www.copiague.k12.ny.us

# COPIAGUE. Onnections

Summer 2014 COPIAGUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS - A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN

#### In this Issue..



Master Teacher pg. 2



Marking A Milestone pa. 3



Schoolhouse Rock Live pg. 6



Top Senior Athletes pg. 7



pg. 8

# And the state of t

### CA Mew Chapter

### AWAITS THE CLASS OF 2014

he 55th commencement exercises of the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Class of 2014 was celebrated on June 26 by members of the Board of Education, administration, family, friends, faculty and invited guests, officially completing their educational careers as Copiague Eagles.

Leading up to the final moment in the graduation exercise, Board of Education President Michael L. Greb, Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig, Principal Jeanette Altruda, Valedictorian Krystal Howell, Salutatorian Alessandra Altruda and Class President Zachary Wilson delivered speeches filled with hopes, dreams and sage advice, assuring the 312 graduates that they were prepared to begin the next stage of their lives.

"In your graduation from high school, we celebrate not only your success, but the excitement that comes with the next unfolding chapter of your personal journey," said Mrs. Altruda. "As you put your high school chapter behind you, remember always that you are the author of your own story. Reflect upon the chapters of your past and remember where you have come from. As challenges come your way, embrace them. They are the adventures that will enhance the story of your life. Always live and dream for your happy ending. Be the hero of your own story and write your chapters with pride."

Congratulations to the Class of 2014! For more photos from the ceremony, please visit the District's website, www.copiague.k12.ny.us.

Copiague School District Copiague, N.Y. 11726

Nonprofit Organization U.S. Postage PAID Copiague, N.Y. 11726 Permit No. 42

\*\*\*ECRWSS\*\*\*

Resident
Copiague School District

### BOE Seeks Community Feedback

The Board of Education is seeking community input on the findings presented by the Space and Facilities Advisory Committee. To learn more about the recommendations, please visit the District's website at www.copiague.k12.ny.us. To submit feedback, please email projectfeedback@copiague.net.

### A Message Superintendent

Dear Residents,

I hope the receipt of this newsletter finds you enjoying these summer months. As we look back on this past school year, we do so with great pride in all that was accomplished by our students and staff. Once again, Copiague students continued their upward trend in academic achievement. As in previous years, we were able to maintain our Regents diploma graduation rate for students attending Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School. We saw increased student and staff participation in clubs, other co-curricular activities, the arts and sports. Our teachers, administrators and other staff members worked very hard every day to make a difference in the lives of the children and help them realize their potential. With the support of the Board of Education and community, our school district has been able to continue to provide the necessary stability in programs for children that these challenging times require.

This May, our residents came out and overwhelmingly approved the 2014-2015 school budget by a two-thirds margin, which is significant. As with previous budgets, the Board of Education and administration struck the necessary balance between maintaining important programs for children while recognizing the interests of our taxpayers.

This newsletter highlights but a few of the numerous accomplishments of our students during the 2013-2014 school year. Features include our annual Superintendent's Art Gallery award winners, Spring Sports Awards, the middle school musical, our annual moving up ceremonies at the elementary schools and middle school, and, of course, high school graduation. Also included is recognition of our retiring staff members as well as those who received tenure this year. In addition, you'll find an informative piece on the progress of our Space and Facilities Advisory Planning Committee. After reading this article, I hope you'll take some time to visit our district website to review the recommendations of the Committee and then share your feelings on this proposed project with the Board of Education, as they would really like feedback from the community on the scope of this proposed capital project, which will address our aging buildings and grounds infrastructure and space needs in order to bring our schools into the 21st century.

After perusing the various features and news pieces within this latest newsletter, I believe you will agree that we have great kids in our community and that Copiague continues to be a "great place to live and learn." I hope you enjoy these summer months with your family and friends. I also look forward to seeing you this fall as we begin the new school year and make our schools the best they can be for the children of Copiague.

See you in September!

Sincerely,

Charles A. Leunig
Superintendent of Schools

### Master Teacher

Copiague Middle School mathematics chairperson Dr. Natasha Murray has been selected as a New York State Master Teacher. Dr. Murray is one of 42 Long Island teachers selected to the program, which encourages educators to mentor



their peers and deepen their own scholarship and professional development in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

"I am honored to be acknowledged as a STEM Master Teacher and elated that I am afforded the opportunity to collaborate with other STEM Master Teachers throughout Long Island and New York State," said Dr. Murray. "I believe that through this collective group, I can contribute to the improvement of mathematics education locally and statewide."

Dr. Murray earned her bachelor's degree in English with a minor in mathematics from the City College of New York; her master's degree in English education from Queens College, while simultaneously earning the equivalent of a master's degree to obtain teaching certification in secondary school mathematics; and her doctorate in mathematics education from the University of Pennsylvania.

### HONORING SERVICE COMMITMENT

The District honored the service of retiring staff members and newly tenured administrators and teachers at the June 2 Board of Education meeting. "This is one of my favorite evenings of the year," said Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig. "It is an opportunity to acknowledge the service of some of our veteran staff, while at the same time officially welcoming some of our newest staff members – even though they've been with us for three years!"

#### The District congratulates the following tenured staff members:

Karla Cangelosi, Great Neck Road ES Assistant Principal
Kenneth Craft, Susan E. Wiley ES Assistant Principal
Bradley Reminick, Walter G. O'Connell Copiague HS Assistant Principal
Nicole Antz, Deauville Gardens West ES Fourth-Grade Teacher
Jonathan Krawchuk, Walter G. O'Connell Copiague HS Special Education Teacher
Lisa Macchia, Middle School Special Education Teacher
Danielle Poletti, Walter G. O'Connell Copiague HS Foreign Language Teacher
Christie Ann Ruppert, Walter G. O'Connell Copiague HS Art Teacher
Stephen Temme, Middle School Sixth-Grade Teacher
Chelsea Termini, Susan E. Wiley ES Guidance Counselor
Jared Zucker, Walter G. O'Connell Copiague HS Psychologist

#### The District extends its best wishes for a happy and healthy retirement to:

Mary Ellen Colli, Middle School Clerk Typist, 13 years of service Cindy Costello, Susan E. Wiley ES Fourth-Grade Teacher, 29 years of service Margaret Costello, Deauville Gardens West ES Speech Teacher, 26 years of service Joann Bryant-Green, Middle School Sixth-Grade Teacher, 18 years of service Joyce Schatz, Walter G. O'Connell Copiague HS Guidance Counselor, 19 years of service Muriel Wisniewski, Great Neck Road ES ESL Teacher, 14 years of service









# ARKING A ilestone

Middle school eighth-graders marked a milestone in their educational careers, as they transitioned to the high school during the annual moving up ceremony on June 25. Held in the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School gymnasium, the students marched in wearing their blue gowns as proud parents, families and friends documented the occasion.

"All of you will leave behind a positive legacy on our middle school, and I have the highest expectations for you as you are welcomed into the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School," said Principal Andrew Lagnado. "You are prepared and you are ready for the academic rigor of the high school."

Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig added, "Become active citizens and participate in your high school community. I urge you to try new things and break out of your comfort zone – challenge yourself!"

Valedictorian Andrea Campos and Salutatorian Alexandra Saczawa spoke about their years at the middle school, their future at the high school and beyond. Following the presentation of diplomas, the class came together one final time as they marched out of the high school gymnasium, preparing to return in August for freshman orientation and to begin their next educational milestone.

### Moving Up to Middle School

Fifth-graders throughout the District marked a milestone in their educational careers by successfully completing their elementary school years and moving up to middle school.

Parents, staff, district administrators and invited guests proudly attended the elementary moving up ceremonies, where the students were recognized and presented with awards for their outstanding academic achievements. The fifth-graders also

demonstrated their musical talents and entertained the audience by performing special selections.

At the ceremonies, the students were offered congratulatory remarks and words of praise on their academic achievements by their respective principals, as well as by Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig and Associate Superintendent Dr. Kathleen Bannon.

"This is really a time for celebration and reflection on the friendships and connections you've made here with your classmates and the staff," said Mr. Leunig. "We are very proud of your accomplishments. We

continue the successes you achieved here when you get to the middle school, and then, a little more than three years from now, at the high school."

have every expectation that you're going to





# The Plac

his year's graduating seniors have applied to hundreds of colleges and universities throughout the United States, earning acceptances that have been an outstanding testament to the academic preparation and commitment of the Class of 2014.

"We are so proud of our students," said Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig. "The Class of 2014 is quite an impressive group of young adults. Their commitment to continuing their education and acceptance to some of the most prestigious universities in the country is proof positive that Copiague continues to be a great place to learn!"

Below and to the right is a list of colleges and universities that have offered admissions and scholarships to the Class of 2014, as well as where you will find the top 10 this fall:

Adelphi University Albright College Alfred University American University Art Institute of Pittsburgh **Boston College** Briarcliffe College Clarkson University College of Staten Island Cornell University CUNY @ Baruch College CUNY @ City College CUNY @ Hunter College CUNY @ John Jay CUNY @ Lehman College CUNY @ Queens College CUNY @ York College Dowling College Eckerd College Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Fairleigh Dickinson University Fisher College Florida Institute of Technology Fordham University George Mason University Georgia State University Hampton University

Hartwick College

Hillsborough Community College Hofstra University

Howard University

Iona College

Ithaca College

John Hopkins University

Johnson & Wales University Lasell College

Le Moyne College

Lehigh University

Lehman College

Lincoln Technical Institute

LIU Brooklyn

LIU Post

Loyola University New Orleans

Manhattan College

Mercy College

Molloy College

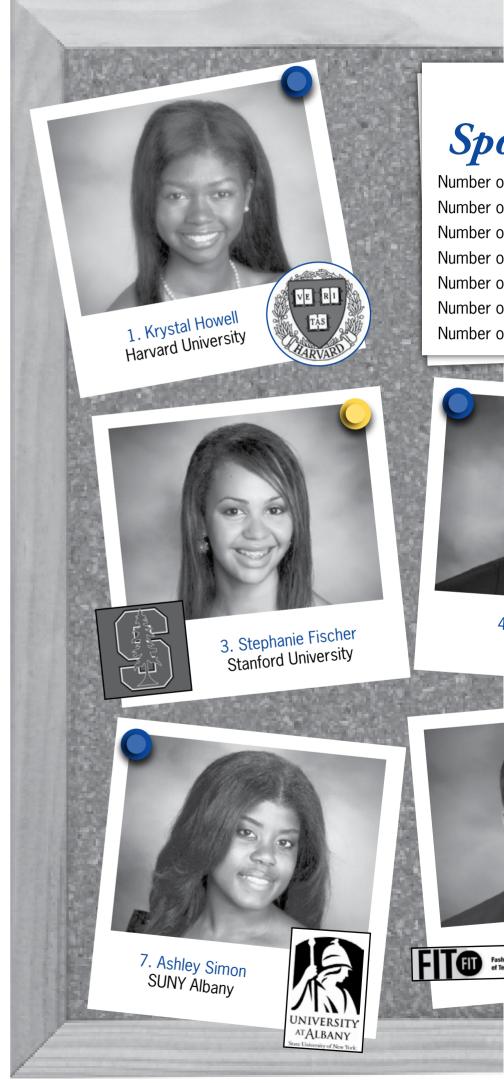
Monmouth University

Monroe College Mount Saint Mary College Mount Saint Mary's University Nassau Community College New England College Northeastern University **NYIT** Pace University Providence College Purdue University Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Roanoke College Robert Morris University Saint Peter's University Salisbury University Siena College St. John's University St. Joseph's College St. Peter's College Suffolk Community College SUNY @ Binghamton SUNY @ Cortland SUNY @ Delhi SUNY @ Farmingdale SUNY @ Fredonia SUNY @ Geneseo SUNY @ Herkimer SUNY @ New Paltz SUNY @ Old Westbury SUNY @ Oneonta SUNY @ Oswego SUNY @ Stony Brook SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry Susquehanna University The College of St. Rose University of Bridgeport University of Colorado Boulder University of Hartford University of Minnesota University of New Hampshire University of New Haven University of Virginia Vanderbilt University

Wells College Wentworth Institute of Technology

William Paterson University

Wilson Tech





4 • SUMMER 2014

# es They're Going





•

## Schoolhouse Rock Live!

Ever wonder how a bill becomes a law or the function of a conjunction? Wonder no more! The students at Copiague Middle School answered those questions and more as they performed their version of "Schoolhouse Rock Live!" on June 11, with a special in-school performance on June 10. Directed by Music Teacher Kaitlin Schneekloth, the students danced and sang the songs made famous by the Emmy Award-winning 1970s Saturday morning cartoon series.

The musical tells the story of a new teacher filled with nerves the morning of his first day of class. Various characters representing facets of his personality show him how to win his students over with imagination and music, through songs including "Just a Bill" and "Conjunction Junction."

Working with Ms. Schneekloth to put together the pitch-perfect show were Assistant Directors Christina Aniello and Gina Occhiogrosso, Props/Costumes Manager Kristen Alfarano, Choreographer Joanna Capitelli, Painting Managers Jodie Embleton and Carlos Taveras, Hair and Makeup Coordinator Stephanie Ingenito and Set Designer Lauren Lefkowtiz.

In addition to the adult supervisors, middle school students worked behind the scenes acting as stage directors, lighting supervisors, set designers and more.



# Seniors Honored at Awards Night

Gathered in the school auditorium, 93 members of the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School were honored for 13 years of hard work at the annual Senior Awards on June 11.

"This evening is our opportunity to celebrate the achievements of our graduating seniors," said Principal Jeanette Altruda. "Each student has been identified for exuding the traits of hard work, service and commitment in various areas of our school and community. Seniors, you have performed in a manner that allows us to continue our tradition of Copiague Pride."

Surrounded by family and friends,

as well as members of the Board of Education, central and high school administrative and teaching staff, more than \$67,000 in local scholarships and academic awards were presented to the students.







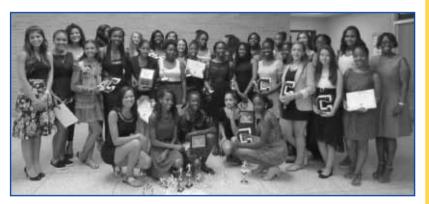
#### SPRING SPORTS AWARDS

Athleticism, sportsmanship, teamwork and dedication were honored at the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Spring Varsity Sports Awards Dinner. The Booster Club-sponsored event recognized student-athletes from the baseball, softball, and girls and boys track and lacrosse teams.

During the evening ceremony, in addition to receiving a certificate of participation or a varsity letter, the Gold Key, Golden Eagle and special memorial awards were presented. The Jared J. Pennington Memorial Lacrosse Award was given to Javon Bunn; Edward Collado received the Daniel O'Connell Memorial Baseball Award and Kasheem Morris was the recipient of the Sean Ryan Noonan Memorial Lacrosse Award.

The Section XI Gold Key Award, the highest Section XI honor that an athlete can receive, and Golden Eagle awards were also presented at the ceremony. The Gold Key is awarded to student athletes who letter in eight junior varsity or varsity seasons in grades 10-12. This year's recipients were Zyare Brown (cheerleading, winter track, spring track), Vittoria Clement (field hockey, winter track, soccer, lacrosse), Michael Illicete (football, wrestling, lacrosse), Andrew Marino (cross-country, winter track, spring track), Willie McFadden III (football, winter track, basketball, spring track), Jennifer Ruiz (tennis, winter track, spring track) and Quinton Woelk (cross-country, winter track, spring track).

The Golden Eagle Award is given to a student on each team who had the highest cumulative grade point average for the season. For the spring season, Alessandra Altruda (softball), Dawn Gioia (girls track), Bryan Johnson (boys lacrosse), Jeramil Saravia (baseball), Sofie Wilson (softball) and Zachary Wilson (boys track) took home the awards.



### Suffolk Zone

The Suffolk Zone of the New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance sponsored the annual Physical Education Student Leadership Awards Ceremony at Longwood High School on May 7. Students who qualify for the award are recognized for their achievements in physical education, leadership, character and academics.

Honored at the ceremony were Copiague Middle School eighth-grade students Jonathan Chinchilla and Rachel Korba; Deauville Gardens East Elementary School fifth-grade-students Sophia Bright and Yael Molina-Ortiz; Deauville Gardens West Elementary School fifth-grade students Jada Angel, Omar Corona and Jordan Kelly; Great Neck Road Elementary School fifth-grade students Patryk Jakowanis and Christina Sanchez; and Susan E. Wiley Elementary School fifth-grade students Joshua Georges and Zuri Milliner.

# SPRING SPORTS ROUNDUP

CI			D		
<b>S</b>	ч		ж	T	
•		$\mathbf{\mathcal{C}}$	T		

Girls Spring Track Boys Spring Track Boys Spring Track Baseball Baseball

Boys Spring Tra Baseball Baseball Boys Lacrosse Boys Lacrosse Girls Lacrosse Girls Lacrosse

#### NAME

Nickeela Austin Zyare Brown Vinnelle Grant Shanisha Jeffrey Tatyana Johnson Nakai Matthews Lyndsey Wilson Aaron McFadden Zachary Wilson Randy Lopez Vincent Pensabene **Jose Taveras** Shaquille McDonald Justin Wright Nicolette Vasseur Anna Zaborowska

**AWARD** All-League All-League All-League All-League All-League All-League All-League All-County Academic All-County All-League Academic All-League All-League All-Division All-County All-Division

Unsung Hero

#### Top Senior Athletes

On June 8, the Economic Opportunity Council of Suffolk and the Butch Dellecave Foundation recognized the top senior male and female athletes from each school. This year, Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School



nominated seniors Michael Illicete and Zyare Brown for the award named in the honor of one of the founding fathers of the Suffolk Hall of Fame.

### Sportsmanship Honored



For the second consecutive year, the varsity softball team at Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School received the Sportsmanship Team of the Year Award from the Suffolk County Softball Umpires Association. Only one varsity team in the county is given the award each year. "One of the foundations of Copiague softball is sportsmanship," said coach Jean Ann

Kohn. "To be honored two years in a row makes me extremely proud of my team."

#### Fall Sports Physicals

The Copiague School District will hold fall sports physicals on Thursday, Aug. 14 for all high school and middle school students planning to participate in fall sports. The physicals will take place in the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School nurse's office from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.



COPIAGUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS SUMMER 2014 • 7

# FREE SUMMER LUNCH PROGRAM

To ensure students continue receiving proper nutrition during the summer months, the Copiague School District will offer free lunch for children 18 years old or younger, at no cost to local taxpayers. Six sites will be open Monday through Friday from July 14 through Aug. 22. There will be no residency or identification required; however, all meals must be eaten on site. Below is a list of sites, serving times and addresses.

Bethel Ame Church 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. 20 Simmons St., Copiague

Christian Life Center Church 12-1 p.m. 450 Bayview Ave., Amityville

Circle of Love Ministry Worldwide 12-1 p.m.

20 Reith St., Copiague

Copiague Middle School 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m. 2650 Great Neck Road, Copiague

Great Neck Road Elementary School 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m. 1400 Great Neck Road, Copiague

Hollywood Full Gospel Baptist Cathedral 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. 3504 Great Neck Road, Amityville

#### Student-Artists Honored

At a special ceremony held prior to the June 16 Board of Education meeting, the District welcomed 25 pieces into the Superintendent's Art Gallery. During the annual reception, this year's selected artists each received a framed certificate of achievement acknowledging their outstanding artistic talent. Members of the Board of Education, administration, staff, parents and invited guests were on hand view the artwork and congratulate the newest student-artists chosen to exhibit their work in the gallery.

Each art piece has been professionally framed, features the

student-artist's name, grade level, and school year engraved on a brass plate and will be hung throughout the district.

The District congratulates: **Deauville Gardens East** - Erin Dixon\* and Paulina Krysiak; **Great Neck Road** - Eliud Bonilla, Larisa Gutierrez and Adriana Ordonez; **Susan E. Wiley** - Angelica Alvarado and Alice Sztabinski; **Copiague Middle School** - Shereyton Blocker, Isabel Febo, Georgia Formes, Maximus Hamoy, Misheley King, Eric Molina, Madison Peischl, Rianna Rivera\* and Mariel Tavares; **Walter G. O'Connell Copiague HS** - Albert Collado\*, Destinee DeLuca, Nicolette Giordano, Keriann Kalb, Esmeralda Mejia, Oliwia Mocarska, Marilyn Tavares, Abigail Trautwig and Julia Woelk. \**Indicates winners of the Fine Arts Festival held May 20*.

#### ACKNOWLEDGING ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Board of Education held a recognition ceremony to honor 22 students for their accomplishments. Members of the administration, Board, Parent Teacher Associations, teachers and parents gathered to acknowledge the students who serve as positive role models for their fellow classmates.

On June 16, the Board recognized students who have portrayed selfless acts of kindness, proven to be positive role models for classmates, volunteered their time to help others, and for academic, athletic, and musical accomplishments.

The District congratulates the following students: Deauville Gardens East - Jacklyn Freitag and Maurice Orr;

Deauville Gardens West - Edwin Duran, Kimberly Garcia Espinal and Tiwan Toney; Great Neck Road - Malik Andilza, Nitthanean Richard and Isaiah Soto; Susan E. Wiley - Madison Aquafredda, Joshua Jagnarine and Edison Peguero Rosario; Copiague Middle School - Jonathan Chinchilla, Gim Elger Gousse, Miguel Mercado and Belen Morote; Walter G. O'Connell Copiague HS - Lissabeth Baez Abreu, Ofelia Argueta Alvarado, Ervin Gonzales, Karla Lopez, Michelle Taveras, Tatyana Bellamy-Walker and Sofie Wilson.





#### Recognized for Dedicated Service

Board of Education members Rosemary Natoli and Everett E. Newman III were honored at the annual dinner meeting of the Nassau-Suffolk School Boards Association on May 29.

Mrs. Natoli received the Distinguished Service Award, which is presented in recognition of outstanding service and leadership to the education communities of Nassau and Suffolk counties, while Mr. Newman was awarded the Silver Bullet Award, which is presented to Board of Education members with more than 24 years of service.

"Mrs. Natoli and Mr. Newman have spent countless hours dedicated to the success of the children of Copiague," said Charles A. Leunig, Superintendent of Schools. "The valuable contributions they make during our meetings and by attending many school events help to preserve our district's tradition of providing a comprehensive educational program for all students and ensure Copiague remains a great place to learn."

### Space and Facilities Advisory Committee Present Findings

During the June 16 Board of Education meeting, representatives of the Space and Facilities Advisory Committee provided a detailed presentation to the Board and community outlining building infrastructure and space issues that need to be addressed, as well as several recommended options. This was the first of many discussions to come soliciting feedback from the Board and community.

The committee was established by the Board in October 2013 and has been meeting over the course of the year. It was formed to identify and prioritize needed building repairs and renovations, as well as to develop recommendations to address the issues of enrollment growth and the need for additional instructional and support space.

Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig noted that the District, with community support, has done all that it can to maintain facilities. The current facilities, however, were not designed to support today's 21st-century learning environment, the instructional programs mandated by the state, and the classroom space and support services space needed to properly educate the current and future student population.

Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operation Peter Michaelsen, explained that the repairs and renovations cannot be funded through the annual school budget due to the state-imposed property tax levy cap. However, by funding the projects through a bond referendum, the district would benefit from receiving

approximately 75 percent in state building aid, greatly reducing the cost to community residents.

The committee characterized its findings as either high, medium or low priority. Tracy Conhiser-Uy of Wendel, the District's architect, identified areas that need to be addressed in each building, including health, safety and welfare; educational program, which includes space needs for classroom and support services as well as science and music; preventive maintenance; items at the end of their useful life; energy efficiency; functional upgrades; accessibility and ADA compliance; and technology upgrades.

The building principals each explained the space issues they are currently experiencing, highlighting the fact that many classes and support services are currently held in spaces that were never designed for that purpose, including storage areas and hallways.

At the conclusion of the presentation, there was an opportunity for the Board and community residents to ask questions. Moving forward, the Board will review the recommendations of the committee and solicit feedback from the community before making a final decision regarding presenting a bond referendum to the community for approval later this fall.

For those unable to attend the Board meeting, the details of the presentation can be found on the District's website at www.copiague.k12.ny.us. To provide feedback on the findings, please email projectfeedback@copiague.net

#### **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Brian J. Sales, **President** 

Laura Gavey, *Vice President* Doris Fischer, *2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President*Michael L. Greb Henry Johnson Rosemary Natoli Everett E. Newman III

Mr. Charles A. Leunig, Superintendent of Schools