



District Highlights

From Bayonne to the Big Stage: The Division 1 Pipeline in Action

Bayonne High School is celebrating a groundbreaking achievement as seven female student-athletes prepare to compete at the Division 1 collegiate level. This historic moment not only highlights the exceptional talent within the school's athletic programs, but also marks a significant achievement — baseball, soccer, softball, and hockey—while maintaining outstanding academic records. Their accomplishments, both on and off the field, showcase their dedication, perseverance, and ability to compete at the highest level.

"This year, seven remarkable young women from Bayonne High School have not only left an indelible mark on our sports program, but they have also etched their names into the school's history books," said John J. Niesz, Superintendent of Schools. "To have a single graduating class send seven athletes to Division I programs, each on a full scholarship, is an unprecedented achievement. These young women have demonstrated exceptional dedication, talent, and perseverance, serving as shining examples of what is possible through hard work and commitment. They have not only excelled in their respective sports, but they have also elevated the entire Bayonne High School community. We are incredibly proud of their accomplishments and wish them the very best as they embark on their collegiate athletic careers. They have truly set a new standard of excellence for Bayonne athletics."



Top Row (left to right): Giselle Davis, McKenzie Neal; Middle Row (left to right) Sydney Fogu, Janaya Meyers, Caitlin Gaetani; Seated (left to right): Kennedy Cotter, Iliana Sanchez

Bayonne High School's Division 1 Commitments (continued)

Athletic Director Daniel George added, "The magnitude of collective achievements and the legacies these athletes are leaving behind are profound. This group of young women have redefined success at Bayonne High School. Their achievements on the field, court, pitch, and ice are only matched by their dedication to academics and leadership. They have set a precedent that will inspire future generations of student-athletes to strive for excellence here at the Hive."

Bayonne High School Principal Keith J. Makowski emphasized the leadership and character these athletes have demonstrated both on and off the field: "It is with great pride that we acknowledge the exceptional leadership and academic / athletic achievements of these young ladies. They have not only excelled in their studies but have also demonstrated a commitment to serving as role models and making a positive impact within Bayonne High School. Their dedication to excellence, both in the classroom and on the athletic fields, courts, pitch, and ice, sets a

standard for others to follow. Congratulations to Caitlin, Kennedi, Giselle, Sydney, Iliana, McKenzie, and Janaya, and all of our students who inspire us daily with their hard work, determination, and character.

Their success is not only a personal triumph but a historic moment for Bayonne, further establishing the school as a powerhouse for developing top-tier female athletes. The community eagerly anticipates watching them continue to shine on the national stage in their Division I careers."

As the season progresses, Giselle Davis, Janaya Meyers, McKenzie Neal, and the Bayonne High School girls' basketball team are on the path to securing another sectional title, adding to their already impressive legacy. The entire Bayonne community stands behind these remarkable athletes, wishing them the best in their future endeavors. No matter where their journeys take them, they will always be a part of the Fighting Bees family. **Once a Bee, always a Bee!**

Caitlin Gaetani – Manhattan College (Softball)

Academic Excellence

Caitlin has excelled in the classroom just as much as she has on the field. A 1st Honor Roll student, she is a member of the National Honor Society, National English Honor Society, and World Language Honor Society. She also won the Law Day Poem State competition.

Softball Achievements

- **2022:** HCIAL 1st Team All-County, Hudson County Player of the Week nominee, ranked 3rd in the state for RBIs.
- **2023:** HCIAL Player of the Year, Jersey Sports Zone Week 2 North Jersey Softball Game Ball recipient, Brian Piccolo Award, Hudson County Player of the Week, Most Valuable Player.
- **2024:** HCIAL Player & Pitcher of the Year, 1st Team All-State Group 4, 2nd Team All-State, Hudson County Player of the Week, Most Valuable Player, nominated as a Top 30 Pitcher in the state, ranked #1 in the state for home runs.

Soccer Achievements

- **2023:** Defensive Hudson County Player of the Week, All-County Goalkeeper, BFF Defender Award.
- **2024:** Defensive Hudson County Player of the Week, All-County Goalkeeper.

Bayonne High School's Division 1 Commitments (continued)

Kennedi Cotter – Rutgers University (Soccer)

- HICIAL 1st Team All-Conference and HICIAL Player of the Year as a freshman with 18 goals and 9 assists.
- NWSL Preseason Invite with Racing Louisville FC.
- Trained with NWSL 1st team and attended preseason with a USL Super League 1st team in 2023 and 2024.
- Received a pro contract offer in March 2024 to play in the USL Super League but chose to retain college eligibility.
- Played semi-pro in the USL W League, finishing top 15 in points (8 goals, 4 assists).

Giselle Davis – Bryant University (Basketball)

- 1st Team All-County.
- National Woman in Sports Award honoree.
- Scored over 1,000 career points.

Sydney Fogu—Boston University (Hockey)

Sydney has left an undeniable mark on New Jersey hockey history, setting the **state record for most career saves** and becoming the **first goalie ever to surpass 3,000 saves**. A dominant force in net and an exceptional student, she has been a **four-year team captain** and a consistent honor roll recipient. Her journey to **Boston University** is the culmination of years of hard work, leadership, and elite-level performance.

Career Achievements:

- Set the NJ state record for most career saves
- Surpassed 1,000 saves as a sophomore, 2,000 as a junior, and 3,000 as a senior (first goalie ever)
- Named 1st Team McMullen Division for three consecutive years
- National Honor Society inductee
- Invited to the USA National Team Camp (Senior year)
- Invited to Team USA National Under-18 Training Camp (Junior year)

Freshman Year:

McMullen Division 1st Team

3x Principal's Honor Roll

1x 1st Honor Roll

Sophomore Year:

McMullen Division 1st Team

Surpassed 1,000 career saves

Team MVP

Team Captain

4x 1st Honor Roll

Junior Year:

McMullen Division 1st Team

Surpassed 2,000 career saves

Team MVP

Team Captain

4x 1st Honor Roll

National Honor Society inductee

Invited to Team USA National under-18 Training Camp

Senior Year:

McMullen Division MVP

Surpassed 3,000 career saves

All-time NJ record for most saves by a goalie

Team Captain

2x 1st Honor Roll

National Honor Society inductee

Invited to USA National Team Camp

Bayonne High School's Division 1 Commitments (continued)

Iliana Sanchez—Houston Christian University (Soccer)

- 3rd Team All-State.
- Comeback Player of the Year.
- All-HCIA American Division Player of the Year.
- Ranked #8 in top 10 leading scorers in 2022.
- Ranked #3 in top 10 most assists in 2022.
- Awarded Sophomore Sensation of the Year.

McKenzie Neal—Austin Peay State University (Basketball)

- 2022-2023: Group 4 State Champion, 1st Team All-County, 2nd Team All-State.
- 2023-2024: Hudson County Player of the Year.
- Scored over 1,000 career points.

Janaya Meyers—North Carolina Agriculture & Technical State University (Basketball)

- Scored over 1,000 career points.
 - Hudson County Player of the Year.
 - 3x Hudson County 1st Team.
 - 3x Hudson County Champion.
 - Group 4 First Team.
 - 2022-2023: State Champion.
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Statements from the Head Varsity Coaches:

"Sydney Fogu is a remarkable young woman who exemplifies all the qualities we want our student athletes to demonstrate with her relentless work ethic not only on the ice but off the ice with that same commitment to her academics. Sydney's passion for Bayonne High School and the Bayonne Hockey program has paved a path for future players to emulate. Her outstanding achievements along with her connection in the community has made her a great ambassador of the sport and for future ladies to follow in her footsteps. Congratulations Sydney, your impact over the last four years will be forever lasting at the hive."

Nicholas Brancatella, Varsity Head Hockey Coach of Bayonne High School

"Over the past three years, Janaya Meyers, McKenzie Neal, and Giselle Davis have epitomized excellence both in the classroom and on the basketball court. Their unwavering commitment and passion have not only rewritten Bayonne High School's record books but have also set new standards for future athletes."

James Turner, Varsity Head Girls Basketball Coach

Statements from the Head Varsity Coaches: (continued)

"Congratulations to Caitlin, Giselle, Iliana, Janaya, Kennedy, McKenzie, and Sydney on their achievement to further their academic and athletic careers at a Division I level. Caitlin, you have been nothing short of a stellar student athlete both in our Softball Program and in the classroom. Your leadership, dedication, determination, and hard work are testaments to all of the achievements you have accomplished in just three years in our program. As your senior season is upon us, your leadership will help lead our program to another successful season. We look forward to watching you grow even more in your last season and are excited to see what you accomplish in your collegiate years. Good luck to you, Giselle, Iliana, Janaya, Kennedy, McKenzie, and Sydney as you all take this leap into your careers. All of your leadership and accomplishments are paving the way for our young athletes to follow in your footsteps. Continue to make us proud, and remember, you will always be a Lady Bee!"

Samantha Maggio, Varsity Head Softball Coach

"Kennedi is a once in a lifetime generational talent. She was Hudson County Player of the Year as a freshman, and a competitor at some of the highest circuits that soccer has to offer. I wish her all the best of luck as she now takes her talent to one of the premier soccer conferences in the country. Moreover, this was my final year coaching Caitlin and Iliana in soccer and knew that this was our year! First Caitlin sacrificed time with her number one sport softball where she is going to play D1 at Manhattan in order to help this team reach its goal for Lady Bees soccer. This hasn't been reached in over fifteen years and she assisted our Bees in finally beating Kearny in the county finals! She is an all around athlete and an even better teammate and we were lucky to have her in net for the past three years. Iliana has been a captain for this team since I arrived in 2022. I knew she was a key piece to this team and three years later she showed her leadership and poise which led to her becoming Player of the Year for HCLAL. She, as well, played a big part in history for the Lady Bees Soccer. Houston Christian University is lucky to have Iliana and I am sure she will shine there just as much as she shined in Bayonne!"

Victor Pesantez, Varsity Head Girls Soccer Coach

Horace Mann's Psychomotor G&T Students Prepare for Showcase

The psychomotor gifted & talented students at Horace Mann Community School have been actively participating in the Sports in Education program, led by Prime Athletics. Throughout the program, they have worked diligently to enhance their speed, agility, and stamina.

Under the guidance of skilled instructors, students have engaged in a variety of drills and activities designed to promote physical growth and athletic skills. Their hard work will be highlighted during the end-of-program showcase, which will take place at County Prep High School in Jersey City. There, they will join students from other Hudson County schools to demonstrate their progress and development.



The showcase will be a celebration of the students' dedication, perseverance, and physical achievements.



Bayonne Police Department Introduces LEAD Program to Vroom

The Bayonne Police Department in partnership with the Bayonne Board of Education is launching the LEAD (Law Enforcement Against Drugs) program in elementary schools across the city. This eight-session, evidence-based curriculum is designed to equip fifth-grade students with essential knowledge and skills in decision-making, substance abuse prevention, and anti-bullying strategies.

Led by officers from the Bayonne Community Oriented Policing Unit, the LEAD program provides students with the tools they need to make positive life choices. In addition to the classroom lessons, families will also receive resources and support to continue the conversation at home.

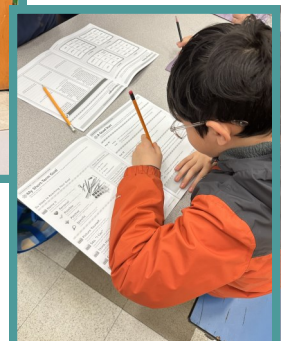
Thanks to the generous support of the Mendez Foundation, all student books and materials have been fully sponsored, ensuring that every student can participate in this impactful program.

LEAD's mission is to foster strong partnerships between law enforcement, educators, community leaders, and families to prevent youth substance abuse and create safer, healthier communities. The program's vision includes educating 1.5 million students nationwide and strengthening relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

"The children and school community have been important to the Bayonne Police Department since my inception as a police officer, and I now have the unique ability to continue this tradition under the LEAD program," said Lt. Fabbriatore. He emphasized the critical importance of educating children on drug awareness and sound decision-making to set them up for future success.

Since its establishment in 1991, the Bayonne Police Department's Community Oriented Policing Unit has developed programs that foster meaningful partnerships between law enforcement and the community. The LEAD program is the latest initiative to reflect this ongoing commitment.

P.G. Vroom School is excited to be a part of this important program and look forward to continuing their strong partnership with the Bayonne Police Department while helping students grow into thoughtful, responsible, and empowered individuals.



Pictured are students from Philip G. Vroom Community School who participated in Lesson 1 of the LEAD program on 4/4/2025 with P.O. Hermosisima ("Big Herm") and P.O. Cruz

John M. Bailey Community School takes on Poster Power: 8th Graders Get Creative with NJSLA Multiple Choice Tips!

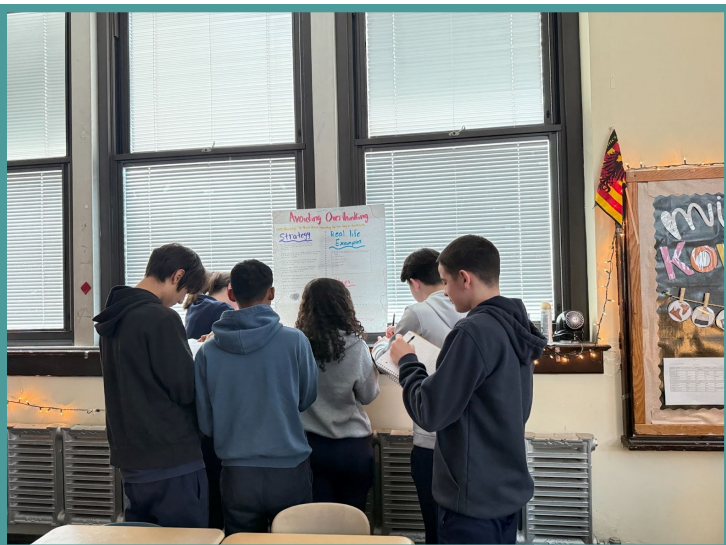


Mrs. Constantine's eighth grade students, at John M. Bailey Community School, are taking an innovative approach in preparing for the fast approaching New Jersey Student Learning Assessment. Students are working in groups to research and design posters dedicated to multiple-choice test taking strategies.

For this project, each group is assigned a different strategy and tasked with creating a visually engaging and informative poster that explains how the specific technique can help with tackling tricky multiple choice questions. The methods included are: Elimination Method, First Answer Strategy, Identifying Key Words in the Question, Educated Guessing, Time Management Strategy, and Avoiding Overthinking. The posters incorporate various teachable items such as, definitions, real-life examples, step-by-step instructions, visuals, and the benefits of each strategy.



Once the posters are completed, students will partake in a gallery walk, taking notes from their peers' work. The students will provide knowledge to one another while promoting success in NJSLA—the idea is, students sometimes learn more from one another. The goal of this project is to gain valuable knowledge on the variety of approaches to staying calm, managing time, and improving accuracy when approaching multiple choice questions. This collaborative process encourages student-led lessons, and makes a practical way of preparing for NJSLA fun!



BHS Honors Women's History Month

Women's History Month at Bayonne High School was not only a time to reflect on the past—it was a celebration of present-day voices and a call to action for the future. Under the guidance of history teacher and Women's Empowerment Club advisor Mrs. Jennifer Thomas, students in her U.S. II, Women's U.S. History & Politics, and Women's History: A Global Perspective classes, engaged in a month-long series of events and initiatives designed to educate, inspire, and uplift.

Guest Speaker Series Brings Real Stories to Life

Throughout March, the Women's History Month Guest Speaker Series welcomed a lineup of dynamic and diverse women who brought their lived experiences into the classroom. Students had the rare opportunity to hear first-hand accounts of resilience, identity, and professional journeys. The series aimed to expose students to the real-world challenges and triumphs of women from different backgrounds and industries.

- **March 7 – Stephanie Lopez:** A proud Latina, LGBTQ+ advocate, and woman living with a disability, Stephanie works in higher education and spoke powerfully about inclusivity, overcoming barriers, and advocating for marginalized communities. She shared tools of her trade, accessibility devices, and personal anecdotes that deeply resonated with students.

- **March 12 – Dana Stephens:** Dana, a Black woman working in the field of social work with elderly populations, shared insights on the importance of compassion and cultural competence in caregiving. She discussed systemic challenges in healthcare and how empathy can be a transformative tool.

- **March 26 – Stephanie Zaldivar:** A Latina woman working in a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), Stephanie gave students a glimpse into the emotional and technical complexities of working with newborns. She brought in equipment and shared stories of both heartbreaking and heartwarming moments from the NICU.

- **March 31 – Staff Sergeant Maya McNair:** As a Black woman in the U.S. Air Force, Staff Sergeant McNair spoke about leadership, discipline, and what it means to serve. She emphasized perseverance, shared her experiences navigating a male-dominated field, and answered thoughtful student questions about gender and equity in the military.

After each presentation, students participated in open Q&A sessions and hands-on activities with materials brought in by each speaker—transforming the traditional classroom experience into a space of meaningful dialogue and discovery.



BHS Honors Women's History Month *(continued)*

Learning Beyond the Classroom: A Journey to Caldwell University



The Women's Empowerment Club also organized an educational field trip to Caldwell University, where students attended a workshop led by Dr. Marie Mullaney, Professor of History. Dr. Mullaney's workshop explored the contributions of unsung heroines in the women's suffrage movement, particularly women of color, working-class women, and activists whose names are often left out of traditional textbooks.

Students left with a renewed understanding of how intersectionality plays a critical role in historical movements and were inspired to continue researching the stories of women who've paved the way.

Spirit Week Sparks School Wide Involvement

To build school spirit and celebrate women's contributions to culture and identity, the Women's Empowerment Club hosted Women's History Month Spirit Week, turning the school into a vibrant space of expression, creativity, and empowerment.

- **Makeup Monday** encouraged self-expression through bold and artistic makeup looks.
- **Twin-A-Teacher Tuesday** promoted community building, with students and staff pairing up to match outfits.
- **On Wednesdays We Wear Pink** was a nod to feminine solidarity and the iconic pop culture reference.
- **Throwback Thursday** celebrated fashion from previous decades and women who defined style through the ages.
- **Fashion Friday** gave students a runway moment to showcase their unique style while honoring global women's fashion traditions.



Participation across grade levels was high, and the week concluded with a group photo and celebration to recognize the club's efforts in uniting the school.

Philanthropy and Empowerment in Action

Looking beyond the month of March, the Women's Empowerment Club is continuing its mission of service and community care. In April, the club launched a Donation Drive for Moms in Need, collecting essential items such as diapers, baby wipes, formula, and hygiene products for local women's shelters. This hands-on initiative not only supports mothers in crisis but also teaches students the importance of civic responsibility and compassion.



Additionally, the club is organizing a Pre-Prom Raffle Giveaway, offering lucky winners access to professional nail, hair, or makeup services—perfect for those preparing for prom or simply wanting to feel their best. This initiative aims to boost student confidence, provide equity in access to self-care, and celebrate the joy of getting “dolled up” in a way that's fun and inclusive.

A Lasting Legacy

Through meaningful programming, student-led initiatives, and a deep commitment to inclusion and empowerment, Bayonne High School, and Mrs. Thomas' students have demonstrated that Women's History Month is more than a moment—it's a mindset. These events and efforts reflect the heart of the district's mission: to foster awareness, celebrate diversity, and empower every student to be a changemaker in their community.

The students involved in the Women's Empowerment Club, and all those who attended these events, have shown remarkable passion and dedication. With the continued support of faculty, administration, and the broader school community, the legacy of Women's History Month will continue to thrive at Bayonne High School long after March has ended.



Henry E. Harris throws Kindness around like it's Confetti!



Throughout the month of February, Henry Harris Community School embraced the spirit of kindness, celebrating acts of compassion, generosity, and unity. Kindness Month encourages students and staff to foster a positive school culture, reinforcing the importance of small gestures that make a big difference. Students, teachers, and staff came together to participate in a variety of kindness-driven initiatives.

On Thursday, February 13th one of the new kindness-driven initiatives was Big Hawk, Little Hawk. Big Hawk, Little Hawk is a group of 8th graders who participate in peer mediation and student counsel. The eighth graders were asked to read a story about a kindness monster to the first graders. The motive behind the story is for everyone to be kind to each other, no matter how small that act of kindness might be. After reading the story, the first graders and eighth graders each got their own kindness monster to decorate and color. "Watching 8th graders and 1st graders come together to explore the meaning of kindness is a reminder that compassion knows no age". "When young minds learn from each other, they create a ripple effect of empathy that lasts a lifetime." says Susan Armstrong, Grade 1 HEH teacher. As we continue to spread kindness throughout the year, we invite our kindergarten classes to participate in 'How to Catch a Leprechaun' initiative in March!



Bayonne High School All State Guitarists

High school guitarists from all over the state of New Jersey recently auditioned for the 2025 NJMEA All State Guitar Ensemble. BHS classical guitarists William Castro Roman, Naairah Scott, and Hector Zea Kislinger were among 18 students chosen to participate in this year's ensemble. All three students spent weeks preparing for the rigorous audition which included numerous scales, an extremely challenging solo piece, and an ensemble excerpt.

William and Naairah are both seniors who are currently in their fourth year with the BHS guitar program, and Hector is a junior in his third year with the program. This will be William's second year performing with the NJMEA All State Ensemble. He was also selected to perform with the professional New Jersey Guitar Orchestra in 2024.

William, Naairah, and Hector will perform with the NJMEA All State Guitar Ensemble throughout the spring at numerous guitar festivals in NJ & NY. Mr. Downes is extremely proud of their passion, hard work, and dedication to the BHS guitar program!



Naairah Scott, William Castro Roman, Hector Zea Kislinger

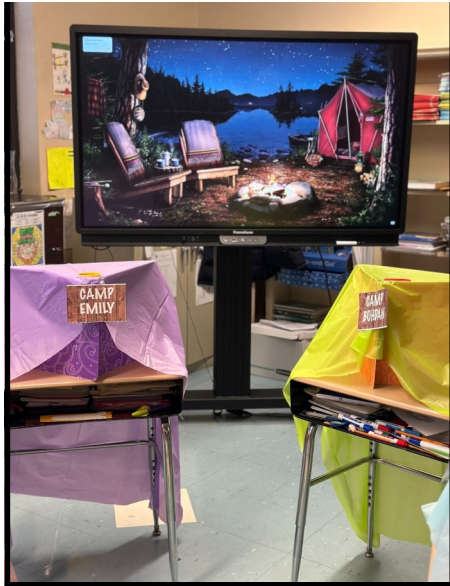
Follow us on Instagram at @BHSGuitar.

Blooming Girls—Oresko's 3rd Grade Friendship Group

During lunchtime, a special group of third-grade girls gathers for Blooming Girls, a program led by school counselor, Ms. Coppola, and dedicated to nurturing healthy friendships and a positive peer culture. Guided by themes such as inclusion, communication, conflict resolution, and self-worth, students engage in "Lunchtime Chats" to discuss important life skills. These discussions are followed by interactive activities, like games and role-playing, allowing students to practice what they learn in real-time. Each session ends with a moment of reflection, where participants think about how they can continue to grow as individuals and be better friends to one another. Blooming Girls creates a safe space where young girls can develop confidence, empathy, and the social tools needed to thrive.



Camp Read-A-Lot @ Washington Community School



Mrs. Mercun's second grade class celebrated Read Across America week with Camp Read-A-Lot. Mrs. Mercun transformed her classroom into a simulated campsite that included "desk tents," camping themed décor and, of course, lots of books! Students enjoyed fun learning activities while celebrating their love of reading. "Camp Read-A-Lot was the perfect way to celebrate Read Across American Week. Students deserve real-world experiences that allow them to connect and gain exposure to new language and ideas, in a way that is engaging and exciting.



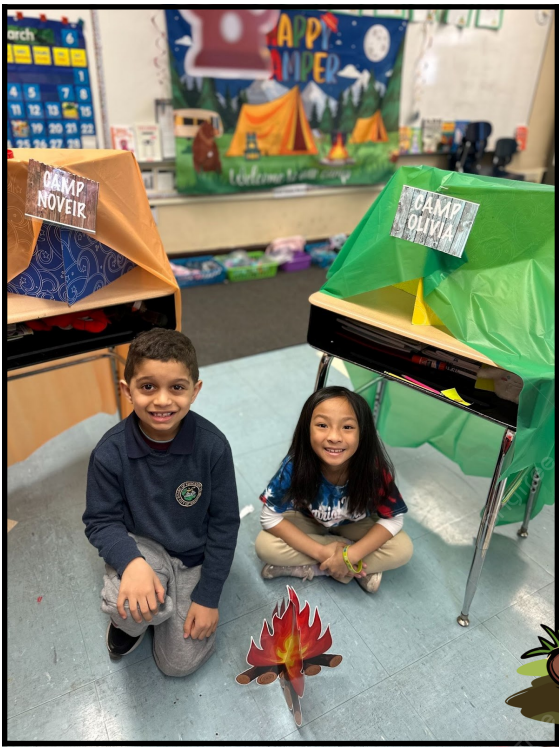
Early Childhood is the foundation of a life-long love of knowledge and exploration, and I hope these memories, and their curiosity about the world, last a lifetime," said Mrs. Mercun when asked about her creative idea to encourage students' enthusiasm about reading.

Students expressed their excitement when asked about the experience. Some of their responses included, "I couldn't believe it when I walked in. It felt like a real campsite." "I loved walking in and being surprised with all of the camping decorations. Going in my own tent was the best." "My favorite part was being with my friends and feeling like we were in a real tent. I loved taking my tent home!" "The smores kit was so fun to take home!" "My favorite part was every-thing."

Celebrating reading is a best practice that the Bayonne Public School District has always promoted. The faculty at Washington Community School intends to continue to simulate real world activities, providing students with opportunities for experiential learning through reading and imagination.



Camp Read-A-Lot @ Washington Community School pg. 2



Horace Mann's Girls Basketball Team is Undefeated



For the third consecutive year, the Horace Mann girls basketball team has consistently performed at a high level, prevailing over the competition and finishing undefeated once again. Their remarkable achievement reached its peak in January when they clinched the city championship title, displaying both skill and heart on the court.

This group of young athletes has set the bar high for sportsmanship and excellence in youth basketball. From day one, they have displayed a work ethic that extends well beyond the basketball court. Their commitment to practicing, improving their skills, and supporting one another has fostered a culture of teamwork and camaraderie that is clearly evident in their game. The team's success is not just about scoring points or making impressive plays. It's about how they approach the game with respect for their opponents, showing good sportsmanship and always playing with integrity. Off the court, their success is no surprise to those who know them best. Their dedication to academics, respect for coaches and their teachers, and positive influence on their peers make them role models in the community.

The undefeated streak, spanning three years, is a rare accomplishment that showcases the dedication and effort that these girls have poured into the game. They are an inspiration to future young female athletes in the city of Bayonne.

Go Tigers!



Woodrow Wilson School Shines a Spotlight on the Spectrum

Every April, schools throughout New Jersey participate in schoolwide and community activities to commemorate Autism Acceptance Month. In support and recognition of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), the New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) Office of Special Education (OSE) promotes acceptance and awareness of ASD during April as an opportunity for educators, students, and parents to celebrate students on the spectrum. The OSE has curated over 270 original artworks from students from over 50 districts across New Jersey with autism and their allies for the 2nd annual autism acceptance virtual art expo. This year's theme, "Spotlight the Spectrum," highlights and celebrates our students across the State.



Woodrow Wilson School, in collaboration with the Art Department, submitted a class picture that is featured in the Expo! Pictured below is Mrs. Becker's Class - Puzzle Piece to Butterfly. The Art Expo, "Spotlight on the Spectrum" can be viewed at: <https://www.artsteps.com/>



A Culture of Growth and Empowerment at Oresko School

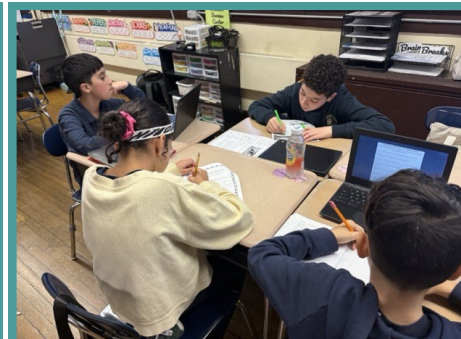
Whether it's learning to be a better friend, spreading positivity throughout the school, or stepping into leadership as young men and women with purpose, students at Nicholas Oresko Community School are empowered to lead lives of character and impact. These mentoring and leadership clubs are more than just extracurriculars—they are launching pads for future leaders, change-makers, and community builders. At Nicholas Oresko Community School, the message is clear: every student has value, every voice matters, and every child can rise.



W.I.N. Period is a "WIN" at Lincoln Community School!

W.I.N. period is a new initiative this school year in Bayonne, designed to allow a designated period of time for intervention services. W.I.N. stands for "What I Need." At Lincoln Community School, 6th Grade Language Arts teacher Katie Ryan came up with a way for students to get "what they need" while still having a choice as to what they work on.

At the beginning of each W.I.N. period, students open up the Padlet application on their Chromebooks. Students are grouped based on their iReady scores and common areas of need. Groups are color coded, which allows for students to see what their options are on the W.I.N. padlet.



While iReady MyPath or assigned lessons are a choice for any group, there are specific options based on student need. Gifted and Talented students have a set of activities that require critical thinking skills and get them ready for various gifted activities, such as "Battle of the Books." There are AI graded writing sites, where students can answer a prompt and get live feedback as they type. Other options include CommonLit articles with questions, Document Based Questions on DBQ Online, and books on Epic! Students are encouraged to choose a different activity each week.

Each W.I.N. period, a small group of students is given the opportunity to meet with Ms. Ryan and work on a specific skill. Recently, students have been working on prefixes and suffixes to enhance understanding of tricky vocabulary words.

What do the students think about this period that has been added to reinforce skills? Sophia G., from Ms. Ryan's homeroom class, remarks, "W.I.N. period has given me time to work on skills that I am having trouble with and also gives me time for test preparation."



One of the challenges has been to figure out how one teacher keeps track of all that is going on during W.I.N. In this 6th grade class, students spend the last five minutes of the period filling out a Google Document for accountability. Students write about what they chose to do during the period and evaluate their focus and use of time.

W.I.N. period has been a success and students look forward to the time they get to review skills. Angela M. says that her favorite day of the week is Tuesday and she waits "all week for W.I.N. period."

Time Machine at Dr. Walter F. Robinson Community School

Dr. Walter F. Robinson Community School Grade 7 & 8 students in Mrs. Fanous' and Mrs. Adamyan's classes are delighted to share the success of their innovative Time Machine Project, where students combined Math and Science skills to bring imagination to life! Their ability to embrace creativity, collaboration, and hands-on learning throughout the mathematical and scientific journey made the project significant! Mohamed, Gr. 7, indicated, "This project showed me that science and math work together. I now understand how to use formulas and measurements to solve real-world problems."

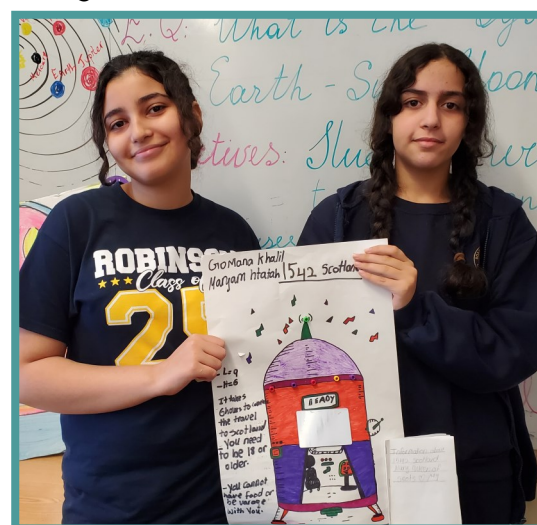
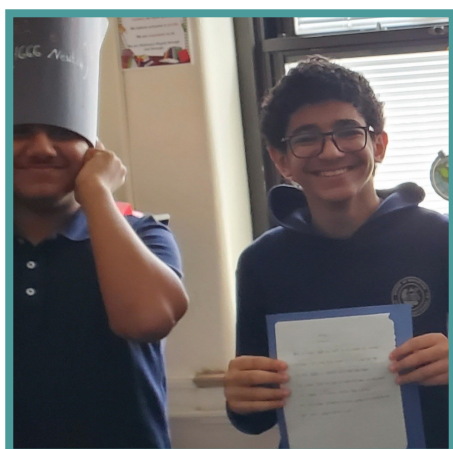
The lesson began with an exploration of time travel as portrayed in science fiction, followed by a scientific discussion on Earth's history, technological changes, and future possibilities. Students were challenged to choose a historical or future era, calculate the time distance, and visually represent scientific and technological progress over time. Integrating their English, Math, and Science skills in a meaningful, interdisciplinary way, students have collaborated in small teams, measured dimensions, drafted blueprints, and taken a fantastic and breathtaking journey through the calculation of length, width, and height as if they were real engineers and scientists.

Following step-by-step guidance, students embraced the challenge and exceeded expectations. They explored the speed of light, time calculations, and scientific theories, making the learning experience both engaging and intellectually stimulating.

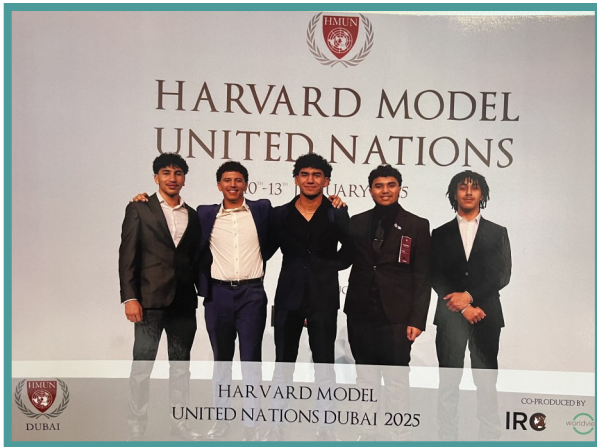
As part of the project, students expressed a desire to travel back in time to meet historical figures such as Leonardo da Vinci and uncover the mystery behind the Mona Lisa, visit the era of Mary, Queen of Scots, witness Newton's discoveries, or even warn Hedy Lamarr about the impact of the WiFi technology. "Visiting Newton's era was like witnessing the birth of modern science; I could almost feel the excitement as he discovered the laws of gravity." Patric, gr.8

Others envisioned journeys to the future, imagining flying cars, space cities, and underwater civilizations. The final step was to combine all collected information taken as notes to design the stunning "Time Machines."

The entire process made them revise their previous knowledge and learn a lot about scientific discoveries of the past. Mrs. Fanous' and Mrs. Adamyan's goal was to spark a genuine interest in exploring complex topics, and the Time Machine Project proved to be an excellent choice. It strengthened their academic, social, and emotional learning (SEL) skills, such as self-awareness, teamwork, decision-making, and respect for diverse perspectives, and sparked excitement and curiosity about the world around them—and beyond. "Through this project, I learned about the speed of light, time calculations, and how different scientific theories connect with math." Laith, gr.8



Model U.N. Delegates Travel to Dubai!



Bayonne High School's MUN delegation, led by BHS Social Studies Teacher Ms. Colleen Rushnak, embarked on an unforgettable journey to Dubai for the Harvard Model United Nations (HMUN) conference, where they engaged in rigorous debates, collaborated with peers from around the world, and tackled pressing global issues. Throughout the conference, students not only honed their public speaking and diplomacy skills but also built lasting relationships with fellow delegates from diverse backgrounds. Engaging in committee sessions and informal discussions, they exchanged ideas, shared cultural perspectives, and gained a deeper appreciation for international cooperation and global problem-solving.

Beyond the conference, the delegation immersed themselves in the rich culture and history of the United Arab Emirates. A highlight of their journey was a visit to Abu Dhabi, where they explored the breathtaking Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, marveling at its intricate architecture and serene beauty. A visit to the Burj Khalifa offered an awe-inspiring experience as standing atop the world's tallest building provided breathtaking views of Dubai. The students also navigated the bustling souks of Old Dubai, experiencing firsthand the vibrant marketplace atmosphere while engaging with local merchants. A city tour introduced them to Dubai's iconic skyline, showcasing the blend of modern innovation and traditional heritage that defines the city. The adventure continued with a thrilling desert safari, where students rode across the dunes in 4x4 vehicles, experienced an authentic Bedouin camp, and enjoyed cultural performances under the starry sky. From camel rides to henna art, the evening provided a glimpse into the UAE's desert traditions.



This transformative experience was made possible through the generosity of benefactors and contributions from organizations that believed in the potential of our students. Their support allowed the delegation to not only participate in a world-class academic conference but also to immerse themselves in a global cultural exchange that broadened their perspectives and strengthened their leadership skills. The students of Bayonne High School are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to represent their school & community on an international stage, and they return home inspired to continue making an impact in the world.

Horace Mann School holds Season 2 of The Masked Reader

Horace Mann Community School's Early Childhood Committee hosted its 2nd Season of The Masked Reader to celebrate Read Across America Week. Mr. Charles Costello (Principal), Mike Penn (PE Teacher), Phoebe Durak (Technology Teacher), and Sue Bizukiewicz (Lunch Supervisor) dressed up as a dog, duck, unicorn, and parrot to read Dr. Seuss books on video.

Throughout the week, students in Pre-K through 2nd grade watched the videos of these "Masked Readers" and voted each day on who they thought the readers were.



**SCAN THE
QR CODE
TO WATCH
THE RECAP
AND
REVEAL!**



At the end of the week on Friday, the Multi-Purpose Room was transformed into a live TV show. A recap video was shown, and one by one, the "Masked Readers" took the stage. The students eagerly shouted, "Take it off!" as each reader was unmasked, revealing their identities. The room erupted with cheers as each one was unveiled, making for an exciting and engaging moment.

The Masked Reader event was a great success, offering students a fun and interactive way to engage with the joy of reading.



Hudson County Arts Program Spotlight

Creative Collaboration: Bayonne's Second Graders Explore the Magic of Puppetry and Storytelling

Our second-grade students embarked on an exciting artistic journey in collaboration with Ms. Sam as part of the Hudson County Arts Program. The students honed their creativity through the art of puppet-making and storytelling, combining visual arts with public speaking skills to produce a unique learning experience.



Crafting Puppets, Crafting Stories with A Special Performance

Students created their own paper puppets, each representing a character from one of the stories they learned. Under Ms. Sam's guidance, the children mastered the delicate art of storytelling by weaving narratives around their puppet creations. They immersed themselves in 2 to 3 different stories, each with its own set of characters, emotions, and lessons. As they brought their puppets to life, they also deepened their understanding of narrative structure, character development, and the importance of creativity in self-expression.

At the end of this creative process, second-grade students will have had the opportunity to showcase their puppets and present their stories to their lower-grade peers. This performance not only gave students the chance to practice their storytelling skills but also built confidence in public speaking. Students were tasked with clearly presenting their stories, engaging their young audience, and demonstrating the power of art to communicate ideas and emotions.



Stay tuned for more updates as our students continue to grow, create, and shine through the Hudson County Arts Program!

Lincoln Community School Students win Silver Medal for STEM

Matthew Agtarap and Izyan Khan, both Grade 8 students at Lincoln Community School were awarded a Silver Medal in the Junior Division at the prestigious RWJ/Barnabas Health Hudson County STEM Showcase. Their project, “Designing an Internet Based Remote Diabetic Foot Wound Monitoring and Treatment System” captured the attention of the judges with its link to biomedical engineering and its real world application.

The medal winning project demonstrated a deep understanding of scientific principles and a remarkable ability to apply them to solve a relevant problem. Matthew and Izyan meticulously documented their research, presented their findings, and skillfully defended their conclusions to a panel of judges at the STEM Showcase which took place at the Liberty Science Center in Jersey City, New Jersey.

The students’ success is a testament to their Science Teacher and research mentor, Michael Buncek. Mr. Buncek spent countless hours assisting Matthew and Izyan after school in the district sponsored Project Innovate STEM Club. He assisted them with their project idea, project design, research paper, and presentation board. Mr. Buncek states, “ I am incredibly proud of my 8th grade students Izyan and Matthew for winning Silver in the Junior Division of the Hudson County STEM Showcase. Their hard work, dedication, and passion for STEM have truly paid off. I know they have bright futures ahead.”

Elementary students in the district look up to Matthew and Izyan. They are role models for our early learners. Mrs. Degnan, Director of Science states, “Matthew and Izyan are creative, innovative, and enjoy participating in STEM Based competitions. It was a pleasure listening to them present their project at the district Project Innovate STEM Competition and the Hudson County STEM Showcase. The way they incorporated scientific concepts, computer science, and engineering into their design is truly remarkable.”



Pictured:
Michael Buncek, Science Teacher
with Izyan & Matthew.

Matthew & Izyan presenting their project
at the Hudson County STEM Showcase.



Week of the Young Child at William Shemin Midtown Community

“Why fit in when you were born to stand out?”~ Dr. Seuss

William Shemin Midtown Community School’s annual “Week of the Young Child” celebration encourages the youngest students to stand out in a very special way! Through carefully curated theme days, and extraordinary dedication from early childhood teachers, the bear cubs enjoyed a week of fun and learning! The Week of the Young Child is a national initiative to raise awareness about the importance of early childhood education and care.

The week of activities included Favorite Book day, Super Hero Day, Disney Day, Game Day, and Show and Tell Day. Each day encouraged students to cultivate a love of reading, be their own Super Hero, use their imagination, and have fun! Each and every day was full of smiles and laughter. None of these wonderful events would be possible without the unwavering dedication of early childhood educators and their collaborative efforts. They all are truly giving their students a strong foundation for a lifetime of learning.

Principal James Pondillo states, “I am extremely proud of all of our students and teachers this week. Their commitment to success is evident in not only our Week of the Young child festivities, but every single day here at the den. Good job to everyone!” William Shemin Midtown Community School students and faculty would also like to thank the Bayonne Board of Education’s Early Childhood Department for their support and generously providing new t-shirts, Wikki Stix, and Magna Tiles for all of our students, they made the week even more fun! We are already looking forward to Week of the Young Child 2026!



Disney Day in Mrs. Cucuzza's First Grade class



Favorite book day and showing off new t-shirts in Ms. Graham's Kindergarten class



William Shemin Midtown Community School *(continued)*



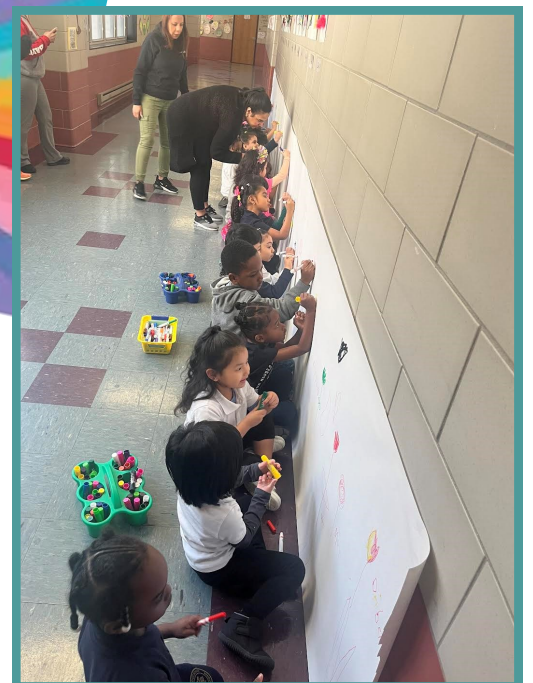
Game Day in Mrs. Billotta's first grade class



Ms. Anthony and Mrs. Seclen's Kindergarten class showing off their new t-shirts



Collaborative art work in Mrs. DiAntonio's Pre-K class



Collaborative art work in Mrs. Klimlowski's Pre-K class

Junior Bees Create a Buzz Across NJ in New Sports Program

A new era of athletic excellence is underway in Bayonne as the school district proudly debuts its inaugural year of the Junior Bees program — a groundbreaking initiative uniting middle school athletes, from 11 elementary schools as one united team, for the very first time. Designed for students in grades 6 through 8, the Junior Bees teams are already turning heads across New Jersey with standout performances and rapid success.

Launched to build a cohesive, district-wide sports culture, the program provides students with an invaluable opportunity to experience district-wide athletics, allowing them to wear the Bayonne colors with pride. In just their first season, the results have been nothing short of remarkable.

The Girls Basketball team made history by capturing the **2024–2025 Bergen County League Championship**, while the Girls Softball team is off to a dominant **3-1 start**, with commanding wins over Deerfield Middle School and CAPS Paterson.

Other teams are buzzing with success as well. The Junior Bees **Wrestling squad** competed in the elite Central Jersey Youth Wrestling League, matching up against 12 of the top middle school programs in the state and finishing with several place winners in the year-end tournament. Meanwhile, the Junior Bees **Swimming team** made history by competing in its **first-ever official meets**, including a milestone matchup against Hoboken.

Impressively, over **150 students** have joined the Junior Bees Boys and Girls **Track & Field** program, which is set to compete in four meets this spring—an extraordinary turnout that underscores the enthusiasm building around this new initiative.

The district offers each sport **free of charge** to students, making high-quality coaching and competitive play available to all. With plans to expand into **bowling, fencing, volleyball, and soccer** in the 2025-2026 school year, the future looks bright for this rising sports powerhouse.

Junior Bees Program Highlights:

- Boys Basketball:** 18 players coached by Gino DelCollo, competing in the Bergen County League.
- Girls Basketball:** 15 players led by Courtney Young — **2024–2025 Bergen County League Champions**.
- Wrestling:** Coached by Zach Maier, Matt Loffa, and Ariel Mendez, with standout performances in the Central Jersey Youth Wrestling League.
- Swimming:** 80 participants under coaches Deveney Zebrowski, and Shannon Neary. Historic first season includes meets against Hoboken.
- Girls Softball:** Undefeated (3–0) under Jessica Petti, Tracy Napier, Mackenzie Brown, and Natalie Visone. Notable wins include 18–8 and 9–5 over Deerfield, and 19–0 against CAPS Paterson.
- Track and Field:** 150+ athletes coached by Dylan Caban, Nicole Ough, Dara Murphy, Gino DelCollo, and Zachary Mackiewicz. Competing in four meets this spring.



Pictured:
Our Lady Junior Bees
Basketball team who won
the Championship in the highly
competitive Bergen County
League!!

As the inaugural Junior Bees season continues, one thing is clear — Bayonne's future in sports is not only alive and well, but already soaring.

2nd Annual Black History Month: Masterpieces of Black Culture

Black History Month Guest Speaker Seminar celebrated Black excellence and joy, spotlighting professionals who shared their journeys in public service, the arts, and athletics on February 28 in BHS.

Councilman Booker, artist and educator Lori Alexander, and former basketball player and current BHS girls basketball coach James Turner spoke with heart and honesty, offering our students empowering examples of resilience, creativity, and community impact.

Students heard about beating the odds, finding your voice, and holding onto joy through it all. It was an unforgettable experience.



This marks the second year hosting the seminar—last year, BHS welcomed BHS alumni Danan Hughes and Doc Watson, whose stories also left a lasting impression. We hope to keep this tradition alive for years to come, continuing to honor and elevate the Masterpieces of Black Culture.



The event featured students hosts, a Q&A panel, and time for reflection & conversation—creating a space where students felt seen, heard and inspired. It wasn't just about history; it was about how the past shapes the present, and how every student has the power to shape the future.

Trip to *Anne Frank—A History for Today*



In March, students in Ms. Townes' World History and *Facing History and Ourselves* elective traded their desks for an unforgettable trip to the Jewish Heritage Museum in NYC. There, they stepped into Anne Frank's world—not just the diary we know, but her life, her dreams, and the people she loved.

Students explored original photographs, family belongings, and firsthand accounts. The museum recreated the Secret Annex and brought in one-of-a-kind artifacts from Amsterdam for the occasion. One student quietly whispered, "I feel like I'm standing in her story." That's the power of immersive learning. This experience encouraged students to reflect on what it means to be an upstander, how silence can be dangerous, and why remembering is a responsibility we all share.

Mary J. Donohoe Community School—Level Up in i-Ready!

Get ready for an exciting school wide competition that will have students across all grade levels striving to complete the most i-Ready lessons each month! The competition encourages students to engage with the i-Ready platform to enhance their math and reading skills. Each grade level will be pitted against the others, with the goal of seeing who can complete the most lessons by the end of each month. The competition fosters not only individual accountability but also a sense of teamwork, as students work together to achieve their collective goal.

To participate in this fun and educational challenge, every student is required to pass at least two lessons per week on i-Ready. This ensures that all students stay on track and make consistent progress throughout the month. By committing to this goal, students will develop a routine of focused learning while sharpening their skills in both math and reading. Teachers will regularly monitor progress and provide encouragement, creating a supportive environment where students can celebrate their achievements and keep pushing forward.



At the end of each month, the grade level with the most lessons completed will be crowned the winner and receive a special recognition. This competition is a great way to motivate students to take ownership of their learning while also making it fun and rewarding. Whether students are aiming for personal success or cheering on their grade level, the excitement will continue to build as the month progresses. Prizes and rewards may also be given to top-performing students or those who show the most improvement, adding another level of incentive to participate and excel.

By participating in the i-Ready competition, students will not only improve their academic skills but will also learn the value of perseverance, consistency, and teamwork. As the competition heats up, students will be motivated to put in their best effort, setting a positive example for their peers. This school wide event is sure to inspire a spirit of friendly competition while reinforcing the importance of academic growth in a fun and engaging way.

Oresko's Sunshine Club—Spreading Positivity through SEL

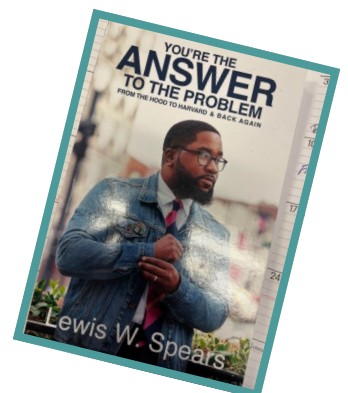
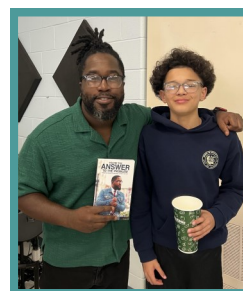
Led by SEL counselor Mrs. Ramdat, the Sunshine Club is a student-led initiative open to students in grades 6–8. The club's mission is simple but powerful: to foster an inclusive and uplifting school climate. Through acts of kindness, student-led events, and creative initiatives, members work together to make Nicholas Oresko a place where everyone feels seen, supported, and celebrated. This week, the Sunshine Club had a heartwarming and impactful activity with our youngest learners. Our student leaders visited Ms. Macklin, Ms. Ozak, and Ms. Kahle's kindergarten classes, where they read stories that emphasized the power of kindness and the importance of being positive, respectful, and supportive in our school community. The Sunshine Club is committed to enriching our school culture, and this activity was just one of the many ways we're working together to foster kindness and positivity. Students in 6th through 8th grade want to make a difference and they are. Together, they continue to create a supportive and caring environment for all.



Kismet of Kings—Empowering Young Men for a Greater Purpose

For the young men of Nicholas Oresko, Kismet of Kings offers a powerful space for growth, reflection, and transformation. Led in partnership with author and mentor Lewis Spears (You're the Answer to the Problem: From the Hood to Harvard and Back Again), this character development and social empowerment program equips boys with the tools they need to become leaders in their communities. Students in the program meet once a month to participate in engaging sessions focused on personal growth, leadership, and social awareness. Through a comprehensive curriculum—including character-building workshops, emotional intelligence training, personal goal setting, and service projects—participants learn to embrace their full potential. With access to mentors and positive role models, students explore what it means to lead with integrity, build resilience, and make thoughtful, ethical decisions.

The program encourages every participant to discover their unique purpose and use their talents to create positive change.



eSports on the Move at Bayonne High School

High school esports has rapidly emerged as a transformative extracurricular activity, blending the excitement of competitive gaming with the structure of traditional sports. Students across the U.S. and beyond are engaging in organized video game competitions under the guidance of their schools, fostering teamwork, communication, and strategic thinking. Esports programs are increasingly integrated into school systems, offering students a structured platform to compete while also developing valuable life skills like leadership and resilience. With dedicated facilities, coaches, and even team jerseys, esports has become a mainstream part of school culture, attracting diverse participants who may not have engaged in traditional athletics.

Schools with esports programs report improved student engagement and attendance, as these activities align with students' passions and provide a sense of belonging. Beyond competition, esports opens doors to academic opportunities in STEM fields like coding and game design, as well as scholarships for higher education. In 2024 alone, over \$16 million in scholarships were awarded to esports athletes by colleges across the U.S., demonstrating the growing recognition of this field as a legitimate pathway to academic and professional success.

High school esports not only provides students with opportunities for teamwork and competition but also fosters skills that can translate into professional fields, including medicine. A study conducted at Beth Israel Medical Center in New York found that surgeons who played video games for at least three hours per week made 37% fewer errors, performed 27% faster, and scored 42% better on a surgical skills test. This correlation highlights how gaming can enhance hand-eye coordination, reaction times,

and precision skills vital for laparoscopic surgery. By integrating esports into education, schools can help students develop transferable skills while engaging in an activity they enjoy.



eSports on the Move at Bayonne High School *(continued)*

The future of high school esports looks bright as it continues to reshape student life and education. Schools are increasingly incorporating esports into their curriculums through subjects like game theory and digital media while leveraging its popularity to foster 21st-century skills such as problem-solving and digital literacy. Competitive gaming also builds community among students, with packed auditoriums cheering on teams during tournaments. As college recruiters scout top players for scholarships and professional opportunities expand in gaming-related industries, high school esports is becoming not just an activity but a launchpad for future careers in the digital age.

This year's team highlights:

Valorant Team:

- * HSEL Tournament Fall Majors (east division): 2nd place qualified for premier
- * HSEL Tournament Winter Majors (east division): 2nd place
- * HSEL Tournament Premier (national): currently top 16 still in progress
- * GSE Tournament: still in progress currently 3rd in round robin division
- * GSE Valkyrie Tournament (Valkyrie League is open to girls, marginalized genders, and non-binary persons): still in progress currently 1st in round robin division

Street Fighter 6 Team:

- * HSEL Tournament Winter (national): 1st place

Overwatch 2 team:

- * HSEL Tournament Fall Majors (national): finished top 8
- * HSEL Tournament Spring Majors (national): still in progress currently 9th in round robin
- * GSE Tournament Winter: Finished 2nd place

Rocket League Team:

- * HSEL Tournament Winter Majors (east): finished top 4

Smash Brothers Ultimate Team :

- * HSEL Solo Tournament Fall Majors (east): Finished top 16 and qualified for Premier
- * HSEL Crews Tournament Fall Majors (east): Finished top 4
- * HSEL Premier Tournament (national): Finished top 32
- * HSEL Crews Tournament Spring (east): currently qualified for playoffs
- * HSEL Solo Tournament Spring (east): currently qualified for playoffs
- * GSE Crews Fall: Finished top 4
- * GSE 2v2s Spring: currently qualified for playoffs

Fortnite Team:

- * HSEL Box Fights Tournament Fall Majors (national): Finished top 4
- * HSEL Zone Ward Tournament Spring Majors (national): currently rank 3 and qualified for playoffs

Marvel Rivals:

- * HSEL Tournament Spring Majors (national): currently ranked 31 in nation and qualified for east division playoffs 15th seed

Hudson County G&T Academic Bowl 2025

The Hudson County Gifted and Talented Consortium, in cooperation with the Hudson County Superintendent of Schools, proudly hosted the 2025 Academic Bowl on May 28, 2025.

This annual event supports the mission of the Consortium by offering students a meaningful opportunity to maximize their talents and abilities through academic competition. The Academic Bowl helps students develop complex problem-solving skills, enhance critical and high-level thinking, and provides a platform to recognize academic achievement. It also fosters collaboration and consensus-building, boosts self-esteem and school pride, and offers valuable practice in public speaking and interpersonal communication.

The following districts participated in this year's event: **Union City, Bayonne, North Bergen, Secaucus, Harrison, and Jersey City Community Charter School.**

We are thrilled to announce that our Grade Six Gifted and Talented representatives brought home **1st place** in the 2025 G&T County Academic Bowl! The G&T Instructional Coaches are incredibly proud of the dedication, focus, and teamwork demonstrated by these outstanding students.

Over the past several months, a rigorous selection process was conducted to identify participants. Since then, the selected students worked closely with the G&T Coaches, preparing through study sessions, practice rounds, and collaborative assessments. Their hard work and commitment truly paid off at the competition.

We are proud to recognize the following Grade Six Gifted and Talented students who represented our district and achieved this remarkable honor:

Academic Bowl Selected Students:

Michelle Pham, Lincoln Community

Joaquin "Jakey" Llanos, Henry E. Harris Community

Umar Majeed, Lincoln Community

Myra Sharma, John M. Bailey Community

Isaiah Kassi, John M. Bailey Community

Mariam Awad, W.S. Midtown Community



2nd Graders at John M. Bailey Stress "Good Manners"

JM Bailey 2nd Grade Students prove that kindness and good manners conquer all.

The auditorium at John Bailey School was filled with laughter, cheers, and a touch of medieval magic as the second graders presented their play, *Good Manners: A Medieval Quest for Polite Behavior*.

Set in a whimsical kingdom where a mischievous wizard had cast a spell to erase all manners, the story followed Sir Gwendolyn and Sir Dancelot, two brave but unimportant knights, on a noble mission to restore kindness, politeness and even good hygiene across the land. Although they had no idea what to do, all hope for the kingdom rested with them.

Along their journey, the knights attempted to defeat the fearsome Black Knight, rescue a damsel in distress, and slay a fire-breathing dragon. Each challenge brought its own share of giggles, surprises, & dramatic flops.

Things go terribly wrong for the knights. They succeed at none of their tasks, but luckily they run into just the right people to help them and show them that kindness, politeness and manners matter.

The students delivered a clear and heartwarming message: true manners come not from might, but from the heart. In the final scene, the wizard's spell was broken not by force, but by the simple power of "please," "thank you," & a sincere apology.

The second grade staff along with Principal McCormick were all smiles as the performers took their bows waving to an audience filled with proud families. "We're so proud of their creativity, their teamwork, and their understanding of kindness," said Assistant Superintendent Degnan, "They may have failed the slaying of the dragon, but they succeeded in the most important mission of all; restoring manners to their kingdom and sharing the message of the importance of kindness.

May their message be a constant reminder that we should all carry kindness into our communities and everywhere we go.



Celebrating Excellence in Collaboration

The district proudly congratulates Melissa Burns and Kristen Mulroy on receiving the distinguished Barbara Tedesco Collaboration Award from NJTESOL/NJBE. This honor recognizes their outstanding teamwork and dedication to supporting Multilingual Learners (MLs) and their families.

The Barbara Tedesco Collaboration Award was established in 2023 to celebrate the exemplary work of educators who collaborate effectively to enhance the learning experience of MLs. Named after Barbara Tedesco, a lifelong advocate for multilingual education and co-founder of LLAMAME LLC, the award highlights the vital role of collaboration in education.

Melissa Burns and Kristen Mulroy stood out among the applicants for their commitment to interdisciplinary collaboration and their dedication to ensuring MLs thrive in their general education classrooms. Their efforts in creating inclusive learning environments and fostering strong connections between students, educators, and families were highly commended.



As part of their recognition, both educators have received a complimentary one-day registration to the NJTESOL/NJBE 2025 Spring Conference. They will also be honored at the President's Reception on May 21, 2025, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Brunswick, NJ.

Their achievement exemplifies the district's ongoing commitment to excellence in multilingual education. Congratulations to Melissa Burns and Kristen Mulroy for this well-deserved honor!

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