



# Inside Islip Schools

*Committed to Excellence*

AUGUST 2013

## New Year, *New Administrators*

With the retirement of longtime Islip educators Diane Druckman and Vince Veglia, the Board of Education and administration were tasked with finding their replacements. Following numerous applications and interviews, the Islip School District has welcomed Dr. Maureen Martin and Mr. Christopher Smalley as the new principals of Maud S. Sherwood and Wing elementary schools, respectively.

A former elementary special education teacher and assistant principal, Dr. Martin shares Islip's vision of educating the whole child. It is her love of learning and depth of knowledge that will enable her to assume the principal responsibilities of the Maud S. Sherwood Elementary School. Dr. Martin's knowledge of elementary curriculum and instruction is comprehensive and, according to Superintendent of Schools Susan A. Schnebel, may only be surpassed by her enthusiasm and energy.

"I am looking forward to working with the community, parents, staff and students at Sherwood Elementary School," said Dr. Martin. "I feel fortunate to be part of the leadership team in the Islip School District."

Dr. Martin joins Islip from the Commack Union Free School District, where she has been the assistant principal at Burr Intermediate School since 1999. Prior to that, she worked as an elementary special education teacher. Dr. Martin has also served as an adjunct instructor at St. Joseph's College, teaching the course "Children

with Learning Disabilities: Psychology of the Exceptional Child." She holds a Bachelor of Arts from St. Joseph's College, a master's degree from Adelphi University, and received her educational leadership professional diploma and doctorate from Dowling College.

As the new principal of Wing, Mr. Smalley brings to Islip his love of children and ability to inspire teachers. An adjunct instructor for Long Island University, Mr. Smalley has also been an elementary teacher and an assistant principal. He is a collaborative leader who has a vision for student learning.

"During my first few weeks in the district, I have really gotten to know many of the families and staff members here in Islip," said Mr. Smalley. "I already can't say enough great things about the tireless support from the community, teachers and personnel in helping to get our school prepared for the upcoming school year. As the new principal of Wing, I am dedicated to the continued social and academic successes that are so important for our youngest learners."

Mr. Smalley comes to Islip from the Half Hollow Hills Central School District, where he was most recently the assistant principal of Signal Hill Elementary School. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from SUNY Binghamton, a master's degree from LIU and an educational leadership professional diploma from Stony Brook University. He is currently pursuing his doctorate at Dowling College.



*"I am looking forward to working with the community, parents, staff and students at Sherwood Elementary School."*  
- Dr. Martin



*"As the new principal of Wing, I am dedicated to the continued social and academic successes that are so important for our youngest learners."*  
- Mr. Smalley



The first day of school for students for the 2013-14 school year is scheduled for September 9th. Please visit the individual building pages on the district's website, [www.islipufsd.org](http://www.islipufsd.org), for important back-to-school information, supply lists, etc.

# A Message from the Superintendent

Dear School Community Members,

Welcome to the 2013-14 school year!

Several weeks ago the New York State Education Department released the scores for English language arts and math assessments in grades 3-8. It is important to recognize that student achievement did not go down; the new standards have gone up. As Commissioner of Education Dr. John B. King Jr. stated in a letter to parents and families (see letter posted on the District website, [www.islip.ufsd.org](http://www.islip.ufsd.org)), "I want to make it very clear that the change in test scores does not mean that students are learning less or that teachers and schools are performing worse than last year." These new assessments do not accurately reflect our students' ability, nor the skills of the staff, and the scores should not be compared to the prior year's assessment results. These are "new baseline measurements of student learning." New York State accelerated the adoption of these new assessments, which are aligned to the new Common Core. Simply, the rules changed in the middle of the game.

We are confident that scores will improve as the Common Core is fully implemented. As we move forward, we will analyze the student scores and utilize the data to assist us in determining academic support, curriculum design and professional development for teachers.

We take great pride in the quality of education we provide and stand by our students, staff and community.

Sincerely,  
Susan A. Schnebel  
Superintendent of Schools

# CURRICULUM Corner

## ACHIEVE3000

In January 2013, the district piloted the Achieve3000 program, a computer-assisted instruction program designed to increase student achievement in reading and writing, for secondary ESL students.

"Use of the reading and writing elements within Achieve3000 language art activities helps students to develop the capacities recommended by the Common Core Standards," explained Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Ellen Semel. "Our students who piloted the program saw substantial improvement in their scores."

The web-based, differentiated instruction program teaches students at their individual reading levels and constantly challenges them to achieve the next level. Students receive articles that have been written on 12 different levels on the same subject and take a placement test to guarantee they receive instruction and text at their appropriate level. According to Achieve3000's website, the result of the continually adjusting content includes "heightened engagement, a stepped approach to reading comprehension and critical thinking and extraordinary gains in reading/writing proficiency."

With the differentiated online instruction, the district saw significant gains in student Lexile (reading gains) points. According to Mrs. Semel, Achieve3000 projected that the Lexile point gains for Islip's students through the piloted program would be 19.8. However, the actual mean gain was 36.7 Lexile points, exceeding the projected expectation by 16.9 points.

The program, which will be expanded for the 2013-14 school year, helps students build strong content knowledge, comprehend and critique content, value evidence, and demonstrate strategic use of technology and digital media.

## NOTEWORTHY RESULTS

In the district's ongoing efforts to raise achievement standards for all students, Islip Middle School once again saw significant results in state tests for 2012-2013. Eighth-graders participating in the New York State Earth Science Regents exam saw a passing rate of 99.9 percent, with a mastery of 84 percent. Additionally, the middle school received an 88 percent passing rate of all eighth-grade students – general education and special education – taking the Integrated Algebra Regents.

"This continuation of last year's noteworthy results is a testament to our teachers and their instructional expertise and passion for teaching that make the difference in the lives of their students," said Superintendent of Schools Susan A. Schnebel.

## BOARD ADOPTS GOALS

Every July, the Board of Education works together as a cohesive unit to create goals they would like to accomplish throughout the upcoming school year. For the 2013-14 school year, the Islip Board has adopted specific goals, one of which is creating a governance document to: 1) assist current and future Board members on the proper practices and procedures for Board service, 2) increase transparency, 3) expand upon the Board's community outreach and 4) work to seek mandate relief and fiscal support from the government.

The governance document, once finalized, will include what one should know when considering running for the Board, the scope of Board vs. superintendent responsibility and authority, and the process to address/redress complaints, thereby providing greater transparency. Additionally, the Board plans to develop a consistent outreach and communication strategy with all community groups beyond

the community council and will attend school events and community meetings, including PTA, Friends of the Arts and Booster Club events. The Board will also create a strong legislative arm to provide outreach and collaborate with others within Islip and beyond to address the need for mandate relief and fiscal support from New York State and the federal government.

To remain updated on the progress of the Board's goals and to stay connected to the goings-on within the district, please attend upcoming meetings. Board meetings are typically held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the board room at the high school, unless otherwise noted. The next scheduled meeting of the Board of Education will take place on Tuesday, Sept. 10. Please visit the district's website, [www.islipufsd.org](http://www.islipufsd.org), for any changes to the Board schedule.

# Keeping the Community Connected

The COMPASS IDEA Task Force Coalition is a collaboration of people within the Islip community who come together with a shared mission to reduce the risk factors that contribute to the youth of Islip using drugs and alcohol. The goal of the coalition is to build stronger protective factors for our youth in order to create a safer, healthier Islip community. Some of the initiatives that are being led by the coalition include the after-school program in the middle school; the free YMCA after-school program for high school students; drug and alcohol awareness programs, including the Mindful Education program, throughout all grade levels; the post-prom party for seniors held at the high school; and parent and community forums designed to share important information about drug and alcohol trends, services and the impact on the Islip community. To learn more about IDEA, please visit [www.islip.site.eboard.com](http://www.islip.site.eboard.com), keyword ideataskforce, or email [ssloan@fsl-li.org](mailto:ssloan@fsl-li.org) to be added to the mailing list.

Other ways to keep active within the Islip school community are through active participation in district volunteer organizations. The PTA, Booster Club, Friends of the Arts and SEPTA are active groups working toward the same goal shared by the district – excellent educational opportunities for Islip students. The interest and involvement of parents and community members in education is a vital part of the instructional process, and the district invites parents and community members to join in and participate. For information on how to join these organizations, please contact their presidents:

**Booster Club** – George Chappas

Email: [george.chappas@mgeups.com](mailto:george.chappas@mgeups.com)

**Friends of the Arts** – Barbara Engels

Email: [nvrmnd73new@aol.com](mailto:nvrmnd73new@aol.com)

(please list subject as IFOA)

**SEPTA** – Mindy Lawrence

Email: [Islipsepta@gmail.com](mailto:Islipsepta@gmail.com)

**Wing PTA** – Christine Breslin

Email: [wingelementarypta@gmail.com](mailto:wingelementarypta@gmail.com)

**Sherwood PTA** – Rosanne Dietz

Email: [Sherwoodprez1315@aol.com](mailto:Sherwoodprez1315@aol.com)

**Commack Road PTA** – Ali Simonetti

Email: [commackroadpta@gmail.com](mailto:commackroadpta@gmail.com)

**Islip Middle School PTA** – Cara Pitta

Email: [imsptaprez@aol.com](mailto:imsptaprez@aol.com)

**Islip High School PTA** – Kathy Collins

Email: [kathycollins99@aol.com](mailto:kathycollins99@aol.com)

# PARENT PORTAL

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## PROVIDES ENHANCED COMMUNICATION

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Parents now have the opportunity to take advantage of a new communication tool created by the district, Parent Portal. A feature of Infinite Campus, Parent Portal provides parents with secure access to attendance and grade information on their children from any computer with Internet access, anywhere in the world. Once parents have activated an online account, they can use the portal to view their child's attendance, schedule, New York State assessment scores, immunization records, current year progress reports and report cards, district and school notices, teacher newsletters and notices, and, for students at the high school, parents can access information on behavioral issues.

"We are constantly striving to improve communication between the district, faculty and parents, and Parent Portal is a fantastic tool that many parents have already begun to take advantage of to stay connected with their children's progress and their classroom teachers," said Superintendent of Schools Susan A. Schnebel.

If a parent would like to set up an account, please visit the district's website, [www.islipufsd.org](http://www.islipufsd.org), and click on the "Parent Portal Infinite Campus" link.

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# Farewell to Retirees

The Islip School District extends its best wishes to the 2012-2013 staff retirees. These individuals have all exhibited much dedication to the students and their education, and they will be greatly missed. With more than 400 years of combined dedication to the Islip Schools, the district offers the following retirees best wishes:

Judy Bender  
Barbara Bologna  
Judith Burton  
Mary Carbone  
Reymon Castro  
Spencer Clareen  
Diane Druckman  
Donna Eakin  
Barbara Knoth  
Philip Lo Grippo  
Rita Maiello  
Joseph Patrovich  
Suzanne Rivelli  
Vincent Veglia  
Steven Waring  
Anna Zotto

ISLIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
ISLIP, NY 11751

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
August 2013

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## Dates to Remember

September 12

Commack Road Meet the Teacher Night  
6:30 p.m. AIS  
7:00 p.m. All Teachers

September 17

Middle School Meet the Teacher Night  
6:30 p.m. AIS  
7:00 p.m. All Teachers

September 18

Maud S. Sherwood Meet the Teacher Night  
6:30 p.m. AIS  
7:00 p.m. All Teachers

September 19

Wing Meet the Teacher Night  
6:30 p.m. AIS  
7:00 p.m. All Teachers

September 26

High School Meet the Teacher Night  
7:00 p.m. All Teachers

October 5

Homecoming  
Parade 1:00 p.m.  
Game 2:00 p.m.

October 11

Dismissal 15 Minutes Earlier  
Than Regular Close of School  
All Grades



## Transportation Reminder

During the week of Aug. 26, bus stop and pickup times will be posted to the district's website, [www.islipsufsd.org](http://www.islipsufsd.org). For the first few weeks of school as bus drivers tailor their routes for efficiency, it is requested that students arrive at the bus stop at least 10 minutes prior to the scheduled pickup. If the bus is delayed, please wait 10 to 15 minutes before reporting a bus overdue.

As a reminder, below are the start and dismissal times for each school building.

|               | Start Time | Dismissal Time |
|---------------|------------|----------------|
| High School   | 7:20 a.m.  | 1:58 p.m.      |
| Middle School | 8:20 a.m.  | 2:24 p.m.      |
| Sherwood      | 8:50 a.m.  | 2:50 p.m.      |
| Commack       | 9:15 a.m.  | 3:15 p.m.      |
| Wing          | 9:45 a.m.  | 3:45 p.m.      |

## Notice of Nondiscrimination

The Islip School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, military status, disability, predisposing genetic characteristic, domestic violence victim status, or any other basis prohibited by New York State and/or federal nondiscrimination laws in its educational programs and activities, or employment practices, and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. Inquiries regarding the district's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Ms. Barbara Nelson, Director of PPS and Special Education, Islip High School, 2508 Union Blvd., Islip, NY 11751, Phone: 631-650-8415.

## School Lunch Program UPDATE

**MyNutriKids.com**  
Secure Deposits. Interactive Menus. Nutrition Information.

Islip School District has announced a free and reduced-price meal (free milk) policy for Islip area schoolchildren for the coming school year. Local school officials have adopted family qualification criteria to assist them in determining eligibility. For full details regarding eligibility and pricing, please contact Food Service Director Carol Ann Grodski at 631-650-8270.

Additionally, the Food Service Department would like to remind parents and/or guardians that through the website [www.MyNutriKids.com](http://www.MyNutriKids.com), they can deposit money into their child's school meal account at any time. This convenient, easy and secure online pre-payment service also enables parents to view what their child is ordering each day, as well as their daily balance.

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

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