

Spring 2020

# Lynbrook School News

A PUBLICATION OF THE LYNBROOK SCHOOL DISTRICT

## STUDENTS TAKE ACTION TO BUILD A *Community of Caring*

Since introducing the district's 2019-2020 theme, A Community of Caring, Lynbrook students have made strides in building their relationships within their schools and the community. Now more than ever, our students, staff and families have banded together to support neighbors in need and our local heroes who are on the frontline of this global pandemic. This includes donating nonperishable food items to families and creating heartwarming thank-you cards and videos for first responders and health care providers. In addition, staff members have lifted the spirits of students by sharing encouraging video messages on social media to show how much they care.

During the school year, kindergarten and elementary school students have learned the power of kindness through daily classroom routines,

programs, fundraisers and new initiatives. Middle and high school students have had more opportunities to showcase their character and their drive to enact positive change. They have exemplified care through service projects, schoolwide initiatives and participation in extracurricular clubs and organizations. All students have also focused on self-care by learning that you cannot help others if you are not the best person you can be. Through districtwide celebrations such as Unity Day and smaller-scale lessons about caring for others, each Lynbrook student has learned that one person can make a difference and even a small act of kindness can go a long way each day. Turn to pages 2 and 3 to learn more about how students in each school have put the Community of Caring theme into action.



Students and staff across the district participated in fundraisers and toy drives during the holidays. Pictured are student council members at West End Elementary School with some of the toy donations that they collected for West End families in need.



Students reflected on how they could show acceptance, inclusivity and kindness towards others during Unity Day. Pictured are Lynbrook South Middle School students who decorated doors with positive messages that day.

In honor of Veterans Day, second graders from Marion Street Elementary School showed their appreciation for local veterans with their annual patriotic sing-along event.



Lynbrook High School students welcomed a student back to school with open arms after he underwent a heart transplant.



Waverly Park Elementary School students visited the Lynbrook Kindergarten Center to read to classes during their Pick a Reading Partner week. Pictured are Waverly Park student Brandon Nicholas (right) who read to his brother Bryson Nicholas from the Kindergarten Center.



Lynbrook North Middle School students are encouraged to practice self-care with the formation of the school's new Wellness Room. Pictured clockwise from left are eighth graders Cara Kelly, Amelia Doyle and Kerry Cullen, school psychologist Marie Toscano and eighth grader Micala Dugger.



"Students and staff have proudly shown their dedication to our theme this year. Spreading kindness leads to a better tomorrow, and we are fortunate to live in a community that recognizes this and cares greatly for each other. I have been so impressed by the good deeds of our students, and I hope they continue to strive to make a difference not only in Lynbrook, but also in the world."

—Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Melissa Burak



# Care in Action

Throughout the school year, students across the district have shined a light on the 2019-2020 theme, **A Community of Caring.**



Kindergarten students Eli Denimmo (left) and Abigail Zangari (right) with the Kindergarten Center's mitten tree.

## Lynbrook Kindergarten Center

They may be little but they have big hearts. Kindergarten students and their families have shown their support for important causes during the school year. They began with a Peds for Peru shoe drive at the start of the school year, in partnership with Waverly Park Elementary School. Since then, the kindergarten students have continued to give back to others, not only in the world but in the Lynbrook community. At the end of January, the school decided to support the Salvation Army. Principal Ellen Postman read "The Mitten Tree" by Candace Christiansen to classes and, together, the kindergartners created a school mitten tree with 150 donated gloves and mittens for those in need. The process taught students how simple acts of kindness can speak louder than words.



## West End Elementary School

This school year, West End Elementary School students have found creative ways to show they care. The school's annual musical turned into a celebration of the Community of Caring theme as students performed a show entitled "The Champions of West End." Written and directed by music teacher Maria Kruh, the production spotlighted West End students who seek to put on a show to raise money and buy food for Our Lady of Peace's food pantry. In addition, Marisa Amalfitano's third grade class has shined a light on how a simple act of kindness can make the school a better place. The class calls themselves the Kindness Crew and prides themselves on completing sweet gestures for others. They have created bookmarks which they hid in books around the school library for students to find, and have also designed posters with inspirational and kind messages which they displayed in the bathrooms around the school.



Marion Street Elementary School students showed their support for Autism Speaks by wearing T-shirts with the statement, "In a world where you can be anything, be kind."

## Marion Street Elementary School

The outside of Marion Street Elementary School represents the heart of the students who are in it. In gold and green letters, the words "Choose Kind" are displayed across the school's fence. Students embrace acts of kindness on a daily basis, and with their new sign, they hope the community is reminded of this important message as well. Throughout the school year, Marion Street students have supported various causes close to their hearts such as Autism Awareness. This year, the school raised \$500 through T-shirt sales to support Autism Speaks. They have also participated in various meaningful activities during Kindness Week, such as creating kindness cards for others on Valentine's Day and building kindness chains. Marion Street strives to be a No Place for Hate School and, with the efforts of students and staff, is on a solid path to becoming one.



In honor of No Name-Calling Week, Lynbrook North Middle School eighth graders (left to right) Micala Dugger, Kerry Cullen, Stephanie Neri, Cara Kelly and Colette Doyle wrote down things they like to hear from peers.



Lynbrook South Middle School sixth graders strengthened their bond during their trip to Frost Valley.

## Lynbrook North and South Middle Schools

Fostering a community of caring starts at the building level. Many lessons, programs, service projects and initiatives that promote kindness have been a significant part of the middle school learning environment. Students have participated in programs such as Start With Hello Week and No Name-Calling Week. Both are celebrated nationally to put an end to bullying and to promote inclusivity and acceptance. Middle school students have also taken trips to enhance student bonding. This includes the sixth grade Frost Valley trip. Students from both middle schools enjoyed the Frost Valley experience this year as it allowed them to learn more about their peers, practice teamwork and develop an appreciation for one another. The positive skills that culminated from these trips translated well as students returned to school with new friends and long-lasting memories.



Waverly Park Elementary School's "CARE" Ambassadors for January and February. The students were selected by their peers for showing kindness and care.

## Waverly Park Elementary School

Students at Waverly Park Elementary School enjoy spreading the love each year. The Student Council, led by Shari Bowes and Courtney Jacobs, have embraced the Community of Caring theme by collecting baking items for the Ronald McDonald House of Long Island and baking for the families residing there. During the holidays, they created and sold kindness ornaments and have also hosted a fundraiser to collect items for those in need living in Puerto Rico. As a school, Waverly Park established a character pillar ambassador program this year. Students are selected by their peers for the specific pillar that the school is focusing on. Thus far, Respect and Care ambassadors were chosen and have helped spread the message across the school.



Members of the Lynbrook High School Key Club received a New York State Senate Proclamation for their positive contributions to the Lynbrook community.

## Lynbrook High School

Whether it is through schoolwide or community events, Lynbrook High School students are always seeking to make a difference. This is especially true for those involved in the high school's various clubs and organizations. This includes the Key Club, National Art Honor Society, the Student Government Association and many more. Key Club members earned a New York State Senate Proclamation this year for their community service. They have hosted successful blood drives, volunteered their time with community members and have facilitated fundraisers to give back to important causes. National Art Honor Society and Student Government Association members are also known for their generosity. This school year, honor society members raised more than \$7,400 during their annual Night of the Pumpkins event, with proceeds supporting the Lynbrook Excellence in Education Foundation. Student government members hosted the school's annual Human Relations Day and have participated in many service projects during the school year. This includes donating hundreds of coats and wrapping gifts for families in need during the holiday season with the nonprofit organization, Rock and Wrap It Up!



# FACILITIES UPDATE

In May 2017, Lynbrook residents voted on and approved a \$33 million Capital Improvement and Construction Bond. This past summer, the district completed Phase One of the bond. This phase encompassed the complete renovation of the Atlantic Avenue Wrestling Room, locker rooms in the Lynbrook North and South middle school gymnasiums, and gymnasium air conditioning installations at the Lynbrook Kindergarten Center, Lynbrook North and South middle schools and Waverly Park Elementary School.

The second phase of the 2017 bond project is ready to begin with the construction of a 33,000-square-foot extension added to Lynbrook High School. This large-scale project began mid-March with an anticipated completion date of September 2021.

Coinciding with the construction of the new wing at the high school are two other capital bond construction projects set to begin this summer. These include the installation of the gymnasium air conditioning at Marion Street and West End elementary schools. Along with the 2017 bond-related projects, the district will also begin construction this summer on an elevator addition at Waverly Park Elementary School.

Planning is almost complete for roofing repairs at Lynbrook High School and an elevator addition at Marion Street Elementary School. If the plans are approved by the New York State School Office of Facilities Planning, a construction timeline will be established.



*The Lynbrook Board of Education, central administrators and high school principal Joseph Rainis broke ground on the Lynbrook High School extension project. Pictured from left: Lynbrook High School Principal Joseph Rainis, Board President William Belmont, Vice President Lesli Deninno, Trustee Heather Hanson, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Melissa Burak, Board trustee Ellen Marcus, Board secretary Robert Paskoff, Assistant Superintendent for Finance, Operations and Information Systems Dr. Paul Lynch and Director of Facilities James Saitta.*

## Tapping Into REMOTE LEARNING

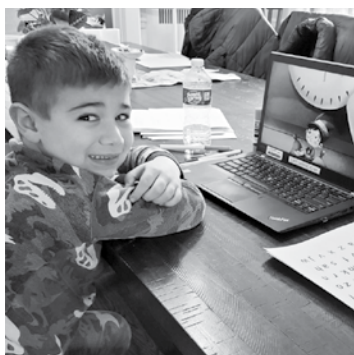
During this unprecedented time of living through a global pandemic, the district has worked diligently to provide distance learning opportunities for all students. Families have embraced this new way of learning, and we appreciate the support that we have already received from the community as we continue to navigate this uncharted territory of instruction.

Administrators and teachers have created materials to build each student's skills in the various academic areas while school is closed. At the kindergarten level, students have been completing paper assignments and engaging in online programs such as Raz-Kids and ST Math. Elementary students have been accessing their assignments online to foster their development in art, English language arts, math, music, physical education, science and social studies. Since reading is also an important part of the

curriculum, kindergarten and elementary school students have been encouraged to read for 20 minutes a day.

At the secondary level, Lynbrook students are receiving their instruction online and have been interacting with their teachers on a daily basis using communication models that they are already familiar with. This includes utilizing instructional programs such as Castle Learning, Discovery Learning, Edmodo and Microsoft OneNote. Teachers are also emailing assignments for students to complete and sending video recorded lessons to support distance learning.

Since this pandemic is constantly changing, we encourage families and students to frequently visit the district's website at [lynbrookschools.org](http://lynbrookschools.org) to receive updates on the remote learning process and the next steps that the district is taking.



*Kindergarten student Vincent Grenier listened to the story "Jack and the Beanstalk" while completing his schoolwork at home.*



*Marion Street students Alexa Sferrazza (left) and Kiara Sferrazza (right) participated in a hands-on distance learning project.*

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## #GIVEAHOOTFOR...

Follow Dr. Burak's Twitter account, @LynbrookSupt. Look for weekly tweets with the hashtag #GiveAHootFor...



*"During this trying time, it has been amazing to see how our staff and parent community have banded together to support our students and continue their academic instruction."*

-Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment, Dr. Gerard Beleckas



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