



COPIAGUE. Connections

Winter 2013

COPIAGUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS - A GREAT PLACE TO LEARN

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Copiague BANDS TOGETHER

When Superstorm Sandy hit Long Island, many residents of the Copiague community were left to contend with an array of devastation. In response to Sandy's aftermath, the Copiague community did what it does best – came together to help those in need. Holding drives for everything from food to clothing to needed supplies, district students and staff members once again demonstrated the caring nature of the schools.

“Due to the kindness and selflessness of many, our schools have been well-stocked with food and clothing for our students in need,” said Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig. “I think I can speak for all of us when I say this has been one of the most challenging – and rewarding – couple of weeks I have ever experienced. From the moment we reopened school, an incredible positive energy took over throughout our district and community – and magic happened. On any normal day in Copiague, these kinds of things happen, but what I have witnessed these past few weeks was just overwhelming.”

In order to distribute the supplies to the local families in need, schools set up evening and weekend pantries and community drives where residents could pick up food or clothing, as needed. Students and staff members across the district donated their time to sorting, folding and organizing

the numerous donations, making it easier for residents to gather what was needed. School crisis teams also reached out to each family within the district affected by Sandy and assisted with resource referrals, delivering required donations and providing much-needed support.

In addition to the fundraising efforts districtwide, the district was overwhelmed by the generosity of schools and individuals far and wide, as well as locally. “The generosity displayed in terms of fundraising and purchasing of food and supplies...there are no words,” said Middle School Principal Andrew Lagnado. “The spirit of giving, helping and coming together to support one another and our students continues to be awe-inspiring.”

Schools from California and Maryland and businesses from Delaware and Pennsylvania, just to mention a few, reached out to the district's schools in the aftermath of Sandy and delivered much-needed items to families to help them get back on their feet.

At Great Neck Road, students from



“The spirit of giving, helping and coming together to support one another and our students continues to be awe-inspiring.”

Theodore G. Davis Middle School and Arthur Middleton Elementary School, both in the Charles County School District in Maryland, visited the school with a truck filled with supplies. To thank the schools for their generosity, members of the SADD club created thank you cards, gave the Maryland students a tour of the school and enjoyed a sit-down lunch together. “This visit provided each school with the opportunity to get to know one another and to discuss similarities and differences between the school systems, as well as how the community service project positively impacted the schools involved,” said Copiague Guidance Counselor Adrienne Mahoney.



Copiague School District
Copiague, N.Y. 11726

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ECRWSS
Resident
Copiague School District

A Message from the Superintendent

Dear Residents,

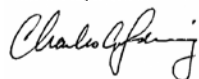
Welcome to our Winter 2013 issue of Copiague Connections, our official district newsletter. As you receive this latest edition, the first half of the school year has already come to a close. This issue provides highlights of the many activities, initiatives and events that have taken place in our schools over the last few months since our fall newsletter was published. Featured in this latest issue are articles about our annual College Day festivities, this year's Top 10 Students from the class of 2013, our annual Senior to Senior Dinner, staff recognition, student athletic achievements, this year's Middle School play, "Once Upon A Mattress," and a variety of other great activities involving Copiague students.

Prominently featured on our cover page is the inspiring story about how the entire Copiague community came together, along with help from far and wide, to deal with the devastating effects and recovery from Superstorm Sandy. This feature defines the true meaning of "community."

I would also like to draw your attention to an item on page 2 entitled Long Range Planning, which highlights a presentation given at a recent Board Meeting regarding space issues the district is currently experiencing. As I have mentioned publicly since the beginning of this school year, our community and schools are seeing a growth in population. This growth trend, which started two or so years ago, is unique on Long Island, where the overall population has actually declined. The growth in enrollment in our schools has resulted in every usable piece of space being utilized in our elementary schools, as well as the middle and high schools becoming tighter in space. The Long Range Planning Study has confirmed that this growth will likely continue for at least the next five years, which means that at some point in the not too distant future, the Board of Education will have to address this space issue. Additionally, all of our buildings' aging infrastructures are in need of maintenance, which will necessitate a capital project at some point soon, which will also be the subject of discussions with the Board.

And finally, once again we are in budget season. As has been the case for the past several years, the Board and Administration are in the process of building next year's budget. Each of these budgets have been a challenge to put together, as state aid and other revenue sources have continued to decrease, making it a greater challenge each year to preserve programs for students. The Board and I hope that you participate in this process by attending school board meetings and providing your input. Between our facilities and our children, we have a huge responsibility to protect our investment.

Sincerely,



Charles A. Leunig
Superintendent of Schools

LONG RANGE PLANNING

Over the last years, while Long Island – Suffolk County in particular – has seen a decrease of close to 5 percent, in the general population, the Copiague School District has seen an increase. To gather information about its growing enrollment and what effects, if any, it may have on the future of the district, the Board of Education recently commissioned a study from the Office of School Planning and Research at Western Suffolk BOCES. "The purpose of this study is to gather data to help the Board come to a determination about potential space needs over the next five years or so, should our student population continue to grow," said Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig.

At the Feb. 11 Board meeting, BOCES' Joan E. Townley presented the findings of the long-range analysis and planning study, including demographics, enrollment projections and analysis of educational space and needs. Throughout her presentation, which may be found on the district's website, www.copiague.k12.ny.us, Ms. Townley focused on three areas: enrollment – Copiague's current enrollment, enrollment patterns and future enrollment projections; demographics – local births and birth trends, housing, population and nonpublic enrollment (private and parochial schools); and district facilities.

At the conclusion of her presentation, Ms. Townley noted that enrollment is expected to continue growing. She continued that while the district's facilities (classroom space) are being used very effectively, all buildings are at or above capacity, meaning additional space is needed to accommodate programs and enrollment.

The Board will review the full study and hold public discussions at future meetings.

BOARD RECOGNIZED FOR COMMITMENT

During the October 22 Board of Education meeting, the volunteer members of the Board were recognized for their outstanding commitment and dedication to the students of the Copiague School District in honor of the New York State School Boards Association's School Board Recognition Week.

At the ceremony, held prior to the regular business meeting, the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Madrigal Choir sang two selections,

while representatives from the Copiague Teachers Association, Parent Teacher Association, Copiague Supervisory Association, Copiague Association of Secretaries and Copiague Teacher Aides and Teaching Assistants thanked the Board for their tireless commitment. Additionally, each unit donated funds to various charity organizations in the name of the Board.

Superintendent of Schools Charles A. Leunig also spoke of the commitment demonstrated by the Board and read excerpts from the proclamation issued by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo.



Trustees Everett E. Newman III and Laura Gavey, Vice President Doris Fischer, President Michael Greb, Second Vice President Rosemary Natoli, and trustees Brian J. Sales and Henry Johnson.



Bright Lights

On January 9, Kim Ruggiero and Monica Santaly, Languages Other Than English (LOTE) teachers from Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School, were honored for their use of technology in classroom instruction by the Association of Suffolk Supervisors of Technology in Education (ASSET) at the organization's annual Bright Lights Awards Luncheon.

"Incorporating technology is vital to our students' learning styles," said Ms. Santaly. "Not every student learns the same way, and by incorporating technology into each lesson, you can help a student understand topics in different ways. This makes a lesson interactive for the hands-on learners and visually interesting for the more visual learners." Added Ms. Ruggiero, "It's important to be able to connect with the ever-changing generation of technology."

Both teachers use SmartBoards to enhance their lessons, as well as document cameras and video cameras, which are used to create cooking shows, music videos and soap operas for the students to work on their vocabulary and grammar.



Building a Foundation for COLLEGE

The purpose behind the creation of College Day is to empower Copiague's students to aspire to higher education.

On January 10, students and staff throughout the Copiague School District celebrated the district's fourth annual College Day initiative. The purpose behind the creation of College Day is to empower Copiague's students to aspire to higher education.

At Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School, the staff focused their activities on college and career readiness. Students were provided with information regarding which classes they can take in high school that will help them in college, as well as various careers related to specific departments. Additionally, each department planned a variety of in-class activities for its students. High school students also traveled to the elementary and middle schools to encourage their younger peers to focus on their academics and prepare for college.

Members of the Copiague Middle School National Junior Honor Society hosted a mini college fair, where the students portrayed admissions counselors and answered questions on their college or university for prospective students, their fellow classmates. Following the theme "Buildings Blocks Leading to College," the middle schoolers enjoyed lessons on various college majors and how they can begin preparing for college now.

Combining their resources, students at Deauville Gardens East and Deauville Gardens West elementary schools were "Shaping Up for College." Fifth graders at both schools

showcased their athletic abilities during an East vs. West basketball game, with halftime performances by the dance team and cheerleaders. The game reinforced the importance of being in good academic standing for eligibility in collegiate athletics.

It was science day at Great Neck Road Elementary School, as the majority of lessons emphasized careers in science, math, technology and engineering. Led by high school science teacher Clare Nugent, members of the high school science research class visited the Great Neck Road students to get them excited about science through a series of hands-on activities. Wearing lab coats, the high school students led experiments using chocolate to demonstrate conduction with the fourth and fifth graders; explained how water tension affects bubbles blown in outer space to kindergartners and first graders; and designed bridges and buildings to observe how they perform in a simulated earthquake with the second and third graders.

Susan E. Wiley Elementary School students traveled down the road of careers, making stops at the middle school and high school before hitting their final destination, "Wiley University," where they participated in an orientation. During their orientation, the students viewed the video "A Day at College," created by students in the Hofstra University Journalism Department, as well as participated in a question-and-answer panel discussion with current Hofstra students.

The celebration continued into the evening,

as parents arrived at the high school to listen to and garner advice from a broad range of experts in preparing their children for college, and to visit a college and community service fair. To kick off the evening, James Hall, director of admissions at SUNY Farmingdale, gave advice to parents and their children about the importance of finding the right fit – academically, geographically and economically – when it comes to a college.



Smaller Schools, Stronger Relationships

Last spring, the Board of Education voted to create two smaller K-5 schools under one roof at the Deauville Gardens Elementary School. Following approval from the New York State Board of Regents, Deauville Gardens East and Deauville Gardens West elementary schools opened in September 2012.

According to the principals of East and West, Joseph Buccello and Michael Kelly, the successes of the split are innumerable, with the most significant positive being the strengthening of relationships between parents, students, teachers and administrators. With approximately 475 students in each building, the principals are able to foster closer relationships and offer enhanced guidance and leadership, as they're able to garner a better understanding of the needs of their staff and families.

Another positive of the split is the common start and end time for primary and intermediate students at each school, as opposed to the staggered times at the original Deauville Gardens. The new timetable allows for each principal to hold one staff development meeting with his entire staff, rather than two separate meetings, facilitating teachers to share best practices. Additionally, grade-level teachers now share prep periods, allowing them to collaborate and better meet the challenges of the new Common Core Standards.

Alyson Bright, PTA president for both East and West and parent to a student at East, also sees the benefits to the smaller schools. "They've really made this split work," she noted. "Building relationships in the smaller school has been easier, creating a tighter community. As PTA president, I deal with both schools, and everyone has really come together to create individual identities for each school. Also, as a parent who has had to deal with the two separate drop-off and pick-up times, the common start time has made it much easier to plan your day, especially for a working parent."



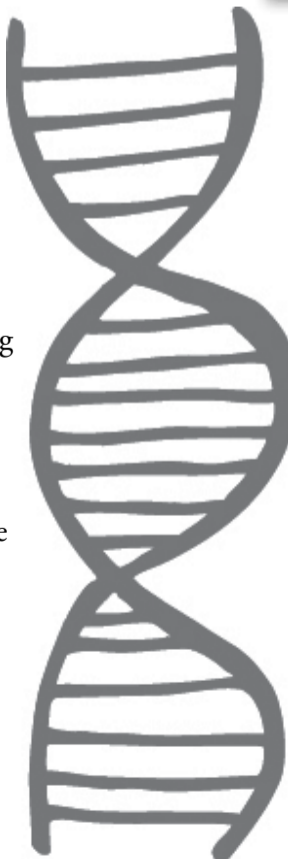
Her Fi

Combining her love of fishing with her role as a fifth grader Claudia Motley earned a spot on the panel by the Long Island Outdoor Writers' Association and the Coastal Conservancy. "My Fishing Story," placed on the panel comprised of distinguished writers, editors and award-winning authors. The book is open to all Long Island area children in grades 1-12.

According to the website www.50plusny.com, the book was to encourage essay writing and to introduce children and adults to the core values, benefits and enjoyment of fishing and outdoor activities, and to perpetuate the fundamental writing skills and the next generation of A



Extracting DNA



Fifth grade students at Great Neck Road Elementary School have been busy learning about the many uses of DNA. In an effort to apply the concepts learned in the classroom to the real world, Jennifer Galasso, an instructor from the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, visited the students, instructing and guiding them through a DNA extraction from harmless bacteria.

To extract the DNA from the bacteria, the students used a combination of soap and heat to burst the cells inside. After making the extraction, they used ethanol to separate the DNA from the soapy solution. Once separated, the students were able to see and touch the DNA.

"It was really cool," said fifth grader Marvin Lobo about the activity. "I am excited to go back to class and learn more about DNA."

The program was offered to the fifth graders in conjunction with the districtwide College Day initiative, specifically Great Neck Road's focus on careers in science, technology, math and engineering.

Remembering OUR VETERANS

Fifth graders at Susan E. Wiley Elementary School honored veterans of the United States Armed Forces as part of their annual Veterans Day celebration. Postponed due to Superstorm Sandy, this year's celebration was held on Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day,



the annual event. During the celebration, teachers and students read original stories created by librarians and members of the community. "The Armed Forces" Following the event, the students questioned the veterans about



Fishing Story



of fishing with writing, Copiague Middle School eighth grader Claudia entered the 2012 Youth Essay Writing Contest sponsored by the National Communications Network, On the Water magazine and the National Education Association New York. Claudia's fictional story, titled "The Fishing Story," was selected first out of hundreds of entries in the junior category. A panel of distinguished educators, including award-winning writers and editors, judged the contest, which was held in Copiague and New York City.

For more information visit <http://www.onthewater.org>. The goal of the contest is to encourage writing as a means of self-expression for young adults and to preserve customs, traditions and values. Other outdoors activities include fishing, hunting and hiking. To date and enhance the quality of life among the current generation of America's youth.



OUND RICK the



but still included the usual pomp and circumstance associated with the event. The celebration, which was organized by the school's fifth-grade students, included guests from the Dominican Village in Amityville, students who read essays and poems about Veterans Day and viewed a photo slideshow, prepared by librarian Lisa Miller, that highlighted the veterans during their years of service. Additionally, under the direction of music teacher Karen Swenson, the band performed patriotic songs and the entire fifth grade sang "The Forces Medley." Following the slideshow, the students spent time with the veterans, asking questions such as their reasons for joining the armed forces, and listened as the veterans shared stories of their time in service to the United States.



Dancing the Night Away

It was a night to remember as more than 300 local senior citizens gathered in the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School cafeteria to celebrate the annual Senior to Senior Dinner, hosted by the Class of 2013. The event provides students with an opportunity to thank senior citizens within the district's community for their continued support of their education.

To kick off the program, the Madrigal Choir, under the direction of Gina Occhiogrosso, performed selections from their winter concert program before breaking off into the crowd to join their guests in a sing-a-long of holiday favorites, including "Jingle Bell Rock" and "Let It Snow." Following the sing-a-long, the senior citizens enjoyed a buffet-style dinner, which they worked off afterwards by dancing to today's hits and yesterday's classics.

"It really is a great time for both the students and the senior citizens."

-Shanna Fitzpatrick

"I love this event," said senior Cristina Hernandez. "It really is a great time for both the students and the senior citizens." Added senior Shanna Fitzpatrick, "I like interacting with the seniors. It's really great to see the smiles on their faces and know that they're having a great time."

The yearly event was organized by the Class of 2013, their advisers Deborah Delaney and Jean Ann Kohn, and Student Activities Coordinator Toni McIntosh and paid for through fundraising by the senior class.





Superstorm Sandy may have pushed back their performance date by a few weeks, but as the saying goes, “The show must go on!” and at Copiague Middle School, the show did just that. Under the direction of Marc Levenson, and with the assistance of Walter G. O’Connell Copiague High School interns, the theater students worked hard for weeks learning lines, choreography and musical numbers in preparation for their stage debut of “Once Upon a Mattress.”

“Once Upon a Mattress” is a popular retelling of the Hans Christian Andersen fairy tale “The Princess and the Pea.” Under the law, no one shall marry until Queen Aggravain’s son, Prince Dauntless, marries.



However, every petitioning princess is sent away after failing an unfair test devised by the Queen. Things take a turn when Sir Harry goes off to the swamps and brings back Princess Winnifred for Prince Dauntless. The Queen is horrified and immediately begins to scheme, assisted by her wizard sidekick. With a little help from Sir Harry, the King and the Jester, however, Winnifred is not quite so easy to get rid of.

For the two performances, Dylan Chambers portrayed Prince Dauntless and Princess Winnifred was played by Jade Dickenson, while the Queen, Sir Harry, the King and the Jester were played by Crystal Betz, C-Jay Wall, Nicholas Favichia and Tiana Roe, respectively.



DEAUVILLE GARDENS WEST



DEAUVILLE GARDENS EAST

Making Melodies

Twenty-five student-musicians from the Copiague School District have been selected to participate in the Suffolk County Music Educators Association All-County Festival. The festival, which is divided into three divisions, will be held this March and incorporates students in grades 5-10.

The students selected represent the best of Suffolk County and were chosen based on their New York State School Music Association scores, as well as teacher recommendations.

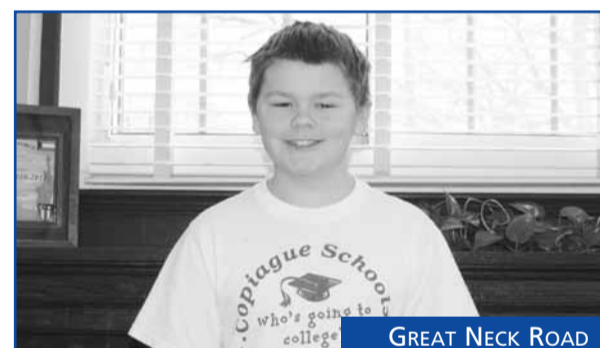
The district congratulates the following students on this outstanding achievement:

Walter G. O’Connell Copiague High School

- Steven Szabo, Band – Mallets
- Marcia Aracena, Chorus – Alto
- Gabriel Clement, Chorus – Alto
- Natalie Korba, Chorus – Soprano
- Vincent Pensabene, Chorus – Bass
- David Szabo, Chorus – Bass
- Jeffrey Yanes, Chorus – Tenor

Copiague Middle School

- Mikayla Angel, Band – Flute
- Kimberly Cheung, Band – Bb Clarinet
- Aaron Eng, Band – Trombone
- Lacy McIntyre, Band – Flute
- Arlene Taveras, Band – Flute
- Justin Taveras, Band – Baritone/Euph
- Matthew Albelo, Chorus – Alto
- Jackson Bright, Chorus – Alto



GREAT NECK ROAD

- Jade Dickenson, Chorus – Alto
- Nicholas Favichia, Chorus – Baritone
- Brianna Mazzilli, Chorus – Soprano
- Kembalee Rolle, Chorus – Alto
- Samantha Sattler, Chorus – Soprano
- Sophie Wilson, Chorus – Soprano

Deauville Gardens Elementary East

- Isabella Galarza, Band – Alto Sax

Deauville Gardens Elementary West

- Jaime Kister, Band – Bb Clarinet
- Donna Rivera, Band – Flute

Great Neck Road Elementary

- Andrew Szabo, Band – Trumpet/Cornet

Creating Awareness

For the third year in a row, the Copiague School District has teamed up with the Copiague Knights of Columbus to participate in the Knights of Columbus Substance Abuse Poster Contest for ages 8-14. The district congratulates Deauville Gardens East Elementary School fifth-grader Katie Garcia and Copiague Middle School students Cameren Jackson, Nayanna Kirk and Tayanee Peay. These students each received a \$50 savings bond and a certificate from the Knights of Columbus.



SENIORS SIGN LETTERS OF INTENT

Two Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School seniors have committed to continuing their academics careers while playing college athletics by signing National Letters of Intent. Lauren Handy signed to play softball for Mercy College, while Sean Benedetto will be playing lacrosse for Molloy College.

Lauren is a five-year varsity softball starter in the positions of catcher and third base. She is an extraordinary powerhouse on the field and, due to her hard work, has been named an All-League

player. As a junior, Lauren had a batting average of .256 and led the team in home runs and runs batted in. "Lauren has a champion presence on the field and is a natural leader and inspiration to others in the sport that she truly loves," said Varsity Softball Coach Jean Ann Kohn.

Sean plays face-off midfielder for the varsity lacrosse team. His hard work, dedication and commitment in improving his face-off skills have really put Sean in the forefront of his position. "His progress has been a pleasure to witness, and



the coaching staff, team and community are very proud of him," remarked Varsity Lacrosse Coach Kenneth Berry. "He is a pure example of how desire and determination will pay dividends in the end."

Suffolk Zone Winners

On Dec. 5, two Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School seniors were presented with the New York State Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance Suffolk Zone Award. Lizbelle Taveras and Stuart Peña were awarded certificates and gold medals recognizing their outstanding achievement as physical education students, scholars and citizens. The ceremony was held at the Hyatt Regency Wind Watch in Hauppauge.

"Throughout her high school career, Lizbelle Taveras has been a hardworking, ambitious and dedicated student-athlete," remarked Director of Physical Education and Athletics Peter Cesare. "The tireless efforts she contributes to each challenge, whether it be in the classroom or on the court, influence others to strive for success." Ranked fifth in her class, she plans to pursue a degree in law.

"Enthusiastic, industrious and motivated are a few of the words that come to mind when describing Stuart's personality," said Mr. Cesare. "These characteristics allow him to achieve his best in anything from physical activities to academic studies." Stuart, ranked third in

his class, plans to study chemical engineering and mathematics after graduation. *Pictured left to right: Physical Education Teacher Patricia Stein, Director of Physical Education and Athletics Peter Cesare, Stuart Peña, Lizbelle Taveras and Physical Education Teacher Antoinette Spencer.*



STUDENT-ATHLETES HONORED

The annual Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Varsity Fall Sports Awards Dinner, hosted by the Booster Club, celebrated the more than 150 student-athletes who participated in the fall sports season. Being honored this December were members of the cross-country, field hockey, football, gymnastics, girls and boys soccer, tennis and volleyball teams.

In addition to the traditional MVP, coaches and most improved player awards, the fall dinner hands out six special memorial awards to outstanding athletes for demonstrating leadership on and off the field. This year Caitlin Zowak (girls soccer) was awarded the Michael S. Cohen Award, Roselin Lopez (gymnastics) was the recipient of the Dolores Sandefur Award, Jose Escobar (boys soccer) was presented with the Anthony Lombardo Award, Natalina Sagliocca (field hockey) received the Barbara Day Award, Grace Hall (volleyball) received the Deborah Tekosky Award, and DJ Brown (cross-country) was the recipient of the Christopher Urban Award.

One athlete on each team with the highest cumulative average for the season was also honored by receiving the Golden Eagle Award. The Golden Eagle winners for the fall were: Alessandra Altruda (girls soccer), Nicole Alvarez (tennis), William Estevez (cross-country), Stephanie Fischer (field hockey), Lindsay Griffiths (gymnastics), Turner Kelly (football), Carlos Saravia (boys soccer) and Lizbelle Taveras (volleyball).



Fall All Stars



<u>SPORT</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>AWARD</u>
Girls Tennis	Nicole Alvarez	All-Division
Field Hockey	Ashley Arquer	All-Division/All-County Honorable Mention
Boys Soccer	Alexis Batres Molina	All-Division
Football	Darren Brown	2nd Team All-Division
Cross Country	DJ Brown	1st Team All League
Girls Soccer	A'Leah Daleus	All-League
Boys Soccer	Jose Escobar	Academic All-County
Girls Tennis	Casey Fernandez	All-League
Volleyball	Grace Hall	All-League
Football	Michael Illicete	2nd Team All-Division
Gymnastics	Katarina Junge	All-League
Gymnastics	Nicole LaSorsa	Honorable Mention
Gymnastics	Roselin Lopez	All-League
Football	Willie McFadden III	1st Team All-Division
Girls Tennis	Katie Molina	All-County
Boys Soccer	Christian Morales	All-Division
Girls Tennis	Janiece Morgan	All-Division
Football	Tyler O'Brien	2nd Team All-Division
Gymnastics	Adriana Orellana	All-League
Field Hockey	Samantha Perez	All-Division/All-County Honorable Mention
Boys Soccer	Troy Ricci	All-League
Girls Tennis	Nicole Rodriguez	All-League/Sportsmanship Award
Girls Tennis	Jennifer Ruiz	All-League



Dates to Remember

MARCH 11

Board of Education Meeting

MARCH 14-16

HS Musical
In the Heights
7:00 p.m.

MARCH 25

Board of Education Meeting

APRIL 2-4

Late Kindergarten Registration

APRIL 8

Board of Education Meeting

APRIL 16-18

Grades 3-8 NYS ELA Assessment

APRIL 23

Board of Education Meeting

APRIL 24-26

Grades 3-8 NYS Math Assessment

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To keep updated on important information and upcoming events, please "like" the Copiague Public Schools Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/CopiaguePublicSchools>

Transportation Reminder

All requests for transportation to private and parochial schools must be made in writing on or before April of the previous school year. Required information includes the student's name, grade, address, telephone number, date of birth, and the name and address of the private or parochial school for which transportation is requested.



Requests should be submitted to Copiague Public Schools, c/o Transportation Office, 2650 Great Neck Road, Copiague, NY 11726.

TOP OF THEIR CLASS

COPIAGUE ANNOUNCES CLASS OF 2013 TOP TEN

Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School has announced the top 10 students of the Class of 2013. Leading their class are Valedictorian Robert Gioia and Salutatorian John Romano.

"These students have consistently exhibited outstanding academic performances throughout their educational careers, and being in the top 10 is a culmination of all their hard work and dedication," said Principal Jeanette Altruda. "Congratulations to them for the examples of excellence they bring to our school and our community."

With a weighted average of 101.577, Robert ranks first in his class. He has excelled academically throughout his career at the high school, taking seven Advanced Placement courses including economics, calculus and physics, earning him the distinction of being named an AP Scholar with Honor by the College Board. Robert has been a member of the varsity wrestling team and is a current member of the Art Club and National Honor Society. Additionally, he volunteers his time as an after-school tutor and assistant coach for the middle school wrestling team. This fall, Robert will major in video game design.

John, with a weighted GPA of 101.054, has earned the distinction of being named salutatorian of the Class of 2013. Having taken 11 AP courses, including world history, economics and chemistry, John has been recognized by the College Board as an AP Scholar with Distinction. Through his years at the high school, John has shown interest in the arts as a member of the award-winning marching band and the Madrigal Choir and as an actor in each of the past four spring musicals. John is also a member of the Key Club and National Honor Society and president of the Drama Club. He plans to major in engineering.

Congratulations to the Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School Class of 2013 Top 10:

Robert Gioia, Valedictorian
John Romano, Salutatorian
Stewart Pena, Third
Tshay Williams, Fourth
Lizbelle Taveras, Fifth
Kayla Rosario, Sixth
Aleksandra Czarnecka, Seventh
Grace Hall, Eighth
Janice Mayard, Ninth
Emily Clark, Tenth



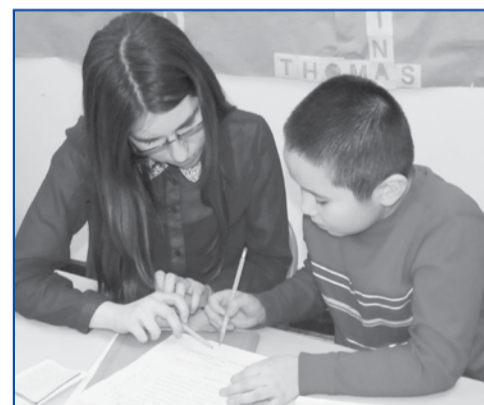
Homework Club

Last school year, the Great Neck Road Elementary School initiated an extended-day Homework Club, which services students in grades 3-5 who are in need of individualized academic assistance in completing homework assignments, as well as larger school projects. The program recruits volunteers from Walter G. O'Connell Copiague High School to work individually or in small groups with the younger students one hour a day, Monday through Thursday.

"These high school students are not just tutors, but also mentors and role models to our young students," said Great Neck Road Social Worker Lissette Persico, who helps organize the program with Great Neck Road Guidance Counselor Adrienne Mahoney and high school teacher Toni McIntosh.

"The volunteers often engage our students in conversations about their own school work, books they are reading, and what it's like to prepare for Regents and Advanced Placement exams."

Added Ms. McIntosh, "As important, the high school students, who are members of both the Future Teachers of America and the Student Council, have found the Homework Club to be a gratifying experience. Assisting younger students in their academics or helping them with their daily homework to improve their academic progress has many intrinsic rewards. All students currently involved in the program seem to really enjoy their contact and role in helping these younger students become more confident in their studies."



BOARD OF EDUCATION

Michael L. Greb, **President**

Doris Fischer, **Vice President** Rosemary Natoli, **2nd Vice President**

Laura Gavey Henry Johnson Everett E. Newman III Brian J. Sales

Mr. Charles A. Leunig, **Superintendent of Schools**