



# On The Line... Online

Aline Bardizbanian, Locust

William Spinelli, Hemlock

Gray Forelli, Homestead

Jenna McGann, Hemlock

## NYS Education Officials Visit GCPS



On January 13<sup>th</sup>, **New York State Commissioner of Education MaryEllen Elia**, pictured above during a lesson in Catherine Ehrlein's fourth grade class, and **Regent Roger Tilles** visited Stewart School and Garden City High School. The visit provided state officials with a glimpse into the robust educational program offered to the district's students. To view video highlights of the day's events, [click here](#) or on the image above. To see photos and learn more, [click here](#).

## We'd Like to Hear from You

### 2017-2018

### Budget Calendar

#### Upcoming meetings:

All meetings will be held at  
Garden City High School, 8:15 p.m.

**February 28:** Budget Work Session #2:  
All Non-Instructional Areas/Administrative and Capital Components

**March 14:** Budget Work Session #3:  
Instructional Components I

**March 21:** Regular Board Meeting; Budget Work Session #4:  
Instructional Components II

**April 4:** Work Session #5  
Additional Budget Review (if needed)

**April 20:** Regular Board Meeting;  
District Budget Adoption

**May 9:** Work Session; Budget Hearing



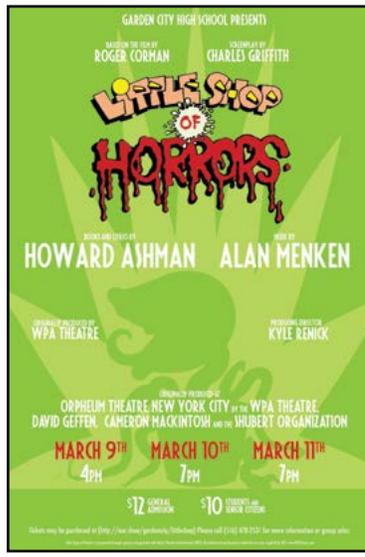
**May 16, 6 a.m. - 10 p.m.:**  
Budget Vote and Election

## Winter Blues? Please Join Us!



On Friday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> (7 p.m.) & Saturday, March 4<sup>th</sup> (1 & 7 p.m.), Garden City Middle School presents **Singin' in the Rain, Jr.** Please join us as this classic musical comedy made famous by the 1952 film starring Debbie Reynolds and Gene Kelly is brought to life on the middle school stage. Tickets can be purchased online by [clicking here](#).

And, if hilarious dark comedy tickles your fancy, be sure to catch **Little Shop of Horrors** presented by Garden City High School at 7 p.m. on Friday, March 10<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. To purchase tickets, [click here](#).



And, if hilarious dark comedy tickles your fancy, be sure to catch **Little Shop of Horrors** presented by Garden City High School at 7 p.m. on Friday, March 10<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. To purchase tickets, [click here](#).

**FREE** to Garden City senior citizens, the Garden City Teachers' Association is sponsoring a delicious buffet dinner and special dress rehearsal of the show on Thursday, March 9<sup>th</sup> starting at 3:15 p.m. in the high school cafeteria. Please register by calling, **478-2222**.



Superintendent of Schools Dr. Robert Feisen (left) introduced the 2017-2018 budget overview at the Board of Education's first Budget Work Session on February 7<sup>th</sup>. As outlined above, there are four remaining public budget meetings which Garden City residents are encouraged to

attend and participate. "Tonight's presentation is the first step in a comprehensive review and discussion of the administration's proposed budget," began Dr. Feisen. "It is not a finished product."

Although subject to change, here are a few **Fast Facts** about the proposed 2017-2018 budget:

- At **\$112,322,126 or 1.35%**, the proposed 2017-2018 school district budget is, for the sixth consecutive year, within New York State's "2%" tax levy limit
- Because the proposed budget is within the tax levy limit, a simple majority is needed for passage at the May 16, 2017 budget vote
- State Aid, the other main component of the budget, makes up a little over 5% of revenues. Because Garden City is considered a "Low Need" school district, 82% of the proposed budget is provided by property taxes
- Since the Governor's budget is a working document until finalized by the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline, state aid projections must be estimated
- Although Garden City Public Schools has a long history of student success, such as its 2016 record 238 Advanced Placement (AP) Scholars, including 31 National AP Scholars designated by The College Board, a host of unfunded state and federal mandates continue to require funding that could otherwise be used for enhancing programs for students.

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# School Start Time:

## A Letter, Survey, & Community Forum are coming your way



With a start time of 7:40 a.m., and the packed

schedules of teens involved in a myriad of courses and co-curricular activities, students attending Garden City Public Schools are caught between a rock and a hard place.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, “. . . the evidence strongly suggests that a too-early start to the school day is a critical contributor to chronic sleep deprivation among American adolescents.”

Here is what we now know:

- A teen’s maturing body shifts the sleep cycle up to two hours, making it difficult for teens to fall asleep before 11 p.m. and wake before 8 a.m.
- Teens need approximately 9.5 hours of sleep each night. Eight hours of sleep is the minimum recommended amount of sleep for teenagers.
- Teens who get enough sleep have better grades, higher standardized test scores, and an overall better quality of life.
- Sleep deprivation presents several serious safety factors: Teens who do not get enough sleep are at risk of being overweight or suffering depression, are more likely to use drugs, fall asleep in class, drink caffeinated beverages, keep a phone or computer in their bedroom, do dangerous things without thinking, and are more likely to be involved in automobile accidents.
- In a Phi Delta Kappan (PDK, 2016) follow-up study of schools that pushed back the start time, “Over 92% of the parents said their kids were ‘easier to live with’.”

- The same PDK study recommended “Go for the latest start time. . . . The benefits are proportional to the amount of time change.”
- Twenty-one Nassau County school districts have high school starting times of approximately 8 a.m. (7:55 a.m. - 8:13 a.m.)

To more closely match our students’ natural circadian rhythm with the demands of a top-notch school system, the district is considering changing school start times.

Work on the topic began last year with the high school’s Site-Based Team (SBT). The team included students, parents, teachers and administrators. The SBT read Dr. Emsellum’s book, *Snooze or Lose*, researched the literature on the topic, and presented their findings and recommendations to the Board of Education and the community at the **May 16<sup>th</sup> meeting**.

Work continues this year with the Board’s School Start Time Steering Committee. The committee includes district administration, parents, teachers, and students. The high school’s SBT presentation, Steering Committee Agendas, and research information have been posted to the district website, along with a Transportation Department study of options for Garden City. Parents are encouraged to review these documents by [clicking here](#).

On the horizon are several opportunities for community feedback. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Feirsen soon will be sending a letter announcing upcoming student, parent, and staff surveys requesting input about the school start time changes. And, please mark your calendars, a School Start Time Community Forum is planned for **Monday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 7-9 p.m.** in the high school auditorium.

## GC’s STEAM Trajectory



Garden City students in grades K-12 have been experiencing the joys and challenges of learning within the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics) curriculum. “We want our students to develop computational thinking skills: to design, test, and use hands-on problem solving to bring an idea to fruition,” explained Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Dr. Ted Cannone. “We want our students to be resilient, to ‘fail forward,’ be collaborative, and be flexible and adaptive thinkers.”

Garden City’s secondary students have been testing their STEAM skills in the competition ring. Members of the middle school’s **FIRST Lego League** (left) and the high school’s new **VEX Robotics Club** have been busy building and programming robots to compete in local competitions. To catch a glimpse of the VEX machines in action, [click here](#) or on the top left photo. The video was shot at the February 4<sup>th</sup> competition at Freeport High School.

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## Spring Continuing Education

In addition to perennial favorite courses such as art, yoga, and SAT prep, Garden City Public School’s Continuing Education Program is offering a series of art trips this spring with the first being to the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine showcasing the Cathedral’s own collection of world famous tapestries. Future trips include The Museum of Art and Design, the Brooklyn Museum, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. [Click here](#) to access the brochure.

## SCOPE After School Enrichment Program

New to the district this spring is SCOPE’s After School Enrichment Program for grades 2-5 focused on topics related to STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics). Classes will take place on Monday and Tuesday afternoons at Stewart and Stratford. Registration deadline is Friday, March 10<sup>th</sup>. Kindly [click here](#) for more information.

## Transportation Request Deadline

Requests for student transportation at the district’s expense to **non-public schools** must be filed by parents with the district annually. Written requests must be received by the Business Office, 56 Cathedral Avenue, prior to **April 1<sup>st</sup>** for the next school year. Transportation Request Forms are available in the Business Office, at the non-public school, or by [clicking here](#).

## GC for a Cure



On Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 8:45 a.m. (1 mile) and 9:15 a.m. (5K) at Garden City High School, join the community as

families, sports teams, adults, and children run or walk to raise funds for cancer awareness at the annual Garden City Teachers’ Association “GC Race for a Cure.” [Click here](#) to register, or contact **Kerry Calvert** for more information.

## Afternoon Tea



Garden City Public School’s 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Afternoon Tea, free to resident senior citizens, will take

place on Thursday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 3:30 p.m. at Garden City High School. Our TEAM of volunteers has many new surprises in store for this year’s guests, so be sure to register soon, it’s first-come, first-served, by [clicking here](#).

# Exemplar Garden City Students



**2017 Valedictorian and Salutatorian**  
 Congratulations to Garden City High School's Class of 2017 Valedictorian Alyssa DeGruccio (left) and Salutatorian Seunghyun Woo. Alyssa's seven-semester weighted GPA of 101.02 and Seunghyun's 100.45 qualified them for the top academic honors of the senior class. Alyssa and Seunghyun will speak at the Class of 2017 commencement ceremony on June 24<sup>th</sup>. "We are very proud of the hard work and dedication of top students," said Principal McLaughlin. "Congratulations to Alyssa and Seunghyun!"

**Nat'l Merit Scholarship Finalist**  
 On February 6<sup>th</sup>, Garden City High School senior Eileen Farrell was elevated to Finalist in the **2017 National Merit Scholarship Competition**. Eileen is pictured above with guidance counselor Jim Malone and Principal Nanine McLaughlin when she was named a Semifinalist back in September. Eileen now moves on to be considered for a number of monetary college scholarship awards. Since 2009, the high school has had 20 seniors named as Finalists in the National Merit Scholarship competition.

**Nat'l School to Watch/Gold Star School**  
 Garden City Middle School recently received two honors for the quality of its academic program, and its responsive and socially equitable culture. The school was redesignated as a **National and NYS Department of Education Essential Elements' School to Watch**. Also, the school received Gold Star Recognition as a School of Character from the Anti-Defamation League, documenting that its programs address school tone and help to build student-school connectedness.



**Class of 2016 Tops in Nassau County**  
 The Class of 2016 placed Garden City High School as the top district in Nassau County for its percentage of students graduating with **Regents Diplomas with Advanced Designation**. New York State requires a minimum of 22 credits for high school graduation. To receive a Regents Diploma with Advanced Designation, students must pass additional required Regents Exams. Congratulations to the 310 members of the Class of 2016 for achieving this amazing distinction!

**Carnegie Hall Honor Concert Chorus**  
 Congratulations to Garden City High School senior Ann Ambach (Mixed Chorus) and junior Annalise LoBiondo (Women's Chorus) for being selected to perform as members of the **Honors Performance Series Concert Choir** at Carnegie Hall on February 5<sup>th</sup>. Annalise LoBiondo is pictured with Women's Chorus conductor Dr. Tim Seelig (inset). Both women are students of music teacher Steve Mayo. Student representatives from across the U.S. and five countries rehearsed and performed for the concert.

**Top 10% Prudential Spirit of Community**  
 An inspiration to all, high school senior Caroline Munn, pictured above with Principal McLaughlin, was awarded a **Prudential Spirit of Community Awards** Certificate of Excellence on February 7<sup>th</sup>. Trinity College-bound, Caroline has been a volunteer at the **Mary Brennan INN** in Hempstead since 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Additionally, Caroline was selected as one of 50 women nationwide to attend **Ann Taylor's ANNpower Vital Forces Fellow** program for which she received a financial grant to apply to an INN program.



**Legislative Art Exhibit**  
 Two Garden City Middle School eighth grade students, Farah Kabir (left) and Sophia Soberon, from Mrs. Lori Biondi's art class, have been chosen to showcase their artwork at the New York State Art Teachers Association's 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Legislative Student Art Exhibition to be held on March 27 – 29, 2017, in the Legislative Office Building in Albany, NY. "The students focused on creating a finished composition in watercolor, ink, and colored pencil," explained Mrs. Biondi. "We are truly proud of Farah and Sophia!"

**Future Business Leaders**  
 "Garden City High School business students did an excellent job at the 2017 **Future Business Leaders of America** District Competition," shared business teacher Dr. Erin McKinstry (far right). "The January event hosted 172 Long Island students competing in a variety of public speaking and written events." Congratulations to our winners: Dean Van Noy: 1<sup>st</sup> place; Caroline Feryo: two 3<sup>rd</sup> place awards; Vedant Trivedi: 3<sup>rd</sup> place; Brennan Maggio: 3<sup>rd</sup> place and 4<sup>th</sup> place; Chase Gladd: 4<sup>th</sup> place; and Joe Doud: 5<sup>th</sup> place.

**Individual Gold**  
 Congratulations to two outstanding high school athletes for winning Individual Gold Medals at the Nassau County Fencing Finals held in late January. Pictured here (left to right) are Boys Fencing coach Kevin Oliver, who was named Nassau County Fencing Coach of the Year; Gold Medalist in Foil Phillip Acinapuro; Gold Medalist in Foil Tia Petrides (Tia won County Gold last year as well); and Girls Fencing coach Denise Holz. Watch for a complete summary of Winter Athletics in the upcoming Spring issue of the district's **On The Line** newsletter.

# A Song In Their Hearts

## The Elixir of Love



Congratulations to Stewart's fifth grade cast and crew, parents and teachers, and music teacher Kelly Grace on another successful opera production! On Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, two casts (150 students) presented Donizetti's "The Elixir of Love," the school's 79<sup>th</sup> opera production. To view the entire album of images from both casts, [click here](#).



## The Wizard of Oz

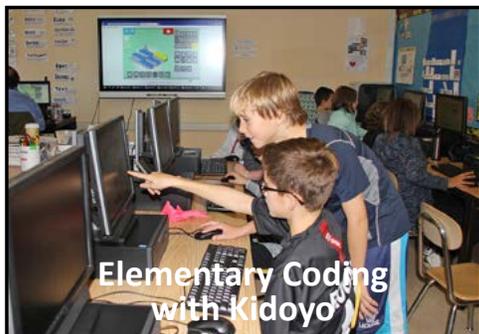


Stratford Avenue's fifth graders presented "The Wizard of Oz" on February 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> to the delight of family, friends, and schoolmates. Congratulations to the cast and crew (above), music teacher Meredith Lavin, and all the supportive parents on a wonderfully entertaining, vibrant and lively production! To view a photo album of both casts in action, [click here](#).



## GC's STEAM Trajectory

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Elementary Coding with Kidoyo

The dozen VEX members built three robots in this, their first year of the new club, meeting after school twice a week with advisor Vincent Pane and retired Grumman programmer Ed Lancevich.

At the middle school, two teams guided by teachers Brittany Kupferman and Amanda Piersa, the Probots and the Bumblebots, have been working to assemble and program small robot vehicles to perform prescribed tasks during FIRST Lego competitions. They also developed projects to present: the Probots created 3D-printed prosthetic limbs that were comfortable and affordable for use on animals; the Bumblebots reached out to local arboretums to share an idea for protecting dwindling honeybee populations.

At Stewart and Stratford, second and third graders worked with *Sphero*, an app-programmable orb, and fourth and fifth graders worked with *kidOYO* to learn to write code in self-paced learning modules of increasing difficulty (top, left).

Thanks to grants from the PTA, even the district's youngest students are engaged in computational thinking skills using small robots. At the October Board meeting at Homestead School (center image), para-professional Alyson Sandler led first graders in a demonstration of Dash, a programmable robot they learned to manipulate as kindergartners. Looking on as they control the robot on a iPad are Board Trustee Bob Martin (standing) and Vice President Tom Pinou.



Primary Programming



Primary Pre-coding Skills

new robot, *Code & Go Robot Mouse*, to kindergartners at Homestead (lower left). The robot is programmed by students using simple directional codes that guide the mouse to a piece of cheese through a maze course the students design.

"The available technology is advancing quickly," shared Superintendent Dr. Feirsen. "We want to keep the end result in mind: to provide a broad range of opportunities for our students to experience so they are well prepared to meet the demanding goals of the future."

## 2017-2018 Proposed Budget

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- The Governor's budget proposal contains no new initiatives for significant mandate relief.
- The proposed school district budget includes funding to maintain the district's robust educational program, including the additions of three new high school electives: the third college-credit component in the Project Lead the Way sequence; Media Arts I; and Advanced Placement Geography.

If residents are unable to attend the upcoming meetings, all 2017-2018 budget information is available on the district website under "Budget Information." [Click here](#) to view. Audio recordings of the Board meetings are now available; [click here](#) to access the files.

### Garden City Public Schools

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Garden City, New York 11530  
[www.gardencity.k12.ny.us](http://www.gardencity.k12.ny.us)



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