

September 2010

Dear Community Member:

On September 13, the Cold Spring Harbor Schools will open its doors to 2,039 students – and the Board of Education, administration, faculty and staff are committed to making this year a successful one for all of our children! Last May, our residents approved a budget which was carefully crafted to maintain a robust academic, co-curricular and athletic program, yet with an eye toward fiscal prudence. As a result, the district has been able to preserve desirable class sizes, and continue the commitment to maintain several initiatives which enrich the instructional program, for example: providing additional resources and professional development for literacy instruction, expanding the study of Spanish into the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, providing workshops with performing artists through an affiliation with Lincoln Center, offering a hands-on overnight environmental studies experience for our 6<sup>th</sup> grade students, and implementing an electronic home practice program (Smart Music) for students who participate in our elementary and Jr. HS band and orchestra groups.

This year, students at the High School will have the opportunity to participate in a new science elective, *Introduction to Research*, which will enable them to develop an in-depth understanding of the process of scientific inquiry. In addition, the district is continuing in its unique partnership with the Cold Spring Harbor Labs where students have the opportunity to participate in a *Molecular and Genomic Biology* course at the DNA Learning Center.

While academic preparation is at the core of our mission, we are cognizant that our students must be equipped with the tools of healthy decision-making and self-awareness in order to lead successful and fulfilling lives. Toward that end, the district is implementing a research-based K-12 program in social – emotional skills developed by Dr. Marc Brackett of Yale University. In addition, our faculty has developed additional opportunities at both the Jr/Sr High School to discuss the increasing prevalence of substance abuse in our society and the impact on one's physical and emotional well-being. This year, our parent group, FOCUS (Families of the Community United with Schools) will also partner with the district to provide parent workshops which will address timely and serious issues, such as internet safety and substance abuse. Our parent groups are highly involved and committed to work in partnership with the schools to shape the culture and values for our students and our community.

The opportunities that technology provides will also be realized this year in our schools. During this school year, all of our faculty will participate in training to create their own web-pages to communicate more effectively with students and families. In addition, the Jr/Sr High School will be posting student schedules, attendance, progress reports and report cards on a secure site which will be accessible to parents and result in increased efficiency and decreased mailing costs. As a result of the Board's careful long-term planning, almost all of the classrooms throughout our district will have the benefit of "*Smart Boards*," which connect classrooms to the world and enable teachers to deliver instruction in a multi-media environment.

We have protected our investment in our schools by making the necessary infrastructure improvements to ensure that our facilities are properly maintained and that our students can learn in an environment

that is safe and conducive to instruction. Some of the recent projects that are currently completed or underway include roofing repairs at Goosehill and the High School, student bathroom renovations at West Side and the High School, driveway and paving improvements at Lloyd Harbor and the High School, a new septic system at the High School, and replacement of the bleachers in the Field House. These critical improvements have been paid through our voter approved Capital Reserve program and have not resulted in any additional debt or need to issue construction bonds.

We are impressed with the caliber of new faculty and staff that are joining the Cold Spring Harbor learning community. Among them is Mrs. Laura Colavecchio, who has been appointed as the new Principal of Goosehill Primary School. Mrs. Colavecchio has most recently served as Director of Early Childhood Education in the Borough of Manhattan and has committed her career to establishing a strong foundation of skills and a joy for learning in our young students.

During a period when we are witnessing the quality of public education being eroded by diminishing resources, we must remain committed to the education of our community's children. All of our futures depend on it.

May I take this opportunity to wish you a successful and enjoyable school year!

Sincerely,

*Judith A. Wilansky*

Judith A. Wilansky, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools