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Education: A Keystone of the Community

Our school district is home to over 8,000 residents. While officially known as the Cold Spring Harbor Central School District, the district actually serves a much bigger area than the village for which it is named.

CSHCS serves the northern portion of the townships of Huntington and Oyster Bay and includes three smaller communities: the Village of Lloyd Harbor, Laurel Hollow and the hamlet of Cold Spring Harbor. In land area, the largest part of the district is not in Cold Spring Harbor, but in Lloyd Harbor and Laurel Hollow.

In many ways, it is the school district that unites these geographically separate North Shore communities and serves as a focal point. The community as a whole values education highly and offers broad-based support for its schools. Its commitment to quality education is evidenced by its overwhelming support for the school budget and the diverse course offerings, programs and activities that are available to all students.

Widely regarded as one of the top school districts on Long Island, Cold Spring Harbor consistently earns high marks. Based on criteria provided by the statewide guidebook, Statistical Profiles of Public School Districts, the district is listed among those considered outstanding. In 2018, College Board named 145 CSH students as AP named outstanding. In 2018, Cold Spring Harbor High School among the top high schools in the state.

A community is often judged by its schools, and Cold Spring Harbor fares well when measured by this yardstick. Residents often cite the schools as the primary reason they move to this area. The high school has been repeatedly ranked in the top 1% academically in the United States. In addition, both elementary schools have been recognized by the NY State Department of Education based on their high achievement.

In December 2010, the school refinanced its 2001 construction bonds to take advantage of the favorable interest rates. At the time of the refinancing, Standard & Poor’s, one of the nation’s largest credit agencies, accorded the CSHCS refinancing bonds a pure “AAA” rating, making Cold Spring Harbor one of only a handful of school districts nationwide to receive this top financial rating. This bond rating, and the favorable market, resulted in reduced interest costs of over $2 million for the remaining 12 years of the bond obligation.

Cold Spring Harbor: Yesterday and Today

Cold Spring Harbor’s schools, however, are but one of the factors that draws people to this charming, historic area. Its deep and sheltered harbor, whose history still defines the flavor of today’s community, was once the 27th largest whaling port in the nation. With the advent of kerosene and the subsequent decline of the whaling industry, however, the area changed with the times. At the turn of the century, it became a summer haven for affluent New York families.

Today, Cold Spring Harbor is a tranquil community, where past and present stand side by side, giving it uniqueness often sought, but rarely found. Its Main Street, home to boutiques, restaurants and art galleries, is also lined with some of the finest examples of 19th century architecture, many of which are former sea captains’ homes.

Its peaceful setting aside, though, this is no sleepy little hollow. Populated not so much by sea captains these days as by leaders of business and the professions, its proximity to Manhattan draws people to this charming, historic area. Its deep and sheltered harbor, whose history still defines the flavor of today’s community, was once the 27th largest whaling port in the nation. With the advent of kerosene and the subsequent decline of the whaling industry, however, the area changed with the times. At the turn of the century, it became a summer haven for affluent New York families.

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special help during the Revolutionary War, he stopped at the construction site of the area’s first school, which was being built on the west side of the harbor. In 2015, the community celebrated the 225th anniversary of that school, originally known as the Bungtown School (a name derived from a whaling term); today, West Side Elementary School.

By the 1950s, the common schools (as schools like the Bungtown School were known) had long since been folded into larger units and the area was served by three official school districts: Lloyd Harbor, Cold Spring Harbor East and Cold Spring Harbor West. Each had a separate Board of Education and carried out all of the functions of a separate district, though operating schools that went up to only grade 8 or 9.

When it became clear that the baby boom following WWII was going to overwhelm nearby high schools, the three separate districts voted in 1958 to form Cold Spring Harbor Central School District and construct its own high school. The first students entered the new school in January of 1962.

The Cold Spring Harbor Central School District is unusual in that it is one of only three districts on Long Island that straddles two counties: Nassau and Suffolk. Seventy-five percent of the district is in the Township of Huntington; twenty-five percent in the Township of Oyster Bay.

Although the district enrollment (1,719 students) may seem small compared to many Long Island districts, it is actually average, when placed in a statewide or national context. Our students consistently score well above national, state and county averages on most standardized tests. Typically, at least 95% of each year’s graduating class attends college. The district offers a comprehensive co-curricular and sports program, with over 77% of the Jr./Sr. High School student body involved in interscholastic athletics. The campus offers two turf fields, and is also home to a state-of-the-art Performing Art Center. In addition, the Jr./Sr. High School possesses innovative science facilities, including a Science Research Laboratory and a Coral Reef Farming Tank. Finally, through the support of the CSH Educational Foundation, all students at the Jr./Sr. High School are learning in a 1:1 setting, and are provided with a Chromebook for use both in school and at home. For more information regarding high school profile data, please visit www.csh.k12.ny.us, and click on High School Counseling Center.

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(30 miles) and all area business centers, together with the lively, upbeat nature of its inhabitants, have made it as cosmopolitan as it is charming.

It is a thriving center for scientific, environmental, and historic research. Community agencies like the Nature Conservancy, Fish Hatchery & Aquarium, and Whaling Museum, which chronicles the history of the industry and is committed to the conservation of the remaining whale population, draw members of the scientific community from all over the world. The Cold Spring Harbor Library and Environmental Center was built in 2006, on five acres of land across from the harbor; students can walk or take a bus provided each weekday from the high school. Our distinguished neighbors also include the world-renowned Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory and the innovative DNA Learning Center; our district is privileged in that both of these organizations work collaboratively with all grades K-12. We are also the only Suffolk County district which has collaborated with Lincoln Center Education for over 20 years.

The community is also home to many houses of worship, including the Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd, Kehillath Shalom Synagogue, St. Johns Episcopal Church, United Methodist Church, St. Patrick’s Catholic Church, and the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception. By any measure, Cold Spring Harbor today is a sophisticated community which becomes more international in scope with every passing year.

**Our Schools: Then and Now**

In an historical sense, Cold Spring Harbor and its schools are intricately intertwined. When George Washington rode through the area during his 1790 trip to thank those who had offered