Community Link

White Plains Public Schools
Unlocking the infinite and unique potential of each student, every day.

Visit the District's website (whiteplainspublicschools.org), Facebook page (facebook.com/wpschools) and YouTube channel (search WPCSD videos) for the latest information.

FALL 2023

First Fun Day!

Throughout the District, students were excited to reconnect with friends, meet new teachers, and make it a great year!



A New School Year Begins

District staff kicked off the new school year at Superintendent's Conference Day on August 30 when Superintendent Dr. Joseph L. Ricca, Board of Education President Rosemarie Eller and union officials shared words of welcome, inspiration and gratitude. In his remarks, Dr. Ricca highlighted some of the positive changes made in recent years, designed to ensure the District can "unlock the infinite and unique potential of each student, every day." These include new innovative and engaging curricular offerings, expanded enrichment opportunities, courtesy transportation for high school students (one of many ways the District has removed barriers to learning), expansion of integrated co-teaching opportunities and dual language classes, school safety and security enhancements, integration of new mindfulness/growth opportunities, reduction of out-of-school suspension rates, career and technical education opportunities, partnerships with many community organizations to provide additional support and opportunities to students, additional offerings in athletics, fine arts and extracurricular activities, a tremendous number of facilities improvements (including the much-lauded air conditioning!), and so much more.

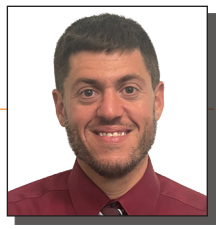


Dr. Ricca said, *"Today, we look toward the beginning of a new year and another opportunity to do our very best to change the lives of our students for the better. I offer my sincerest best wishes for much joy, excitement and success!"*

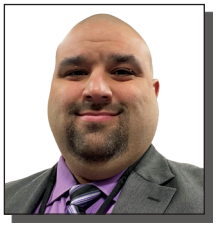




Welcome, New Administrators



Emory Davis

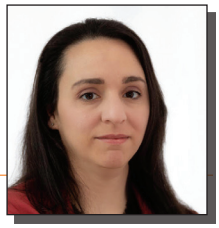


Gabe Robles

A very warm welcome to Emory Davis, Coordinator of Social Studies, Grades 7-12, and Gabe Robles, Assistant Principal at Ridgeway School. Emory joins the WPCSD from the High School of Art and Music in New York City, where his experience included instructional leadership and equity and inclusion. Gabe is a graduate of White Plains High School (once a Tiger, always a Tiger!), and has been with the District since 2014, serving most recently as a teacher at Mamaroneck Avenue School and Administrative Intern. He is also the Head Coach of the Girls Varsity Lacrosse Team.

The District is also pleased to welcome 45 new teachers and 32 new civil service members this school year.

Valerie Daniel Joins the BOE



Valerie Daniele, a White Plains resident since 2004, was elected to the Board of Education in May, 2023. She holds a Bachelor of Science in the Administration of Justice from Rutgers University and a Juris Doctor from Pace University School of Law. She serves as an Associate Regional Counsel for Litigation for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Valerie is also active in the greater White Plains community. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for the LOFT LGBT Community Center and formerly served on the Board of the Kingsley House Senior Development and as a trustee for the White Plains Presbyterian Church. She has two children who attend White Plains schools. *"I am proud to join the Board of the White Plains City School District,"* said Valerie. *"I hope my presence helps ensure teachers, administrators, social workers, and psychologists are provided with all the tools necessary to help all our students grow into lifelong learners."*



Congrats, Graduates!

On August 28th, we were pleased to celebrate eleven seniors who completed their requirements to graduate over the summer! WPHS Principal Emerly Martinez, Rochambeau High School Director Paul Bratcher, WPHS Assistant Principal Sara Hall, Board of Education President Rosemarie Eller, and Superintendent Joseph Ricca addressed the graduates, commending their perseverance and determination. Graduates shared that they are excited for the future – off to start businesses, join the workforce and continue their education at local colleges. We are #WPProud and can't wait to see what they do next!

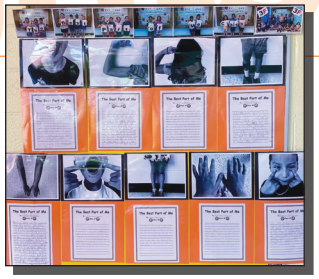
A Day for Dads and Special Adults



In partnership with the City of White Plains and the White Plains Youth Bureau, schools districtwide participated in Dads/Special Adults Take Your Child to School Day on September 21st, a program designed to encourage fathers and special adults to be as engaged as possible in their children's schools and education, and to celebrate the love and support they provide our White Plains Tigers. Visitors had breakfast at school, took tours, visited their children in class, and more. It was a great day!

highlights

The "Best Part" of Ridgeway





After reading *The Best Part of Me*, Teacher Amy Frishman's third grade class at Ridgeway was excited to discuss, brainstorm and eventually choose "the best part" of themselves. They generated ideas into a graphic organizer, then wrote them up. The final product is displayed outside their classroom and the students are very proud of their work.



Mindful Mondays at GW

The year is off to a great start at GW! During the first weeks of school, students took part in grade-wide community meetings to check in with their emotions and feelings and to practice their Mindful Monday affirmations: "We do hard things!" "I believe in myself." Students also read Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor's picture book, *Just Ask*, which helped highlight the themes of inclusivity and bravery.

Building Community at Highlands





Throughout the month of September, Highlands students took part in fun community-building activities, including games and sports, in order to get to know each other better and to help get the school year off to a great start. Creating a community among students fosters a sense of belonging and social connection, provides a source of emotional support, encourages accountability, and creates learning opportunities.

WPHS Athletes Commit to Top College Sports Programs

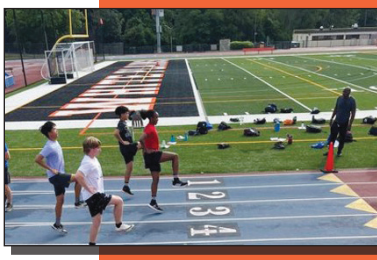




Congratulations to two exceptional WPHS athletes: Sequoia Layne, who has verbally committed to Boston College for volleyball, and Callum Markowitz, who has verbally committed to Vanderbilt University for tennis! Callum's Universal Tennis Ranking (UTR) is 11.68; he ranked #3 in New York and #27 in the Class of 2024.

Summer Sports Academy





Now in its second year, 160 WPHS student athletes took advantage of the Summer Sports Academy, which increased from three to four days a week in 2023. Students arrived at 7am to participate in speed, strength and injury-prevention training. A virtual academic component was offered in the evenings, with an introduction to the SAT/ACT, study skills and college essay writing prep. Guest speakers gave talks about leadership, character, perseverance, and overcoming adversity. Assistant Athletic Director Mike Chappas shared that the summer's hard work is already paying off on the field, especially in the reduced number of injuries.

Dr. Joseph L. Ricca
Superintendent of Schools

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Rosemarie Eller, *President*
Cayne Letizia, *Vice President*
Sheryl Brady
Valerie Daniele
James F. Hricay
Rose Lovitch
Charlie Norris

The mission of the White Plains City School District is to educate and inspire all students, while nurturing their dreams, so they learn continually, think critically, pursue their aspirations and contribute to a diverse and dynamic world.

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Perseverance and Presentation Skills in the Science Research Program

The Science Research Program at WPHS, a 3-year Honors Science elective, is a unique opportunity for students to experience the rigor and rewards of real scientific research while still in high school. Working with a mentor, participants choose a topic of interest and construct an original experiment. Along the way, they learn exploratory and bibliographic research, increase their ability to work independently, and to develop perseverance among other critical skills. Recently, students have been practicing their verbal presentations in preparation for this year's science fairs and year-end Science Research Symposium.



National Merit & College Board Recognition



Seven White Plains High School seniors were named Commended Students in the 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program. Students are recognized for their exceptional academic promise, based on the results of the 2022 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. Congratulations to Kaitlyn A. Celentano, Nikola Davidovic, Eliav T. Goldman, Cassidy M. Khachetoorian, Jonah F. Kovach, Lucas A. Rhode, and Saumya V. Sawant.

The College Board National Recognition Program honors outstanding high school juniors and seniors for their exceptional academic achievements, particularly among underrepresented minority groups. This program aims to identify and reward students who have excelled in challenging courses, such as Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) and have demonstrated a strong commitment to their communities.

Congratulations to this year's recipients of the National Hispanic Recognition Award (NHRA): Andrea Arteaga, Alexis Cuautle, Daniella Di Savino, Jocelyn Galarza, Christian Garcia, Brandon Hance, Emiliano Juarez, Karla Lopez Florez, Eduardo Muniz, Andrea Navarro, Lucia Patino, Jane Rajasingh, Jaden Ritterman, and Leoncio Torres. Congratulations also to the recipients of the National African American Recognition Award (NAARA): Elena Bediako, Xavier Bellande, Sienna DAgostino, Sequoia Layne, and Shalyssa Mantock.

Design: Jill Singer Graphics • Writing: Hillary Millman