

COMMACK HIGH SCHOOL

Carrie Lipenholtz
Principal



Andrea M. Allen
Assistant Principal

Matthew P. Keltos
Vice Principal

Eric P. Biagi
Assistant Principal

March 12, 2026

Dear Catherine and Sally:

Commack High School's Business Department would like to nominate Dr. Sandra Braun for the Long Island BTA Teacher Of The Year Award. When members meet Dr. Braun at our very first FBLA meeting of the year or the first day of classes, they are greeted with a contagious smile and positive energy that inspires them to become active Future Business Leaders and participate in all club events. These include Halloween Happening, pizza sales, competitions, and supporting the Business Department's adopted charity, The Sounds of Silence Foundation, to promote positive mental health and support for families in need during the holidays. Her welcoming attitude prompted FBLA to create a freshman networking event for new FBLA members so they could find their "home" immediately in the high school.

Throughout the years, Dr. Braun has always worked 12 hour days to help our members become the best teammates, colleagues and competitors that they can be. Our membership serves as role models for other students in the building and membership numbers grow each year. FBLA provides a foundation where students build their confidence, friendships, school involvement and a passion for Business Education. Dr. Braun is supportive and kind. Her ability to connect to all students helps them grow and overcome challenges throughout their years at CHS. She is always asked to sit on building level committees to help create school policies to promote an environment conducive to learning and positive growth in our school. Dr. Braun is also the Advisor of our award winning Mock Trial Club and our innovative School of Law.

This morning, I found a note in my mailbox that expresses the positive values Dr. Braun teaches club members. To celebrate FBLA week and to start every building club advisor's day on a positive note, FBLA thanked me for being the Business Honor Society Advisor. All BHS members must be in good standing with FBLA to maintain eligibility. Dedication to Business Education and FBLA become a way of life for our members. Dr. Braun is always promoting an atmosphere of respect, professionalism and appreciation for others in the building. She works as a team and she is always the first one to volunteer to help and become a committee member to make our building a better place for our students. Her room is full of creativity, laughter and learning. Dr. Braun gave cards to students who participated in "Why Business Is Booming" Wednesday to FBLA members who dressed to impress and looked FBLA Fantastic! She is always their biggest cheerleader while teaching vital skills that FBLA members will use in their personal, academic and professional lives. This is also why her Mock Trial Club is consistently in the top 4 teams competing on Long Island! In addition, she serves as a Bloomberg Investment Challenge mentor for our students and she continues to learn about investing to help the students achieve winning results!

Her work ethic prompts Dr. Braun to fundraise all year long so club members can compete in competitions and have the student expenses kept to a minimum. Since the very first day she started working at Commack High School, she has been involved in FBLA and their annual Spring Fun Day Fundraiser. Members work together to invite the elementary school members in our community for a day of activities to celebrate spring. This event is student centered with Dr. Braun facilitating all activities. Every year the event has more activities to offer and every year we raise more money for our club members. As a result of this event's success, FBLA now offers two scholarships to graduating seniors who have made a positive impact on our school and club membership. Dr. Braun also works tirelessly to build connections within our local business community while teaching club members how to network with local businesses for donations for our Spring Fun Day. In addition, she has had the owner of Chick Fil A speak to her entrepreneurship classes and donate food. In turn, our students become employed due to the connections built in her classroom.

Dr. Braun's commitment to FBLA is evident in the number of years she has been Advisor, State Board Member and the organizer of local Fall and Spring District meetings. She does all of this with over 200 students to care throughout her busy day. Her efforts are incredible and she has been recognized by our school PTA for their Founders Award, which recognizes service to our students, Commack High School and our local community.

As a result of continuous involvement in FBLA and her passion for creating innovative and engaging lessons, Dr. Braun's personal goals align with those of FBLA and LIBTA. Sandy Braun earned her doctorate and became known as Dr. Sandra Braun. She is on an eternal quest for excellence in the classroom by continuing to increase her own knowledge in the classroom and the business world. She is a true leader of our school and our Business Department. She is recognized for her interactive projects that encourage students to communicate and collaborate with each other. Dr. Braun has been selected to teach our new INCubator course next year because she is the business leader who will create a classroom environment that fosters new ideas and business enterprises. It is for these very reasons that Dr. Braun will be trusted with building our new INCubator program.

We are all lucky to have Dr. Braun in our lives as she makes our world a better place and truly teaches her Business Education students, FBLA and Mock Trial members how to be successful leaders of tomorrow!

Sincerely,

Carolyn Milano

Carolyn Milano
Lead Teacher of Business Education and FACS



Toby Elmore
Director of Business, Student Affairs & Community Partnerships
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Dear Selection Committee,

It is with the highest level of enthusiasm and respect that I write this letter of recommendation for Dr. Sandy Braun. Dr. Braun is a dedicated educator whose time, energy, and heart are unwaveringly devoted to her students. She is the rare professional who views teaching not simply as a career, but as a calling and that distinction is evident in everything she does.

Dr. Braun consistently challenges her students to reach their highest potential. She creates an environment where academic rigor and personal growth go hand in hand. Her classroom is one where expectations are high, support is constant, and excellence becomes the standard. Students under her guidance do not merely meet benchmarks; they exceed them.

As the advisor to the Commack High School Mock Trial Team, Dr. Braun has elevated the program to extraordinary heights. Under her leadership, the team has soared and currently ranks among the top three teams on Long Island. This achievement is not accidental; it is the result of her meticulous preparation, strategic thinking, and her ability to inspire students to believe in their own capabilities. She fosters not only legal reasoning and public speaking skills, but also confidence, discipline, and teamwork.

Dr. Braun has also led Commack High School's Future Business Leaders of America chapter to new and impressive levels of success. With numerous finalists at both the state and national levels, she has cultivated a culture of ambition and achievement within the organization. Her mentorship empowers students to compete with distinction while developing leadership skills that will serve them long beyond high school.

What makes Dr. Braun especially remarkable is her leadership style. She is a quiet powerhouse, the steady engine that keeps programs thriving, yet she consistently deflects recognition away from herself. She prefers the spotlight to shine solely on her students and their accomplishments. Her humility, paired with her impact, speaks volumes about her character.

Beyond academics and extracurricular achievement, Dr. Braun builds lasting relationships rooted in trust and respect. She connects not only with students but also with families, establishing partnerships that strengthen the entire school community. Her integrity, compassion, and consistency make her a trusted figure and an invaluable asset.

Dr. Sandy Braun is the quintessential leader and educator. Any school district is fortunate to have her, and any initiative she undertakes is destined to flourish under her guidance. I recommend her without reservation and with complete confidence for the Outstanding Local Chapter Advisor of the Year Award.

Sincerely,

Toby Elmore - Director of Student Affairs, Business Education & Community Partnerships

