

Save the Date

April 18-25
Passover Recess - Schools Closed

May 1
Kindergarten Orientation
9:30-11:30 a.m. @ ES

May 3
SAT I & SAT II Exams

May 12
Budget Hearing/Board of Education
Meeting 7:30 p.m. @ HS

May 20
School Budget & Trustee
Vote 6:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. -
Grade School

100 Days Down, Many More To Go

Babylon Elementary School celebrated the 100th day of school on Thursday, February 14. During the celebration, students and staff participated in a wide variety of activities centered around the number 100, including arts and crafts projects and mathematical counting exercises.



A High Note For STUDENT-MUSICIANS

Seventeen talented Babylon student-musicians were selected to participate in the Suffolk County Music Educator's Association (SCMEA) All-County Festival in Divisions I, II, and III. Students were selected along with others from across Suffolk County on a competitive basis, with their New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA) scores as the main criteria, along with teacher recommendations. Selection to the SCMEA All-County Festival recognizes these students among the top student-musicians in all of Suffolk County. Congratulations to the following students:



DIVISION 1

Jennifer Gregory - Chorus
Julia Harkin - Chorus
Michelle Mangini - Chorus
Shannon Brushett - Band
Marissa Allen - Orchestra
Sarah Halpin - Orchestra



DIVISION 2

Melissa Tolve - Chorus
Kyle Werlick - Chorus
Jonathan Amdur - Orchestra
Sarah Everitt - Band
Adam Marrone - Band
Jonathan Olsen - Band

DIVISION 3

Ethan Lipman - Band
Charlie Gambino - Chorus
Alex Leitch - Chorus
Elizabeth Oman - Chorus
Kate Sherwood - Chorus

SPECIAL EDUCATION CHILD FIND

- If you suspect your preschool child (ages 3-5) may have a disability, please call the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) at 893-7941.
- If you suspect your school aged child (5-21) may have a disability, please call the Committee on Special Education (CSE) at 893-7941.
- If you suspect your child may have a disability and requires an accommodation, please contact the Section 504 Compliance Office at 893-7941.

www.babylonschools.org

THE BABYLON SCHOOL DISTRICT
50 RAILROAD AVENUE
BABYLON, NY 11702

Board of Education:

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Dr. Ellen Best-Laimit
Superintendent of Schools

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Babylon Highlights

UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

www.babylonschools.org

A Message From Your SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

As we move into spring, our direction changes a bit as there are different areas to which our attention is turned. Within a month you will be receiving the district's budget newsletter that will explain the spending plan for the coming year and the resulting cost to property owners. If you prefer to receive your information in person, please join us at our April 14th Board of Education meeting in the high school library at 7:30 p.m. at which time we will be presenting the 2008-2009 proposed school budget.

Over the past year the District has experienced an increase in property damage due to vandalism and unauthorized use of the facilities and grounds. In an effort to curtail damage and unwarranted expense, the District has contracted with a private security firm to patrol our buildings and grounds. We hope this presence will have the desired effect of maintaining calm throughout our school community.

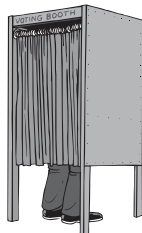
There is some truth to the concept of spring fever. As the administration of the state mandated assessments in mathematics in grades three through eight have been completed and we move toward a second spring break, it is common for students to begin to envision the school year as over. I hope you will encourage the young people in your lives to believe it is every bit as important to work hard at the end of the school year as it is in the beginning, when first impressions are being made. It is never too late and we hope the students you know and love will want to end the year on a successful note!

Till next time,

Ellen Best-Laimit

ABSENTEE APPLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE

Residents who are registered to vote but are unable to cast their ballots on the school budget during the district's designated polling times are encouraged to obtain an absentee ballot application from the District Clerk. Please contact the Clerk's Office at 893-7925 or visit the district's website for application information.



Remember Every Vote Counts!

**BUDGET VOTE:
MAY 20, 2008 6 AM - 9 PM**

KEEPING Curriculum Current

Each year, district teachers and administrators review the curriculum offered in the schools to ensure that it best meets the needs of educating today's youth. As a result of that evaluation the following enhancements are underway:

Mathematics

While the answers to mathematical problems have remained the same, the procedures for teaching problem-solving techniques have evolved over the years. At the elementary level, the district is currently in the process of selecting a standardized math curriculum for grades K-2. Two teacher representatives from each grade level are working in a committee format to evaluate seven different programs. Throughout the discovery process, the committee has been speaking with representatives from the different companies and invited two groups to present the specifics of their program to the district. A decision on which program to implement for the 2008-2009 school year is anticipated to be made this spring. Grades 3-6 will continue to use the math program developed using the revised New York State Standards.

At the secondary level, the state reversed the previously used Math A and Math B program back to a curriculum based on Algebra, Geometry, and Trigonometry. This year, the district implemented an Integrated Algebra course at the ninth-grade level and is currently developing a curriculum for Geometry. Throughout the ensuing months, administrators and teachers will work to develop a curriculum plan that not only incorporates the state-directed requirements, but also fosters a deep understanding of the mathematical concepts.

English Language Arts

As an extension of the spelling program included in the grades 1-2 curriculum and working in line with the district's Literacy Collaborative program, the Grade School is currently piloting a 'spelling to write' program for grades 3-4. In order to help ensure the successful implementation of the program, teachers are participating in staff development activities and are working on lessons to pair spelling with the students' guided reading instructional time – a pairing that has a highly documented level of student comprehension. Additionally, through grant and federal money allocations, the district was able to stock a book room for these lessons with leveled literature and spelling resources.



Character Counts!

Grade School Selected as National Character Award Finalist

Stellar character education programs, including character monitoring charts, morning meetings, fundraising for organizations like St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, and creating quilts for Brighter Tomorrows, and the completion of a rigorous application process, have earned Babylon Memorial Grade School a spot as one of 25 National Finalists in the Character Education Partnership (CEP) National Schools of Character (NSOC) awards program. Approximately 149 applications were submitted from across the United States in this year's competition. Earlier this year, the Grade School was selected as the only elementary school from New York State as a State School of Character.

CEP, the nation's leading advocate for quality character education initiatives, is conducting on-site visits to all finalists throughout the end of April. A team of evaluators visited the Grade School on March 27th to gain a deeper

Leave A Lasting Mark

Babylon Junior-Senior High School and Babylon Memorial Grade School are in the process of selling bricks as part of each individual school's courtyard project. Now, you too can *be a part of this makeover!*

Whether you are a past or current student, a Babylon family, or a community member, leave a lasting mark on the schools' grounds by purchasing a paving brick for a courtyard. Bricks are \$40 each and can be engraved with up to 20 characters.

For more information on the projects, please contact High School Assistant Principal Steve Goldberg at 893-7911 or the Grade School at 893-7980. The deadline for purchasing bricks at the High School is May 15, 2008.

understanding of the school's character education. Following their visits, CEP's Blue Ribbon Panel will meet to select 10 winners, which will be announced in late May.



Librarian of the Year

After more than 12 years of serving the students at Babylon Memorial Grade School, it would be hard to count the number of lives school librarian Grace Kiernan has touched. Recently, in appreciation for all her efforts and in recognition for her exceptional commitment to education, 13 administrators, teachers, parents, and students, both current and former, wrote letters to nominate Mrs. Kiernan for the First Annual Library Media Specialist of the Year Award in Western Suffolk BOCES. Only *one* letter was required per nominee.

In his recommendation letter, Principal Eric Freidman states, "I can state unequivocally that Mrs. Kiernan has had a wider positive impact on staff and students than any teacher I have met in my career."



FUTURE LEADERS TAKE TOP HONORS

The DECA Club from Babylon Junior Senior High School has historically been a powerhouse during the annual New York State DECA Career Conference and this year was no different, with Babylon taking home 10 top honors in a variety of events.

Throughout the competition, students competed against their peers from across the state in categories such as public speaking, job interview, visual advertising, accounting, and business services marketing.



MAKING MEMORIES FOR NICARAGUA ORPHANS



Could you imagine not having one keepsake to call your own? That is the case for many of the orphans living around the world. In an effort to give those children something that they can look back upon with fondness as they grow older, six talented members of Babylon Junior-Senior High School's National Art Honor Society lent their artistic abilities to create original portraits for orphan children in Nicaragua.

Through their participation in "The Memory Project" — a national initiative run by Ben Schumaker in Madison, Wisconsin, that invites high school art students to paint and draw portraits of children living in orphanages around the world based on a photograph provided — the students spent countless hours perfecting their projects.

As a special touch, the students included a picture of themselves and sometimes a note to the child whose portrait they painted. When the portraits were delivered to the orphan children, Mr. Schumaker took pictures of the children with their paintings and sent a copy to the artists.



Shedding Light on Professional Fields

Recognizing that choosing a career path is something that takes years to decide, Babylon Junior-Senior High School hosted a Career Day program for students in grades seven and eight. In addition to informing the students about the variety of career options they will have after graduation, the program was also provided as a continuation of the career portfolio students are asked to create prior to moving up from the Grade School.

Throughout the event, students attended two workshops and met with professionals from nearly 20 different fields. The presenters, many of whom were local business owners or worked in the surrounding area, spoke with the students about the education needed for their jobs, the types of things they experience at work, and welcomed questions about their fields.

Authors, Illustrators, & a Love of Reading



In Babylon, reading isn't something that is just a part of literacy lessons. Instead, it is something that permeates students' daily activities, both in and out of the classroom. In an effort to enhance students' love for the written word and as a kickoff to their P.A.R.P. program, the Grade School recently hosted an Author Illustrator Night for students in grades K-6, a program that showcased 25 local Long Island authors.

Prior to the Author Illustrator Night, kindergarten students in Jennifer Monteleone's and Kathy Reynolds's class at the Elementary School were treated to some insight on the life of an author when Francine Poppo Rich visited their class.

