

THE 'SET SPOTLIGHT



March 2025



Letter from the
Superintendent



Spotlight on the
Arts



Celebrating Our
Successes



In the Zone:
Athletics



Inside the
Classroom



Community
Corner



Picture Perfect



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LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Manhasset School Community,

Welcome to our new quarterly e-newsletter, The 'Set Spotlight. In these editions, we look forward to showcasing a few of our student success stories, as well as highlighting some of the great work taking place in our classrooms daily. Of course, please make sure to visit [our website](#) and follow the district on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) for additional news and information.

As the Board of Education is in the process of developing the proposed budget for the 2025-26 school year, I would like to encourage your participation throughout the process. All presentations related to the proposal can be found on [our website](#), along with voter information. Please plan on participating in the vote on Tuesday, May 20. Additional information regarding the proposed budget will be sent to all residents in early May.

As always, I'd like to thank you for your continued participation in our district, and I look forward to seeing our students, parents and residents during the busy spring months ahead!

Sincerely,
Dr. Gaurav Passi
Superintendent of Schools



CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESSSES



CLASS OF 2025 VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN

Manhasset Public Schools is proud to announce Julie Mingxin Chen and Grace Punzalan as the valedictorian and salutatorian for the Manhasset High School Class of 2025. We are so proud of Julie and Grace and look forward to sharing this honor with them when they turn their tassels with fellow Class of 2025 graduates on June 27. [Read more](#) about Julie and Grace's accomplishments.



TWO SENIORS NAMED 2025 REGENERON SCIENCE SCHOLARS

Seniors Julian Sethna and Emily Zhao have been recognized as semifinalists in the 2025 Regeneron Science Talent Search, a program of Society for Science. They are among just 300 students to be named nationwide in this prestigious science and math competition.

Julian was selected for his project entitled "Cardiometabolic Health in Asian American Children." Emily was selected for her project entitled "Piezocatalysis with Optimized Turbulent Flow in Hydro Turbine for Eutrophication Remediation." [Read more](#) about their great accomplishment.



THE PHOENIX WINS REALM FIRST CLASS AWARD

Congratulations to the staff of The Phoenix, Manhasset Secondary School's student-run literary magazine, which has been recognized as a 2024 REALM First Class magazine by the National Council of Teachers of English. The magazine was also recently announced as the first-place winner in the American Scholastic Association literary magazine contest.

CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESSES, CONT.



ROBOTICS TEAM BRINGS TALENT AND TENACITY TO INAUGURAL COMPETITION

Congratulations to the high school's robotics team which recently competed in their first Vex Robotics competition, advancing to the quarterfinals.

The team of five students, under the direction of advisers Mr. Carr and Mr. Russo, consists of senior Colin Hairabedian and juniors Alex Demirdjan, Zach Eng, Matthew Liolis and Ramses Naraini.



VIRTUAL ENTERPRISE TEAM STRIKES GOLD

Congratulations to the Virtual Enterprise class which took home two awards at the New York State-Virtual Enterprise Regional Business Plan Competition and Trade Show. The Allergy Armour team won gold for Best Sales Pitch and silver for Best Trade Show Booth at the event. The District is proud to recognize these students for their energy, creativity and focus as they develop the skills, insight and acumen that will serve them well as future business leaders and entrepreneurs.



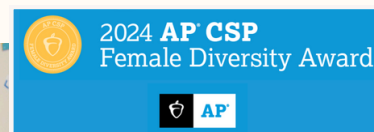
TWO MANHASSET TEACHERS ACHIEVE NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION

The District is proud to congratulate two teachers from Shelter Rock Elementary School who recently earned accreditation as National Board Certified Teachers from New York State United Teachers. Allyson Weiss Begley, a third grade teacher, and Ashley Arcuri-Iaquinto, an ENL teacher, were two of just 47 teachers recognized with this distinction. In all, 2,377 educators from across New York State have attained this advanced credential.

CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESSSES, CONT.

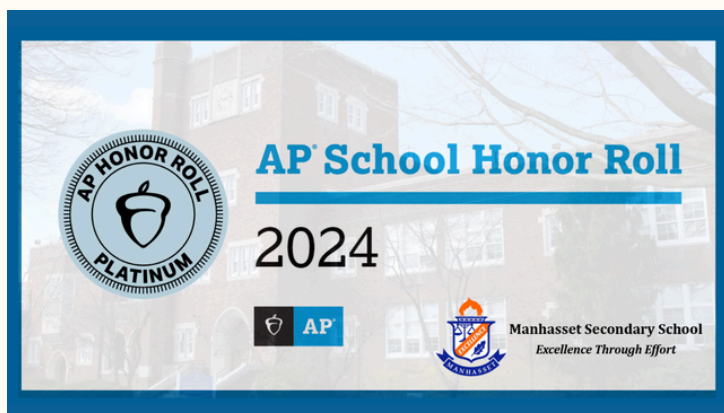
SECONDARY SCHOOL RECOGNIZED WITH AP COMPUTER SCIENCE PRINCIPLES FEMALE DIVERSITY AWARD

Manhasset Secondary School has earned the College Board AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award for achieving high female representation in AP Computer Science Principles (CSP). Schools honored with an AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award have expanded access to AP computer science courses for female students in their communities. Award contenders must either have reached 50% or higher female representation in one of the two AP computer science courses or have achieved a percentage of female computer science exam takers that meets or exceeds that of the school's female population. Manhasset Secondary School was one of only 847 recognized for improving female representation in AP CSP.



Manhasset Secondary School is proud to be leading the charge for gender equity in computer science education and experiential learning. Our educators are committed to providing young women with the tools necessary for them to be among our next generation of leaders and innovators in this exciting field.

SECONDARY SCHOOL EARNS AP HONOR ROLL RECOGNITION



Manhasset Secondary School has been named to the 2024 Advanced Placement Program (AP) School Honor Roll, earning platinum distinction, the highest honor a school can receive. This is the second consecutive year that Manhasset Secondary School has achieved this recognition.

The AP School Honor Roll recognizes schools that have done outstanding work to welcome more students into AP courses and support them on the path to college success. Twenty-nine Advanced Placement courses are offered annually at Manhasset Secondary School with over 620 students taking 1,791 exams during the 2023-2024 school year.

INSIDE THE CLASSROOM



DINO DIG AT SHELTER ROCK

Mrs. Shondelmeyer's kindergarten and first grade classes joined Mr. O'Brien in the Shelter Rock Science Lab to participate in a Dino Dig. During the first lab, the students learned how fossils are formed and created their own model of a fossil using clay and plaster of paris. When the students arrived for the second lab, the fossils were hidden in a tray of sand. They searched for their fossils using grid coordinates to keep track of what they found.

MASTERING MATH AT MUNSEY PARK

Fifth graders at Munsey Park worked independently and in small groups to find the volume of irregular shapes. The students built three-dimensional figures to reinforce their understanding in a hands-on way. They also discussed their strategies with one another, which solidified their understanding and exposed them to different problem-solving approaches.



STUDENTS TRAVEL TO ITALY, VIRTUALLY!

Students in Italian 5 at Manhasset High School had the unique opportunity to participate in virtual field trips with a live tour guide, where they explored the historic cities of Venice and Milan in real time. They were able to interact with the guide and ask questions in Italian, as well as have the guide stop and elaborate on any 'stops' along the way. In the coming weeks, the students will be 'embarking' on virtual trips to Florence, Rome, Pompeii and Siena.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE ARTS



Grades 5-7 Treble Honor Choir:

Winifred Concannon, soprano
Charlotte Cronin, soprano
Eliana Hakim, soprano

NINE STUDENTS SELECTED FOR ACDA ALL-NATIONAL HONOR CHOIR

Nine choral students from Manhasset Secondary School were recently selected to perform with the All-National Honor Choirs at the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) National Conference, which takes place in Dallas from March 19-22.

Grades 7-10 Tenor-Bass Honor Choir:

Jack Degnan, tenor
Ryan Fini, tenor

Grades 11-12 SATB Honor Choir:

Adriana Chan, alto
Colin Gibbs, baritone
Thomas Grygiel, bass
Isaias Mejia, tenor

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS DELIVER CONFIDENCE AND CHARISMA IN 'A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM'

Manhasset Middle School thespians brought magic and mayhem to the stage with their wildly funny and perfectly playful production of William Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," which ran for three performances at the school's intimate Black Box Theater from Feb. 7-9.

The district is proud to congratulate the entire Manhasset Middle School Theater Department on an outstanding production worthy of a standing ovation.



COMING SOON!

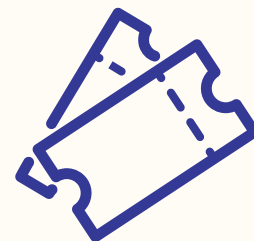
Don't miss the Manhasset High School Theater production of "The Outsiders."

When: Friday, March 21, and Saturday, March 22, at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 23, at 2 p.m.

Cost: Adult : \$15
Student : \$5

Where: On stage at the Munsey Park Auditorium!

Tickets on sale now at manhasset.booktix.com/dept/Theatre/e/Outsider



IN THE ZONE: ATHLETICS



BOYS CROSS-COUNTRY WIN STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

Manhasset Public Schools congratulates the Manhasset varsity boys cross country team who celebrated their historic state champion title with a spirit-filled championship parade on Dec. 7.



FENCING TEAMS ARE 2X CHAMPS

Congratulations to our girls and boys fencing teams for their repeat as Nassau County Conference II champions!

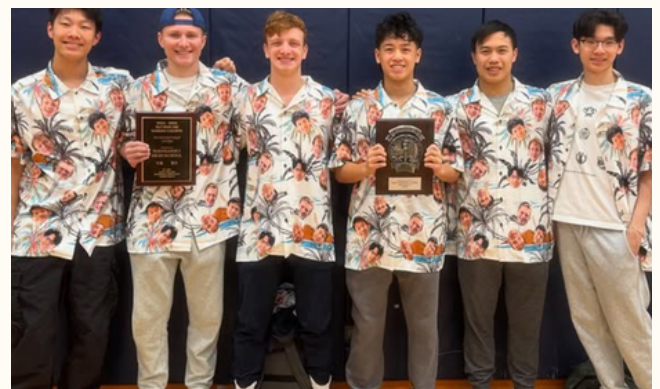


CROSS-COUNTRY RECORD BROKEN, AGAIN!

During the Ocean Breeze Elite Invitational 2025 meet, sophomore Nic Katsoulis from the varsity cross-country team shattered the 800-meter school record, set by John Hogan, running 1:54.85, which is currently USA No. 4 for sophomores. Nic is also the USA No. 2 sophomore at 1000 meters. His 800-meter time is the third fastest for a sophomore in New York State over the past 25 years!

SWIM TEAM SCORES SPORTSMANSHIP AWARD

Congratulations to the Manhasset boys swimming and diving team for finishing second place at the overall Nassau County Team Championships last weekend. The team was also awarded the Team Sportsmanship Award as selected by the Long Island Swimming Officials Association.



COMMUNITY CORNER



UNIFIED SPORTS CLUB POLAR PLUNGE TEAM RAISES OVER \$12,000 FOR SPECIAL OLYMPICS

On Feb. 8, the Manhasset Unified Sports Club participated in the Town of North Hempstead Polar Plunge, raising over \$12,000 for Special Olympics New York and earning first place in the "Cool School" Challenge. The district is proud to recognize all the participants who were "Freezin' for a Reason" and those who didn't take the icy plunge but showed up to express their support and contribute to this amazing cause.

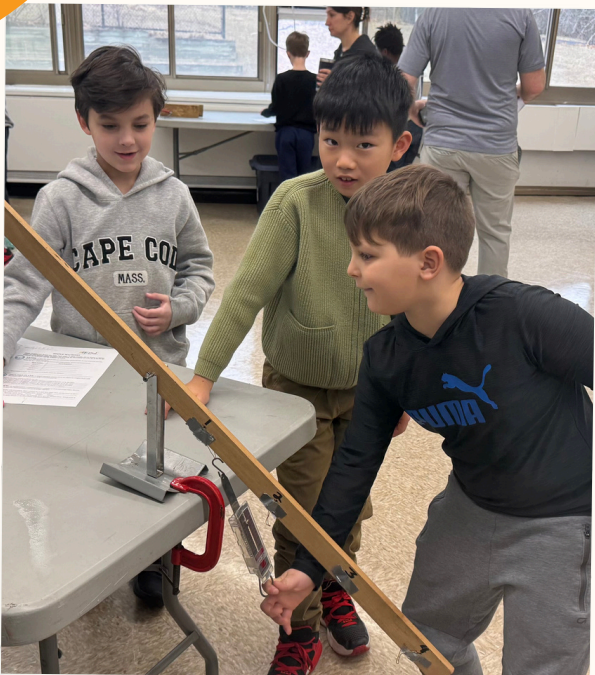
MUNSEY PARK STUDENTS COLLECT SPARE CHANGE TO HELP WILDFIRE VICTIMS

Inspired by the heartbreaking scenes of destruction they were seeing on the news from the California wildfires, students at Manhasset's Munsey Park Elementary School, in conjunction with the Manhasset SCA, held a spare change drive raising \$1,964 for the Los Angeles Unified School District Education Foundation Emergency Relief Fund.

The district is proud of the Munsey Park school community for stepping up and letting their kindness shine as they helped other students in need. Their empathy and generosity know no boundaries and is an inspiration to us all.



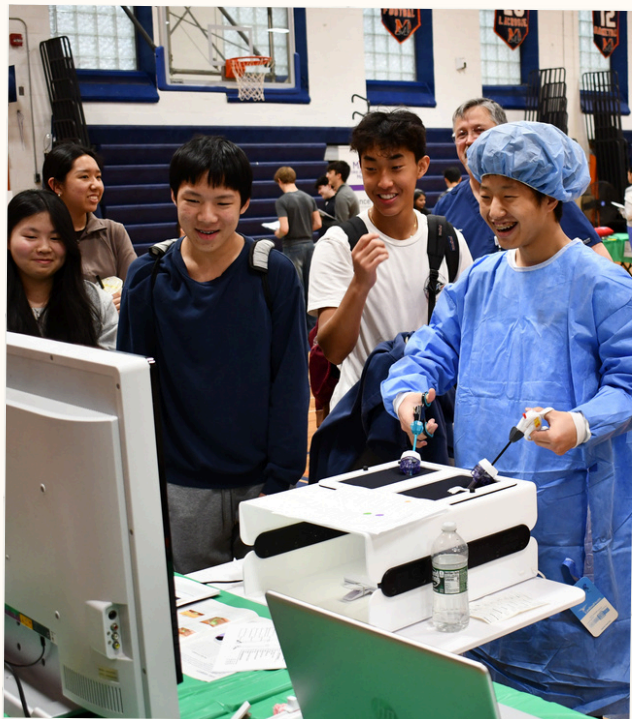
PICTURE PERFECT



The Science Museum of Long Island visited Munsey Park and Shelter Rock with the Simple Machines exhibit, giving students a hands-on physical science lesson.



Manhasset Secondary School Band and Orchestra performed at the Epcot International Festival of the Arts at Disney World.



Manhasset Secondary School students explored health care, law enforcement, military and engineering careers at the annual Career Fair on Feb. 28.



Elementary students enjoyed "Guess Who's Coming to Read" when visitors shared their love of reading in the classroom.