

To the Kinnelon Community,

As you can imagine, in preparing our budget for the 2011–2012 school year, there were many concerns to be considered. While adjusting to what has been called the “new normal,” our goal must remain doing the best we can for our students and providing them with as many opportunities as possible to prepare them for increasingly competitive national and global arenas. At the same time, we all have to be aware that economic times are tough and that solutions cannot depend on limitless resources.

We believe the budget we are presenting to you does both. We are proposing a budget that stays within the 2 percent tax cap, increasing 1.5 percent from last

year. Approval of the budget will allow us to continue to progress, preserving many of the programs that have made us unique and successful. We are a high-performing school district, and with this budget we can continue to do the things that have made us that way.

Our challenge has not been only to reduce the budget. The real challenge has been to do it in the most equitable manner and in a way that does the least harm. So far we have been able to manage that, but eventually, if year after year we are forced to cut deeper, will reach a point of diminishing returns. Past progress is not a guarantee of future success.

Our budget theme has always been to provide you with an above-average education at a below-average cost. This year’s budget continues that theme and balances a need for more with the reality of working with less. Our progress is due to a combination of motivated students, a professional and caring staff, and your support. Hopefully, as you review our budget presentation at www.kinnelonpublicschools.org and make your decision, you will agree that our school district is a vital part of our community and deserves your continued support.

Dr. Allen Kirk
Kinnelon Board of Education President

Students Become Hydroponic Gardeners

Students at Kinnelon High School will soon become hydroponic gardeners. A recently installed greenhouse will be a part of the science curriculum for the district’s Multiple Disabilities class. Its unique design uses fish to provide natural fertilizer for growing vegetables. Students from a similar class at the middle school will also be sharing space in the greenhouse. Aside from learning about the biology of plant life, students will be using their crops to supply the weekly food service program at Kinnelon High School. This very popular program, called “F3,” provides a

fee-based weekly lunch service to staff throughout the district. Students in the Multiple Disabilities program prepare and package foods cooked in their classroom and distribute it to faculty. This provides a wealth of opportunities to practice workplace readiness and prevocational skills under the supervision of their teachers, Mr. Ray Sikora, and Mr. Christopher Hartmann, who is a trained structured learning experience coordinator.

The greenhouse is scheduled for a grand opening in the spring of 2011.



Pictured are Mr. Christopher Hartmann and KHS student John Smialek installing hydroponic tanks in the new greenhouse.

Hydroponics (From the Greek **hydro**, *water*, and **ponics**, *labour*) is a method of growing plants using mineral nutrient solutions, in water, without soil. Terrestrial plants may be grown with their roots in the mineral nutrient solution only or in an inert medium, such as perlite, gravel, mineral wool, or coconut husk. *Source: Wikipedia*

The Great American Novel

Have you ever dreamed of writing the next great American novel? Our Kiel students have not only dreamed it—they have made their own wishes come true!

This year, Kiel second graders were invited to write and illustrate their own books. Students were promised that their tomes would be cataloged in Kiel's library/media center—no differently than any other books found on our shelves.

Stories about friendship, pet care, and travel, as well as cookbooks, alphabet books, and counting books have all been written and illustrated by our Kiel authors. Many authors had the opportunity to read their books to friends during class time in the library/media center.

In her travel book titled *New York*, Gabriella Gorelik observes that “New York has big buildings . . . if you live in New York you will have to live in a hotel . . . if I lived in a hotel, I would move.”

Thomas Tarabokija's autobiography, *Working with My Dad*, describes how Tom helps around the house: “I go with my dad to the Home Depot or Lowe's . . . I help dad plant my mom's flowers . . . when I'm with my dad, I'm always happy . . . I love working with my dad.”

Alexandra Hinz pens in her novel, *A Lost Cat*, “There once was a cat that needed an owner . . . the cat slept in the woods . . . one day the cat found an owner who was looking for ladybugs . . . she showed her parents the cat . . . it had fleas so her parents made an appointment with the



Second grade authors proudly display their books which are now part of Kiel's Library/Media Center's collection.

vet, and the vet got the fleas off . . . then they lived happily ever after.”

Now that Kiel second graders search for library books online, it is exhilarating for our authors to see their “great American novels” permanently catalogued in the library/media center's collection.

Quite a legacy of books for second graders to leave behind, and quite a gift of literature donated to Kiel's library/media center.

Kinnelon High School GOLD



Since beginning the 2010–11 school year, when KHS's tradition of excellence was recognized by September 2010 edition of New Jersey Monthly via its ranking among the top

25 high schools in the state, our students continue to make frequent contributions to our legacy of excellence in academics, arts, and athletics.

The **Advanced Placement Program** named 41 of our students AP scholars, some with distinction and one a National Scholar, the most prestigious. Eight members of the class of 2011 were named Commended Students in the 2011 National Merit Program. In academic competition, five members of our academic decathlon team earned gold medals while both mock trial and consumer bowl teams took second place in Morris County.

In the **performing arts**, 13 KHS choral members were named to the 2010–11 Morris County Choir, three students

were accepted to the 2011 American Choral Directors' Association National Honor Choir, and six musicians named to the North Jersey Area Band. In 2010, our Media Arts program was awarded \$5,000 by MSG Varsity V Awards judged by the Academy of Arts and Science. To cap off this great year, all are invited to the Kinnelon Public Library this spring to enjoy an exhibit of our students' artwork.

Our Colts girls' and boys' soccer teams successfully defended their Liberty Division Championships for the 2010 fall season. During the winter season, our girls' swim team, which broke numerous records throughout the season, took second place in the very competitive county competition, and one team member took home an individual gold. The boys' team brought home two individual gold medals. The Kinnelon wrestling team, as well as our boys' track



team, also earned individual sectional championships. Meanwhile, girls' relay teams came in second in the county and state competitions.

As we work with our students to be more sensitive of the needs of others and more aware of those who live in poverty a large number of our young men and women are regularly involved in community service ventures through our activities programs, classes, scouting, local churches, and outside agencies.

In summary, Kinnelon High School's students continue to serve their community while enriching the legacy of excellence in academics, the arts, and athletics.

Stonybrook Celebrates Read Across America Day

On March 2, Stonybrook Elementary School hosted a school-wide, day-long celebration of Read Across America. This is the nationwide observance of the birthdate of beloved children's author Theodore Geisel, commonly known as Dr. Seuss, and has become synonymous with a highly focused national emphasis on reading.

In addition to a full schedule of parent volunteer readers in individual classrooms, the day featured a rotation of special guest readers including

- Superintendent of Schools Jim Opiekun;
- Director of Curriculum Diane DiGiuseppe;
- Principal Mark Mongon;
- Supervisor of Elementary Education Noreen LaFergola;
- Kiel School Principal Jodi Mulholland and administrative assistant Paula Kelly;
- former Kiel School Principal Pat Hart;
- Pearl R. Miller School Principal Jack Hynes and Assistant Principal Louis Caruso;
- Kinnelon Children's Librarian Louise Solomon;
- Mr. Isaac Freeman (also known as Grammy award-winning rap artist "Fat Man Scoop") and his wife Shanda;
- Mayor Bob Collins;
- Kinnelon Police Sgt. Joe Napoletano;
- school nurse Mary Bowers; cafeteria employee Jennifer Tempio; Head Custodian Lou Albanese;
- and band instructor Alan Tedesco.

The dedication to celebrating reading could be seen and heard in every classroom. Activities ranged from math, reading, and writing lessons related to Dr. Seuss; crafts such as red-and-white striped stovepipe hats; and "I Pledge To Read" cards colored and signed by all 575 students hanging in every hallway.

Many students, teachers, and guest readers wore red, white, and black—the colors of Dr. Seuss' iconic Cat in the Hat. The Cat himself, along with popular Seuss character Thing One, also made surprise appearances in every classroom. "The entire Stonybrook staff did an incredible job creatively showing students how fun reading can be," commented teacher and Read Across America Chairperson Aileen Florio.

Principal Mark Mongon added, "Reading is one of the most important skills we use throughout our lives, and it can also be one of the most enjoyable. It helps us to be independent learners, giving us the tools to find the answers to whatever questions we may ask. It is also a great way to spend free time; there are few pleasures as engaging and relaxing as reading a book that you just don't want to put down. It was wonderful to see so many members of our school community come together to celebrate reading today."

The National Education Association's Read Across America Day is the nation's



Seuss characters The Cat in the Hat and Thing One (teachers Aileen Florio and Annika Levitt, respectively) make surprise appearances in every classroom.



Superintendent of Schools Jim Opiekun serves up some *Mouse Soup* to third graders.

largest reading event, occurring each year on or near Dr. Seuss' birthday (March 2nd). In a proclamation made by President Barack Obama on March 1, 2011, he called upon "children, families, educators, librarians, public officials, and all the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities." The first Read Across America Day was held on March 2, 1998.



Frequently Asked Budget Questions

How much are taxes increasing?

Under new law the current expense tax levy cannot increase by more than 2 percent. The proposed budget falls within this limit. For the average assessed home the increase is \$183, the lowest tax increase in the past 10 years. The increase over last year's budget is 1.5 percent.

How does this budget affect our district?

If the proposed budget is approved by the community it will enable us to maintain current programming with a small expansion of teaching staff to accommodate class size concerns. Three full time and three part time teaching positions are included in the proposed budget.

How is the kindergarten program affected?

We are maintaining an extended day kindergarten and have phased out the JrK program. With some changes in the extended day program we were able to bring costs in line with a half-day program and are excited about being able to provide this opportunity to our kindergarten students at a reduced cost.

What is the status of negotiations with the district bargaining units?

The proposed budget does not include a salary increase. The Board continues to negotiate with the Kinnelon Education Association and the Kinnelon Administrator's Association.

What if the budget doesn't pass?

Depending on the level of cuts mandated by the mayor and council there would need to be less staff and fewer programs. Most areas have already felt the budget ax which leaves the specter of increasing class sizes and the potential cutting of our art and music and library programs. At the middle and high school level-programming cuts would further affect course offerings especially in the elective areas.

Will the pay to participate program continue for Pearl R Miller and Kinnelon High School?

Yes. Students who participate in clubs, athletics or parking will continue to pay a fee similar to the one developed this year.

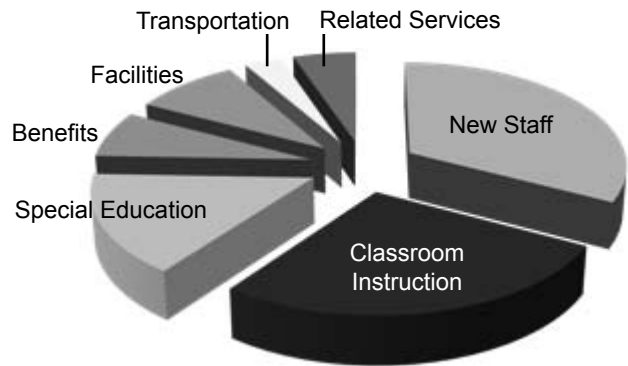
When is the school election this year?

The vote is on Wednesday, April 27th and the polls will be open from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m. Check page six for your polling place.

How do I get an absentee ballot?

Application for an absentee ballot are available at <http://www.morriscountyclerk.org/html/forms/VoteByMail09.pdf>. All mailed applications must be received by the Morris County Clerk by April 20, 2011. Voters may apply for an absentee ballot in person, or by authorized messenger if the voter is sick or confined, to the county clerk any day up to 3 p.m. on April 26, 2011.

**Areas of Increases
in the 2011-12 Budget**



Formal Writing Takes Center Stage At PRM

Sixth-grade students at Pearl R. Miller Middle School enjoyed a breakfast of croissants with butter and jam served by “waiters” formally dressed in black and white on Wednesday, Feb. 24, all with the aim of helping them to improve their writing.

“We wanted them to have a memorable, shared experience that was fun and made them feel special so they would remember our message,” explained Sixth Grade Team Facilitator Marie Tomasheski.

The message, as students prepare to take the New Jersey Assessment of Student Knowledge (NJ ASK) in the first week of May, is that there is a big difference between formal writing for school and casual writing, such as texting.



Students are served up delicious croissants at “Chez Pearl”.

“What we were finding is that if we called students’ attention to it, they knew many of the rules of formal writing such as capitalization and punctuation, but they were not always doing it in written work in school,” said Tomasheski.

The sixth-grade teachers decided to use the COPS strategy to focus the attention of students on the need to use formal writing rules for all public work, which means all writing done for school. COPS is an acronym for capitalization, organization, punctuation, and spelling. “Administrators and teachers had been having discussions about our writing

scores, what could be affecting them. Is it the increase in written informal communication such as texting? More importantly, what can we do to improve them?” Principal Jack Hynes said.

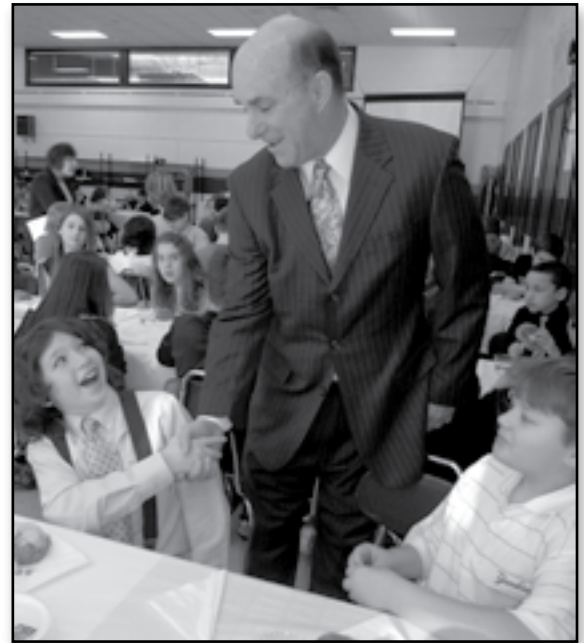
“When the sixth-grade team came up with this idea, the rest of our staff members completely supported them and volunteered to help” Hynes continued.

The sixth-grade staff kicked off the initiative with the special breakfast by converting the cafeteria into “Chez Pearl” for the sixth-grade class meeting.

Students had been directed the day before to dress up a bit for their meeting the next day. A couple of boys adopted the principal’s trademark look by wearing suspenders for the occasion. Some girls wore their favorite skirts or dresses, others did their hair in more formal styles. Sixth-grade teachers prepared the cafeteria before school by putting white paper tablecloths on all the cafeteria tables

and place settings for each student. With assistance from seventh- and eighth-grade teachers and guidance counselors, who served as waiters and dressed in black and white, they served the students croissants and sparkling water as Tomasheski explained the purpose of the morning.

The teachers performed a skit with “cops” and “students” introducing the COPS strategy in an entertaining way. They then ran through the rules in a PowerPoint slideshow for students and had the sixth-graders up and moving with “Editing on the Move,” a kinesthetic activity linking physical movement to punctuation.



Pearl R. Miller School Principal, Mr. John Hynes greets students during the COPS program break. Pictured from left to right are PRM students James Armstrong, and Robert Dromsky-Reed.

The COPS message was carried throughout the day with activities in every class.

During their reading classes, students were given a reminder sheet with the COPS rules for formal writing on one side and a word wall of commonly misspelled and misused words on the other.

Students personalized their word walls with drawings and reminders to help them with individual problem words. They were given a transparent plastic protector for their sheets and directed to put them in their assignment pads or a binder they take to every class and to use it whenever they were writing.

All through the day, in every class, teachers did a short activity with students related to their subjects to reinforce the message of the morning.

“The kids were excited,” said Melissa Eckert, a sixth grade social studies teacher. “They were talking about the breakfast, how much fun it was, talking about COPS. The teachers all had fun with it too. It worked really well.”

Its all Smiles at Stonybrook School

The 100th Day of School is an exciting time in kindergarten! Students celebrated with many activities, including giving back to their community. Stonybrook kindergarten students and teachers raised \$100 to donate to the Kinnelon Food Pantry.

The Kinnelon Food Pantry provides assistance to families and individuals who meet simple criteria. The food pantry stocks canned vegetables, fruits, cereals, pasta, cleaning supplies and personal products.





Vote

**Wednesday
April 27**
Polls open
7:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

District 1–Districts 1 & 7
Kinnelon Municipal Building

District 2–Districts 2 & 5
Fayson Lakes Clubhouse

District 3–Districts 3, 4, & 6
Kinnelon Public Library



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