



The Panther Press

FALL 2025

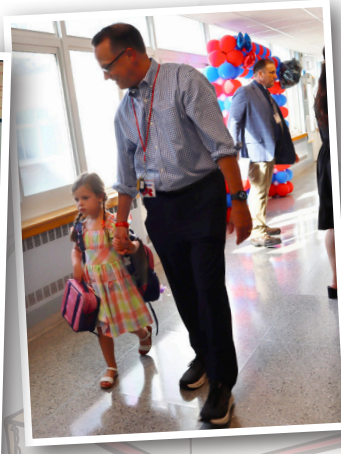
MILLER PLACE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

"Empowering excellence today, developing tomorrow's achievers, forever Miller Place proud."

www.millerplace.k12.ny.us

Welcome Back to School!

The Miller Place School District launched the 2025-2026 school year on September 4, welcoming students back for an exciting year of growth, achievement, and discovery. Administrators, teachers, and staff greeted students with smiles as they made their way to their classrooms and settled in. The back-to-school season brings fresh opportunities to learn, explore new experiences, and build lasting friendships. As we begin a new school year, we wish our entire school community a season of success, connection, and endless possibility.



A Message From the Superintendent

Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year. This summer, we hired over 38 new staff members that included nurses, aides, clerical, operations staff, teachers, and teacher assistants. In August, parents, guardians, and students were invited into our buildings for an informative walk-through and orientation. Staff gathered on September 2nd and 3rd for our Superintendent's Conference Days, finalizing preparation for our students' return. On Tuesday, September 4th, we welcomed more than 2,250 students into our classrooms, including the 2026 senior class and our newest generation of students—the class of 2038—who began their journeys at Andrew Muller Primary School.

As we opened, the new school year activities were in high gear. Each school building had their Open Houses as parents and guardians were invited to meet their child's teachers. Our District provides students with a well-rounded experience as students have the option to participate in extracurricular activities. This fall, students in grades 7 through 12 will represent Miller Place in 24 interscholastic athletic teams. Clubs are an opportunity for students to be involved in school and with approximately 40 clubs offered at the secondary level, students are offered the chance to select those activities that interest them. In the late fall and early winter, clubs will start at both Andrew Muller Primary School and Laddie A. Decker Sound Beach School.

As part of the Miller Place Strategic Plan, we are focusing on a collaborative effort on the benefits and understanding Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA), a research-based assessment that measures growth and proficiency utilized by the district in grades two through eight to track student growth and identify areas of strength and areas that need to be addressed. We will be increasing our communication with parents and guardians about the NWEA reports as we have added an additional parent-teacher conference day at AMPS and LADSBS in March in order to facilitate conversations about student progress. We are providing additional professional development for teachers in NWEA tools and teachers will be speaking directly with students about their growth and avenues for enrichment or improvement.

The education landscape in New York is continuously evolving, including the Regents exams and the newly adopted New York State Portrait of a Graduate. We will be looking at incorporating these changes into the current Strategic Plan and/or adjusting our plan to meet the changes and needs of our students. As students start the new academic year, Miller Place staff members are committed to planning, teaching, and supporting student success inside and outside the classroom. It is important for students to communicate with staff when they need help, and for parents or guardians to reach out as well. This allows staff to better understand any challenges and work together to create a plan.

I look forward to working with students, parents, guardians, and staff to continue to improve our student success and continue to make Miller Place the best possible district.

Empowering excellence today, developing tomorrow's achievers, forever Miller Place proud.

Seth Lipshie
Superintendent of Schools

A Message From the Board of Education

Welcome back, Panthers! I hope everyone enjoyed a restful and fun-filled summer and is ready for another exciting school year. Fall is a special time in Miller Place—a season of fresh beginnings, new opportunities, and the chance to come together as a community to support our students as they grow and thrive. As we step into this new school year, I would also like to share some important news with you. At our recent Superintendent's Conference Day, Seth Lipshie, our Superintendent of Schools, announced his retirement, effective in August of next year.

On behalf of the entire Board of Education, I extend our deepest gratitude to Mr. Lipshie for his more than 35 years of dedicated service to Miller Place. From his early days as a social studies teacher to his role as superintendent, his steady leadership and unwavering commitment to students, families, and staff have left a lasting impact on our community. His guidance has been especially critical in helping us navigate the challenges of recent years, and his legacy will continue to benefit our students for generations to come.

Looking ahead, the Board of Education will begin preparing for a thoughtful and inclusive superintendent search. We are committed to keeping our school community informed throughout this process and creating opportunities for meaningful input from all stakeholders—parents, students, and staff alike. Your voices will play an important role in shaping the future of our district, and we look forward to working together to ensure that Miller Place continues to thrive under strong leadership.

I am excited for all the wonderful things this upcoming year holds. From classroom achievements to athletic competitions, musical performances, and community traditions, there will be so many moments to celebrate together. I encourage everyone—families, staff, and community members—to stay involved and engaged, as it is our shared partnership that makes Miller Place such a special place to live and learn.

Forever Miller Place proud!

Lisa Reitan
Miller Place School Board President

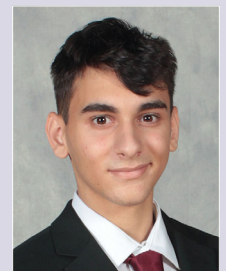


MPHS Students Recognized by National Merit Scholarship Program

At Miller Place High School, students engage in rigorous studies that prepare them for future success. Student achievement is recognized and celebrated. The district is proud to announce that MPHS student Marc Lindemann has been named a National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist, and students Luke Posner, Ellis Worcester and Stephen Ye have been named National Merit Scholarship Commended Students. Their selection in the National Merit Scholarship Program was based on their high scores earned on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) exams. Congratulations to all.



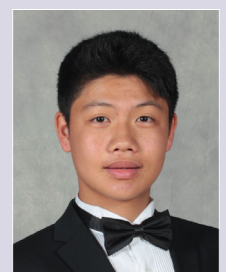
Marc Lindemann



Luke Posner



Ellis Worcester



Stephen Ye

AROUND OUR SCHOOLS

ANDREW MULLER PRIMARY SCHOOL

At Andrew Muller Primary School, our new gymnasium and kindergarten/Universal Pre-kindergarten playground have been supporting student learning. With these new spaces, students now attend physical education classes three times per week. PE teachers Ms. Dunn and Ms. Gibbons have expanded the PE curriculum, adding a golf unit, expanding the bowling and cooperative games unit, and ramping up the jump rope unit. First and second graders have been exploring team building, turn taking, and skill development during their recess periods. Students who are interested are able to spend more time playing kickball and practicing their basketball skills. We can't wait to see what else is in store for our students as we work to build strength, skill, and stamina.

Kindergarteners and UPK students are loving the new playground, repaved blacktop, and grass field. They are invited to go outside twice per day to play with friends and meet new students from other classes. The physical activity allows students to develop gross motor skills as well as social skills. Gross motor development is the precursor to fine motor development, which supports handwriting and posture. Physical activity also provides developmentally appropriate playtime, which supports focus in the classroom. Friendships foster strong connections with classmates and create a positive sense of belonging at school.



LADDIE A. DECKER SOUND BEACH SCHOOL

Laddie A. Decker Sound Beach School teachers recently engaged third grade students in meaningful reflection surrounding the events of September 11th. Students read the story *September 12th*, written by a first-grade class about how they knew everything would be okay after the events of 9/11. They also read *14 Cows of America*, a true story about the Maasai people of Kenya who gifted 14 of their most prized cows to America as a symbol of compassion, strength, and healing after the tragedy of 9/11. Students learned the significance of Patriot Day, decorating the school building with their own paper chain creations and Ribbon of Remembrance. Continuing their lessons of American values and unity, students shifted their focus to the Constitution. They collaborated with their peers on a presentation exploring the work of the Founding Fathers, reviewing each Article of the Constitution, and defining the Preamble. As they worked, they participated in meaningful discussions led by their teachers about the meaning and relevance of the Constitution in today's world. Through these lessons covering September 11th, Patriot Day, and the US Constitution, students were able to ask questions, discuss with their classmates, and pay tribute to defining moments in American history, engaging empathetically with their learning.



NORTH COUNTRY ROAD MIDDLE SCHOOL

NEW ART ROOM

North Country Road Middle School had a very successful first day of school. Students arrived eager and full of energy, and administrators, faculty, and staff were excited to welcome them back. Art students were especially excited to use the newly renovated art room. The beautiful weather allowed students to enjoy recess outdoors, which added to the positive start of the school year.

SPIRIT WEEK

Students proudly participated in Spirit Week, showcasing their school pride through a series of themed dress-up days. The week-long celebration concluded with Spirit Day, followed by the district's Homecoming parade and football game. The events fostered a strong sense of school spirit and community, bringing students, staff, and families together in celebration.



MILLER PLACE HIGH SCHOOL

NEW FASHION DESIGN COURSE

A new half-year course at Miller Place High School is giving students a stylish head start in the world of fashion design. The course offers an engaging introduction to the history, artistry, and practical skills behind the fashion industry. Open to students of all skill levels, the course guides participants through a creative journey that begins with a look at fashion through the ages—from the elegance of historical garments to the trends shaping modern day streetwear. Students then dive into hands-on learning, developing core design skills, and mastering essential techniques in garment design, construction, and sewing. With growing interest from students eager to explore creative industries, the fashion design course marks an exciting addition to the school's arts and electives curriculum. As fashion continues to intersect with technology, sustainability, and global culture, programs such as our new half-year course at Miller Place aim to prepare the next generation of designers, creators, and changemakers.

A VICTORIOUS HOMECOMING WEEKEND

The District's annual Spirit Week kicked off with students and staff showcasing their creativity by dressing up for daily themes. The week culminated in "Spirit Day," when students proudly repped their favorite Miller Place gear at the high-energy pep rally. The excitement for the big game continued into the weekend as the Varsity Girls Soccer team earned a 2-1 victory over Center Moriches High School, leading into a community parade featuring Panther cheerleaders, the Miller Place High School pep band, the Miller Place Fire Department, community organizations, and students from all District buildings. Each high school class marched alongside handcrafted floats decorated according to this year's theme: Pixar movies. The afternoon ended in a nail-biting game as our Panthers came back from not one, but two deficits. The stadium roared with enthusiasm as they defeated John Glenn High School in a 34-33 homecoming win. It was a week of tradition, celebration, and Panther pride!



MUSIC NEWS

Musical Talents Take Center Stage

Congratulations to the Miller Place music students selected for the 2025 NYSSMA All-State Winter Conference ensembles. The All-State ensembles are honors groups comprised of the top students from school music departments across the state. Pictured from left to right are Devin McGrath (alternate, Jazz Ensemble), Sean Creedon (alternate, Jazz Ensemble), Marc Lindemann (alternate, Symphony Orchestra), Stephen Ye (All State Symphony Orchestra), and Andy Luo (All State String Orchestra).



Scholar-Artist Selection

Miller Place High School senior Stephen Ye was recently named a Long Island Scholar-Artist for the class of 2026 by the Long Island Arts Alliance. The Long Island Arts Alliance has developed the Scholar-Artist Awards program to present outstanding high school-age artists to the public in monthly profiles that will appear in *Newsday* and on *Newsday.com*. Scholar-Artists are chosen from five disciplines: music, visual arts, theater, dance, and media arts. Selections are made from a pool of students nominated by Long Island's public school districts, as well as from independent and parochial schools. From these nominees, the Scholar-Artist selection committees choose one monthly award winner from Nassau and one from Suffolk for ten consecutive months throughout the school year. Congratulations, Stephen!

ATHLETICS NEWS

Earning Accolades

Fantastic news from the Miller Place Athletics Department! Miller Place High School received the School of Distinction Award from the New York State Public High School Athletic Association, NYSPHSAA. This award is presented to school districts when 100 percent of their athletic teams earn Scholar Athlete status for the 2024-2025 school year. (A team achieves this status when each student-athlete on that team earns a minimum 90 GPA.)

All 23 teams for Miller Place High School achieved this for the 2024-2025 school year, the seventh time in the program's nine-year history that MPHS has achieved this distinction and earned the NYSPHSAA School of Distinction Award.



MILLER PLACE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

7 Memorial Drive, Miller Place, NY 11764

Board of Education: Lisa Reitan, *President* • Bryan Makarius, *Vice President* • John Galligan, *Trustee*
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Superintendent of Schools: Seth A. Lipshie