

## GREAT NECK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**John L. Miller-Great Neck North High School**  
35 Polo Road  
Great Neck, New York 11023-1044  
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[www.greatneck.k12.ny.us](http://www.greatneck.k12.ny.us)



*Over 90 years of excellence*

February 3, 2021

Dear NHS Parents/Guardians:

On behalf of the staff of NHS, I want to start by wishing you and your family a Happy New Year.

As we enter the second semester of what has been a school year unlike any other, I want to extend my gratitude and appreciation for your partnership and unwavering support.

Even amid this pandemic, North High continues to bustle with the energy of inquiry, scholarship, creativity, and initiative. As a school, we're dedicated to refining and building programs that not only respond to and reflect contemporary issues, but also ensure our students engage in meaningful and resonant curricula. In recent months, we have dedicated a great deal of time to the following curricular initiatives: implementing social justice topics; increased research skills across the 9-12 curriculum; and senior internship refinement.

With the advent of the Black Lives Matter movement and its subsequent reverberations, several members of the North High administration team and myself, participated in a 5-day conference through Columbia University this past summer. The conference, entitled the Racial Equality Summer Institute (RESI), provided us the opportunity to work with teachers and administrative leaders throughout the country who shared our interest in discussing the topic of social justice as it relates to education.

During this in-depth program, we listened to and engaged with many prominent members of the educational world to discuss how educators, schools, and communities can work towards common goals of understanding, compassion, unity and connectivity. We are excited to share that an outgrowth of our attendance at that conference resulted in a partnership with Dr. Angel Acosta, a Columbia Professor and keynote speaker at RESI. Dr. Acosta is currently providing our ELA and Social Studies teachers with professional development on how to implement a socially responsive curriculum within the scope of their work.

At the present time, we are designing a new elective course on Racial Literacy for the 2021-22 school year. The course will be open to juniors and seniors and offer a variety of ways for students to study and consider the myriad topics related to racial literacy. We believe those students who are interested in learning and discussing issues related to racial literacy will benefit greatly from the coursework.

Another exciting venture in recent months is the creation of North High's Social Justice Awareness Club. One of the goals of this club is to serve as a platform for raising awareness of social justice issues and for

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students to engage in positive discourse on how to foster meaningful growth in our school. Another goal is to take actionable steps through the planning of events to achieve increased social justice awareness. This work includes honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., raising awareness about LGBTQ rights, and professional development related to the proper use of identifying pronouns (he/she/they/etc.) The group plans to continue throughout the year to plan other events to further the goal of inclusivity, acceptance, and awareness. All students were sent an invitation to participate in the club and students are welcomed to join at any time.

I want to acknowledge and thank the student leaders who have worked with steadfast commitment to this endeavor and who are collaborating with South High to create a Social Justice Awareness Committee that includes students, staff, and parents from throughout the district.

Starting in September of 2021, North High School will move to embed increased elements of research into several core curricula including ELA, Social Studies, and Science. This research initiative is designed to develop and build upon the skills students require to conduct meaningful research and craft well-written papers with appropriate citations. As our students prepare for success in both college and career environments, they will rely on the tools of research, effective communication, problem solving, and written and oral expression they have learned at North High. Our department leaders from Social Studies, English, Science, Business, and Library are meeting regularly to develop a scope and sequence program that fosters student growth and builds upon the previous year's acquired skills.

Additionally, in the 2021-2022 academic year, our Business department plans to unveil two new courses for our students. The first, entitled "Financial Literacy," will be an elective open to all students. The second, entitled "Internship," is for seniors who seek hands-on internship experience in a sector of their choice: e.g. business, non-profit, service, etc. The goal of this course is for students to engage in a rigorous, relevant, and "real world" learning experience that further enhances understanding and knowledge of a particular career path and/or profession. In addition to the internship experience itself, students in this course will enjoy a series of presentations, guest speakers, seminars, and workshops. We have no doubt that this course will support our students' career interests and allow them to investigate those interests and learn about what is required for overall success in the workplace.

I hope this shines a light on the work we are doing. As always, we appreciate your input, thoughts, suggestions, and support in reaching our goals.

Regards,

Dr. Holtzman