

Soar with the eagles...



## Helping Students Transition From Elementary to Junior High, and on to High School



The West Babylon School District has undertaken several initiatives to help students make the transition from elementary school to junior high, and from junior high to high school, a more comfortable and rewarding experience. When students – like all of us – have a clear understanding of what to expect, anxiety is minimized and the opportunity for success is maximized. It is our goal, and our commitment, to see that every child has the greatest benefits in moving from grade to grade, as well as the support necessary to make the most of the excellent programs and services West Babylon has to offer.

### Elementary to Middle School ...

Last spring, West Babylon Junior High School's Sixth Grade Transitioning Committee, led by teachers Julie Powers and Heidi Birr, presented a fifth grade orientation for parents that was a wonderful success.

Additionally, the committee members, accompanied by groups of sixth graders and their parents, visited each fifth grade elementary class in the district to present information on what to expect at the junior high school. The sixth grade students

also hosted Q & A sessions, giving the fifth graders an opportunity to raise their specific questions and concerns about moving up to the next level. These preparatory efforts were well-received by students and parents alike, and provided both with greater comfort about the first days and weeks of school at WBJHS.

This year's sixth grade students have been actively involved in academics, athletics and the arts, as well as extra-curricular activities, and are well underway to a successful year of learning and growing, academically, socially and emotionally.

**“Through social and emotional activities children’s emotional intelligence is bolstered, giving them an enormous edge in their personal and professional futures.”**

–WBJHS Principal Scott Payne

by members of the Student Association. The incoming students were also shown where their lockers are, and were able to try them out.

Based on the recommendations of the School Quality Team and SEAL (Social, Emotional and Academic Learning) committees, eighth grader students will visit the high school once more to experience an abbreviated day.

### Junior High to High School ...

Similarly, our high school administrators met with eighth grade students and parents last spring to provide a general introduction to WBHS. Then in August, everyone was invited back to take a tour of the high school. Students were given their schedules for the fall and had the opportunity to walk from classroom to classroom, accompanied



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# Superintendent's Message:



Dear Residents:

It seems like just yesterday we were sending our graduates off to begin a new chapter in their lives, and now it is time to move ahead and welcome you to the 2011-12 school year!

The Board of Education and I have set the following goals for this school year. Several of these goals have multiple components, not listed here. To review the complete list of 2011-12 district goals, please visit the district website at [www.wbschools.org](http://www.wbschools.org).

## District Goals 2011-2012

1. Commit to a districtwide comprehensive long-range strategic plan with measurable goals & objectives that are evaluated annually
2. Provide a rigorous and relevant instructional and co-curricular program for the purpose of raising student achievement to prepare students with skills for 21st century expectations
3. Develop communication methods to enhance relationships between the school district and the community
4. Maintain and enhance fiscal stability
5. Increase the use of technology throughout the school district
6. Recruit, develop and retain talented, qualified staff and educational leaders
7. Provide safe, healthy and well maintained facilities

## Board Goals 2011-2012

1. Ensure the delivery of high-quality instruction to improve student performance
2. Commit to continued Board trustee staff development
3. Develop communication methods to enhance relationships between the school district and the community (2.1)
4. Ensure the district remains fiscally responsible while maintaining quality educational programs for our students

## Superintendent's Goals 2011-2012

1. Support the 2011-12 District and Board Goals
2. Maintain fiscal stability that addresses the needs of the district while balancing the community's commitment in difficult financial times
3. Establish an Educational Foundation (separately or in cooperation with the Alumni Foundation)

I look forward to the many challenges and celebrations that this year has to offer. We began the school year with the opening of South Bay School. It is such a rewarding experience to see the students and staff in their new building. I truly thank the West Babylon Community for your cooperation and support.

As a graduate of West Babylon, I am proud to share with you that on October 29 the West Babylon Alumni Foundation held its third annual Hall of Fame induction dinner. It was truly a memorable night. Five very worthy individuals were honored as a testament to what they've accomplished. We also honored retired administrators Mathew Wilensky, Dr. Anthony Capone, and Martin Kennedy. The motto "Once an Eagle, Always an Eagle" is alive and well!

Our administrative team has been diligently working on many of our strategic plan initiatives. We are devoting our energies to meeting the requirements of the Race to the Top federal grant, including the Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) process for our teachers and principals. As we begin the 2012-13 budget cycle, we are prepared to meet the challenges of the newly legislated Property Tax Cap. As a community working together, I am confident we will continue to move forward for the success of our students. To learn more about what is happening in West Babylon, please take the time to visit our website at [www.wbschools.org](http://www.wbschools.org).

In closing, I wish all of you good health and happiness during the upcoming holiday season.

Sincerely,

*Anthony Cacciola*

Anthony Cacciola  
Superintendent of Schools

## Administrative Appointments



### **Jennifer Buscemi, Executive Director for Finance and Operations**

Jennifer Buscemi began her career as an auditor with the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance before she became an examiner with the Office of the NYS Comptroller. During her time at the Comptroller's Office, she worked on many high profile audits of municipalities throughout Long Island including being an integral member of the Roslyn UFSD audit team. As a result of that audit, the State Legislature adopted the School District Accountability Initiative, which required the Comptroller's office to audit every school district in the state. Jennifer supervised and managed many of those audits including the *West Babylon UFSD audit*. Jennifer has her BA in accounting from Queens College, her MBA in public management and her advanced certificate in school business leadership from Dowling College. Jennifer is very excited about this opportunity and is looking forward to meeting and working together with all the members of the West Babylon community.



### **Jennifer Carere, West Babylon Junior High School Assistant Principal**

Jennifer Carere started her educational career here in West Babylon as a social studies teacher for grades seven and eight, and was later appointed K-8 social studies coordinator for the district. Ms. Carere also serves as the co-chair of the Districtwide CCC-SEAL character building committee. She is enthusiastic about the WBJHS bullying prevention team, and encourages students and staff alike to focus on the many character traits of Character Certainly Counts; her advice to all is to "Be All You Can Be." In her role as assistant principal, she embraces the idea of educating the whole child and finds joy in working with students, teachers and community members.



### **Ryan Case, West Babylon K-12 Student Data and Instructional Technology Coordinator**

Ryan Case taught kindergarten at the Riverhead Charter School and K-5 elementary computer lab at Connetquot CSD before becoming a shared data expert at Eastern Suffolk BOCES. He received his B.A. in political science at Stony Brook University (SBU), his M.S. Ed in educational computing from SUNY Buffalo State College, and an advanced certificate in educational leadership from SBU.



### **Barbara Kelly, WBHS Art & Music**

**Chairperson** is a West Babylon graduate (1982), and began her tenure in the District as a part-time high school piano teacher and elementary Title I mathematics teacher. Ms. Kelly teaches all levels of the piano and Advanced Placement music theory. This year, she is chairperson for the high school art and music departments and serves as the Tri-M Music Honor Society advisor, as well as being a member of the high school mentoring program. She performs in the pit orchestra for our high school musicals, playing keyboard, clarinet and accordion, and has conducted the orchestra for several performances.



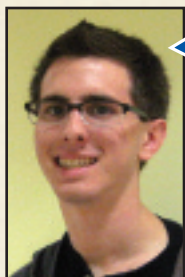
### **Michael Mack, WBJHS Special Education**

**Chairperson** began his career in West Babylon in 2001 as a student teacher at South Bay Elementary School and became a permanent substitute the following year. Later that year, he served as a teaching assistant in South Bay fifth grade inclusion classroom. In 2003, he became a special education teacher at West Babylon Senior High School. In November 2010, Mr. Mack was instrumental in organizing a public forum at the performing arts center on the dangers of drug abuse. During the 2010-2011 school year, he also helped organize our successful transition program for incoming freshmen (highlighted on the cover of this newsletter).



# We're Proud to Recognize Our Advanced Placement Scholars!

Principal Dr. Ellice Vassallo and the West Babylon school community congratulate more than 70 of our students and alumni on being named Advanced Placement (AP) Scholars in 2011. Approximately 18 percent of the more than 1.8 million students worldwide who took the AP exam in May performed at a sufficiently high level to earn an AP Scholar Award. Congratulations to all of West Babylon's AP Scholars on this tremendous achievement.



*Ray Schein*

## **National AP Scholars (4)**

Distinction granted top students in the United States who receive an average grade of at least 4 on all AP exams taken, **and** grades of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams: Raymond Schein (senior), Eric Carr, Morgan Feldman and Joseph Liguori (Class of 2011 graduates)

## **AP Scholar with Distinction (18)**

Distinction granted to top students who receive an average grade of at least 3.5 on all AP exams taken, **and** grades of 3 on five or more of these exams: Ramy Abbady, Luke Baranek, Devin Barbaro, Philip Beck, Jennifer Buscemi, Michael Carboni, Eric Carr, Danielle Haley, Kaarina Hanington, Andrew Kiss, Raymond Schein, Samuel Schmid, (seniors); Lilith Chasen, Emily Donlon, Catherine Erdelyi, Morgan Feldman, Jennifer Joniak, Alicja Kielzewska, Joseph Liguori, Damien Lyons, Amanda Poulos, Richard Schmoll, Viktor Theiss (Class of 2011 graduates)

## **AP Scholar with Honor (13)**

Distinction granted to students who receive an average grade of at least 3.25 on all AP Exams taken, **and** grades of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams: Wasio Ahmad and Brian Phillips (juniors); Andrew Battafarano, Danielle Casey, Jennifer Cummings, Alexandra David, James Joseph and Carolyn Wittschen (seniors); Kumsal Balci, (Class of 2011 graduates); Joanna Tanzman (senior with honor)

## **AP Scholars (36)**

Distinction granted to students who receive grades of 3 or higher on three or more AP exams: Stephanie Milazzo (junior); Dillon Clancy, Joseph Louis-Jean, Joseph Ryder and Hao Xing (juniors); Mark Carr, Mario Cuzzi, Derek Daffara, Jake Kohler, Allison Lazzaro, James McNally, Rachel Mercorella, Galen Merigliano, Ashley Montalbano, Paige O'Connor and Kocper

Zdunczyk (seniors); Kevin Angiulo, Elizabeth Belmont, Kelsey Bettenhauser, Emily Bianco, Cori Conner, Dominick Consalazio, Kerrigan Coyle, Patrick Cronin, Michelle D'Errico, Kathryn Delprete, Amalia Drewes, Hayley Edwards, Kerry Edwards, James Englander, Corey Greco, Dillon Higginson, Yuliya Kinash, Sara Lentriccia, Erin McArdle, Travis O'Sullivan, Brandon Plinto, Melissa Prunzion, Meagan Robertson, Melissa Slatky and Kelly Weisenseel (Class of 2011 graduates)



# Visit West Babylon on the Web

The West Babylon School District website – [www.wbschools.org](http://www.wbschools.org) – contains an abundance of useful, easily accessible information related to the district and its seven public schools. Among its many features are...

- **Adult Education courses and registration information**
- **A directory of district alumni and the latest on upcoming class reunions**
- **A copy of the 2011-12 school year calendar**
- **Current and past issues of Your West Babylon Schools, the district's community newsletter**
- **Useful external links for parents and students**

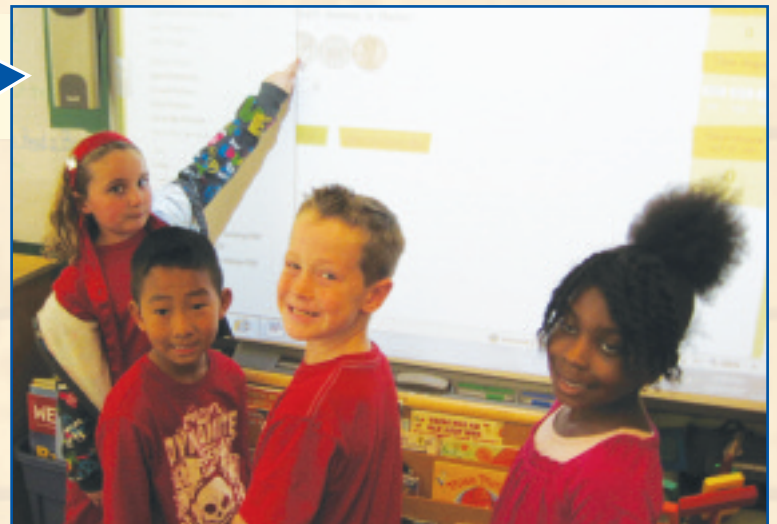
...and much more. Don't forget to stop by the next time you're on the web!



# What's Happening in Our Schools...

## Forest Avenue Technology Makes for Fun Learning

**Forest Avenue Elementary School** is using online math and reading programs to enhance learning. Children in kindergarten through fifth grade are benefitting from IXL math, which offers visual representations, word problems, interactive activities and more. Students are able to select the specific areas where they need practice. Another program, RAZ-kids, is used with students in kindergarten through second grade. The program allows students to read or listen to books online, then answer questions to assess their comprehension. For correct answers, they earn points and can “purchase” accessories to use when designing their own rockets. Students in grades three through five are also using Study Island, which provides reading passages and comprehension questions in a variety of subject areas. Students are provided with usernames and passwords and have access to these programs at home as well as at school. The teachers integrate the programs in the classrooms using SMART Boards.



*Second grade students from Jaclyn Lynch's class Stephanie Curley, Gabriel Greengold, Blake Reese and Anya Jimenez use IXL.*



## John F. Kennedy Kindergartners Learn About Bullying

**John F. Kennedy Elementary School** Principal Gregg Cunningham recently read a story to all three kindergarten classes. In *The Recess Queen*, Mean Jean was the biggest bully on the school playground until a new girl arrived and challenged her status. Once Katie Sue, the new girl, used the approach of inclusion, Mean Jean never bullied anyone again. The kindergartners not only enjoyed the story, but learned some strategies for dealing with bullying on the playground.

*Principal Gregg Cunningham reads a story to teacher Jeninne Shay's kindergarten class about playground bullying.*

## Santapogue Students Take a Walk to School

**Santapogue School** students and their families, as well as many staff members, joined others across the district to participate in Walk to School Day on Wednesday, October 5. Many of those who participated have been regular walkers, and others made the trip to Santapogue on foot for the first time. The weather was beautiful, making it an especially great day for outdoor exercise and giving the walkers an opportunity to appreciate the changing scenery of nature. This event was a wonderful way to promote healthy activities and encourage families and friends to spend a little time together on their way to school.



*Students, families and friends arrive at Santapogue on Walk to School Day.*



# What's Happening in Our Schools...



## South Bay Students Focus on Character Education, Wellness and School Spirit

**South Bay Elementary School** recently held its Student Council elections for the 2011-12 school year under the leadership of advisor Laure Loughlin. Candidates each created a campaign poster and were videotaped giving their campaign speeches. The videos were shown to all third, fourth, and fifth grade students, who then were able to vote for a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. The focus of this year's Student Council will be community service, character education, wellness and school spirit. The 2011-2012 officers are Sage Salanitri, president; Anthony Induisi, vice president; Andrea Ercolino, secretary; and Erin Doherty, treasurer.

*Student Council officers and advisor Laure Loughlin*

## Tooker Avenue Students Use SMART Technology

The use of technology is a very important component of the curriculum at the Tooker Avenue Elementary School. Students throughout the entire school enjoy using their SMART Board during classroom lessons. This interactive technology helps to transform student learning and increases participation. It also helps teachers to differentiate instruction and accommodate all of the different learning styles of our students. Most recently, the students in Mr. Kozak's fourth grade class used their classroom SMART Board to complete a unit on writing. Students took turns using the board to create, revise and edit multiple writing passages. This type of technology allows the students to work cooperatively in a fun and exciting way.



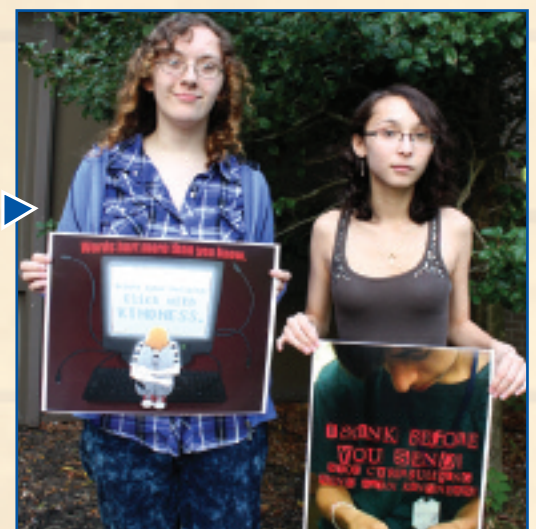
## West Babylon Junior High School Celebrates Peace

**West Babylon Junior High School** celebrated International Day of Peace on September 21. Students and staff were asked to wear white and/or peace signs as a way to show support. Additionally, students heard special announcements and participated in lessons in their social studies classes about the history of the occasion.

## WBHS Students' Posters Aim to End Cyberbullying

**West Babylon High School** students Emma Eustace and Sierra McKenna won second and third place, respectively, in a contest sponsored by Cablevision's *Power to Learn*. Power to Learn's public service initiative, called Delete Cyberbullying, encourages parents, teachers and students to work together to combat this form of harassment. Both Sierra and Emma were students in Christine Iaquinto's art class last year.

*(L to R) West Babylon High School students Sierra McKenna and Emma Eustace display their winning posters*





# West Babylon Alumni Foundation

## 2011 Hall of Fame Inductees

On October 29, the following West Babylon alumni were honored at the annual Hall of Fame dinner, held at Stuart Thomas Manor in Farmingdale. We congratulate each of these inductees on their many outstanding accomplishments and are proud to call them our own.

(Full bios are available on the District website, <http://www.wbschools.org/>.) Needs to be confirmed.



Dr. William G. Hawkins (WBHS Class of 1987) specializes in complex cancer surgery for lesions of the pancreas, liver and stomach at Washington University in the St. Louis School of Medicine. Dr. Hawkins is also a lead investigator for pancreatic and liver cancer research, as well as other cancers, at Washington University School of Medicine and Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri, where

he is also the medical student education coordinator. The recipient of numerous awards for his research, he serves on several boards and committees and has several publications to his credit as well as patents relating to his cancer research.

later became first vice president - regional manager for Janney Montgomery Scott, LLC. His experience led him to create his own investment company focused on the rapidly developing internet industry, and he launched Kinetics Asset Management, Inc. in 1996.



Dr. Daniel S. McCally (WBHS Class of 1964 – class president) is the director of urology at Nassau University Medical Center (NUMC), as well as director of the Urology Residency Training Program. Since 1992, he has also been the assistant chief of urology at South Nassau Communities Hospital. He has served as a clinical instructor in urology at Stony Brook University School of Medicine's Department of Urology, and as president and vice president of the medical staff at NUMC. Dr. McCally is the recipient of numerous awards, including the President of Nassau Surgical Society-Gold Medallion, and is a fellow of the Nassau Academy of Medicine.



Major (Ret.) Melvyn Kloor (WBHS Class of 1959) served for over 20 years in the U.S. Army as a counterintelligence agent, counterintelligence officer, human intelligence officer and civil affairs officer. He participated in military operations in Vietnam, Panama, Grenada, and most recently, Iraq, as a Department of Defense special advisor for Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was also assigned to the University of Nebraska's ROTC Department

for four years as an assistant professor of military science. When not on government assignment, he currently volunteers on the Congressional Veterans Advisory Council for Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords (8th District, Arizona). In addition, he mentors disabled veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.



Dr. Christopher Proto, DDS (WBHS Class of 1972), taught as a substitute science teacher in West Babylon schools for one year before going on to Georgetown University School of Dentistry, where he graduated cum laude. Working as a dental associate in 1984, he had an opportunity to purchase a small office of his own in Babylon Village, located

a few blocks from Proto's Bakery, a family business started by his grandparent in 1946. He proudly moved his office to the family building, where a plaque in the foyer dedicates the structure to his grandparents.



Lawrence Doyle (WBHS Class of 1976) is chairman and co-founder of Kinetics Asset Management, Inc., a six billion dollar asset management company located in Westchester County. Mr. Doyle began his business career in 1978 when he accepted an entry-level position at the American Stock Exchange, and



## Making a Difference ... One Can at a Time

October 19 commemorated Make a Difference Day: National Day of Doing Good. To celebrate and contribute, students and staff throughout our district helped the community by hosting the Make a Difference Day Food Drive for local individuals and families in need.

As part of West Babylon's character education program, CCCSEAL (Character Certainly Counts – Social/Emotional/Academic Learning), our district collected over \_\_\_\_\_ non-perishable items to donate to Our Lady of Grace in West Babylon, Our Lady of Miraculous Medal and the Babylon Food Pantry. These organizations will distribute the items to those in our local community who are less fortunate.

With the help of the PTA, CCCSEAL co-chairs Eleanor Levy, Santapogue principal, and Jennifer Carere, WBJHS assistant principal, organized the districtwide event. Ms. Levy has been instrumental in developing a districtwide initiative to carry out the principles of our character education program. The program is aimed at helping our students develop positive character traits and enhancing their understanding of the value of respect, responsibility, citizenship and consideration.

**“It's amazing to see everyone helping out – donating, collecting and distributing. We want to help people in our community who are struggling in economic times.”** – Santapogue

Elementary School Principal/ CCCSEAL Co-chair Eleanor Levy

Five year ago, Ms. Levy spearheaded a monthly “Can-Can Day” at Santapogue Elementary School, when students and staff bring in canned items and other non-perishables for our local charities to distribute. Since then, the monthly food drive has been implemented throughout the school district. The PTA established a districtwide Can-Can Day on the first Wednesday of every month.

Many thanks to the CCCSEAL Committee, the West Babylon PTA, and all who participated in this year's Make A Difference Day Food Drive, and to all the students, staff, families and community members who help support these worthwhile efforts every month of the year.



# Music

The West Babylon Marching Eagles, under the direction of Dana Meadows, Bryan Heaton, and dance team advisor Nicole Torres, performed their 2011 field show, *Glee Showstoppers*, at the Hofstra Marching Band Festival on Tuesday, October 18. The Marching Eagles were conducted on the field by drum majors Allison Lazzaro, Kristi Melfi and Sabrina Esposito. The dance team captains are Meredith Louis, Victoria Miraglia and Melissa Perez.

The West Babylon High School Music Department is proud to announce that four talented student musicians were selected to participate in the New York State Council of Administrators for Music Education / Suffolk County Music Educators' Association (NYSCAME/SCMEA) 2011 All-County Ensembles. Congratulations to Joseph Doukas, tenor, Mixed Chorus; Brian Phillips, bass, Mixed Chorus; Tyler Smalling, tenor, Mixed Chorus; and Tyler Walther, clarinet, Concert Band.



(L to R) Brian Phillips, Tyler Walther, Joseph Doukas and Tyler Smalling

The musicians rehearsed their music for three days with other talented students from Suffolk County, and then performed at Huntington High School on Friday, November 18.

The selection of students was based on their performances at the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) Solo Festival in May 2011, as well as on teacher recommendations.



(L to R) Luke Ossmann, Trevor Barrett, Matthew Desrosiers and Katie Garvey

Congratulations to the following seventh grade students, who were chosen to perform in the Hofstra Middle School Honor Band Festival on October 20-21: Trevor Barrett, Matthew Desrosiers, Katie Garvey and Luke Ossmann. The festival gives select seventh grade band students across the New York area an opportunity to perform alongside members of the Hofstra University Symphonic Band. This year's group was conducted by Larry Clark, a world renowned composer and arranger for young ensembles. With only four hours of rehearsal time, the students put together a truly wonderful performance.

# Fine Arts

Seniors Nicolle Bernard and Stacey Dinkle, both art students at West Babylon High School, have been accepted into the Adelphi University drawing class. The students meet at Adelphi every weekend and participate in a college-level course with a concentration on figure drawing. The course is free for talented students. Both students were nominated by WBHS art department faculty.



Patricia Casey, a senior art student at West Babylon High School, used her talents and skills from her airbrush class to design a *Beauty for a Cure* donation tally sign. The sign will be on display at the Odyssey Hair Salon in West Babylon as part of a fundraising campaign for breast cancer.





# Helping Students Transition From Elementary to Junior High, and on to High School

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On June 20, the students arrived and were brought to the Performing Arts Center, where teachers from both the junior high and high school greeted them. Following a brief introduction, students and teachers followed a mock schedule where there were presentations about each subject area, including some of the requirements for these courses. Afterward, the incoming ninth graders enjoyed a snack in the cafeteria during their lunch period, enabling them to become familiar with that aspect of the high school experience in a supportive setting. WBHS Principal Ellice Vassallo took the opportunity to talk with small groups and answer the students' questions on a variety of topics.

**“The day was highly successful. Many of the teachers from both schools learned about the different programs and were impressed by the work of their colleagues.”**

—WBHS Principal Ellice Vassallo

Stephen O’Leary, mathematics chairperson, and Michael Mack, a special education teacher, took the leadership role of organizing the event by setting up schedules, overseeing departmental presentations, and arranging transportation. This was truly a team effort, involving teachers from both schools and administration, and proved to be an extremely valuable experience for the eighth graders.

A second part of the transition took part at WBJHS, when our high school teachers from elective subject areas presented their programs and demonstrated the connections between these subjects and various careers. This event, organized by Elizabeth Garland, chairperson of family and consumer science, and Katharine Reilly-Johnson, chairperson of business, was also very well received.

The WBJHS Eighth Grade Transition Committee, led by Family and Consumer Science & Technology Chairperson Elizabeth Garland and Assistant Principal Jennifer Carere, works very closely with the high school to prepare students for this important transition period and to provide them with information and resources that will guide them in planning for college and careers.

## ★ ★ HOMECOMING 2011 ★ ★



Enthusiastic students, families, staff and community members came out to celebrate homecoming on October 22 in a wonderful show of school spirit. Dozens of people watched from their spots along Arnold Avenue and Old Farmingdale Road as the parade followed a new route this year from the high school to the junior high. Creative and colorful floats, designed by the junior-freshmen team (“Under the Sea”) and the senior-sophomore team (“The African Forest”) were highlights of the procession. Following the parade, our football team fought to the end against Smithtown West. Despite the opponent’s triumph in the end, we’re proud of the Eagles’ hard work and great attitude, and of all the students who participated, including our fantastic cheerleaders and marching band.

The evening dance, attended by over 300, featured the presentation of the homecoming court. This year’s court included seniors Luke Baranek, Matt Bellone, Justin Fitzpatrick (king), Allison Lazzaro, Deandra Livoti, Ashley Marinello, Rachel Mercorella, Michael Richardson, Dean Rizzo and Kelly Watt (queen).

