

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE THE CLASS OF 2018



Commack High School's graduation ceremony was an extraordinary evening from beginning to end, as 560 seniors celebrated their accomplishments surrounded by their friends and families, and their teachers and administrators. Steeped in tradition, with all dressed in cap and gown, diplomas were awarded, speeches were made, and the Class of 2018 was off to pursue their future dreams.

The Class of 2018 distinguished itself by garnering over \$44 million in scholarships to universities and colleges. More than 95% will be attending college, some entering with almost a full year of college credits earned from taking college classes at the High School. An impressive 19% of our seniors earned the prestigious International Baccalaureate Diploma. Eight of our seniors are entering the military to serve our country.

Many more photos and the video of the graduation ceremony are posted on the Commack Website.

CLASS HIGHLIGHTS

Graduation Rate	97.7%
Total Regents Diplomas	99.1%
Total Advanced Regents Diplomas	78.8%
Graduates Attending College	95.4%
Total Value of Scholarships	\$44,291,914
Graduates Receiving Scholarships/Awards	290
National Merit Scholarship Winner	1
National Merit Scholarship Semi-Finalists/Finalists	4
National Merit Scholarship Commended Students	11
National Hispanic Recognition Scholars	5
New York State Merit Scholarship	14
President's Award for Educational Excellence and Achievement	287

Finding a Need & Fulfilling It

Three students in Grace Barrett's Creative Connections class at Commack Middle School designed and sewed 43 "bear hug pillows" to donate to Memorial Sloan Kettering in Commack for children who are receiving chemotherapy at the facility. The pillows will provide encouragement and comfort during treatment and at home.



As part of the class curriculum, students are required to develop a proposal for a creative project that will benefit the community. The girls hope to sustain the project next year and inspire new students to join in. In photo, Emma and Rachel present the pillows to Sandra Kolb-Clark, Practice Manager for Medical Oncology. The third student who participated, Ava, was away at camp at the time of the photo.

BACK TO SCHOOL CHECKLIST

- The **Back to School Section** on the website lists District information for all parents, as well as pages for your individual school(s).
- Check out important updates on the website, including school visitation dates, odd/even day schedules, PTA information, supply lists, and much more on Calendar, Backpack News, Lunch Menus, and the Community Events pages.
- All information for parents - click on the **Parent** button! Don't forget to update your email address in the Parent Portal if it has changed.
- Opt in for text messaging by sending a text to 67587 and typing a Y as the message. This will enable you to receive texts as well as emails for school-parent messages.

For all the information anytime, anywhere!

www.commackschools.org

Commack High School Class of 2018 Top Cohort Additions

The students pictured below achieved final grade point averages that exceeded 100% and were added to Commack High School's Class of 2018 Top Cohort group. Congratulations!



Andrew Brett
SUNY College at Potsdam



Brynn Franz
University of South Carolina



Benjamin Lapidus
University of Rochester



Emma Mangels
NY Institute of Technology



Alexa Marshall
Sacred Heart University



Evan Masters
Arizona State University



Aaron Morales Dolich
Oberlin College of Arts & Sciences



Mia Serritella
SUNY College at Geneseo



Michael Sollicito
Hofstra University

NEW ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS AT SAWMILL AND THE MIDDLE SCHOOL



Evelyn Cardenas

The Commack School District is pleased to announce the appointment of two assistant principals in our schools. Evelyn Cardenas, formerly the assistant principal at Sawmill Intermediate School, will fill the open position at Commack Middle School. Dr. Maria Ruffini, a teacher in Commack for many years, will be the assistant principal at Sawmill.

"We are always gratified when we can fill administrative positions from our own pool of Commack's professionals," stated Dr. Donald James, Superintendent. "We look for strong leaders who are dedicated to our students' well-being and the educational ideals we embrace in our District. These two professionals possess the qualities, background, intrapersonal skills, and most importantly, the love of children, a perfect fit for the assistant principal positions."

Ms. Cardenas began her career in Commack as a Middle School Spanish teacher. Ten years later, she became the assistant principal at Sawmill, and served in that position since 2012. She received her Bachelor's and Master's Degrees from Queens College and her Administration Certifications from Stony Brook University. Ms. Cardenas believes that forming relationships with

her students and staff members creates positivity and a supportive environment. She said, "This is a very emotional and exciting time for me. Although, I will be going back "home" to my Middle School family, I am also leaving behind my Sawmill family. I will forever be grateful for the memories and relationships I have established at Sawmill."

Dr. Ruffini is an enthusiastic and articulate leader with over 17 years of successful administrative and teaching experience. She has earned credentials in Elementary Education, Literacy, Special Education, School Administration, and a Doctorate in Interdisciplinary Education. She has been a teacher in Commack since 2003 at Indian Hollow Primary School and Sawmill, and has served as a summer school principal. She worked extensively promoting literacy and reading through special projects and committees, and was named Primary School Teacher of the Year.

"I am delighted to be the new Assistant Principal at Sawmill," said Dr. Ruffini. It is truly an honor to be part of such an amazing team that is committed to providing exemplary and enriching learning opportunities for all students."



Maria Ruffini

Superintendent's Welcome Message

The summer seems to fly by as we enjoy the long days and the warm weather. I hope you had a chance to relax with your family and friends. Activities in our schools continued all summer, with hundreds of children taking advantage of the Enrichment Program at Sawmill, the Cougar Athletic Camp at the High School, and the Summer School for our Special Education students at Cedar Road. We've been busy interviewing and appointing new staff members, writing curriculum that is age and grade appropriate, and updating and repairing our facilities.

As we prepare for the first day of school on September 5, 2018, our goal continues to be to provide every student with a premier educational experience, and maintain an environment where students learn social, emotional, academic, and physical skills through diverse curricular and extracurricular opportunities. With the support of our top-notch educators, our parents and community members, we have achieved much and will continue to do so.

I'm excited to let you know that we are ready to unveil our new teacher web pages! Our goal is to make it easy for Commack parents, students, community members, and staff to be informed about all that goes on in our schools on a daily basis.

With the introduction of our new teacher pages, every faculty member now has his or her own section on our Commack Website that contains contact and class information, as well as links, downloads, and resources to compliment classroom instruction to enhance school-home communication

for our parents and students. This is a user-friendly tool that replaces the eBoards that we've used for many years.

Both parents and students will soon find other enhancements on the Parent Portal as well, including the ability to update your contact information so we can stay in better touch with you.

Exploring and implementing safety protocols to secure our schools and to keep our students and staff safe are a prime concern, and we are working diligently to strike the right balance. We will update you on new procedures as the year progresses. With the input and suggestions from community members, students, staff, and parents, we continue to work together to protect our precious children.

Please be sure to keep in touch with us by opting in for community news emails, parent/guardian text messaging, by visiting the Commack Website, or by following us on social media. On Twitter we are @CommackSchools and on Instagram, we are @CommackSD. My Instagram account is @Commack_Supt.

Please feel free to send me an email at any time should you have questions or concerns. My email address is djames@commackschools.org.

Sincerely,
Dr. Donald James
Superintendent



WHAT'S HAPPENING!

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL
September 5, 2018

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS
Thursday, September 6, 2018
Hubbs Administration Center at 8:00 p.m.*

Thursday, October 11, 2018
Commack High School at 7:30 p.m.*

*The Board will convene at 6:30 p.m. and is expected to adjourn into Executive Session. Public meetings will commence at times stated above.

9-11 CANDLELIGHT CEREMONY
Commack High School Heroes Memorial Track
7 p.m. All Welcome!

**SCHOOL BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP
KICK-OFF**
Get involved in our schools! All local businesses and professionals welcome!
Thursday, October 4, 2018 from 4-5 p.m.
Hubbs Administration Center Conf. Room D

HOMEcoming - October 20
Parade at 12 noon* followed by Alumni of Distinction and team festivities
Football Game Kick-Off at 2:30 p.m.

CCC RED RIBBON WEEK 5K RUN
Saturday, October 27, 2018
Free Kid's Walk at 8:30 a.m., 5K at 9 a.m.*

*Check the website for road closure information!
More info on the Community Events page on the Commack Website
www.commackschools.org

NOMINATE AN ALUMNUS OF DISTINCTION

Each year the Commack High School honors Commack alumni based on career achievements, community involvement, charitable work, etc. An award ceremony is part of the pre-game festivities featured at **Homecoming on October 20.**

Nomination forms are posted on the Commack Website.

Breakfast Program Waiver

Consistent with past years, the Commack Union Free School District has applied for, and received, a waiver of the school breakfast program. The waiver was requested after a poll of primary, intermediate, and middle school parents determined that the large majority of families would not avail themselves of a breakfast program. Interested parties may address comments or suggestions to the attention of Laura A. Newman, Assistant Superintendent for Business, PO Box 150, Commack, NY 11725.

The Senior Walk 2018: A Journey Through Time



Joyous reunions, huge smiles, tears, and happy memories filled the hearts of students and teachers alike as Commack High School seniors traveled by school bus one last time to the schools they attended in kindergarten, first, and second grades. The seniors, dressed in their graduation caps and gowns, paraded through the halls to the welcoming cheers and colorful signs made by the primary school students. As you can see in the photos (more photos and videos on the Commack Website and our YouTube channel), it was an awesome way to spend the last day as a student in the Commack Schools.

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL SEPTEMBER 5, 2018

Class Assignments/Schedules will be posted on the Parent Portal on the dates and times listed below.

Burr and Sawmill Grades 3-5 August 23
(late morning)

Primary Schools Grades K-2 August 24
(late morning)

High School Grades 9-12 August 27
(late morning)

Middle School Grades 6-8 August 28
(early afternoon)

FALL ATHLETIC TRYOUTS

August 13

Football and Girls Swimming (@Northport) - 7 a.m.

August 20

All High School Fall Sports - 7 a.m.
Girls Volleyball - 5 p.m.

September 5 - After School

Commack Middle School - All Fall Sports

August 27 - 6 p.m.

Mandatory Fall Athletic Code Night
Grade 9 Parents Only

Check the Calendar on the Website for dates and times for Athletic Physicals & Form Drop-offs.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

The Commack Union Free School District does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's actual or perceived race, color, religion, creed, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship status, age, marital status, partnership status, disability, predisposing genetic characteristics, sexual orientation, gender (sex), military status, veteran status, domestic violence victim status or political affiliation, and additionally does not discriminate against students on the basis of weight, gender identity, gender expression, and religious practices or any other basis prohibited by New York State and/or federal non-discrimination laws in employment or its programs and activities. The District provides equal access to community and youth organizations.



Commack Board of Education:
Steven Hartman - President
Jarrett Behar - Vice President
Trustees:
Jennifer Carpenter, William Hender

Superintendent of Schools:
Dr. Donald A. James