



DANIEL GOODRICH

Principal Carisa Burzynski celebrates John H. Glenn High School's achievement with students in Elwood Monday.

High performers

4 LI schools named blue-ribbon winners

BY JOHN HILDEBRAND
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Four public high schools on Long Island — each rated “high performing” — captured national blue-ribbon awards Monday as part of a federal effort to recognize academic excellence and improvement.

Winners for 2018 included W. Tresper Clarke High School in the East Meadow district, John Glenn High School in Elwood, South Side High School in Rockville Centre and Sayville High School.

Monday's announcement by the U.S. Department of Education listed 300 public schools and 49 private schools nationwide, including 20 in New York State. This placed New York third among states in the number of schools honored; Texas and Illinois led with 24 schools each.

At John Glenn High, senior administrators and students exchanged high-fives in hallways when they heard the news.

“I've always felt there was something special about our

district's schools,” said Annie Song, 17, a senior at the Glenn campus and president of the 800-member student body.

“There's a certain buzz that you feel after the last bell rings,” said Song, who also plays cello in the school orchestra. “I see students with their binders running up to their classrooms to get some extra help, or grabbing their bags and going to sports practices or grabbing their instruments and going to rehearsals.”

Applications for blue-ribbon status typically require months of preparation by school employees and supporters.

“A big congratulations to students and teachers and staff for a job well done,” said Kenneth Card, superintendent of East Meadow schools.

Federal blue ribbons recognize two categories: schools with superior graduation rates and test scores, and those with exemplary records in closing achievement “gaps” between students of different races, ethnicities and economic backgrounds. This year's winners on the Is-



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South Side High School Principal John Murphy at school Monday.

land all fit the first category.

Some local administrators said their schools are putting more emphasis these days on instructional quality, as opposed to simply encouraging students to pile up advanced course credits. John Murphy, principal of South Side High, said one focus there has been guiding students to look for subtleties and nuance in their literary readings.

“The emphasis these days should not be on more — our students are plenty busy, thank you — it should be on making things better,” Murphy said.

Since 2015, the great majority

of public elementary and middle schools in this region have found themselves shut out of blue-ribbon competitions, due to the large numbers of parents opting their children out of state tests in grades 3-8. Federal law requires at least 95 percent of such students to be tested annually.

Consequently, local districts have zeroed in on recognition for high schools, with five honored last year and another four on Monday.

“We provide opportunities for kids,” said Edward Schmieder, the English department chairman for grades 7-12 in Sayville.

Red light warnings proposed

BY SCOTT EIDLER
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Nassau County would be required to warn motorists of red light cameras with signage near intersections under a bill filed Monday by the Republican majority.

However, the administration of County Executive Laura Curran, a Democrat, contends that all of the county's 285 cameras are already identified.

The bill, sponsored by Legis. John Ferretti Jr. (R-Levittown), would require that signs be installed within 200 feet of the cameras. He said that while he believes warning signs accompany “the vast majority” of intersections, “it's not codified. It's not required.”

The bill would also require installation of signs near cameras where it's permissible to make a right on red. A sign would have an arrow pointing to the thick white line on the road where the driver must make a full stop before making the right turn.

The signage would have to be installed by March 1, according to the legislation.

Ferretti said he often fields calls from constituents who receive tickets after believing they had, in fact, made a full stop before turning right on red. Often, the driver was caught making a “virtual stop” — driving very slowly at the white line — or had driven past the line because the paint had eroded, he said.

“There will be no confusion by a motor vehicle operator,” Ferretti said in an interview.

“Much of what the bill calls for is either already policy or not under the jurisdiction of the county,” said county spokeswoman Karen Contino. “There are already signs at every Nassau County photo enforcement location informing drivers of the presence of cameras. In addition, the county must adhere to New York State Department of Transportation regulations and will need state approval on any additional signage at NYS intersections.”