



BRENTWOOD BULLETIN

Published by the Board of Education

January 2007

Brentwood Community Overwhelmingly Approves Bond

As a Result, District Will Receive Over *One Hundred Million Dollars* from State for Capital Projects

In a record landslide, 1,519 members of the Brentwood community turned out at the polls on Tuesday, December 12, overwhelmingly passing the EXCEL bond proposition by a margin of 1,375 to 144. Approval of this referendum entitles the Brentwood School District to receive over **\$100,000,000** to complete capital projects in the areas of health and safety, physical capacity expansion, educational technology, ADA compliance, and energy efficiency through a one-time EXCEL grant. EXCEL — **EX**anding our **CH**ildren's **E**ducation and **L**earning — is a new state initiative to provide funding for school construction projects.

National Hispanic Scholars



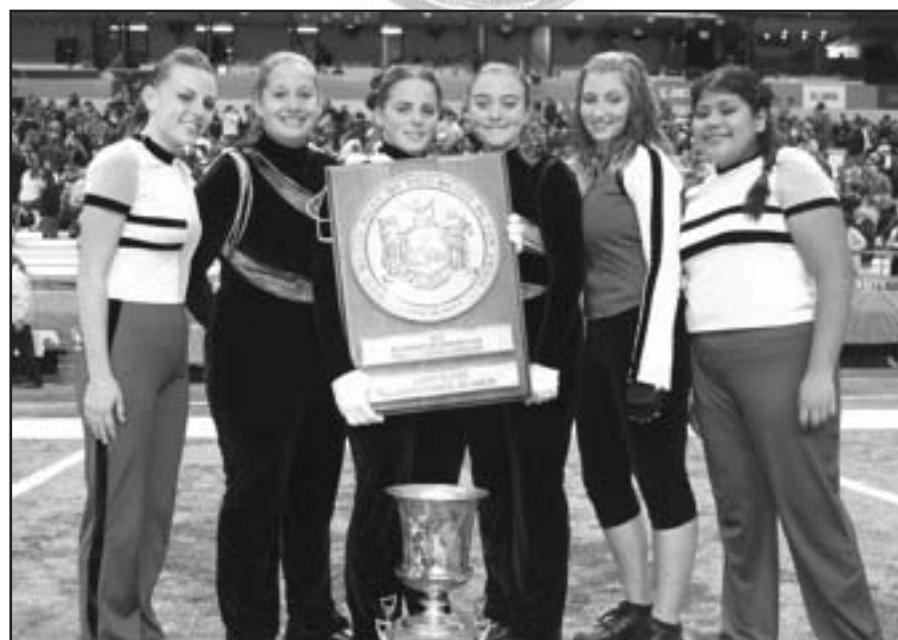
For achieving outstanding scores on their PSATs and maintaining at least 3.5 cumulative GPAs, Brentwood seniors Sarah Perez (left) and Melissa M. Bonilla (right) have been recognized by the College Board as National Merit Hispanic Scholars and accepted to the National Hispanic Recognition Program. As testament to their accomplishment, the National Hispanic Recognition Program

(NHRP) selects approximately 3,300 of the highest-scoring students from a nationwide total of 124,000 Hispanic PSAT/NMSQT-takers.

The College Board's NHRP was initiated in 1983 to identify outstanding Hispanic high school students, and in order to be eligible for selection, students must be at least one-quarter Hispanic. Congratulations to Melissa and Sarah, pictured here with Brentwood Board of Education President Tomás Del Río, on their outstanding achievements.

Brentwood's Green Machine is #1!

At the New York State Field Band Conference State Championships, Brentwood's Green Machine Marching Band competed against more than 50 other bands at the Carrier Dome in Syracuse and placed first in their division this past October. Their performance earned them the Governor's Cup and a gold plaque. This event — one of the largest and most prestigious in the Northeast — is the culmination of a series of marching band competitions involving state schools; a few select bands reach the finals.



This publication is designed to inform residents of the Brentwood School District Community of news about your schools. For further information, call 434-2334.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

- Tomás Del Río, *President*
- Joseph L. Fritz, *Vice President*
- Helen R. Moss, *2nd Vice President*
- Suzanne M. Belanger-Embree, *Trustee*
- Stephen E. Coleman, *Trustee*
- Gail Kirkham, *Trustee*
- George M. Talley, *Trustee*

Michael Cohen
Superintendent of Schools

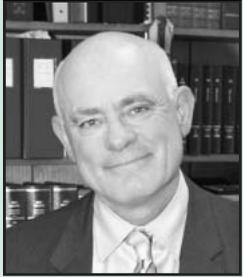
POSTAL PATRON-LOCAL
Brentwood Union Free School District

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

U.S. Postage
PAID
BRENTWOOD, NY
PERMIT NO. 1

Carrier Route Presort

Message From the Superintendent



Dear Friends,

Just before Thanksgiving, the Board of Education unanimously approved my appointment as your new Superintendent of Schools. As the Board took that action, my wife and children, my parents, my in-laws, and many friends watched as the Board members provided me with the ultimate honor – and the ultimate challenge – of my career. Thus, this Thanksgiving took on a special meaning as I embarked on a journey to pay down the debt to those who have placed such a sacred trust in me.

After serving almost six months as your Interim Superintendent, I ask each of you to join me in reflecting on what we've accomplished together, and how much we can continue to achieve as we seek to build a better Brentwood. The list of actions undertaken includes the following:

- ❖ Adopting a plan to spend over \$100 million, improving our school buildings and our technology through the December vote on the EXCEL referendum – at little to no cost to taxpayers.
- ❖ Inaugurating our universal pre-kindergarten program that serves over 200 youngsters every day.
- ❖ Taking proactive steps to improve the safety and the security of students and staff members throughout the district.
- ❖ Approving sixth-period contracts for middle school teachers to provide Academic Intervention Services (AIS) to youngsters who require assistance in English language arts and in mathematics.
- ❖ Providing funding for every tenth and eleventh grader who wanted to take the PSAT in October **at no cost**.
- ❖ Hiring a nationally renowned guidance expert to provide our high-school students with the knowledge that they need to seek acceptance to the best possible colleges and universities.
- ❖ Partnering with Suffolk County Community College to initiate a program under which high-school seniors begin collegiate studies at SCCC... while they are still enrolled at the high school.

All of these occurred with the direct support and encouragement of the Brentwood Board of Education, under the leadership of President Tomás Del Río. They provide vivid evidence of the Board's steadfast commitment to improve academic achievement for all of our students. I look forward to building upon this foundation over the course of the next three-and-a-half years.

In closing, I thought I would share with you the email message that I sent to family members, friends, and colleagues, without whom I could not have been granted this incredible opportunity for public service:

All —

This Thanksgiving provides the Cohen Family with a unique opportunity to give thanks — for your support — for your encouragement — for your inspiration.

The work begins.

mc

Indeed, the work begins anew as we join hands and hearts to move our wonderful community forward.

Sincerely,

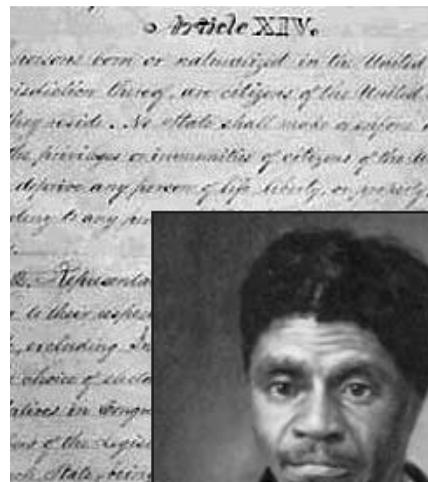
Michael Cohen, Superintendent

1857-2007

Brentwood School District Celebrates 150 Years...



One hundred and fifty years ago, Franklin Pierce was the President of the United States, succeeded by James Buchanan after the March election. It was in that year that George Pullman invented the sleeping car for overnight railroad passengers, and Elisha Graves Otis designed



and installed the first passenger elevators in the U.S., heralding the age of the skyscraper. It was also the year of the infamous Dred Scott Decision, later overturned by the 14th Amendment.



It was in 1857 that the first school building was established in the Brentwood community, marking the beginning of a century-and-a-half-long educational journey that is embodied today in the Brentwood Union Free School District. Our history as a school community is characterized by strength, persistence, and determination, and we in the Brentwood school community can – and should – be very proud of our roots, and of what we have achieved.

Join us in the Budget Process

As we prepare the 2007-2008 budget, we ask for your input and suggestions. Please come join us at any one – or all – of our budget workshops held at 7 p.m. in the Administration Center Board Room.

Workshop Dates

Thursday, January 25
Thursday, February 8
Wednesday, March 7
Thursday, March 22
Thursday, March 29
Thursday, April 12
Saturday, April 14 (if necessary)

Registration

Tuesday, May 1 • 12 p.m. - 8 p.m. at local elementary schools

Public Hearing

Tuesday, May 8 • 7:30 p.m. in the Administration Center Public Meeting Room

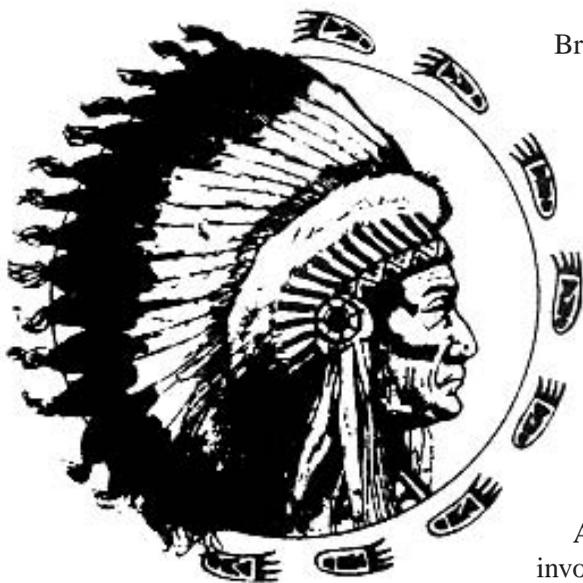
Budget Vote

Tuesday, May 15 • 8 a.m. - 9 p.m. at local elementary schools

Our celebration of the 150th anniversary of our school district will kick off this month with a *150th Anniversary History Contest*. Students and their mentor teachers will be researching topics that pertain to the history of Brentwood, North Bay Shore, or the Brentwood Union Free School District. The Brentwood Alumni Student Association, Inc. has volunteered to sponsor \$100 prizes for first-place winners in each of 12 categories, with trophies going to the top three placements in each category. Winners will be announced in March.

In addition, there will be a *150th Anniversary Ceremony* for the entire community, showcasing 150 years of educational excellence in the Brentwood schools. Speakers will include current and former teachers and administrators, as well as students, alumni, and local politicians. The ceremony will take place during the first two weeks of March 2007 (date and time TBA). The Retirees of Brentwood Schools (ROBS) will be actively involved in celebrating the service of former employees. Retirees are encouraged to be in touch with ROBS and Mr. William Moss, 434-2391 / wmoss@bufsd.org.

... and Brentwood High School Turns 50!



Brentwood High School will celebrate its 50th Anniversary in June 2007. The district is working with the Brentwood Alumni Student Association to invite as many alumni as possible to participate in an alumni processional at Brentwood High School's graduation ceremony, to be held on June 23, 2007.

In addition, the BHS School Improvement Team and the Brentwood Alumni Student Association will jointly host a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the establishment of a Brentwood High School Alumni Hall of Fame. Alumni who wish to be involved in this special event, or who wish to nominate someone for the Alumni Hall of Fame, should go to the alumni website at <http://www.brentwoodalumni.net>.

Please contact Mr. William Moss, 434-2391 / wmoss@bufsd.org, if you are interested in becoming involved.

A Tribute to Two of Our Own

The Brentwood School District was deeply saddened by the deaths of two of our high school students on the weekend of November 17-19. Our hearts continue to reach out to the families and loved ones of Michelle Chaverria, who succumbed to cancer after a long battle, and Yansin Rivera, who was killed in a car accident on Brentwood Road.

Michelle was known as a warm, spirited, and determined young lady whose internal strength never allowed her debilitating disease to prevent her from being a positive influence and a loving person. Her perseverance in life serves as an example to all who knew her.

Yansin was an exceptional person, known to all as smart, hard-working, and dedicated. Words repeatedly used to describe her include "sweet," "fun-loving," and "genuine." She lived life to its fullest, and was loved and admired by her friends and her teachers.

Michelle and Yansin will remain in our hearts and minds as two shining examples of humanity.

A Word From Your Board of Education



Dear Community Members:

The Board of Education is pleased to announce the appointment of Michael Cohen as Brentwood's new Superintendent. Mr. Cohen has been serving as the Interim Superintendent of Schools since July 2006, and we are delighted that his hard work on behalf of our children will continue.

The district consulted with a national search firm to help identify the most qualified candidates for the position. A total of 37 people from 12 states either were recruited or applied for the position. After our consultants met with nearly a dozen individuals, the Board interviewed five of their recommendations and we decided that Michael Cohen, who has already been leading the district for several months, was the best fit for the job.

We are delighted to have an educator of Mr. Cohen's caliber remain in our district. His expertise, as well as his reputation for spearheading initiatives that have resulted in dramatic improvements in student achievement, make him a true asset to the district. Mr. Cohen's dedication and hard work have earned him the respect of our students and staff, and we are excited that he will continue to make improvements in student achievement.

Michael Cohen has been working in the education field for more than 30 years. Prior to his employment with the Brentwood Union Free School District, he served as a consultant in the Stamford Public Schools. Mr. Cohen retired from his position as Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction in the Amityville School District in 2005. Among his achievements, Mr. Cohen developed and implemented an action plan that resulted in the removal of two schools from the state's list of schools failing to meet the standards, and their placement on the list of schools in good standing. Under his leadership, Amityville saw one of the largest single-year increases in grade-eight NYSED mathematics assessment scores, and the highest district scores since the inception of state testing in all subject areas.

We are confident that Mr. Cohen will continue to bring his energy and creativity to his work with students, parents/guardians, teachers, and administrators in the process of developing a rich academic and extracurricular program that meets the needs of every student.

We trust that you share in our excitement as we welcome Mr. Cohen to the Brentwood Union Free School District.

Sincerely,

Tomás Del Río
Brentwood Board of Education President

Noteworthy...

A Cultural Immersion

Fourth graders at **FJC Southeast Elementary School** recently delved into the history and culture of Native Americans. During an informative and interactive presentation by the Suffolk County Archaeological Association, children experienced the Native American way of life. After viewing the clothes, toys, and animal skins used by Native Americans, students' faces were painted with red rock – as Native Americans did to ward off insects and block the sun. Students also made wampum necklaces using pieces of slate and feathers, and prepared cornbread with raisins, corn, pumpkin seeds, and blueberries, using shells to mix the ingredients.



The Wild World of Science

On Saturday, November 4, **Northeast Elementary School** hosted its second annual Fall Family Science Day. Steve Tomecek, "The Dirtmeister," opened the day with a hands-on presentation titled, *May the Force be with You*, in which students and their families learned about the different forces in nature. Student-conducted scientific experiments demonstrated the laws of gravity, rotational inertia, and static electricity. To conclude the fun-filled day, everyone stepped into *The Wild World of Animals* to learn about snakes, bears, cats, and monkeys.



A Class Act

Creativity abounds at **Hemlock Park Elementary School**, where children have been practicing their writing skills through poetry and stories. They watched as their works came to life, acted out on stage by the professional theater artists and educators of Child's Play Touring Theatre. This unique program further inspired children to exercise their imaginations.



A Lesson in Anatomy

Fifth-grade students at **Oak Park Elementary School** are now pros at identifying several vital human organs and naming their functions. During an interactive biology lesson, dissected and non-dissected animal organs were showcased for student viewing, and our savvy fifth graders quickly memorized structures of the heart, eye, kidney, and brain. Students were quizzed on the organs, and now fully comprehend the function those organs play in the human muscular system.



Reading is Magical

Pine Park Elementary School children enjoyed the "magic" of reading during a very special visit from magician Terry Parrett. Mr. Parrett delivered a highly entertaining magic show highlighting different genres of books, and demonstrating that reading allows us to travel to faraway places, meet famous people, and learn to do new things – all without leaving our seats.



Bodacious Books

To kick off PARP activities at **Laurel Park Elementary School**, students attended some exciting assemblies, including one by Bodacious Books, during which they were encouraged to share a good book with their parents for at least 10 minutes a night. After a two-week period, all classes returned their PARP calendars, and the classes with the most readings each won a pizza party and a basket chock full of books.



Spreading Holiday Cheer



This past holiday season, all across the district our schools remembered the less fortunate, and participated in various food, clothing, and toy drives, spreading cheer and smiles with their kind-hearted donations.

Students and staff at **East Elementary, Hemlock Park, Laurel Park, North Elementary, West Middle School, the Freshmen Center, and North Middle School** adopted several disadvantaged families, to whom they gave holiday gifts and food... **WAL*MART** donated \$1,000 to **Loretta Park** for the purchase of winter coats and school uniforms for needy students in the district... **Oak Park Elementary** held a dance-a-thon; admission was a dollar and one non-perishable food item. All proceeds were donated to Pronto, a local charity... **Pine Park Elementary** held several drives to collect toys, books, coats, and monetary donations... At **Southwest Elementary**, staff members picked gift ideas off the "giving tree," then made purchases for needy families. Classes collected change for the *Pennies for Patients* program and donated proceeds to the American Cancer Society and the **MAKE-A-WISH** Foundation... **Twin Pines Elementary** held a gift-wrapping event;

donations from the day were dispersed to charities... **South Middle School** students gave American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan a reason to smile when they delivered stockings stuffed with non-perishables, phone cards, travel-sized toiletries, and letters of thanks... At the **Ross** and **Sonderling** centers, academic departments were assigned foods to collect, and donation baskets were then distributed to needy families... The **Brentwood Alumni Student Association** collected money and solicited donations from Famous Amos Cookies and Campbell's Bakery. Food donations were delivered to Pronto, and the monetary contributions were used to purchase nearly 100 turkeys to feed the needy.

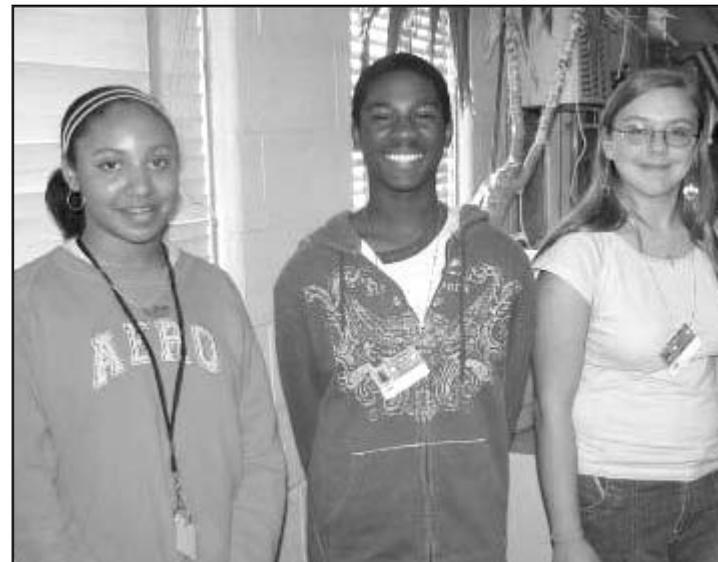
Health in Leaps and Bounds

In conjunction with the physical education and music departments, **Twin Pines Elementary School** first graders participated in the school's first annual Turkey Trot this past November. The importance of healthy eating and living was stressed as children took part in fun exercises and recited silly song lyrics during a morning trot around the school campus. Exciting activities of the day included hopscotch, hopping on one foot, jumping jacks, and inventing dance moves. Students learned about healthy snack alternatives using the food pyramid as a guide.



Walking For a Cure

Thirty-two **Brentwood Freshmen Center** students, under the auspices of the school's honors club, participated in the American Cancer Society's annual *Making Strides Against Breast Cancer* walk-a-thon this past fall. Our students raised \$860 for their efforts; pictured below are the top-three fundraisers: (L-R) Hamadi Duggan, Elisabeth Scheffel, and Jaylinn Howard. Thousands of others participated in the five-mile trek along the Jones Beach boardwalk to help stamp out breast cancer; it was a great day for a great cause!



Celebrating African-American Heritage

Brentwood schools are celebrating the heritage and accomplishments of African-Americans in a variety of activities as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday approaches this month, and we look forward to Black History Month in February. **Pine Park** classes have been reading *Happy Birthday, Dr. King!* – a fictional book about the historical Montgomery bus boycott – and completing lessons based on the readings... At **Oak Park**, Parents' Choice award-winning storyteller Robbi Kumalo will present the cultural arts program, *Turtle's Shell*. Students will learn about African-American heritage while participating in drumming, singing, chanting, and dance activities... **Southeast** will celebrate its 10th annual King Sing with students performing for two assemblies... At **Northeast** teacher Pat DeVito will conduct a lesson tying character education words into famous African-American quotes... and many other wonderful events will continue to take place throughout our schools.



Highest Honor for an Outstanding Young Man



Brentwood High School student Daniel Fletcher was recently bestowed with the highest honor of scouting – the national rank of *Eagle Scout*. An outstanding accomplishment under any circumstances, Daniel's achievement is particularly notable because of the obstacles he has had to overcome: Daniel was born with Downs Syndrome.

To earn the esteemed rank of Eagle Scout, Daniel had to fulfill requirements in the areas of leadership, service, and

outdoors skills, demonstrating participation in increasingly more responsible service projects. To earn his Eagle rank, Daniel chose to build a mounting block for the Long Island Region Special Olympics Equestrian Training Center – a project that took more than a year from planning to implementation. Due to his fundraising efforts and excellent leadership skills, the project was a tremendous success. The mounting block, now in place, allows Special Olympics athletes to mount their horses safely.

Of the 120 merit badges available, 21 are required for qualification as an Eagle Scout; Daniel received 36 merit badges. A member of Boy Scout Troop 10 in Bay Shore, Daniel motivates other Boy Scout members to pursue additional badges, and as a Special Olympics participant, he encourages other team members to become involved in Scouting.

Brentwood Middle School Students Get an Edge on Career Planning

This fall, North and East middle schools held career fairs for eighth-grade students, providing a host of opportunities to help these soon-to-be high schoolers gain insight into a variety of professional fields. Presenters represented over 20 different career fields, including medicine, the military, advertising, telecommunications, martial arts, real estate, dance... and much more. These volunteers – many from right here in the Brentwood community – discussed their careers and answered a broad range of questions from students.

Students came away from these events with a great deal of knowledge and information, and many expressed enthusiasm and confidence as they shared their ideas about possible career paths. Additional career fairs are planned for South and West middle schools this year.



On the Road to Excellence

Parent Partner Workshops in Mathematics and ELA

“The mathematics workshop was very helpful. We were able to review strategies and critical-thinking skills for certain problems.”

Parents and students from across the Brentwood School District worked together with teachers from every elementary and middle school during this year’s workshops designed to help families assist students in preparing for state assessments. The Parent Partner Workshop in Mathematics was held in December; an English language arts workshop took place in October. These programs drew over 1,000 participants, and provided valuable information

about the New York State English language arts and mathematics assessments at each grade level. Instruction was available to parents in both English and Spanish at both workshops.

“Que es una buena oportunidad para sober como ayudar a nuestros hijos.”

Mathematics assessments for grades three through five will be administered during the week of March 5-9; mathematics assessments in grades 6-8 will be given during the week of March 12-16. Parents should make every effort to ensure that students are in attendance especially during testing weeks. Many after-school programs are available to provide extra help to children. Please contact your child’s school for more information.

“I learned a lot about the ELA test and what the children are expected to do.”

More Good News About Literacy in Our Schools

Literacy Grant

East Kindergarten Center was the recipient of a *Legacy of Literacy* grant, thanks to the combined efforts of the Brentwood and Commack-Kings Park Rotary clubs. Legacy of Literacy provides the opportunity for local Rotary Clubs to “adopt” a school in their service area and buy books for every child in the school. East Kindergarten Center held a Legacy of Literacy celebration in October.

Young Illustrators Honored

For the past four years, the Language Arts Department has recognized students who express their joy of books through art. In November, 80 students in grades K-8 were honored during Young Illustrators’ Night. Award-winning author and illustrator Kim Doner delivered an entertaining and educational keynote presentation, and each student received a certificate of recognition from the Board of Education, a gift bag from the Instructional Media Center and a copy of Ms. Doner’s *Buffalo Dreams* from the Language Arts Department. Ms. Doner also visited Hemlock Park, East Elementary, and North Elementary schools.

Exemplary Reading at Hemlock Park

Hemlock Park Elementary School was named one of five finalists in the International Reading Association and New York State Reading Association Exemplary Reading Program 2006. This honor went to Hemlock Park for its outstanding language arts program and activities promoting literacy. Principal Laura Alicastro and reading consultant Mia Vogt received the award on behalf of the school during the New York State Reading Association conference in November.

Poised for Success!

Minority Students are Competing with the Best in High School Science Competitions

BHS Students Enter Nation’s Top Research Competitions for the First Time Ever

Five seniors from Brentwood High School have entered this year’s Siemens Westinghouse and Intel Science Talent Search competitions. Each of these students – Richard LaGrandier, Alicia Franco, Oscar Marcelino, Erik Martinez, and Alex Yang – completed independent research projects at either SUNY Stony Brook or Brookhaven National Laboratory. Each year, over 1,500 students accept the challenge of completing an entry for the Intel Science Talent Search, with finalists competing for the top prize, a \$100,000 scholarship. Over 30 students are enrolled in the Research Program at Brentwood High School. All of these students are expected to enter the Intel Science Talent Search and Westinghouse Competitions in the upcoming years.

Science Olympiads

Beginning in April, Brentwood High School’s Science Olympiads will prepare for the organization’s annual competition, going up against 35-45 teams from across Suffolk County. Brentwood has won a place at the state level for the past 16 years, and has earned first place in Suffolk seven times. Coaches Mrs. Diggert and Mr. Fritz, as well as many of our other science teachers, help the

team prepare for finals. In one activity, students pair up to compete against each other for the best car design. Since 1994, Brentwood has won this activity, allowing students to garner either a \$20,000 or \$40,000 scholarship for Boston University. Go Olympiads!

Lowe’s Toolbox for Education Grant

Lowe’s Charitable and Educational Foundation has awarded Brentwood High School a \$50,000 grant to build an outdoor learning laboratory. This project is one of 680 that received *Lowe’s Toolbox for Education* grants for parent-initiated school improvement projects benefiting K-12 education. The BHS lab will include a greenhouse, as well as fog/bog, vegetable/herb and wildflower garden; nesting boxes; a composting area; and butterfly garden. Project goals include informing the public about the need to preserve and protect open space for the future, reporting on sustainable farming and gardening practices, promoting open-space preservation and management, and encouraging students to become lifelong stewards of the earth. BHS students are presently involved in environmental clean up activities in the community.

Arts News...

- Three Brentwood students have submitted their artwork to be displayed at *The Colors of Long Island* exhibit sponsored by the Long Island Museum. You can see the inspired creations of Danielle Colacrai, Justin Mackenzie, and Justin Menjivar in the main gallery of the History Museum through January 28, 2007.
- Ten Brentwood students in grades K-5 have entered their art projects into the 10th Annual Fire Prevention and Life Safety Poster Contest. Students created the posters based on the theme of practicing fire safety in the home and school.
- Brentwood High School senior Vanessa Hurtado entered her work in the Healthy People 2010 of Suffolk County Poster Art Contest, sponsored by the Suffolk County Department of Health Services Offices of Minority Health.
- Seven Brentwood High School students have entered this year's national Coca-Cola art contest. Their artwork has been submitted under the direction of art teacher Lisa Marinelli.
- Brentwood has joined schools around the world in becoming part of the International Youth Art Exchange (ARTex). For the past 20 years, ARTex has shared American art with other cultures, allowing students around the globe to communicate through the universal language of art. This year's theme was *Rites of Passage*. Brentwood students submitted their drawings and paintings, of which 35 will be chosen to be part of a special archive of over 6,000 pieces of original art from over 60 countries.
- Four inspiring young artists from Brentwood High School's Freshman Center won this year's Substance Abuse Prevention Poster Contest: Kevin Chunilal, Jennifer Marin, Shabir Hamin, and Rosalie Gonzalez. The student-artists submitted their posters to help raise awareness of the dangers of substance abuse. Other award winners were Vanessa Hurtado and Lino Zaruma, for posters with the best message, and Talia Cumberatch, for the most artistic poster.
- As part of the Town of Islip's Youth Enrichment Services (YES) summer art program, five students from Brentwood High School joined students from three other area high schools to collaborate in the creation of four amazing murals depicting fashions of the 50s, 60s, 70s, and 80s. Selected for permanent display at the Westfield South Shore Mall in Bay Shore, these murals were unveiled this past October. Congratulations to our participants Vanessa Colon, Edgar Escobar, Victor Franco, Jianna Garcia, and Melva Maldonado.

Music Notes...

- Based upon solo performances before an adjudicator, four Brentwood High School student-musicians were selected to perform this past December alongside almost 4,000 other students from New York State during the NYSSMA Winter Conference at Eastman Theatre in Rochester. Brentwood was proud to have 13 of its own eleventh and twelfth graders participate in the NYSCAME/SCMEA All-County Festival this past November.
- At the NYS Reading Association Conference in Saratoga, our high school's One O'clock Jazz Ensemble presented a dazzling opening for NYS Education Commissioner Richard Mills' keynote address.
- Our high school brass quintet and choir joined the Masterworks Chorus and Brass Ensemble recently to stage a delightful concert at St. Peter's Church. As part of the project, trumpet virtuoso Josef Burgstaller conducted a masterclass for middle school and high school trumpet players at Brentwood High School.
- This past November, the Island Senior Symphony Orchestra came to Brentwood High School to perform in concert alongside the high school select and symphonic orchestras.
- The Ross Health Care Facility was graced with a performance from members of our high school choir at the facility's tree lighting, sponsored by the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce.



Our amazing student-musicians continue to entertain and awe, and it is with great pride that we highlight their accomplishments.

From the Sports Desk...

With exceptional teamwork and unrelenting dedication, our sports teams excelled on the court, track, and field this past season. Here are just a few highlights:

- ❖ Under the leadership of coaches Ron Eden and Francisco Herrera, the **boys' varsity soccer** team defended their rank as League I champs for the fourth year in a row. The team dribbled their way to the playoffs, and placed first on the Island, second in New York State, and 22nd in the nation. At the Suffolk County Soccer Coaches Association Dinner in December, Wilbur Bonilla was named a *Two-Time All-American* and *New York State Player of the Year*; and for the second straight year, Ron Eden was named *Coach of the Year*.
- ❖ With a 7-1 season record and second-place standing in League 1, the **boys' varsity football** team was a contender at the Suffolk County Championship Finals at Stony Brook University. Our Indians played a tough game against William Floyd, losing the game by a mere touchdown and two-point conversion.
- ❖ The **girls' varsity volleyball** team wrapped up the season with a third-place finish, and made it to the playoffs for the first time in Brentwood history.
- ❖ Our **girls' varsity soccer, tennis, and cross-country, and boys' varsity golf** teams also played their best this season. Congratulations to our teams on their successes!



Wellness and Nutrition Update

The district's new Wellness Policy, outlined in the last issue of the *Brentwood Bulletin*, has been established to meet the nutrition recommendations of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The School Lunch Department, under the direction of Ms. Credidio, has worked diligently to update its menus over the past two years to meet and exceed the revised nutritional guidelines set forth by the federal government. The food service workers take great pride in preparing these nutritious meals and serving them within the time allotted for lunch periods. For some children in our district, meals served by the School Lunch and Breakfast Program are the healthiest meals of their day.

Since the beginning of the school year, a number of issues have arisen concerning compliance with the new policy, including questions about food and beverages sold by clubs as fundraisers and foods brought in for school celebrations. The Wellness Committee recognizes that fundraising by clubs and organizations is a worthwhile activity that provides money for field trips, as well as scholarships for our students. In keeping with the district's long-standing practice, foods and beverages sold by clubs and school-related organizations cannot compete with the School Lunch and Breakfast Program; clubs may sell foods and beverages only at the end of the school day. The Wellness Committee encourages these organizations to sell healthy food and beverage items or look for alternative means to raise funds for their clubs (e.g. car washes, talent shows, etc.).

At the elementary level, the committee chose not to formally address areas such as PTA cupcake sales (held twice a year), food served at multicultural celebrations, and cupcakes sent from home by a parent/guardian to celebrate a child's birthday. The committee's opinion was that these events are limited in nature and should not be addressed during the phase-in stage of the policy. Parents and guardians should note that the School Lunch Department has implemented a program this year that celebrates the birthdays of all students and staff. One day is set aside each month to recognize all students and staff celebrating a birthday that month. School Lunch provides a "birthday treat" to all students and staff who purchase a meal that day. Those parents/guardians who wish to celebrate their child's birthday in the classroom are encouraged to send in healthy snacks (listed right) as an alternative to cupcakes.

The intent of this mandated policy is to encourage healthier lifestyles among students, parents/guardians, and staff. Educating students about making healthy choices in terms of food selection, portion size, and participating in regular exercise programs will provide lifelong benefits to them. Additional information on healthy foods and beverages can be obtained by contacting the School Lunch Department at extension 2316 or by visiting their Web page at www.brentwood.k12.ny.us.

Healthy Snacks for Children

- ❖ **Fruits and Vegetables:** Most snacks should be fruits and vegetables, since most children do not eat the recommended 5-13 servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Healthy options include fresh fruits and vegetables, frozen fruit, applesauce, fruit cups or canned fruit (in juice or light syrup), dried fruit, fruit salad, fruit juice ice pops, and homemade smoothies. Vegetables can be served with dips like hummus, bean dip or salad dressing in salads, or in whole-wheat pitas.
- ❖ **Healthy Grains (whole grains low in fats and sugars):** Serve mostly whole grains, which provide more fiber, vitamins, and minerals than refined grains. (Whole wheat or other whole grain should be the first ingredient listed.) Healthy whole-grain options can include English muffins, pita, tortillas, breakfast cereal, crackers, rice cakes, popcorn, tortilla chips, granola, cereal bars, breadsticks, or flatbreads. Be sure to read nutrition labels to pick options that are low in sugars, saturated fat, and trans fat.
- ❖ **Low-Fat Dairy Foods:** To protect children's bones and hearts, make sure all dairy foods are low-fat or fat-free, such as yogurt and low-fat pudding. Choose lower-fat cheeses, serve small portions, and serve cheese with other foods like fruits, vegetables, or whole-grain crackers.
- ❖ **Nuts and Trail Mix:** Since nuts are high in calories, it's best to serve small portions (a small handful) and serve them along with another snack, such as fruit.

Healthy Beverages

- ❖ **Water:** Water should be the main drink served to kids at snack times. Water satisfies thirst and does not have sugar or calories. It is low-cost.
- ❖ **Seltzer:** Carbonated drinks like seltzer, sparkling water, and club soda are healthy options. Serve them alone or try making "healthy sodas" by mixing them with equal amounts of 100% fruit juice.
- ❖ **Low-Fat and Fat-Free Milk:** Milk provides key nutrients, such as calcium and vitamin D. Choose fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk to avoid the heart-damaging saturated fat found in whole and 2% (reduced-fat) milk.
- ❖ **Fruit Juice:** Try to buy 100% fruit juice and avoid the added sugars of juice drinks, punches, fruit cocktail drinks, or lemonade. Drinks that contain at least 50% juice and no additional caloric sweeteners are also healthful options.