

Statement by Barbara Berkowitz,
Great Neck Public Schools Board of Education President,
Following the Successful Passage, By The Community, of the Budget and the Bond
Wednesday, May 17, 2017

I know I speak for the rest of the Board when I say “thank you” to our entire community for becoming extremely interested, energized, and active with regard to the vote on May 16.

While there were some intense differences of opinion about the Bond and the annual Budget being voted upon, the fact that so many of you became involved is a very good thing, as you expressed your opinions and exercised your right to vote which are fundamental rights and privileges in America. We sincerely hope that as a result of this election, more people will attend school district meetings and become educated in the detailed workings of our district.

A heartfelt “thank you” to all the members of our community who worked tirelessly for weeks to secure the passage of the Bond and the annual operating Budget. You were well organized, focused, and diligent about getting out the true message that both the Bond and the Budget are vital to maintaining the important structural and educational workings of the school district. Now, we can all get back to our primary responsibilities, which are the education of our students and the oversight of the governance of our district. So while we cannot thank you each individually, please know that we thank you collectively for your steadfast belief that these affirmative votes would be in the best interests of our entire community.

To our two newly elected Board members, Rebecca Sassouni and Jeffrey Shi, we congratulate you on your victories and welcome you both onto the Board. We are all here to help you as you transition to your new roles as School Board trustees, and we look forward to working with you as we forge ahead with many projects.

This election brought out some rather heated exchanges, and we will now need to seek ideas and ways to work to bring our community together again. In 1858, then President Lincoln said, “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” We can and we must again become ONE community, and we will do so, because we’re Great Neck, and this communal appreciation of one another is what makes us GREAT!

Again, we thank you all for your show of support for our schools and, most especially, for all our children!