



The Amityville

FALL 2009

TIDE

Change Brings Progress

ENHANCEMENTS & INNOVATIONS IMPACT STUDENT SUCCESS

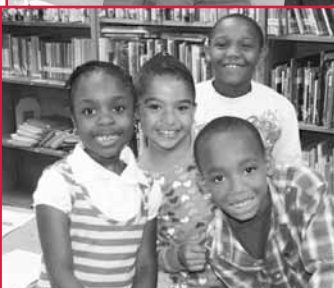
With many new building enhancements and the implementation of a grade-level reorganization, students and staff were excited to experience the opportunity for a new beginning. In addition to the reorganized grade structure, other innovations are underway around the district. For the first time, a before and after-school childcare program is being offered at the elementary level. In addition, the newly implemented 21st Century Community Learning Center program is in place, which benefits both students and their family members. A tour of district facilities shows the outdoor beautification



At the high school (above), neatly landscaped grounds with colorful plant and stone retaining walls provide a welcoming environment for students.



At Park Avenue, sixth-grade students (above) feel at home in their learning environment.



At Northwest Elementary School, students became reacquainted with friends, and books, in their building library (above).



Northeast Elementary School kindergartners are happy to demonstrate one of the first things they learned last year in Pre-K – how to walk quietly in the hallways.



Ninth-grade academy students enjoy their own computer lab.

projects that were a priority this past summer, especially at the high school.

This edition of *The Tide* will provide a look at some of the experiences your children – our students – are enjoying thus far during the 2009-2010 school year. For more information, parents and community members are encouraged to visit the district website at www.amityvilleufsd.org.

GOOD NEWS FROM THE COLLEGE BOARD ADVANCED PLACEMENT RESULTS ARE IN!

AP Scholars:

Tracy Governanti
Corine Jackman
Chanelle Jackson
Jamilah Lindo
Shamelia Loiseau

AP Scholars with Distinction:

Karlee Archer
Kimberly Iwanski
Timothy Jacobsen
Zenna Solomon

HIGH ACHIEVERS

Seniors Jamilah Lindo and Yonique Wilson (pictured) were among some 3,100 students nationwide who were named Outstanding Participants in the National Achievement Scholarship Program, after they achieved exemplary scores on the 2008 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. The recognized students scored in the top three percent of more than 160,000 Black Americans, and will be part of a special roster of names that is sent to about 1,500 colleges and universities across the nation, and which cites these students for their academic promise.



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A MESSAGE

from your Superintendent



Welcome back to another school year and the first issue of *The Amityville Tide*. The district has entered the 2009-2010 academic year after one of our busiest summers ever. Students had the opportunity to attend seven different summer programs, and 150 young people enjoyed the second annual Amityville Summer Sports Camp. We were also very busy reconfiguring and preparing our buildings to implement our grade level reorganization. Our students returned on September 2 and are now fully into the swing of a new school year. The sixth

graders are already feeling very much at home at Park Avenue, the Ninth Grade Academy is running very smoothly on the third floor of the middle school, and the students in our reorganized high school are finding much more elbow room in the halls, the cafeteria and common spaces.

In addition to the reorganized grade structure, there are other innovations underway. For the first time, a before and after-school childcare program is in place at our elementary schools. The 21st Century Community Learning Center program began in early October, and provides after-school programming for students in our middle school and Park Avenue for three hours every day. It also offers opportunities for two-hour workshop-style sessions each evening designed specifically for parents and adults.

A new school year presents opportunities for various beginnings -- new classes, new faces, new courses and often new materials. Newness alone, however, will not produce transformation. We ourselves must be willing to be caught up in the

rebirth that is possible with each new year. Starting again gives us the opportunity to formulate new plans, design new strategies and implement new ideas. There is a special kind of joy and satisfaction in planning lessons and activities for a new class; although the subject or grade-level is the same, the students are new, and they appreciate the work that is done for them.

We are proud of our work here in Amityville -- in our classrooms, in our offices and on our playing fields and stages -- but our achievements are not due to complacency and satisfaction with the status quo. Our program is what it is because a staff of dedicated men and women have a common goal -- to do what is best for students -- and are always looking for ways to move our district from Good to Great. We hope you enjoy taking a look at the transformations and accomplishments illustrated in this issue of *The Tide*, and, as always, we welcome your feedback.

Warm regards,
Dr. John R. Williams
Superintendent of Schools

Above & Beyond



The United North Amityville Youth Organization (UNAYO) has awarded Superintendent Dr. John R. Williams the Educator of the Year Award. "Dr. Williams shares a common goal with us here at UNAYO," stated Executive Director Sonji Crawford-Clark. "That goal is to serve the community, and make a difference in the lives of Amityville's young people."

"I have received many commendations during my career, but it is always particularly exciting to receive recognition from organizations that are dedicated to improving the lives of young people," stated Dr. Williams, who is pictured above with Ms. Crawford-Clark.



High School Principal Dr. Scott Andrews was the recipient of the Excellence in Education award during Amityville's National Night Out celebration. The North Amityville Taxpayers Association (NATA) honored Dr. Andrews for his commitment to bettering the lives of the students and families of the district. Helen Jones, Assistant Director at NATA, and Errol Williams, President of NATA, presented Dr. Andrews with the Excellence in Education award and thanked him for being a guiding presence both in the schools and in the community. "It's humbling to receive such an award," Dr. Andrews stated. "I couldn't be more proud and honored to be the principal of Amityville Memorial High School."

INTRODUCING... 21st Century Learning Communities



The district is proud to announce that it is one of three on Long Island and sixty across the state to receive a \$4.3 million state grant, the largest in its history, that will benefit both students and their families. The 21st Century Learning Center Communities Grant will allow the district to better address the educational needs of students at Park Avenue and the middle school, and supports assisting families with limited or no English speaking skills. Newly hired Project Director Rose Hutcherson, who possesses a wealth of experience in the field of grant administration, is working within the district to organize and implement the program, which provides three hours of learning and enrichment for students after school five days a week, and morning and evening programs for parents and guardians. Pictured above is Superintendent of Schools Dr. John R. Williams (standing, center), with representatives from the various community groups who will be a part of this exciting project, including UNAYO, Adelante and the Long Island Educational Opportunity Center at Farmingdale State College.

Staff Off to a Soaring Start

"Learning is for the birds...the ones who want to fly." This message, delivered by nationally renowned professional speaker John Powers, Ph.D., began the new school year for staff members during Superintendent's Conference Day. Dr. Powers used candor in sharing his personal experiences to connect with the audience, and inspire them to teach students to love learning and that their opinions are valuable. "You can do anything you want to do as long as you believe you can do it," Dr. Powers stated in closing. "This is my message to you, and should be your message to your students."



United in their common goal to support teachers in reaching every student, administrators showed their solidarity, donning Warriors shirts during Superintendent's Conference Day.

Warrior Ways

SEASON STARTS WITH GOALS AND GLORY



With 46 sponsored athletic teams in grades 7-12, the Amityville Interscholastic Athletics Program is a busy place to be. Research shows that students involved in extracurricular programs, such as interscholastic sports, achieve higher grades, manage their time more effectively, have fewer disciplinary incidents, and graduate and move on to higher education. The district is proud to provide its student athletes with equal opportunities to compete and excel in a positive environment that encourages community values and sportsmanship, and emphasizes the role of the educational curriculum as the primary means for individual achievement and success. Read on for just a few highlights of what promises to be a great year for the Warriors...



- **The Girls Junior Varsity Soccer Team**, under teacher and coach John Katsigiorgis, consists of seventeen student athletes, whose main goal is to work hard and improve as they enter their second year with Mr. Katsigiorgis as their coach.

- **The Boys Junior Varsity Soccer Team** has gotten off to a tremendous start for the fall 2009 season, beginning with a 4-1 record and winning the league opener with a 3-2 overtime victory against East Hampton. Coached by teacher Cole Cammaroto, the team is striving to improve its record from last season with the goal of finishing with a winning record.

- **The Girls Varsity Soccer Team** also started the season on a great roll, defeating Westhampton Beach in their first league game of the season. Coached by teacher Christopher Roth, the Lady Warrior defense played an outstanding game, with goalie Nahaeth Rolon making seven saves to ensure the win.

- **The Warriors Junior Varsity and Varsity Football Teams** began practicing their fancy footwork as early as August to prepare for the fall season. With seasoned players on Varsity and a solid freshman class on JV, the Warriors football season is turning out to be one to remember.

Warriors Grab HOMECOMING VICTORY



The Amityville community came together in one of its longstanding traditions to enjoy Homecoming 2009. Board of Education President Michele Sikhrangkur, Trustee Kathleen Ward, Superintendent of Schools Dr. John R. Williams and Assistant Superintendent for Finance Dr. William Fanning led the parade, which featured performances by the marching band, cheerleaders and kickline. Members of the Amityville Parent Teacher Council also joined the parade, along with members of the Amityville Memorial High School Drama Club. The Homecoming Court rode in style atop a convertible driven by senior class advisor Heather Persan.

The marching band, under director Brian Wishin and conducted by drum majors Nichole Turner, Nahaeth Rolon and Ashley Moreno began the game with a performance of The National Anthem. The Amityville Warriors took the field and squared off against the Southampton Mariners, playing with a cohesiveness that prevented their opponents from earning a spot on the scoreboard. Senior Gavin Kretz was a standout, passing for 131 yards and scoring four touchdowns in the first half of the game.

Spectators were treated to a lively halftime show that featured a marching band and kickline performance, under the direction of teacher advisors Jackie Hammil and Dawn Levine. The Warrior Cheerleading Team, led by teacher Tiffany Pesale, also wowed the crowd with an eye-catching dance routine. Seniors Jamie Henderson and Mico Wong were crowned Homecoming Queen and King, and received heartfelt congratulations from their fellow court members.

The Warriors returned to the field fully prepared for the second half of the game. AJ Watlington played stellar defense, with six tackles in the third quarter and two touchdowns on runs of twelve and six yards. The game ended with the Warriors defeating the Mariners, 40-7. Students and staff celebrated at a Homecoming Dance held in the Warrior Café that featured, food and fun, a well-deserved reward to a day that brought school and community together.



*District Offers Summer Programs to **Sharpen Students' Skills***

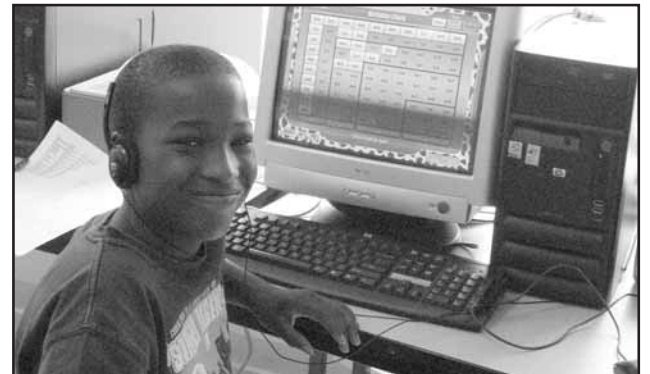
IN THE CLASSROOM...

For the first time ever, the district provided an opportunity for students to extend their learning beyond the academic year by participating a number of academies this past summer. Funded by monies from a School Improvement Grant, the English Language Arts Academy set out to help eager learners improve both their reading and math skills, using two interactive programs called "After the Bell" and "FASTT Math" (Fluency and Automaticity through Systematic Teaching with Technology). As part of the grant, each school originally received \$50,000 to implement a Saturday School, the goal of which was to increase students' annual yearly progress (AYP) in reading. Based on its success, the district decided to extend the program into the summer and add a math component, resulting in the implementation of the summer ELA and Math academies. Additionally, the Wilson Reading Academy provided extensive instruction for students in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The Wilson method offers tools to help educators teach the structure of words in a systematic and cumulative manner, which helps students become more confident with the English language despite its irregularities.

English as a Second Language (ESL) students in grades 5-8 also had the opportunity to study English in a nurturing environment via an interactive curriculum during the newly formed ESL summer school. During the five-week program, under the direction of ESL Coordinator Shannon Reilly, teachers introduced students to a theme and guided them in researching topics in the areas of science, transportation, nutrition and food, sports, and animals. The students wrote papers using their research and designed posters, both of which were shared during classroom presentations. Each week culminated with a field trip to local sites, such as White Post Farms, the Long Island Children's Museum, the Cradle of Aviation Museum, Stop and Shop, and a local park. Students enjoyed the thematic units and field trips, which helped to reinforce the week's language lessons. "The Summer ESL Academy was a very valuable experience for these students; they benefited from the engaging activities, small class sizes and small teacher/student ratio," stated ESL teacher Linda Mussen.



Smaller class sizes allowed for more individualized attention during the district's first-ever summer ELA Academy.



District technology and investment in the latest educational software allowed summer Math Academy students to sharpen their skills using FASTT Math.



ESL students in the summer program created projects based on each week's language lessons.

ON THE PLAYING FIELD...

For the second year in a row, the lazy days of summer were filled with fun, excitement and physical activity as students in grades 4 through 6 enjoyed the district's All Sports Summer Preparatory Camp, which provided not only physical activity and athletic instruction, but also breakfast and lunch every day during the three-week program. High school athletes were on hand during the program, serving as mentors and camp counselors and gaining service experience. Director of Health, Physical Education, Athletics and Nurses and camp administrator Mr. Tony Cerullo described the high school volunteers as 'the hit of the camp.' "Our young campers really look up to the high school athletes, and without their assistance, the coaches wouldn't have the ability to diversify the drills," he stated. Campers played indoor and outdoor sports, including volleyball, basketball, wrestling, football, track and field, golf, soccer, and more.



Superintendent of Schools Dr. John R. Williams frequented the All Sports Summer Preparatory Camp often, providing advice and support to students.



High school students volunteered their time and gained service experience for their work with the district's young campers.



District teachers and coaches staffed the summer camp, teaching sports skills and building confidence and self-esteem in student campers.



The All Sports Summer Preparatory Camp was more than just athletics – existing friendships grew stronger and many new relationships were forged.

SETTING AN EDUCATIONAL TREND

Welcome to Our Ninth Grade Academy



Students in the ninth-grade academy have their own wing, computer lab, and student government, all of which are housed on the third floor of the middle school, which has been designated for academy students only.



The computer lab in the newly implemented ninth-grade academy allows students to spend more hours sharpening their skills and engaging in research.

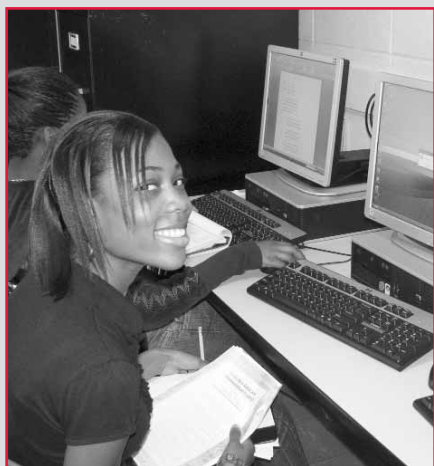
Entry into high school is a critical period in the lives of students. Faced with more challenging academic programs, dynamically diverse environments, and higher expectations at this pivotal point in their educational careers, freshmen need the most support during such an important adjustment period. With these and many other factors in mind, the district has implemented, for the first time, a ninth-grade academy at Edmund W. Miles Middle School, and joins a select few Long Island school systems that have established such a program. "The creation of the ninth-grade academy benefits the ninth-grade students by providing them with the structure and support they need," stated Superintendent of Schools Dr. John R. Williams. "Additionally, the reorganization of our grade-level system that occurred as a result of the academy has freed up some much-needed space at the high school; all around, this is a win-win situation."

Although the academy has only been in existence for a few weeks, Principal Mark Pitterson and Assistant Principal Michele Darby explained that students are stepping up to take ownership of the program. "Our priority right now is to get the students settled in their new environment," Ms. Darby commented. "We stress independence, self-advocacy, and in this program, to make learning at the high-school level a successful experience for students transitioning to more difficult and more demanding academics."

Academy students have been given their own wing at the middle school and take the same courses that are typically offered at the high school. "The entire ninth-grade staff came to us from the high school already well-versed in ninth-grade teaching," stated Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Dr. Kathleen Gulbin. "Ms. Darby met with the teachers on staff development day and continues to convene with them on a regular basis regarding procedures and expectations."

Monthly assemblies focusing on college preparation are planned, and ninth graders can participate in their own student council. An afternoon bus leaves the middle school at 2:10 pm to deliver interested students to clubs and sports activities at the high school.

The ninth-grade academy structure also allows the ninth-grade teachers to accompany their classes to the high school building the following school year through a concept known as "looping." As the teachers move to the high school with their students, other high school teachers move to the middle school to teach the newest members of the academy. This unique system allows for a more tailored support system as the students transition to their new surroundings at the high school.



The district's newest high school students are adjusting well to the new ninth-grade academy and are enjoying their own space on the third floor of the middle school.



Ninth-grade academy students are off to a great start using the many resources that are available to them.

What's New at Park Avenue?

To complete the grade-level restructuring that made the ninth-grade academy possible, Park Avenue is now home to the district's sixth-grade students, who will benefit from a more gradual transition to middle school, which will be the focus of much of their academic and social time during the school year. "Our sixth graders are adapting well to the districtwide grade-level restructuring," stated Interim Principal Dr. Regina Cohn. "One of our goals is for them to conclude their time here as more confident students who are ready for the middle school building."



Curricula, Community, Com

Students and staff wasted no time in resuming the teaching and learning process, lessons and the implementation of new technologies and curricula, students had commemorations and celebrations that promoted respect and tolerance.

Building Literate Communities



Grandparent Rose Tejada-Torres (seated, center) read the book, "You Say Hola, I Say Hello" to students in Gail Williams's Pre-K class during Grandparents Day.

Grandparents of students at Northeast Elementary took center stage during story time at the school's annual Grandparents Day. Students were encouraged to invite grandma or grandpa to class to read a favorite book with classmates and to share some interesting information about themselves. "This is a perfect way to contribute to the school/community partnership," Principal Pauline Collins explained. "The students really enjoy when a family member reads to their peers or participates in a school activity."

Read 180 MAKES ITS DEBUT

At Park Avenue and the middle school, the introduction of Read 180, a comprehensive reading intervention program, has students interested in sharpening their literacy skills. The program assists educators in addressing the teaching of reading on multiple fronts – using technology, audio, print and professional development. What makes Read 180 unique is that it encompasses a ninety-minute period of three different rotations beyond whole-class instruction. It also allows for learning through varied media: software, paperback books and audio books. The software and independent reading rotations offer students a variety of learning platforms that create systematic independence, while small-group and whole-class instruction rotations provide teachers with the opportunity to interact with their students and expand their teaching to other modalities.



A middle school student uses the tech-audio component of Read 180 to move toward higher levels of comprehension and systematic independence in reading.

Reflections of September 11th

Recognizing their civic responsibility to teach students about events that have shaped our history, staff members around the district paused to reflect and remember the day that United States history was changed forever - September 11th, 2001. The week's lessons in classrooms from Pre-K to grade twelve were focused on delivering messages of tolerance, respect, and positive decision-making, and formulating plans to fulfill the request of President Obama to make September 11th a day of service to others.



Park Avenue sixth-grade students (l-r) Lincoln Woelk, Neil Angus, Jocelyn Cortes, and Alora Allen made American Heroes handprints in Denise Graham and Kathy Hyland's class to thank the nation's heroes and to reflect on our country's freedoms.



Third graders in Stacey Katt and Julia Romain's class, (l-r) Dakota Willenbrock, Emmanuel Turcios, Indya Hunter, and Nidia Mendoza, pose in front of the class's American Heroes handprints.

memorations, Celebrations

cess for the 2009-2010 school year. In addition to many engaging classroom and opportunities to make their voices heard during special community projects,

School-Community Connection *Gives Students a Vision*

The North Amityville Taxpayers Association (NATA), in partnership with Every Child Matters, once again coordinated the participation of the Amityville schools in this year's Children's campaign. Last year, NATA Executive Director Jacquelyn McCullough collected approximately 2,000 hands created by students around the district, with each set bearing the name and age of a child as a message to our elected officials that the needs of the children must be considered. The message for the 2009 Children's campaign is: *Here are the eyes of children who are looking to all of us, including elected officials, for leadership on issues that affect them.*

The artistic interpretations of eyes were completed during students' art classes and will be used for various advocacy efforts throughout the year, such as the nationally celebrated Step Up for Kids Day at the Nassau and Suffolk County Legislatures. "We want to send the message that EVERY CHILD MATTERS as the legislatures make their policy decisions," stated Ms. McCullough. "We made a huge impact last year, and with the cooperation of Dr. Williams, Ms. Fernandez, the schools, principals, teachers and children, we expect great things for this year's campaign as well."



Northwest students will have their eyes on Suffolk lawmakers this year, sending a message that Every Child Matters.



Executive Director of the North Amityville Taxpayers Association Jacquelyn McCullough (center, with Northeast students) visited every school building to promote the Children's campaign and collect the artwork eyes created by students.



High school students created beautiful eyes through which they hope lawmakers will consider their needs.

Unity in Diversity



At Park Avenue, teacher Melissa Asbell shared artifacts from a Hispanic Heritage museum that was in place to commemorate Hispanic Heritage Month (above).

During Hispanic Heritage Month, students came together in a number of venues to celebrate the diversity that defines the Amityville community and school district. At the high school, Spanish teacher Elisa Castro, with the support of her colleagues, planned and facilitated a lively, colorful tribute to Hispanic Americans that featured Frank Rodriguez and El Mariachi Internacional Cuscatlan, student dancers and performers, and poetry readings. At Park Avenue, teacher Melissa Asbell set up a museum of Hispanic artifacts and shared firsthand information about her own heritage with classes of fascinated students who visited.



High school Principal Dr. Scott Andrews presented Frank Rodriguez and El Mariachi Internacional Cuscatlan with a citation for joining the students during their celebration of diversity.



Student dancers choreographed Merengue, Bachata and Cumbia routines to entertain their peers during their Hispanic Heritage celebration.



AMITYVILLE GRAD GIVES BACK



Thanks to graduate Michael Miller, who completed his Eagle Scout project on the grounds of the high school (pictured), students can enjoy a permanent reminder of Amityville pride.

Dates to Remember

November 11
VETERANS DAY
School is Closed

November 12-13
PAMES Parent/Teacher Conferences
11 am-2:15 pm 7-8:30 pm

November 17
AMHS Parent/Teacher Conferences
7-9 pm

November 18-20
NW Parent/Teacher Conferences
After the Noon Dismissal &
7-8:30 pm

November 20 and 23
EWMMS Parent/Teacher
Conferences
10:30 am Dismissal
12 noon-2:30 pm Conferences
7-9 pm Conferences

November 24-25
NE Parent/Teacher Conferences
No Pre-K
12:10 pm Kindergarten Dismissal

November 26-27
THANKSGIVING RECESS
School is Closed

Promoting Fitness for Life



At Park Avenue, students are getting a great workout while having fun using the building's new Dance Dance Revolution system. Purchased last spring with grant money obtained by Interim Principal Dr. Regina Cohn, the system is used in physical education classes to introduce alternate ways for students to add dancing to their regular fitness regime, and encourage them to be fit for life. "Children need to be active to be successful students," stated Dr. Cohn.

Featured State Performer



Ninth-grade choral student Gabriella Daly participated in the New York State American Choral Directors Association Children's Choir this past August. The talented group, which included student vocalists from across New York State, was featured at the NYSSMA Summer Conference in Albany. Gabriella's teacher, Mr. Carl Ferrara, helped prepare her for this prestigious musical experience.

H1N1: Proactive Prevention

In an ongoing effort to address the importance of current medical issues, district educators are stressing safe health and hygiene practices in their classrooms. Such safeguards as the "dracula sneeze," which emphasizes the importance of covering one's mouth completely with the crook of the arm and sneezing into the sleeve, frequent hand washing throughout the day, and respect of one's personal space to reduce the risk of spreading germs are reviewed regularly. "The district will remain proactive in its approach to the spread of H1N1, or 'Swine Flu,' and other illnesses that are commonly spread via airborne germs and physical contact," stated Superintendent of Schools Dr. John R. Williams. "Our maintenance staff uses an industrial cleaning solution - Virex - on a regular basis in buildings around the district, especially in Pre-K classrooms where there may be a particularly high concentration of germs on toys and other items that are shared frequently in the classroom." For more information on H1N1, visit the district website at www.amityvilleufsd.org.



ITS NOT TOO LATE!

After-School Child Care Program Available

The Great South Bay YMCA, in partnership with the district, is pleased to provide an After-School Child Care Program for the 2009-2010 school year for Park Avenue students in grades 3-5. The program offers a safe and caring environment for school-age children of working parents. YMCA professional staff members provide supervision during the hours of 2 pm until 4:45 pm. For more information or to register, please contact Cathy McKenna, School Age Child Care Director at 631-665-4255, x169.



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