salutatorian, Robert is highly motivated and has a passion for math and science, specifically in the areas of physics and engineering. He is an active member of the Science Olympiad team, as well as a participant in the Science Bowl. Robert's leadership skills and passion for problem solving have led him to envision a career as an engineer or a physicist.

MUSIC NOTES

Farmingdale High School Earns High Praise at *Newsday* Marching Band Festival

The Farmingdale High School marching band gave a fantastic performance at the three-day *Newsday* Marching Band Festival held at Hofstra University this past fall. In this 49th annual event, Farmingdale's marching band performed a spectacular show, titled *Radio.wav*. The theme was top 20 pop songs, with highlights including "Dynamite" (Taio Cruz), "Bad Romance" (Lady Gaga), "I Like It" (Enrique Iglesias) and "Forget You" (Cee Lo Green).



Accompanied by Principal Glen Zakian, and Fine Arts Director Rita Zirpolo Padden, Farmingdale Drum Majors and Dalerette Captains accept the Newsday plaque.



Experienced band commentators, including Manhasset High School Marching Band Director Randy Knudsen, were impressed with the size and precision of the Farmingdale band as well as the interesting visual performance, the energy of the Dalerettes, and bold, clear sound of the ensemble. Due to its size and its excellence in execution, Farmingdale's marching band was selected to perform second from the end.

It was an exciting night of outstanding student achievement, excellent music and tremendous spectator enthusiasm. Thanks to Band Director Gina Pellettiere, Assistant Band Director Barbara Lieberman, Dalerette Coach Lauren Webb and Assistant Dalerette Coach Jessica Baker for leading the students in this well-rehearsed and high-quality performance.



FROM THE SPORTS DESK



Farmingdale Fall Athletics Recap

Varsity Girls Soccer: The Lady Dalers came out strong as they faced Calhoun on October 31 in the quarterfinals. At the end of regulation, the score was tied 1-1. Though Calhoun scored the winning goal during double overtime, the Lady Dalers had a great season and should be proud of their conference championship title!

Varsity Girls Volleyball: These girls treated their fans to a real nail-biter this past season. After a slow start, they came from two sets down to triumph over Syosset in the Class AA Quarterfinals! The Lady Daler volleyball team then faced off with Hicksville in the semifinals, with Hicksville coming out on top. These girls had a tremendous season and will be back stronger than ever next year!

Varsity Girls Swimming: Sara Golshar earned All-County honors in the 50 freestyle and 100 freestyle. Sara and teammates Jasmine Rashid, Brittany Dolan, Lindsay Hemminger, Nicolette DeMartino and Joanna Gazzo were named to the All-Conference II team as the Lady Dalers finished 9th out of 30 teams at the Nassau County Championships! The Lady Dalers began the season ranked 14th, minus a list of six graduating seniors that included one state finalist, two county finalists and three county qualifiers. The leadership shown by captains Cindy Burhans, Lindsay Gazzo and Sarah Hecht, along with their fellow seniors Gaby Aleman, Jenn Barnola, Megan Barrow, Sam DiTaranto, Gina Ramos, Courtney Ratner and Maddie Reilly, was a big reason the team was able to overcome those losses. The girls worked hard to change practice habits, immensely improve their individual performance and team standing, and institute a real culture change within the program. We're confident that their efforts will yield even greater success in the coming years.

Every Farmingdale Team Earns Scholar-Athlete Award!

Farmingdale is proud to announce that all of the fall varsity teams earned the Scholar-Athlete Team Award. The New York State Public High School Athletics Association awards this honor to teams who earn averages of 90 percent or higher during the season. Over 300 Farmingdale students participating in a varsity sport six days a week have maintained a team average of 90% or better. This is the seventh consecutive season that Farmingdale athletes have earned this impressive distinction!

Fall Scholar-Athlete Team State Champions

The New York State Public High School Athletic Association has announced that the following Farmingdale High School teams are the fall 2011 Scholar-Athlete Team state champions:

- Boys' soccer team with a GPA of 96.597%
- Girls' swimming and diving team with a GPA of 99.042%
- Boys' cross country team with a GPA of 99.250%
- Girls' soccer team with a GPA of 97.760%

Congratulations to these teams for achieving the highest GPAs in New York State!

Our Board of Education's Overarching Goal for the District

"We will establish Farmingdale as a high-achieving school district, as evidenced by high levels of student performance in all areas including New York State assessments and Regents exams."