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## **Jericho Middle School Hosts LGBT/GSA Forum**

By Denise Nash

Earlier this month, Jericho Middle School principal Don Gately and Middle School Spanish Teacher, Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) and Diversity Club advisor Elisa Waters held a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)/GSA Forum for Long Island administrators and educators.

Approximately 90 people attended the forum, which highlighted the need for GSA's and the importance of implementing them at the Middle School level.

"To have so many educators in one room working toward making schools safe for LGBTQA [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, and Allies] students, staff, and families is what education is all about," said Waters.

The hope is that attendees take the information back to their respective school districts and begin to discuss the clubs, activities and policy changes that were discussed.

"I was excited and encouraged by the turnout at the forum," said Gately. "This is a critical issue in our society and I am proud of the leadership role Jericho and Jericho Middle School has taken. I sincerely hope that this will lead to more schools offering a GSA club and greater sensitivity to the issues faced by LGBT students."



**Pictured (L-R) are Middle School Spanish teacher Elisa Waters, Scott Quasha, school psychologist at South Side Middle School in Rockville Centre and Middle School Principal Don Gately.**