

# THE RAY REVIEW

1848 N. Great Neck Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23454 (757) 648-4550

## PTA President's Letter:

Anjanette Schlemmer - PTA President

We have started the 2018-2019 school year with tremendous success! Membership is currently around 60%. If you have not yet joined, please consider doing so. You can give directly to our PTA through "Stingray Sharing." This money goes directly to our school and student for programs such as the 8th Grade Celebration, Scholarships, Spring Dance, Staff Appreciation and the annual Gift to School. We welcome your membership and donations.

Our PTA usually holds meetings the first Friday of each month and all are welcome. Our next meeting is January 4, 2018, at 9:40AM in the Student Activities Room. If you have any questions regarding PTA, please visit our website for more information at [www.gnmspta.com](http://www.gnmspta.com).

We have had a busy start to our school year with enthusiastic participation in our PTA Programs. One of our programs is "Reflections." Congratulations to all who have participated we have had some incredible entries. Our winners will be announced very soon. Formal awards for Reflections will be presented at our Winter Concert on December 12th. This is also our next PTA General Meeting. Please join us to celebrate our winners and hear about upcoming PTA events.

The PTA sponsors the "Scholarship Program." Our PTA gives scholarships to former GNMS students who have achieved great things. Much of the money we raise for scholarships comes from "Spirit Nights."

Thanks to Ballyhoos and Ynot Pizza for hosting our first two Spirit Nights of the school year. Please support your school by bringing your family to GNMS Spirit Nights.

Scheduled dates for upcoming Spirit Nights include:

December 18: 5:00-9:00PM Moe's Southwest Grill "Rivalry Week"  
GNMS-vs-Plaza

December 20: Moe's Basketball shootout at GNMS,  
(your chance to win free burritos for a year!)

April 23, 5:00-8:00PM Your Pie Pizza

May 7, Your Pie pizza oven at the GNMS Track Meet GNMS-vs-VBMS 5:15PM

Save the Date: Friday, January 25, 2019: First Annual GNMS Fun Run

Thanks again for your continued support and generosity with our PTA; GNMS is looking forward to a successful year.

PTA Executive Board 2018-2019

Anjanette Schlemmer, President

Stephanie France, VP Membership

Donna Lewis, Treasurer

Jo-Ann Barreiro, Secretary

Susan Hurley, Volunteer Liaison



## IMPORTANT DATES:

November 11, 2018

Veterans Day

December 5, 2018

Rising 6th Grade Open House  
(current grade 5)

December 12, 2018

Winter Concert/PTA General  
Meeting/Reflections Awards

January 4, 2019

PTA Board meeting @9:40AM

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GREAT NECK MIDDLE SCHOOL IS PROUD  
TO BE A BLUE RIBBON SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE



## Principal's Corner

### November 2018

Gene F. Soltner, Ed. D., Principal

Inside and outside the classroom, staff, parents, and students are making Great Neck Middle a better place. Parent and community volunteers are working with PTA, student activities and athletic teams, and are serving as resources in learning. I see consistently in all classrooms solid, challenging instruction punctuated by problem-solving, collaboration, and critical thinking. A thrust on student accountability is also evident in students reflecting on outcomes and setting personalized learning goals. In short, high standards for classroom engagement are set and maintained on a consistent basis. Digital integration continues to enrich instruction as students utilize their school-issued Chromebooks and our new Learning Management Platform, Schoology, both in the classroom and at home. Parents who would like to learn more about the tech tools we are using in school are invited to attend a one-hour informational session on November 13 at 10:00 AM or 6:00 PM. Email [Jessica.Snow@VBSchools.com](mailto:Jessica.Snow@VBSchools.com) to register. Know that nothing replaces the value of direct instruction, and our data clearly illustrates that students who are in school on a regular basis outperform than those with absences. Evidence of high expectations can be found in the classrooms, hallways, playing fields, and everywhere throughout the building. Follow us on Twitter [@greatneckms](https://twitter.com/greatneckms) for daily updates.

Please know that Great Neck Middle offers assistance for students experiencing academic difficulty. Each morning the Homework Center opens at 7:40 AM, and a math teacher is available in room 121 at 8:00 AM to provide homework assistance. In addition, our teachers are available in room 121 for extra assistance either before or after school, and students who remain at school for help may ride the activity bus home. We offer SOL tutoring Monday through Friday from 7:50-9:10 AM or 4:00-5:40 PM, depending on the specific subject. We also offer an after-school four session writing seminar by grade level; student participants learn writing strategies to assist in middle school, college, and beyond. For information on tutoring or other assistance programs, email Kathy Morrison, School Improvement Specialist, at [Kathy.Morrison@VBSchools.com](mailto:Kathy.Morrison@VBSchools.com). Know that students who score below 70 in a core course of math, science, social studies, or English are assigned to Academic Support in lieu of an elective during the school day. Contact your child's counselor for additional information. Regular communication with your child's teachers is important. You may contact your child's teachers through email or through the counseling office. You will find a link to our teachers on our website [www.greatneckms.vbschools.com](http://www.greatneckms.vbschools.com). Most importantly, ensure you are using ParentPortal to access your child's grades and attendance on a daily basis. To sign up for ParentPortal, visit our website.

I look forward to our continued improvement as we enter the second nine weeks. For your planning purposes and to assist families with holiday travel, on Wednesday, November 21, 2018, students at the middle school will be released at 1:30 PM. Do not hesitate to contact me or any member of my staff should you require our assistance.

Sincerely,  
Gene F. Soltner, Ed. D., Principal

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## GNMS Library

### Media Center News

**New Books:** The library has recently added 170 new items to the collection across a variety of genres. Encourage your student to visit the library to check out a new book.

**Book Fair:** The GNMS library will host a Scholastic Book Fair Monday, December 10 through Friday, December 14. The Book Fair will be open Monday through Thursday from 9:10AM until 3:00PM. On Friday, the Book Fair will open at 8:00AM and conclude at 2:05PM. All students will have a chance to preview the Book Fair and make purchases through one of their core classes. Students will need a signed planner and method of payment to revisit the Book Fair.

Parents have been invited to shop the Book Fair on Wednesday, December 12, from 10:30AM to 3:00PM, using the entrance near the gym.

#### **Book Fair Hours**

Dec. 10-13: 9:10AM-3:00PM

Dec. 14: 8:00AM-2:05PM

Parent Shopping Day: 10:30AM-3:00PM on Wednesday, Dec. 12.

## Bully Prevention Month

October was Bully Prevention Month. While we continuously focus on this topic throughout the year, we emphasize it in October to remind students we all want Great Neck to be a safe and welcoming school filled with kindness and good will.

## Stay tuned

Watch for upcoming information on 2019-2020 course requests and the Academy Application process. Be sure to have your child show you important dates listed on the grade level School Counseling Schoology Course which they have been invited to join.

## GNMS Counseling Department News

The Counseling Department has had an exciting start to the year! We welcomed our incoming students with Stingray Cove and multiple Open Houses. We are excited to introduce two programs to Great Neck: Anchored for Life (A4L) and Advisory. These programs focus on creating a welcoming, student-centered atmosphere that fosters a stronger school community while focusing on the future and transition.

## Major Clarity

Have your children shown you Major Clarity, the amazing tool at their fingertips? This Academic and Career-centered application is located on Clever and enables students to match their interests and abilities to careers. Students can also design a course of study tailored to their personal needs.

## Attendance

Great Neck Counselors are closely monitoring attendance again this year. If a student is absent from school, a parent must provide written documentation in the form of an excuse note or an email to the counselor or the attendance associate. Regular school attendance contributes to the ever-growing success of our students because direct instruction in the classroom is irreplaceable.

## Counseling Corner

We have added a new way to disseminate information to students on a daily basis. Throughout lunch periods, we display a looping slideshow that features events, topics, and announcements. This slideshow currently includes High School Academy information, grade level updates, positive conversation starters, and so much more. Be sure to ask your child about the counseling messages each week.

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# Great Neck Band News

The Great Neck Band program has had a great start to the school year! Congratulations to the Great Neck Pep Band for excellent performances at the home football games and the pep rally, and to the 8th Grade Band for a great performance alongside the Cox Band at a Cox High School football game.

Below are important dates for upcoming band events:

December 1: Virginia Beach Holiday Parade: 8th Grade Band performs

December 8: All-District Band Auditions

December 12: Winter Bands Concert

January 31-February 2: All-District Band

March 7-9: VBODA Band Assessment

April 10: GNMS Pops Concert

May 2: Spring Bands Concert

# Great Neck Orchestra

The Winter Orchestra Concert will be on Tuesday, December 4th at 7:00 PM. The call time for students and parent volunteers is 6:00 PM. Students must come to school dressed in formal concert attire. GNMS will issue a bowtie and cummerbund to each student prior to the concert. Students must return these items to Ms. Sawyer or a parent volunteer after the concert. More information regarding after-school rehearsals and concert attire is posted on Schoology.

# Great Neck Chorus

All-District Chorus audition results will be announced in our next newsletter. All chorus students will participate in the following concerts in December:

Friday, December 14, 2018

Day Winter Concerts with Band & Orchestra

Bell 1: 8th Grade Auditoria

Bell 2B: 6th Grade Gym

Bell 5: 7th Grade Auditoria

Tuesday, December 18, 2018

Winter Chorus Concert in the Auditoria at 7:00 PM

Meet for warm ups in the chorus room at 6:00 PM

Chorus Concert Dress Requirements:

Concert Dress is required for all day and evening concerts

Girls:

- Long Black Skirt (ankle length only)
- White Long Sleeve Shirt with Collar
- Black Dress Shoes

Boys:

- Black Dress Pants
- White Long Sleeve Shirt with Collar
- Black Socks
- Black Dress Shoes

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# GRADE SIX COMBINED



It is hard to believe we have moved through the first quarter! Students have settled into the challenges of block scheduling, more freedom, and the use of lockers. They have done well! Please check your student's school supplies and replenish them as needed, and please make sure you are signed up for Parent Portal and Listserv.

**Language Arts** - Advanced Language Arts will begin our novel study of *Holes* by Louis Sachar. This novel has four plot lines occurring through different centuries that all have a connection in the present. We will engage the help of our Gifted Resources Teacher, Gabe Howard, to bring this novel to life. This novel study will be placed in the framework of understanding karma as well as recognizing child labor in the world both past and present. Students will also read other material during the unit to emphasize karma, and a literary analysis of this idea will end the unit.

Core Language Arts will also study how conflict changes a character as they meet young Jesse Aarons, Jr. in the novel, *Bridge to Terabithia*. This coming-of-age story emphasizes how friendships shape our lives. Core students will also complete a literary analysis of how characters change due to overcoming conflict.

**Math** -Advanced Math 6 students have been practicing their integer operation skills and applying them to real-world scenarios. Next up, students will be learning to perform all operations involving fractions and mixed numbers and will draw models to represent multiplication and division of fractions. For additional practice, students should be studying their notes nightly, utilizing IXL, and the Unit Resources located in Schoology.

Pre-algebra students are now proficient in identifying all of the mathematical properties. Students also know that the order of operations must be followed like a roadmap to arrive at the correct answer. They are currently working on performing all operations with integers. Balance those budgets! Pre-algebra students will continue to work with rational numbers. Students should be studying their notes nightly since we have many concepts to cover during the second semester. Proportional reasoning will be the next unit.

**Science** - Advanced Science is just wrapping up our unit on matter with our study of elements, compounds, and mixtures. We will dive into the world of chemistry next by learning about the history of the periodic table and world of elements.

Core Science has been trucking through the Matter unit. We just finished Elements and Compounds and Mixtures, and will move on to the world of the atom. After that, we will dive into the world of water when we study its properties and characteristics.

**Social Studies** - We have been off to a busy start! We have explored geography of the world and North America including latitude and longitude, bodies of water, geographic features and geographic regions. Our students were able to put their detective hats on to investigate clues about geographic regions of the United States. Students were then able to support and defend their position on how the First Americans came to North America. In addition, students had their first Virtual Learning Day where they had an opportunity to not only engage and explore the topic of Black Death, but also to explain their learning through cartoon analysis and open discussions. Throughout our first unit, students used Schoology to extend their learning through many available resources such as maps, PowerPoint presentations, video clips, Quizlet, games and study guide pages. We look forward to the rest of the year as we dig deeper into our study of United States history.

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# GRADE SEVEN



The 7th-grade students of Great Neck Middle are off to a great start of the year. Here is a brief summary of what the students have been doing in their classes.

The **Algebra 1 Honors** students have covered algebraic basics such as solving for variables, simplifying and evaluating equations, and inequalities. Topics coming up include Graphing and Slope. Advanced Math 7 students have finished work on topics in Number Sense and Rational Numbers. Next up will be work in Proportional Reasoning, followed by Functions, Equations, and Inequalities- PRE-ALGEBRA and ALGEBRA rocks!

In **English/Language Arts**, students started with creating a writing Works-In-Progress (WIP) folder for our writing assignments this year. Then, our students became scholars of ancient Greek mythology by examining popular myths to understand the purpose of telling stories to help explain the unexplainable. Students have started analyzing nonfiction passages using Achieve 3000 articles in our classrooms. Now our focus shifts to the novel, with Core students going back to 12th century Korea to learn about the importance of perseverance and family with Tree-ear and Crane-man in *A Single Shard*, while Advanced students will fall into the rabbit hole with *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

In **Life Science**, students began the year by learning how to think like a scientist using scientific language, skills, and processes. Our knowledge of the scientific method can now be applied through the study of the wonderful world of the cell as we investigate cell theory, parts of a cell, and the functions of those parts. Soon we will delve even deeper into understanding our own biology as we look at our cells under the microscope.

Finally, in **Social Studies**, Reconstruction, Westward Expansion, Immigration, and Industrialization were the primary topics of the first quarter. Through a variety of gallery walks and analyzing primary source documents like political cartoons and speeches, students drew conclusions and synthesized their knowledge in Point-Prove-Explain paragraphs. The Progressive Era, including women's suffrage and prohibition, World War I, the 1920's and the Great Depression will be examined in the coming weeks. Please feel free to share any artifacts from relatives that you may have that relate to these exciting times in our history!

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# GRADE EIGHT



**Math 8** students will be finishing up the algebra unit before Thanksgiving break and will then begin proportional reasoning. This involves practical real-life situations such as calculating discounts and mark-ups, determining interest on bank accounts and investments, and paying interest on car loans and home mortgages. All of these are skills that will be used in the real world. Next up: Geometry.

In **Algebra** students have finished up the first two units: Unit 1 - Algebra Basics and Unit 2 - Equations and Inequalities. With their newly found skills of solving equations, the students are moving into Unit 3 - Functions and Linear Equations. In this new unit, students will learn the relationships between linear equations and functions. While examining functions, students will learn domain and range, function notation, and zeros of functions. They will apply this knowledge to linear equations as they learn about y-intercepts and slope.

**Geometry Honors** students have finished two units and have just begun their third unit on parallel lines and angle relationships. They will soon begin the first of many units on triangles. We have been studying logic and proof writing using segments and angles. We will now put our skills to use in proving lines parallel. The many properties, theorems, and definitions they have already learned will be applied throughout the first semester, so it's always a good idea to go back to previous notes and refresh one's memory!

This quarter in **Language Arts** we'll be focusing our time on essay writing. Students in the advanced classes will continue reading *A Tale of Two Cities*, while the students in core classes will finish working their way through *Freak the Mighty*. All students should continue to review literary devices as well as their rules and notes for writing mechanics to prepare for the Writing SOL in March.

During the first quarter, **Earth Science** students covered important SOL information on the scientific method, mapping, and topographic maps. The astronomy unit followed with information from the Big Bang Theory to the formation of our solar system and space exploration, a student favorite. In the second quarter, we'll finish up astronomy and will study meteorology. Students will learn about high and low pressure systems, hurricanes, tornadoes, global winds, and the Earth's climate.

In **Physical Science**, students began the year learning about matter, physical properties, and physical changes. We finished the quarter learning about atoms, elements, and the periodic table. Next up, the focus will be on chemical changes. The time will be spent learning about how chemicals interact and how compounds are formed.

In **Civics**, students have been studying the Legislative Branch and researching the complex law making process. They will be delving into interest groups and lobbying before moving into Unit 4: The Executive Branch. In addition, students are engaged in researching candidates for the upcoming November 6 elections.