

Board Advisory Committee Report - January 16th 2020

Board of Education - Great Neck Public Schools

On January 16th 2020, the members of the Board Advisory Committee convened for the third time in the Phipps Building.

In attendance, Mr. Sanders is North High School student; Ms. Fleishman and Mr. Li are school parents; Ms. McNulty, Dr. Applebaum and Ms. Gunning are the school employees and administrators. Ms. Peirez and Mr. Shi are the board members on the advisory. Ms. Berkowitz, the board president, is the ex officio in attendance. Dr. Prendergast and Ms. Newman are the featured speakers.

We all thanked Dr. Applebaum, who is retiring at the end of the school year, for her contributions to our school district. She has been teaching for thirty-four years and last sixteen has been with the Great Neck South High School. We all wished her a very happy and fulfilling retirement!

Ms. Fleishman advised the school district of a continued expansion of our very successful Robotics program at both elementary and secondary levels. She saw the program as an equivalent of many sports programs we had in terms of team-building and character building. We were all thrilled with the success of the program and could foresee this as a big part of our district-wide STEM(Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) initiative. It should complement our existing programs of excellence, such as the high achieving musical programs(instrument, band and chorus), theatre productions(both plays and operas), the DECA teams and the “community school” within NHS (which Mr. Sanders shared this little secret with us from his experience). Our success stories of extracurriculars were too many to list and it showed the dedication and commitments that our teachers, administrators and our district made to our students besides the academic excellence.

Ms. McNulty advocated for more space for the nurse’s office at Lakeville School. Ms. Berkowitz commented that a facility review would be conducted soon for all school facilities and this suggestion would be passed along to the facilities managers.

Ms. Fleishman reported that the lunch offering had much improved under our new food service manager.

Speaking of academic excellence, our students’ success starts at a young age. Ms. Newman, our assistant superintendent for elementary education, shared with us the initiatives we had been undertaking in recent years:

1. We are the early adopters of the Columbia University’s Teachers College curriculum, developing true love for reading and writing in our young students
2. We advocate for the responsive classroom, emphasizing the social and emotional learning
3. We are using Math-in-Focus, a derivative of Singapore Math, for our math curriculum

4. The adoption of NGSS (New Generation Science Standards) will take our STEM program to a higher level of learning
5. Our school district always prides ourselves on continuous professional development for our teachers

Dr. Applebaum provided valuable insights on our high school guidance counseling services, preparing our students for their futures as well as college selection process. Our new library at SHS is amazing and is supporting the academic and emotional well being of our students at the center of our student activities. It again showed how supportive the Great Neck community is for the success of public education.

The meeting ended shortly before 9PM. Our next meeting is scheduled at 6PM on Thursday, March 26th.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeff Shi
Trustee, Board of Education
Chairperson, Board Advisory Committee