

# Educational Horizons

NOVEMBER 2011

PLAINVIEW-OLD BETHPAGE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT  
pobschools.org

## The Search for a New Superintendent

### Community Input is a Key Ingredient for Our District's Long-Term Success

Plainview-Old Bethpage Superintendent Gerard Dempsey recently announced his plans for retirement at the end of this school year. Mr. Dempsey will complete his tenure in the district in June in order to spend more time with his wife, children and grandchildren.

Board of Education President Gary Bettan commented on behalf of his fellow Board members, "Our district has been very fortunate to have had Mr. Dempsey's leadership since 2007," noting that much has been accomplished in that time. Mr. Bettan added, "Thanks to Mr. Dempsey's early announcement, the Board will have ample time to seek a replacement, and to continue to progress in achieving district goals without disruption." Mr. Dempsey will work closely with the Board in the search for a superintendent who will lead Plainview-Old Bethpage into the future.

The Board has contacted several search firms and consultants as an initial step; interviews and selection of a firm will occur within the next few weeks. "The Board takes this process very seriously," said Vice President Amy Pierno. "Wisdom and caution must be exercised in the decision-making process – particularly in light of current economic challenges and new state initiatives. It is of paramount importance that the community to be involved and that residents have the opportunity to offer insight and feedback."

Over the coming months, the Board will provide updates to its stakeholders and community on the progress of the search process. Please visit our website to stay informed about this important matter.

## School Climate Survey Results

### Survey Data Provides Valuable Insight for Enhancing Our Students' Ability to Learn and Grow ... Academically, Socially and Emotionally

The quality and character of school life is what we call "school climate." The climate of a school is reflected in its goals, values, interpersonal relationships and organizational practices and structures. Last spring, the Plainview-Old Bethpage School District surveyed students, staff and parents about the school climate at each of our eight buildings. The survey used was the Comprehensive School Climate Inventory (CSCI), developed by the National School Climate Center. Complete results are on the district website: [pobschools.org](http://pobschools.org).

The survey measured responses from all participants in four general areas: safety, teaching and learning, interpersonal relationships, and institutional environment. **The results indicate two particular areas of strength districtwide.** First and foremost was the common perception that the rules

and norms about physical violence, harassment and verbal abuse are clearly and consistently enforced. Another very positive response was in reference to respect for diversity regarding race, gender and culture. An area of concern comes from the few sections that received a neutral but not a negative rating. Across the three groups this was the area of social and emotional security, which was presented as a bigger concern for the students in comparison with the adults.

Each school principal and a team of people within the school will develop plans and responses tied to the building's results on the survey. The district will use the results to plan its response to

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Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District  
Administrative Offices • Washington Avenue • Plainview, NY 11803  
[pobschools.org](http://pobschools.org)

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**Was Your Child Born in 2007? See Kindergarten Registration Census Inside!**

## Superintendent's Message



Dear Community Residents,

During the last year, the Plainview-Old Bethpage Schools administered a school climate survey to students at appropriate grade levels, to all staff and to parents in our community. Such surveys are meant to compare the attitudes, feelings and thoughts of the key participants in our efforts to create a safe, supportive and challenging school experience for all. During 2011-2012, we will analyze those results with the help of the National School Climate Center.

The Board of Education and the administration of the POB schools see the schools as places where everyone comes together to promote learning. First and foremost, this vision speaks to our task regarding academic learning and achievement. However, attention to the social, emotional and civic needs of our students plays an essential part in the overall success of our students and our schools. Each classroom is a community, and the larger school community should connect all our classrooms through a sense of purpose. That purpose should be to create an environment that is just, compassionate, disciplined and caring. Among the many high expectations we have for our schools, this may be the most challenging.

During the 2011-2012 school year, we have chosen to continue the goals we worked on last year. In the area of academic expectations we want to expand our efforts to incorporate the Common Core learning standards into our classrooms. This national effort to enrich curriculum will be a major focus for all American schools for the next several years. We hope this effort will both challenge our students and deepen their learning and understanding. We also will meet the expectations for the new state evaluation program for teacher and principal effectiveness. This statewide effort requires us to include student performance in teacher and principal evaluations, by mandate of state law and regulation.

Integrating our school climate goals with our academic and evaluation goals will provide us with an ongoing challenge. We hope to enhance our efforts as community builders both in each school and in the district. We want to enhance the coherence of our curriculum in line with the Common Core. This requires greater attention to student performance, not only on external measures but on internal ones as well. All of this needs to take place with a commitment to character building for our students and for all of us who work or volunteer in our schools.

These are very big challenges, but it is very worthwhile work.

Sincerely,

Gerard W. Dempsey, Jr.

## New Administrative Appointments

### Jennifer Hoffman, Old Bethpage Elementary School Assistant Principal/Part-Time Reading Coordinator K-12



Ms. Hoffman, formerly of the Lawrence Public School District, has 17 years of classroom experience. During her tenure in Lawrence, she taught kindergarten, fourth, fifth and sixth grades; and enrichment for grades one through five. Ms. Hoffman has also worked in special education and with ESL learners. Her staff development leadership activities include teaching literacy instruction classes for teachers through SCOPE. Among her areas of expertise, she has continually pursued study in social/emotional learning and character education.

### Joanne Spindler, Parkway Elementary School Assistant Principal/Part-Time Reading Coordinator K-12



Ms. Spindler is no stranger to Plainview-Old Bethpage, having served in the district for the past 12 years. After working for the New York City Public Schools, she joined the POB community as a reading specialist in Old Bethpage Elementary School, then went on to become coordinator of reading. In that role, she spearheaded the implementation of several literacy programs, including Read 180, System 44, ReadAbout and Leveled Literacy intervention. She continues to work diligently to oversee these programs.

## School Climate Survey

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the Dignity for All Students Act. Last year we created a districtwide committee to respond to the anti-bullying and anti-harassment legislation. This group will make recommendations to the administration and the Board about appropriate responses.

Districtwide, **the Dignity for All Students Committee will use these results to create its recommendations for anti-bullying and anti-harassment training and instruction.** A new law requires districts to select an individual in each building to serve as an anti-bullying and anti-harassment liaison and to provide training for all staff members. Committee discussions have already resulted in the development of a policy, which the Board of Education recently adopted. (Also available on the district website).

The law, the policy and the survey will be used to enhance the development of an atmosphere of social responsibility in all Plainview-Old Bethpage schools. We must not only try to eliminate negative behavior, but we must work as an entire school community to promote positive behaviors. Attention to social and emotional security and social and civic learning helps to create an atmosphere of mutual respect, enhancing the social environment necessary for academic success and achievement.

# POB Scholars Recognized in National Programs

Congratulations to Plainview-Old Bethpage John F. Kennedy High School senior Raymond Kim, who has been named a semifinalist in the 57th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. More than 1.5 million juniors entered the 2012 program by taking the 2010 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). Nationwide, fewer than one percent of high school seniors earn this distinction. To pursue the competition to the finalist stage, Raymond will submit a detailed scholarship application, including an essay and information about his participation and leadership in school and community activities.



Thirteen additional POBJFK seniors have been honored as commended students in the National Merit Scholarship Program: Daniel Borko, Jin Soo Chun, Parsa Erfani, Alexandra Figler, Samuel Friedman, Julie Jun, Gina Kwon, Nidhi Mann, Matthew Marlin, Scott Metzger, Joseph Park, Sonia Sethi and Samuel Weinstein. These students were selected based on their excellent performances on the 2010 PSAT/NMSQT, ranking among the top three percent of the 1.5 million students who took the test. Each received a letter of commendation in recognition of his or her outstanding academic promise.



Rebecca salmon was honored in the national Hispanic program. Approximately 5,000 students are identified to apply for this honor based on their 2010 PSAT scores. Students with GPA's of 3.5 or above are eligible to be considered in the "Scholar" category.

Congratulations to each of these Plainview-Old Bethpage scholars for their outstanding achievements!

## Achievements in Science

Congratulations to **Plainview-Old Bethpage John F. Kennedy High School** students Sunny Zheng, Kevin Koo, Ria Sajany, Hayney Ho and Shaheer Alam, who have been awarded research and engineering apprentice scholarships from the Academy of Applied Science. These students are members of Plainview-Old Bethpage's *Independent Research Program* and were accepted into the Polytechnic Institute of NYU's Center for Biocatalysis and Bioprocessing to complete summer lab projects. With the assistance of Plainview resident Dr. Richard Gross, the students explored environmentally friendly methods of biodegrading plastics and emulsifying crude oil.

In addition to this achievement, **Plainview Old-Bethpage School District** set a record by sending five ninth graders to the highly competitive Biotechnology Camp at Stony Brook

University. This selective program accepts 24 students nationwide to explore modern biotechnology research techniques. Our ninth graders worked in groups to learn about DNA recovery at crime scenes by evaluating the conversion of household oils to biodiesel fuel and optimal compounds.

Seniors Nidhi Mann and Danielle Scarano were accepted into *Simons Summer Research Program*, where they apprenticed with distinguished Stony Brook faculty members. The independent research students worked in an elite group, engaging in hands-on research with anesthesiologist Dr. James Dilger and biochemistry and cell biology professor Dr. Nancy Holingsworth. In October, our District hosted the *2011 Research Student Colloquium*, during which students shared their summer research experiences with the community.

## Stay Connected

### New elementary report cards will soon be available electronically through Infinite Campus!

Infinite Campus connects parents/guardians to student data online, anytime, from anywhere there is internet access. This information-rich connection is a clear way to improve communication between teachers, parents and students. The parent portal is a free service to our district families.

The Infinite Campus Parent Portal enables the district to reach parents electronically in the event of emergency. **In order for us to contact you with emergency information, we must have your email address.** Please send your personal email address to your child's building principal (first initial, last name @pob.k12.ny.us). The Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District website – [pobschools.org](http://pobschools.org) – provides links to a wealth of information about your child's school, including:

- Contact information for schools and administration
- District calendar and event information
- Board meeting agendas
- Current and archived district newsletters
- First Alert notices
- Lunch menus
- School library information
- Emergency school closing and delayed school opening information ... and more. **Don't forget to get the latest district news next time you're online!**

# What's Happening in Our Schools

## Kindergartners Care!

Students at the **Plainview-Old Bethpage Kindergarten Center** are learning about kind and caring behaviors. When students act kindly toward others, staff members recognize their actions by awarding “Thumbs Up” coupons. When a class earns ten coupons, Principal Francine Leiboff visits the classroom to present a Kindergartners Care Certificate; the class picture is taken and displayed on the Kindergartners Care bulletin board. The children will continue to earn coupons throughout the year and are excited about future rewards. Kindness is spreading quickly throughout the Kindergarten Center!



*The students in Mrs. Kady's class proudly display their Kindergartners Care Certificates.*



## Old Bethpage Elementary Students Are Readers

**Old Bethpage Elementary School** students are working on stamina in reading. Some first grade classes are up to reading independently for thirty minutes! Students record their minutes on a bar graph, and teachers keep track of their progress. The children are also checking for understanding by reading with partners. They are expanding their reading vocabulary, including the words “comprehension,” “accuracy,” “fluency,” and “stamina.” These habits of reading, writing and working with peers will lead to a lifetime of independent literacy.

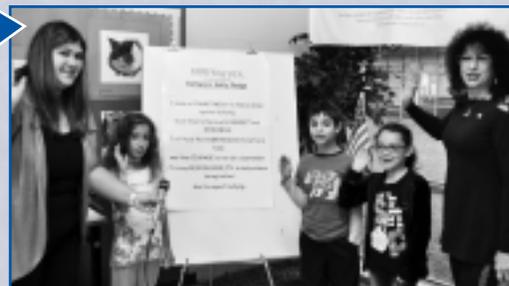
*Old Bethpage first graders work with their peers to develop a lifelong love of reading.*

## Parkway Students Are ‘Bucket-Fillers,’ Not Bullies

Children at **Parkway Elementary School** recite the Parkway Bully Pledge every morning after the Pledge of Allegiance. The PTA provided a very large copy of this pledge to every classroom, as well as one for display in the main hallway. To show their commitment, the children traced their hands on paper; hands were affixed to the pledge poster in the hallway or on the “Bucket Filling” bulletin boards in individual classrooms.

Based on important concepts from the book *How Full is Your Bucket?* by Dr. Donald O. Clifton, the bucket-filling theme encourages children to become confident, caring, resilient and responsible citizens. The PTA is working closely with Parkway administration and staff on this very important initiative.

First graders are introduced to the themes of anti-bullying and kindness in the school’s Bullyfrog program, conducted by school psychologist Tom Meier and social worker Marc Galloway. Grade-level bullying sessions, the Bucket Filling Program, and the daily Bully Pledge help Parkway children in all grades to understand how dangerous bullying can be, and, conversely, how rewarding it is to be kind. “I’m so proud of the parents’, teachers’ and children’s efforts to address this issue and to ensure that we have a very rewarding year,” said Principal Ronelle Hershkowitz.



*(L to R) Teacher and reading specialist Marilyn Raimondi; second grade students from Mrs. Temkin's class Erin Vieira, Austin Bathija and Leah Deller; and Principal Ronelle Hershkowitz*

## Pasadena Students Are Readers

**Pasadena Elementary School** has won the Plainview-Old Bethpage Summer Library Award for the fourth year in a row! During the summer break, the library invited children from our five elementary schools to read as many books as they could, and librarians kept track of which school’s students checked out the most books. This year, over 1,600 of our elementary school students participated in the contest. In October, Pasadena was awarded a trophy for its achievement, and a schoolwide assembly was held to honor the accomplishments of Pasadena students. The children’s hard work is furthering the success of our literacy goals for all students.



*Librarians Julia Westbrook and Debra Feder from Plainview-Old Bethpage Public Library, recently retired Pasadena librarian Deb Rothaug, Pasadena PTA President Heather Fleischman, Board of Education Vice President Amy Pierno, and Superintendent Gerard Dempsey with representatives from each of Pasadena’s four grades.*



Teacher Sharon Smith (far left), Enrichment for All teacher Bryan Plouffe (back right) and teacher Maria Costanza (front right) help students learn about genetics.

## Positivity Rules at Stratford Road

Fourth grade students in Maria Costanza and Sharon Smith's class at **Stratford Road Elementary School** spent part of an afternoon randomly selecting chromosomes to determine the unique traits of a make-believe organism called "Marshmallow Baby." Students related the organism's genotype (genetic makeup) to its phenotype (the traits that are displayed) while creating their creature out of household materials. Enrichment for All is a program that provides interdisciplinary experiences to meet the varied learning styles of our students. Bryan Plouffe, the Enrichment for All teacher, provides hands-on lessons designed to enrich and extend the science curriculum, as well as integrate science with the other content areas.

## Mattlin Helps Fourth Graders Transition to Middle School

**Howard B. Mattlin Middle School** has kicked off a program to help prepare fourth grade students for a smooth transition to the fifth grade. In the multi-phase program, fifth grade teachers begin by meeting with fourth grade teachers from Old Bethpage and Parkway elementary schools to learn about the students who will be entering middle school the following September. Mattlin administrators then visit the elementary schools and introduce themselves to the students.

In the next phase of the program, fourth graders tour the middle school to become familiar with the building. Finally, two groups of Mattlin students meet with the fourth grade children in their elementary schools to answer questions about middle school life. The Mattlin student groups are divided according to the elementary schools they attended; those who went to Old-Bethpage visit with current OBE fourth graders, and those who attended Parkway go back to meet with fourth grade students in that building. The program culminates in a workshop designed to completely integrate the children between the two elementary schools. When children have opportunities to work constructively with one another, they tend to build stronger relationships. In turn, this experience improves student relationships and helps them form a stronger bond as a unified class.

In this inaugural year of the program, the fourth graders from both schools met in the Mattlin cafeteria. To get the workshop started, each member of the group shook hands with the other members at their tables. Afterward, teachers asked the students to raise their hands if they'd ever felt left out of a group and if they'd ever seen someone in a group dominate the decision-making process. After the show of hands, the children were encouraged to talk about how they felt when these situations occurred. A positive discussion created a framework for the children to treat one with respect and consideration.

As the students engaged in conversation, they listened to songs that emphasize the importance of developing good relationships, including "With a Little Help from my Friends," "Why Can't We Be Friends, and "We're Going to Be Friends." Afterward, everyone received scissors, glue, pencils, construction paper, markers, and crayons and created projects on the theme of friendship in cooperation with others seated at their tables.



Fifth grade students work on the final stage of the articulation process.



The winning poster contest MAP group

## Anti-Bullying Month at POBMS

To recognize National Anti-Bullying Month (October), POBMS held grade-level assemblies and scheduled several activities for students in each grade. Grades five and six participated in "Box Out Bullying" – an interactive presentation focused on the theme of empathy. Students in grades seven and eight attended a character education assembly on bullying and positive decision-making.

An anti-bullying poster contest encouraged the middle schoolers to use their creativity constructively. The posters were displayed during an extended MAP session and in the main lobby.

In addition, a parent-student book club was offered this month to all interested students and their families. Facilitated by Principal John McNamara and teachers Rachel Quattrocchi and Joanna Gentile, the club was a wonderful opportunity for parents to come with their children to school to discuss the book *Bystander*, by James Preller. The story underscores the anti-bullying theme.

# Music and Fine Arts

## POB Students Selected for NYSSMA All-State Festival

Sixteen students from Plainview-Old Bethpage were selected to participate in the 76th annual All-State Winter Conference this December in Rochester, New York. Eight students were chosen to perform in ensembles, and nine additional students will serve as alternates. All-State music selections are extremely competitive; selection is limited to the top student musicians in the state, as determined by their performance at the 2011 New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) All-State Solo Festival. Congratulations to all of our All-State students and their music teachers, Jerry Loeb, Glenn Rubin and Adam Paltrowitz.



*(L-R) Bottom Row: Marissa Grill, Jamie Lander, Jacqueline Primack and Kenta Kondo; second row: Tracy Abraham, Katherine Park, Corina Kim, Jacqueline Levine, Jennifer Chou and Bobby Namdar; third row: Joseph Park, Allen Saltzman, Diana Kim, Sam Weinstein and Scott Metzger; top row: Mr. Paltrowitz, Mr. Rubin and Mr. Loeb; Not pictured: Parsa Erfani*

## POBJFK Rocks at the Hofstra Marching Band Festival!



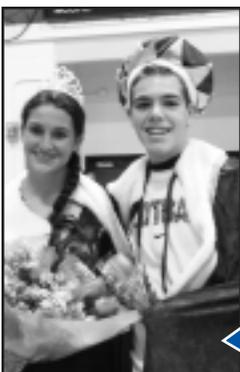
The Plainview-Old Bethpage John F. Kennedy High School Marching Band gave an outstanding performance at the 49th annual Newsday Marching Band Festival on Tuesday evening, October 18, at the Hofstra University Stadium. The band was led by director Jerry Loeb and his assistants Neil Wallowitz, Pamela Basile, and Brett Colangelo. The POBJFK flag line, under the direction of Elizabeth Christie, and the kick line, under the direction of Jason Goodstone, joined the band on the field. Drum majors Chase Brown, Ian Krivoruk, and Samuel Weinstein conducted the performance. Congratulations to all of these students for their excellent performances.

*(L-R) Rachel Bright, Nicole Davidson, Nicolette Almer and Rachel Werman*

## POB Seventh Graders Perform in Hofstra Honors Band

Plainview-Old Bethpage sent 17 seventh grade students to perform at the 8th Annual Hofstra Honors Band Concert on Friday, October 21, at Hofstra University. The students joined the Hofstra Wind Ensemble and renowned guest conductor Larry Clark, along with approximately 300 other seventh grade band students from across Long Island. These students were selected for their outstanding effort and achievement in their middle school band programs. The POB students who performed were Daniel Brandwein, Justin Chae, Matthew Costanza, Jennifer Golio, Michael Gustafson, Arianna Grossfeld, Daniel Gulotta, Armand Juliani, Joshua Kim, Nicholas Rosa, Matthew Salkin, Hinako Sasahara, Adam Slomovitz, Anouar Smith, Stephanie Stern, Vincent Tung and David Weissman. Congratulations to all of the performing students, as well as to teachers David Hirsch and Roger Geddes. Congratulations to all!

## POB HOMECOMING



Plainview-Old Bethpage held its annual Homecoming on Saturday, October 29. Due to inclement weather, the parade was moved to the gym, where the marching band played as all the grades displayed their banners and several clubs marched. The cheerleaders and kick line performed routines, the Homecoming court was introduced, and the king and queen were crowned. The senior class won the banner contest in a close competition. Unfortunately, the football game was called during halftime due to the weather; however it was a spirited event and a tribute to our school community.

*Homecoming Queen Allie Gungor and King, Mike Basile*



# 2012 Kindergarten Census!

## Plainview-Old Bethpage Kindergarten Center

(516) 937-6339

Francine Leiboff, Principal

Hye Sook Kang, Assistant Principal

### INITIAL KINDERGARTEN CENSUS INFORMATION

*All families who have children born in the year 2007 are eligible for kindergarten in September 2012.  
In order to be included in our registration process, which typically begins in January,  
kindly return this completed form at your earliest convenience.*

**Kindergarten Student Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

*Last Name*

*First Name*

*MI*

**Date of Birth:**

\_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

*MM / DD / YY*

**Gender:**

Male \_\_\_ Female \_\_\_

**Home Address:**

\_\_\_\_\_

*Street*

*Town*

**Telephone Number:**

\_\_\_\_\_

*Home*

*Work/Cell*

**Email Address:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent(s):**

\_\_\_\_\_

*Father's Name*

*Mother's Name*

**Siblings in Household:**

\_\_\_\_\_

*Last Name*

*First Name*

*DOB*

**THIS FORM MAY BE MAILED AFTER SEALING. PLEASE SEE REVERSE SIDE.**

# Please Complete Our 2012 Kindergarten Census!

If you have a child born in 2007, please take a moment to fill out and return our kindergarten registration census on the reverse side of this page. To mail the census, remove this page from the newsletter and fold it in thirds so that the mailing panel below is clearly visible.



..... *Fold Here* .....

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