



Commack Courier

A BOARD OF EDUCATION PUBLICATION

COMMACK HIGH SCHOOL DESIGNATED AS NATIONAL BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL

*Commack HS Recognized Nationally for Being an
'Exemplary High Performing School'*



The Commack School District is proud to announce that Commack High School has been named by the U.S. Department of Education as a National Blue Ribbon School for being an “Exemplary High Performing School.” Only six high schools on all of Long Island—and just 19 in all of New York State—received the honor. Schools are recognized for their academic achievements measured against state assessments and nationally normed tests.

“I am so proud of the work by our entire school community to enhance student achievement,” said Dr. Donald James, Superintendent of the Commack School District. “Although it is an honor to be recognized, it does not come as a surprise as this achievement is a direct result of the dedication of our students, teachers and families and helps ensure our District is consistently improving.”

“This year’s Blue Ribbon Award was based on the 2020-2021 school year, and our students performed exceptionally well despite the challenges that COVID-19 had brought,” said Mrs. Leslie Boritz, who was the principal of Commack High School from 2016 through the 2020-2021 school year and is now the District’s current principal for leadership and instruction. “Our educators and our administrative team, in conjunction with our hard-working students, are what made earning this award possible for our school.”

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes public and private elementary, middle and high schools based on their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. This year, just 325 schools nationwide were given the distinction.

In Commack, It's All About Access and Opportunity

The District's Flagship Initiative Has Led to Widespread, Significant Student Growth!

Our students are immersed in enrichment programs, enhanced programming, and a project-based curriculum throughout their educational careers in the Commack School District. Thanks to this initiative, and the District's overarching philosophy of access and opportunity for all students, we've seen tremendous results. These include:

- 98% of all graduating students take and pass at least one (1) college-level course.
- 85% of all graduating students take and pass at least three (3) college-level courses.
- 75% of all graduating students take and pass at least five (5) college-level courses.
- Four (4) year college attendance rate is at an all-time high - 81%; Two (2) year college rate - 13%.
- Entering the Work Force - 15%.
- Entering the Military - 4%.
- Attending Business/Vocational School - 10%.
- SAT and ACT scores continue to rise.
 - SAT scores have risen steadily for years and spiked in 2021 with a 50-pt. increase.
 - ACT scores have risen steadily for years and spiked in 2021 at our highest level.

14 Commack Students Honored by National Merit Scholarship Program



Commack High School students never cease to amaze us! This year, 14 high school students were named Commended Students in the 2022 National Merit Scholarship Program.

A big congratulations are in order for Jake S., Ryan R., Brennan T., Maxwell C., Sarah L., Reagan H., Ashley H., Isaac C., Melody L., David Y., Daniel F., Melina N., Tasnim M., and Jacob S.

Each year, only about 34,000 students nationwide receive this honor based on their high PSAT/NMSQT exam scores, putting them among the top five percent of test-takers in the nation. The Commended Students are chosen based on a nationally applied Selection Index score, and though they do not continue in the competition for National Merit Scholarships, some of the students still have the possibility of getting scholarships sponsored by corporations and businesses.

A GREEN FUTURE IN COMMACK

There's a green future ahead at the Commack School District! We are dedicated to energy performance and energy efficiency. That's why we're so happy to announce that in the near future, all Commack Schools will be "off the grid" - we will be generating our electricity through solar panel installations.

Not only will the solar panels greatly reduce our schools' environmental impact, they will save us the high cost of electric bills and become an additional revenue source. We estimate that Districtwide, the solar panels will generate approximately \$8 million in additional revenue. Please keep informed by using our website, and read future newsletters for updates.



As leaders in the community, we in the Commack School District have a responsibility to monitor and mitigate our impact on the environment. Additionally, it is incumbent upon us to be mindful of the economic realities and challenges facing our community and do our part to keep expenses down. We believe that our new solar panel project accomplishes both goals, and we couldn't be more excited.

– Steven Hartman, President of the Commack School District Board of Education

WhatAHomecoming!

Our 2021 homecoming was sweeter than ever. Not only were we all elated to be back together in full after a difficult 2020-2021 school year, but we got to watch our Cougars win an incredible victory against Riverhead by a score of 49-0. Way to go, Cougars!

To watch a video of the parade and other Homecoming festivities, visit our website at www.commackschools.org and scroll down to the "[District News Bites](#)" section.



ATTENTION: KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR THE 2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR

Children who will be five years old on or before 12/01/2022 are eligible for admission to kindergarten for the 2022-2023 school year. Kindergarten registration for these children will take place in January/February 2022 through our electronic registration system.

Information concerning this kindergarten registration process will be sent in January. If your child is eligible for kindergarten and you do not receive a registration notice, please call the Registration Office at (631) 912-2028.

9/11 Night of Reflection

It's hard to believe that it's been two decades since that fateful morning in September when the world changed forever. With so much time passed, it's essential that we work to preserve the memories



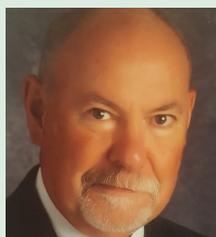
of those we lost that day and never forget the lessons of the aftermath. The Commack School District hosts an annual Night of Reflection on the anniversary, and this year's ceremony was as emotional and vital as ever. The whole community was invited, and the annual event has become a memorable tradition of the community coming together as one to remember those who were lost during the tragedy.

"This event brings us together to honor the individuals from our community that were tragically lost and remember the sacrifices that our first responders have made and continue to make for us," said Dr. Donald James, Superintendent of the Commack School District.

A candlelight ceremony was held at the Heroes Memorial Track at the Commack High School football field, and the District recognized first responders, past and present, for their continued commitment in serving our community. Commack is one of a few districts to receive a piece of World Trade Center steel, which was added to the District's memorial in 2012 and features the names of Commack residents and District alumni who perished in the attacks.

The ceremony included members of the Marine Corps, the Commack Fire Department, the Commack Volunteer Ambulance Corps and our High School's Vocal Quartet. There was a helicopter flyby and a presentation from students, who read the individual accounts of where members of our community were on that tragic day in history. Many thanks to all those who participated, attended, and contributed to this special 20 Year Anniversary Night of Remembrance.

Welcome to Our New Interim Superintendent



We are very pleased to welcome Mr. David Flatley, who was appointed by the Board of Education as the Commack School District Interim Superintendent of Schools from December 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 while the Board conducts a search for a new permanent

Superintendent. Dr. Donald James, who has served as Superintendent for the last ten years, tendered his resignation and will end his duties on November 30th.

Mr. Flatley's distinguished career in education includes nine years at the Carle Place School District serving as the Superintendent of Schools and seven years as Assistant Superintendent of Instruction. He also served as the Interim Deputy Superintendent in the Hewlett-Woodmere School District last school year.

Mr. Flatley has been a valued educator on Long Island since 1979, working as a school administrator for 26 years across multiple local districts. Prior to his administrator roles as a principal, Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent, Mr. Flatley was a middle school and high school teacher in math and science for 15 years. He has also held executive roles at the New York State Council of School Superintendents, Nassau Association of District Curriculum Officials, Long Island Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and the Nassau County Council of School Superintendents.

We know that with Mr. Flatley's extensive experience as an educator and his proven track record of administrative excellence and leadership, he will continue to advance the exceptional educational experience offered in Commack Schools.

The Commack Board of Education has engaged Western Suffolk BOCES to assist the district in conducting a national search to identify the best qualified educator to assume the position of Superintendent of the Commack School District beginning in July 2022. Please visit the Commack Website for details and community input.

Board of Education

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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.