

Board Advisory Committee Report - September 19th 2019

Board of Education - Great Neck Public Schools

On September 19th 2019, the members of the Board Advisory Committee convened for the first time in the Phipps Building.

In attendance, Mr. Sanders is a North High School student; Ms. Fleishman, Mr. Jia and Mr. Li are the school parents; Mr. Jahng and Mr. Thadhani are the community residents; Ms. Applebaum, Dr. Holtzman, Ms. McNulty are the school administrators and employee respectively. Ms. Peirez and Mr. Shi are the board members on the advisory. Ms. Berkowitz, the board president, is the ex officio in attendance. Dr. Predergast, the superintendent of the school district, is the featured speaker of the night.

As the meeting commenced, members introduced themselves and shared their background information. Everyone hopes to see the continued success of the Great Neck Public Schools. The committee inputs are intended to improve what has already been a very successful education program for many years. Great Neck is currently ranked #1 school district on Long Island in the Niche report.

Dr. Predergast gave a “state of the union” address for the school opening, highlighting the completion status of the summer construction projects, which represent a big portion of capital expenditure of the 2017 Bond Referendum. She discussed the opening of the new but long-anticipated JFK pre-K program, the physical presence by the police officers and the security badges for the high school student to further enhance the security measures on the school grounds. In addition, Dr. Predergast listed the new offering of robotics programs at the elementary schools, after-care enrichments at the SCOPE, the professional development of the Math-in-Focus curriculum, and the expanded ENL (English New Language) program. The committee members were very thankful for this summary presentation by the superintendent.

While discussing the district goals in the new school year, the committee focused on the topics of the good citizenry, mindfulness in the school and social media settings, etc. The subjects of further collaborations among our schools, cyber-security concerns, and updates of our summer enrichment and recreation program were also brought up.

The district always prides itself for a small class-size to best meet the educational needs of the students. During the round-table discussion, the overcrowding issues are noted at several schools. For instance, a biology class has enrolled more than twenty students, much higher than the class-size norm. The problems are most exacerbated at both Baker and Lakeville schools. The board had authorized administrators to look into classroom additions at both schools. It will culminate in a new capital proposition scheduled for a December 3rd vote.

The committee will meet four more times this year with agendas and topics contributed by the memberships. The board of education was very thankful for the active participation from all the volunteering members.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeff Shi

Trustee, Board of Education

Chairperson, Board Advisory Committee