



Our Schools

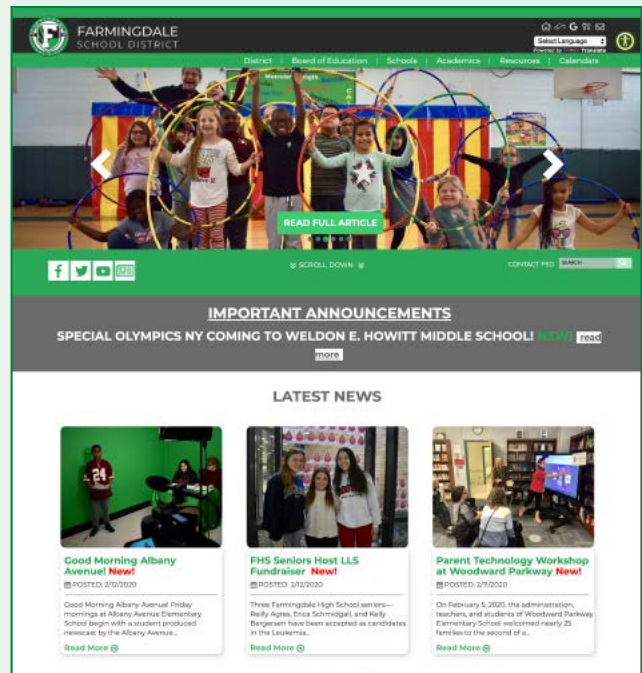
FARMINGDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT | WINTER 2020 | FARMINGDALESCHOOLS.ORG

FARMINGDALE SCHOOL DISTRICT LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

The Farmingdale School District is pleased to announce that after a year of planning, designing, creating new content, and migrating existing material, the new district website has launched!

In 2018, when Superintendent Paul Defendini took over the district, he promised transparency and multiple pathways of communication. “Our newly designed website is just one example of how we are making information accessible to all members of the Farmingdale community,” said Superintendent Defendini. “We hope that everyone finds it to be a valuable resource for obtaining information about our school district.”

“The new website was a team effort,” said Assistant Superintendent for Innovation and Organizational Development Dr. William Brennan, who oversaw the whole process. “We had to pull multiple years of information from six schools and categorize it in an efficient way. We made sure the new site would be easy to navigate and provide users with a friendly viewing experience.”



The rebranded site is story-focused and contains more imagery. Along with an updated and colorful new look, the homepage features large photographs that showcase student and faculty highlights. The site is categorized with six major topics: **District, Board of Education, Schools, Academics, Resources, and Calendars**. Clicking on any of these links across the top of the site will allow visitors to access more detailed sub-pages. The simplified design allows visitors to find information quickly, such as important announcements or the latest school news. A series of quick links are featured in the middle of the homepage, providing access to budget information, food services, district newsletters, the Farmingdale Public Schools Code of Conduct, and the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Closer to the bottom is a roster of upcoming events, followed by links to the district’s six key initiatives. The newly unveiled website is also “mobile responsive,” meaning the layout adapts to different devices and multiple web browsers. It was designed to fulfill web accessibility requirements under the American Disabilities Act, and enables individuals with vision, hearing, and physical disabilities to have access. Additionally, with the help of Google Translate, users are able to select another language in which to navigate the site. The website address remains www.farmingdaleschools.org.



Special Olympics

The Special Olympics are coming to Farmingdale! On May 17th, the Special Olympics New York 2020 Spring Games North will be held at Howitt Middle School and hosted by Farmingdale. What an honor it will be for all of us to host these incredible, inspirational athletes.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2020 WALL OF FAME HONOREES!

*Community members are welcome to attend the induction ceremony to be held
Monday, April 27, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. at Farmingdale High School*

DR. MARIA ELAYNE DESIMONE - CLASS OF 1972

Dr. Maria Elayne DeSimone is a clinical professor at Widener University School of Nursing in Pennsylvania. Her education includes a diploma from the New Rochelle Hospital School of Nursing, a Bachelor of Science and Master of Science from SUNY Stony Brook, and a Ph.D. from Adelphi University. Dr. DeSimone has been honored with numerous awards, including the President's Award for Excellence in Teaching and the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching from SUNY Stony Brook, and the Yvonne C. Harmon Award from the School of Nursing. An early advocate for nurse practitioners, Dr. DeSimone co-founded the Nurse Practitioner Association of Long Island and is a past president of both the Nurse Practitioner Association of New York and the American College of Clinicians. She currently serves on the editorial board for the *Journal of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, Clinical Reviews*; is a Nurse Practitioner Board Chair for Clinician 1, a website for nurse practitioners and physician associates; and has been published in numerous journals and books. For over forty years, Dr. DeSimone has volunteered her time with various community groups, most recently the Jewish Family and Children's Services of Delaware County and the Westchester Free Medical Clinic. Based on her professional accomplishments, as well as her community commitments, the Wall of Fame Selection Committee views Maria Elayne DeSimone as an excellent role model for our students.



TRACY VICERE - CLASS OF 1991

Ms. Tracy Vicere is a learning consultant at Woodward Parkway Elementary School. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and Psychology from Wagner College and a Master in Special Education from Long Island University. She began her tenure at Farmingdale School District in 2000 as a special education teacher in an integrated collaborative setting and in the school's Resource Room—a place for students who struggle academically. In addition to her work in the classroom, Ms. Vicere has served as a co-moderator of the student council, shepherded the creation of a student-crafted memorial garden, planted in honor of a young Farmingdale student, and organized the *Week of Thanks* food drive, providing Thanksgiving dinners to families in need. A teenage bout with Hodgkin's lymphoma and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma inspired her to found Friends and Angels: The Tracy Vicere Foundation Inc, a nonprofit set up to improve the quality of life of children battling cancer. Since 2011, her organization has raised over \$150,000 to support patients receiving treatment at Cohen Children's Medical Center. Ms. Vicere's foundation also provides patients with hospital scrapbooks to document their journey, decorates the rooms of bone marrow transplant patients, and hosts movie nights and birthday parties. Based on her professional accomplishments, as well as her community commitments, the Wall of Fame Selection Committee views Tracy Vicere as an excellent role model for our students.



GLENN WEISS - CLASS OF 1979

Mr. Glenn Weiss is a producer/director of live television programming, most notably national awards shows. He attended SUNY New Paltz and the University of Maryland, where he majored in radio, television, and film. He began his career in cable news, working in CNN's Washington, D.C. bureau, then spent fifteen years honing his craft on countless talk shows, game shows, etc. before entering the live variety genre. In 1999, Mr. Weiss co-formed a Manhattan-based production company called White Cherry Entertainment. In the decades that followed, he distinguished himself as a leading producer/director of live events and programming. Mr. Weiss has been nominated for and honored with many awards, including 14 Primetime Emmy Awards (37 nominations), 8 Directors Guild of America Awards, and a CableAce Award. His credits include 19 Tony Awards, 5 Academy Awards, 6 Kennedy Center Honors, the Primetime Emmy Awards, 3 Super Bowl Halftime shows, the Billboard Music Awards, the BET Awards, Peter Pan Live, and many years of Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve. During the Primetime Emmy Awards in 2018, Mr. Weiss made headlines by proposing to his long-time girlfriend, Jan Svendsen, during his acceptance speech. He is a frequent guest lecturer at various colleges, and credits his television class at Farmingdale High School with kick starting his career. Based on his professional accomplishments, as well as his community commitments, the Wall of Fame Selection Committee views Glenn Weiss as an excellent role model for our students.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR SCHOOLS

ALBANY AVENUE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Friday mornings at **Albany Avenue Elementary School** begin with a student-produced newscast by the Albany Avenue Broadcasting Company (AABC).

The show, generated from a green screen studio, is hosted

by two teams of fifth grade students, auditioned and mentored by teachers Kevin Schwab, Carolyn O’Gorman, and Catherine McLoughlin. They prepare copy, read news, share the weather forecast, and make birthday announcements. Each week, they pre-record the Pledge of Allegiance with a new class, chosen and announced via lottery during the live show.



WOODWARD PARKWAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Students at **Woodward Parkway Elementary School** took part in the Hour of Code, a global computer science initiative that creates a fun and creative environment for students to be introduced to the concepts of computer programming. Using their Chromebooks, students explored resources housed on Code.org and created their own art, stories, and games while learning the basics of computer programming. Third graders took the lesson even further, with weekly visits to Innovation Lab where they learned about text-based coding languages using Code Monkey. The experience challenged students to think differently, and they enjoyed the opportunity to express themselves using technology in ways they never have before.



NORTHSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Northside Elementary School joined thousands of schools across the country to participate in the Pennies for Patients Challenge Week. Held during the last week of January, students were encouraged to theme their clothing in conjunction with the coin of the day, such as Pajama Penny Day, Neon Nickels Day, Dazzling Dimes Day, and Crazy Quarter Day. All proceeds support the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society’s mission to end cancer.



WELDON E. HOWITT MIDDLE SCHOOL

As part of the sixth grade health education curriculum, **Weldon E. Howitt Middle School** students were taught how to interpret the statistics, laws, and the long-term effects of tobacco and e-cigarette use. Students learned how marketing techniques are being used to increase vaping and smoking among teenagers, which adds to the tobacco epidemic. Students were tasked with creating their own truth in advertising, anti-tobacco, e-cigarette advertisements, which they presented to their peers. “Being well informed and able to make good choices is at the heart of our health curriculum,” said health teacher Allyson Pietronigro. “Our students want to know the truth, and we’re giving them the tools to search, find, and share information with others.”



SALTZMAN EAST MEMORIAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

To coincide with their Pick A Reading Partner (PARP) theme—Read to go to the Greatest Show—**Saltzman East Memorial Elementary School** held a week-long circus program during physical education classes. Children had a lot of fun learning a variety of new skills, including: plate-spinning, feather balancing, juggling, and hula-hooping. Each grade-level workshop focused on teaching coordination, timing, and team building. At the end of the week, third-graders put on a lively performance inside the gym for the kindergarten classes.



FARMINGDALE HIGH SCHOOL

In the beginning of February, the fourth annual Career and Technical Education (CTE) Showcase was held in the Commons of **Farmingdale High School**. Each year, the evening showcase is an opportunity for Howitt Middle School 8th graders and their parents to meet and interact with teachers and learn which classes align with their interests. Through CTE, students can earn college credit via SUNY Farmingdale, and earn a CTE Endorsement for a particular career path. Projects created by the carpentry and woodworking students were put on display, and tasty appetizers—prepared by culinary students, were passed among all the attendees.



ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS AND TECHNOLOGY

HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTIONS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

This past December, 122 students were inducted into the Farmingdale High School chapter of the National Honor Society. Students entered carrying candles to represent the promise of their futures. Selection is based on fidelity to the four pillars of the society: scholarship, service, leadership, and character. All students must have a 90 or above unweighted average to be admitted.

In January 2020, 97 eighth graders were inducted into the National Junior Honor Society. In order to be eligible, they have to maintain an overall average of 92.0 or higher for all of sixth and seventh grade, and provide proof of community service.



THIRD ANNUAL VEX TOURNAMENT AT FHS

Farmingdale High School hosted their third annual VEX Robotics Competition on Sunday, January 5, 2020. Close to 80 teams participated, comprising high school and middle school students from across southern New York State. The purpose of the competition is to explore innovation through robotics, celebrate student accomplishments, and encourage friendly competition. The tournament was open to the public and admission was free. Nearly a dozen FHS alumni were on hand as volunteer referees and judges.

Farmingdale High School has three robotics teams, two of which competed in the Tower Takeover game, a two-versus-two robot stacking challenge. Team *VEXistential Crisis* made it to the semifinals, finishing seventh out of 38 teams.

The tournament was a first for the Weldon E. Howitt Middle School Junior Dalers Robotics team, who, along with ten other middle schools, chose to compete at the high school game level.



Two of the Farmingdale High School Robotics teams qualified previously for the championship, to be held in March at the Harvey School in Katonah, NY. They will be joined by the Junior Dalers, who qualified by earning the Excellence Award during the Farmingdale competition. Farmingdale's robotics teams have consistently qualified for the Southern NYS VEX Championship and have advanced to the world championship for the past five years.

MUSIC AND THEATRE NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR STUDENTS WHO WERE SELECTED TO PERFORM IN THE 2020 NMEA ALL-COUNTY MUSIC FESTIVAL

Farmingdale sent 101 students to the 2020 Nassau Music Educators Association (NMEA) All-County Music Festival, held at the Tilles Center in January. The festival brings music students together from schools throughout Nassau County. Students performed in five different divisions: Band, Orchestra, Chorus, Vocal Jazz, and Jazz Band.



NMEA Division I



NMEA Division II



NMEA Division III



NMEA Division IV



NMEA Division V

ALL-DISTRICT CHORUS CONCERT

On Thursday, February 6, 2020, Farmingdale High School hosted the All-District Chorus Concert, bringing together student musicians from all six Farmingdale schools. 420 students performed to a packed house. Each year, the All-District Concert is a showcase that demonstrates the level of growth that takes place from the elementary to the high school level. It alternates every three years with band, orchestra, and chorus. The grand finale brought all the students together to sing “You Will Be Found” from the musical *Dear Evan Hanson*.



HAIRSPRAY IS A HIT!

The Farmingdale Playcrafters put on a performance of *Hairspray* at Farmingdale High School. Known for its high energy and memorable characters, *Hairspray* is a musical that teaches important messages about acceptance, inclusion, and equality. “Whether it is someone’s size, sexual orientation, social status, or color of their skin, *Hairspray* reminds us that recognizing and embracing differences is essential to creating a world with less hate,” said theatre teacher and musical director Jessica Mischke. “This musical has a message that the world needs to hear, and I am humbled to have provided that for our community.”



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FROM THE SPORTS DESK



In December, 24 seniors at Farmingdale High School signed their letters of intent, signifying their commitments to college sports teams. The seniors gathered in the lecture hall of Farmingdale High School, where they were joined by family members, coaches, Principal Dr. Samuel Thompson, Assistant Principal Jed Herman, Director of Athletics Jeanne Berkoski, and Assistant Superintendent Glen Zakian.

For the 31st consecutive season—over 10 years—all 12 Farmingdale High School varsity teams have achieved scholar-athlete status! The fall teams included 301 students, participating in football, boys soccer, girls soccer, girls cross country, boys cross county, girls tennis, girls swim, girls volleyball, boys volleyball, golf, cheerleading, and the Dalerettes.



The Farmingdale High School Competition Cheer Team competed for the first time in school history at the UCA High School Cheerleading Nationals! The competition was held February 7-9, 2020, at Walt Disney World in Florida. The team placed 5th out of 23 teams in the preliminaries. Overall, they came in 15th out of 45 teams from all over the United States!

The Farmingdale High School boys track and field team captured the Class A Nassau County Championship Title and secured three spots in the New York State competition!



FHS senior and basketball player Marvel Chambers has scored 1,000 points during his Daler career! Only five players before him have earned this achievement. Congratulations, Marvel!

