Community Link

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

SUMMER 2025

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Board of Education

You Did It!





The White Plains High School Class of 2025 celebrated their graduation at the Westchester County Center on June 26th. Family and friends filled the venue, cheering them on as speakers shared heartfelt congratulations and meaningful advice for the journey ahead.

WPHS Principal Emerly Martinez kicked off the festivities with a simple ask: that graduates choose to be kind to themselves and others. *"Kindness doesn't cost anything, but it has real power. Sometimes it's a quiet word, a small gesture, or just being present when someone needs you. While you may not always see the impact, I promise you it matters."*

Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Joseph Ricca spoke about the power of choices, telling graduates that life is changed by those we make each day. He urged them to choose growth — by working hard, embracing challenges, owning mistakes — and to steer clear of habits that hold them back.

Valedictorian Jackson Bhat encouraged his fellow classmates to take pride in the perseverance that brought them to graduation night and to embrace fear moving forward. *"Use it to fuel your courage, your ambition, your transformation."*

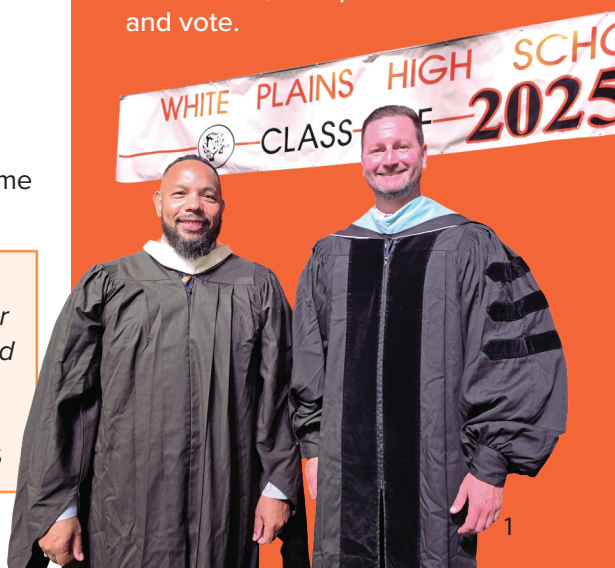
Salutatorian Sophia Levy reminded her peers about the value of the community they've built together in White Plains and that no matter what's next, they will always have each other and all they've learned during their time together.

SUMMER SENDOFF *I hope you're enjoying a fun summer, and finding time to read, get outside, and stay active. I also encourage you to look for ways to be helpful: at home, with your family, or in the community. As I told our graduating seniors, we all choose how we spend our time... and time spent in service is never wasted. See you in September!*

DR. JOSEPH RICCA, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

School Budget & Election Results: THANK YOU!

The 2025-2026 School District Budget passed in May and voters re-elected Sheryl Brady and Charlie Norris to the Board of Education. We thank Assistant Superintendent for Business Dr. Ann Vaccaro-Teich for her leadership of the annual budget process and the community members who took time to attend meetings, share information, ask questions and vote.



White Plains Public Schools
WP
REAL LIFE LEARNING

school news

Headed to High School

During the Highlands Moving Up ceremony at the Westchester County Center on June 26, Principal Michael Eaton congratulated 562 rising ninth graders, 168 of whom were recently inducted into the National Junior Honor Society and reminded them that the future is up to them. *"In your hands lies the power to build something better: a society where respect is given freely, where empathy guides decisions and where doing good isn't the exception, but the norm,"* he said.



Oh, The Places You'll Go!

We're #WPProud (but not surprised) that our graduates have earned $314,000 so far in local scholarships and once again have been accepted into some of the most prestigious colleges and universities in the nation, including:

Amherst College
Brown University
Columbia University
Cornell University
Georgetown University
Hampton University
Harvard University
Howard University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Princeton University
Spelman College
Tufts University
Tuskegee University
University of California
University of Michigan
University of Notre Dame
University of Pennsylvania
University of Virginia
Wesleyan University

Seal-ing the Deal on College & Career Readiness



More than 200 graduating seniors received special recognition from the New York State Education Department for their work and achievements this year. Sixty-eight earned the State Seal of Biliteracy, demonstrating that they are highly proficient in English and an additional world language. One hundred and thirty-four earned the Seal of Civic Readiness, in recognition of their commitment to civic engagement, service and social responsibility. We know these skills will serve them well.



Congratulations to the Girls Varsity Softball team for winning the Section 1 Title for the first time!

In Our Schools

Math MAYnia at Post Road

A twist on Spirit Week really "multiplied" the fun for students and staff alike at Post Road Elementary School. Activities included math-themed riddles, games, puzzles, and a scavenger hunt. On Wear It Wednesday, pictured, everyone came to school wearing their favorite number, shape, time, or math fact. It was a unique way to show how math is important and relevant in our everyday lives and added up to a great week of laughter and learning for all.



At Ridgeway, One Book for Many Lessons

Reading *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio for the One School, One Book reading event in May was a great way to incorporate Ridgeway Elementary School's schoolwide focus on diversity (character trait of the month) in an effort to highlight the importance of celebrating and honoring everyone's differences. Activities included recorded read-alouds and trivia questions on morning announcements. The initiative culminated with assemblies led by the MyFace Wonder Project, a program designed to teach students of all ages the importance of empathy, inclusivity and standing up against bullying. One School One Book is funded by a grant from the Friends of White Plains Public Schools and the Ridgeway PTA.





Rochambeau students join Art Teacher Meghan Gasiorove on a visit to the weeklong Citywide School Art Show at the White Plains Public Library

White Plains Public Library Showcases Student Art

Students from every school in the District had work on display at the White Plains Public Library's annual weeklong Citywide School Art Show in June. Art teachers selected up to 50 art works from among their students, aiming to display a variety of different styles and media. Rochambeau Art Teacher Meghan Gasiorove shared that she "loves to showcase high quality work that has emotional depth, originality of ideas and a successful usage of the elements and principles of design." Rochambeau's inclusions this year included paintings, drawings, ceramics, and 3D pieces.



Talent and Creativity on Display at Eastview

The 30 students who performed at Eastview Middle School's Talent Show practiced their acts several times a week for a month before impressing an audience of parents, peers and school staff with their confidence and creativity. Performances, hosted by two student emcees, included singing, dancing, a magician duo, stand-up comedy and instrumental solos on guitar and piano. We thank these students for sharing their unique gifts and passions with the school community!

Lights, Camera, Action at GW

To celebrate their own "senior" year, fifth graders at GW elementary school had an unforgettable experience when they took part in a customized TV Game Show at their school in May. The interactive educational event, which featured colorful visuals and was led by energetic hosts who kept everyone laughing, featured exciting challenges, fun trivia questions and lots of opportunities to work together and cheer each other on. It was a perfect mix of fun, learning and teamwork—an experience students will undoubtedly be talking about for years to come.



Award-Winning Environmentalism at MAS



DEF Commissioner Vincent Kopicki, District Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Deb Hand, Westchester County Executive Ken Jenkins, and the MAS Fantastic Five: Isaac Elkin, Conor Burke, Luca Naclerio, Xavier Frantz and Kaellum Powell.

Five industrious students from Mamaroneck Avenue Elementary School, who became known as the Fantastic Five, brought the school community together to collect and recycle over 1,000 pounds of plastic bags as part of the *NexTrex Recycling Challenge Program*. The Five designed lesson plans, taught all their classmates about the impact of plastic bags on the environment and made flyers to send home, sparking excitement throughout the community. As bags started pouring in and everyone watched the weight of the plastic collected grow, enthusiasm grew too. In just four months, they achieved their goal and celebrated not only a major win for the local environment, but an understanding of what a significant impact they can have on important issues. In April, County Executive Ken Jenkins and Westchester County's Department of Environmental Facilities (DEF) presented MAS and the Fantastic Five with the prestigious Eco Award which recognizes "outstanding contributions to the environment and sustainability."

Impactful Guest Speakers Inspire Students

Lessons in history and current events were brought to life for students at Highlands Middle School and White Plains High School by two recent guest speakers who shared their stories to educate, build empathy and promote critical thinking. Sam Mihara, 91 years old, related his experience of surviving life in a Japanese Internment Camp in the United States during World War II and his thoughts about how we can prevent something similar from happening again. He promoted tolerance and warned against discrimination. His powerful first-person account connected to our social studies curriculum in a meaningful and thought-provoking way as students worked on follow-up assignments. Rabbi Kendall Pinkney (pictured, right) addressed tolerance from a different angle, using his theater background to engage students in a passionate discussion about identity, race and the power of personal narrative. He talked openly about his experiences as a Black rabbi, including the challenges of navigating a racial and religious identity that some might find incongruous. He encouraged students to embrace and celebrate diversity within themselves and others.



Dr. Joseph L. Ricca
Superintendent of Schools

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Sheryl Brady
Jessica Buck
Valerie Daniele
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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.

White Plains Public Schools
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White Plains, NY
10605

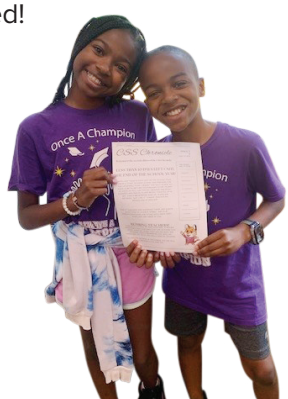
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Aria and Carter McCants holding a copy of the Church St. Chronicle, a newsletter the industrious fifth grade twins launched near the end of the school year to share happenings around their school. Contents included details about the upcoming math and spelling bees, an informal poll about favorite breakfast options, sports reporting, and a heads-up about exciting changes coming to Church Street's library during the summer. As the school year was winding down, Carter and Aria were looking for rising fifth graders to take over. Stay tuned!



Thank You for Your Service

The Board of Education honored 43 retirees and 36 twenty-five-year staff members at its June meeting. We are proud to recognize these professionals who have dedicated their lives to teaching and supporting our students.

RETIREES
Kelly Agar
Joe Allen
Melanie Alvarez
Geri Alvarez
Theodora Argyros
Tineria Augborn
Juanita Banks
Gloria Barrera
Joan Behrends
Patricia Benavidez
Shari S. Bierly
Akmeed Boouraca
Marcella Briggs
La-Sheila Brown
Deborah Brunetto
Kirsten Calkins
Michele Charriez
Paula Christensen
Betsy Cicchetti
Kathleen Contrata
Franklin Cromer II
Wilbert Dixon
James Dowd
Regina Dunn
Maureen Fargo
Vasendha Gangadharan Hrazanek
Adele Herzenberg
Donna Hodges
Joan Holt
Gweneth W. Kaebnick
Lisymol Kalathara
Ann Kelly
Darrel D. Kidd
Paula Knuckles
Maria Felicia Lotito
Lourdes Muñiz-Gauthier
Lillian O'Grady
Erika Ortiz
Barbara Penasso
Susan Repetti
Gloria Salerno
Francesca Salvi
Amera Wiese
Ana Zamora

25 YEARS OF SERVICE
Michelle Ammirati
Patricia Benavidez
Leah Borzoni
Marcella Briggs
Susan Brumer
Michele Davila
Michelle Dipilato
Rebecca Doherty-Fahey
Jennifer Farenholc
Amy Frishman-Amir
Arlene Garcia
Donna Hodges
Alison Hoffman
Andrea Hollingsworth
Lisymol Kalathara
Suzanne Lasser
Keri Levine
Mary McGovern-O'Sullivan
Filomena Merluccio
Lisa Meyers
Teresa Montalto Alfalla
Jonathan Monti
Holly Moore
Dennis Polanco
Kristin Raneri
Rodolfo Rivera
David Roher
Brenna Rosenfeld
Mark Russo
Pamela Schneider
Jimmy Serrano
Sandra Serrano
Christine Spatola
Gerardina Testa
Jill Walters
Leslie Williamson

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