

# HEMPSTEAD SCHOOL DISTRICT

# TIGER NEWS

FEBRUARY 2026

2025-2026

INNOVATION

ACCOUNTABILITY

PURPOSE



## Building the Future of ABGS Middle School

The Hempstead Union Free School District proudly marks a significant milestone with the start of construction on the new Alverta B. Gray Schultz (ABGS) Middle School, ushering in a transformative new chapter for the school community. This long-anticipated project represents the first major reconstruction of the ABGS campus in more than 50 years and reflects the district's commitment to providing scholars with modern, safe, and engaging learning environments. District leaders, families, and community stakeholders united around a shared vision rooted in educational excellence, opportunity, and pride.

The new ABGS Middle School will replace aging facilities and temporary classroom structures with a state-of-the-art campus designed to support collaboration, innovation, athletics, and the arts. Planned features include flexible instructional spaces, enhanced athletic areas, and environments that foster creativity and student engagement. The new school is anticipated to open during the 2027–2028 school year, serving as a lasting investment in Hempstead's scholars and reinforcing the district's commitment to excellence for generations to come.

## Message from Superintendent Gary Rush

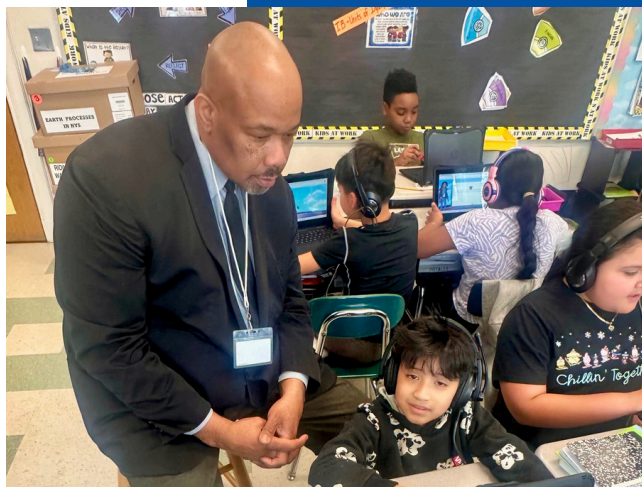
Dear Hempstead Community,

As we close the second quarter, I am proud to share the progress, achievements, and momentum building across the Hempstead Union Free School District. This has been a season of opportunity, growth, and collective pride made possible by the dedication of our students, staff, families, and community partners.

We want to remind parents of our afterschool programs, which provide safe, engaging, and enriching opportunities for students beyond the regular school day. These programs are designed to support academic success, introduce career exploration, and promote healthy, active lifestyles. Our afterschool academic programs offer homework help, small-group tutoring, literacy and math support, and enrichment activities that strengthen foundational skills. After school programs extend the school day up to 6:00pm and students in attendance are served an evening meal. You can sign up at your child's school today as it is a great opportunity.

To support your child's academic growth, make sure they are signed up to attend the Saturday AIS program which will be taking place at all elementary schools for extra support. Our ABGS Middle School AIS academic program takes place on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Saturdays. This is a great opportunity for students to reinforce learning in preparation for state assessments and Regents exams.

To better support the SEL of our secondary students grades 7-12 we are excited to have launched our Counslr App. This is a mental health application that students can access 24/7 for social emotional support right from their cell phone. If they have not downloaded the application as of yet, please see the website for directions. The mental health of our students is very important to us.



We are excited to announce the expansion of our workforce and career pathways through our Adult Education Program. We have opened new doors for community members to gain certifications, develop job-ready skills, and pursue meaningful employment. This initiative reflects our belief that education does not end with graduation; it is a lifelong commitment to empowerment, economic mobility, and community strength.

Across our district, students continue to thrive in classrooms, on stages and fields, and through service to others. Our staff remains committed to providing rigorous instruction, safe learning environments, and experiences that prepare every learner for college, career, and life. Student attendance remains our #1 priority as it is imperative that students are in school ready to learn every day. Our goal is 95% attendance rate districtwide.

Thank you for your continued partnership and trust in Hempstead UFSD. Together, we are building a stronger district that creates opportunity, honors our community, and believes deeply in the potential of every child and every adult we serve.

Respectfully,

**Mr. Gary Rush**  
Superintendent of Schools



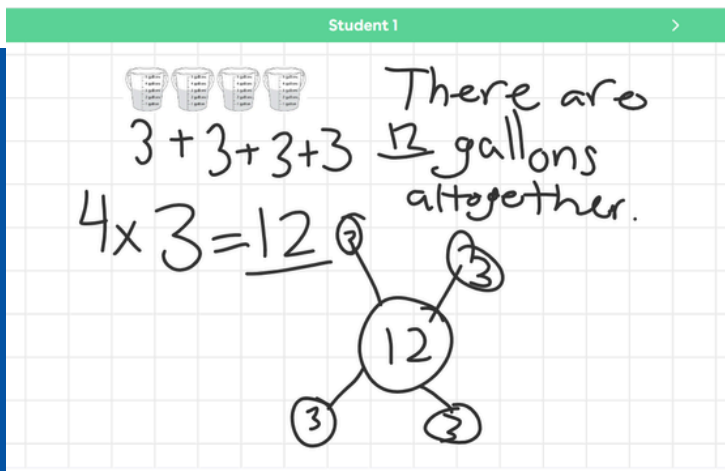
## Winter Wonderland Brings Holiday Joy to the Hempstead Community

Hempstead Union Free School District's annual Winter Wonderland brought families, scholars, and community members together for a festive celebration filled with joy, generosity, and school spirit. The event featured holiday activities, seasonal entertainment, and the distribution of hundreds of toys and gifts to families across the district, reinforcing Hempstead's commitment to supporting and uplifting its community. With the help of dedicated staff, volunteers, and student helpers, Winter Wonderland created a warm and welcoming space that reflected the district's values of compassion, service, and togetherness during the holiday season.

# District Spotlights & Community Engagement

## Supporting the Whole Child

Our MTSS framework continues to drive both academic growth and social-emotional learning across the district. Academically, more than 85% of students in Reading and Math demonstrated growth from fall to winter, with many meeting expected midyear progress and some successfully exiting intervention after reaching their goals. Social-emotionally, restorative practices and team-building activities were implemented across multiple schools, engaging students in community circles that strengthened relationships, belonging, and a positive school climate. Together, these efforts reflect our continued commitment to supporting the whole child.



## Building Mathematical Thinkers Through Discourse

Our math program is strengthening learning through rich mathematical discourse, real-time use of student thinking, and meaningful connections across subjects. Teachers are creating more opportunities for scholars to explain their reasoning, compare strategies, and engage in purposeful discussions that deepen understanding. By closely examining student work and dialogue, instruction is adjusted to better support and extend learning. Connecting mathematics to real-world contexts helps scholars see math as a powerful tool and builds confident problem-solvers who understand not just the answer, but the *why* behind it.

## Humanities in Action Across Our Schools

The Humanities Department continues to demonstrate strong instruction and student engagement across all grade levels. In the elementary grades, literacy instruction is thriving through engaging reading lessons and the pilot of updated instructional resources that support students in reading and writing above grade level. At the middle school, student leadership was highlighted through the creation of a virtual study guide to support peer learning. At the high school, culturally responsive instruction and a focus on civics education were showcased, including recognition in a recent Newsday feature on how schools are preparing students to be informed and active citizens.



## Building Science Skills Through Hands-On Learning

This year, science instruction has focused on hands-on, literacy-rich learning that strengthens foundational skills. Students engaged in investigations using science kits and digital resources while building reading, writing, and math connections through Claim-Evidence-Reasoning. Progress monitoring supported assessment readiness, and learning extended beyond the classroom through student-led presentations and family engagement activities that encouraged collaboration and problem-solving.



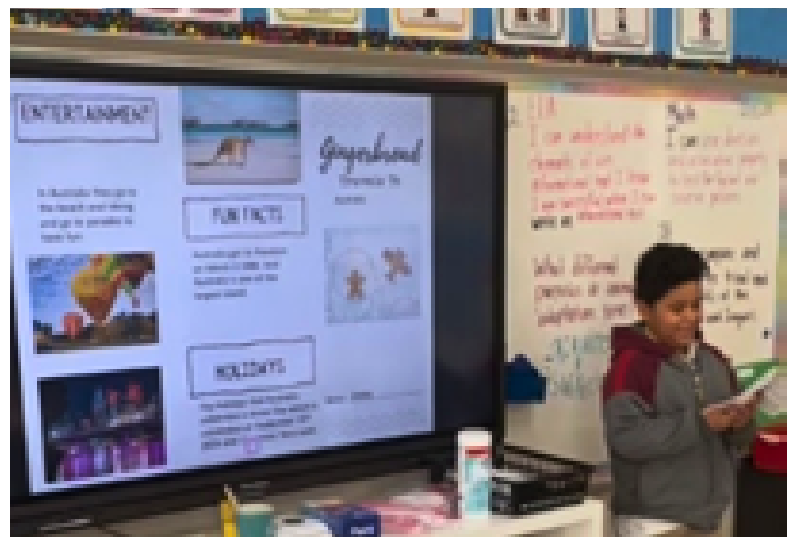
## Expanding Workforce Opportunities

The Adult & Community Education Program is expanding workforce opportunities with a new Advanced Manufacturing Certification Program, offered in partnership with the Town of Hempstead, with orientations held at ABGS Middle School. This free program provides hands-on training and industry-recognized certification preparation, while continuing to offer ESL, GED, and additional career pathways such as Clinical Medical Assistant and Home Health Aide to support adult learners.



## Empowering Multilingual Learners Through Literacy and Family Partnerships

Aligned with the Hempstead UFSD mission, the Bilingual and World Languages Department continues to promote innovation and accountability through literacy and family engagement initiatives, including a Kindergarten Parent and Community Workshop at Rhodes Academy, culturally responsive writing supports for multilingual learners, and expanded access to Lexia English and Core5/PowerUp for all ELLs, reinforcing strong home-school partnerships to help scholars thrive in a global society.



# Elementary Spotlights

## Prospect School



Prospect Elementary School proudly embraced its IB PYP identity through a Who We Are Spirit Week, during which students explored flags, music, food, and cultures from around the world, and families were invited into classrooms on Who We Are Day to share their traditions. Students further demonstrated their global-mindedness by participating in a Turkey Trot and a Holidays Around the World performance in December, showcasing songs from diverse cultures, while the school also hosted a Parent Expo during Parent-Teacher Conferences to connect families with valuable community and educational resources.



## Rhodes Academy

Our school community has been buzzing with excitement these past few months! In November, we came together for a Clothing Drive, collecting warm essentials to support families in need—thank you for your generosity! December brought plenty of Holiday Cheer, with festive decorations, joyful activities, and a spirit of giving that lit up our halls. And every Friday, we kept the energy high with Fri-Yay Fun on the News, celebrating student achievements and sharing smiles to kick off the weekend. Here's to continuing the positivity and teamwork in the months ahead!



## David Paterson School



David Paterson Elementary School had a successful kick-off to its inaugural food pantry distribution, an initiative spearheaded by Mrs. William, the school social worker; Mrs. Brown, the school psychologist; and Mrs. Raphael, the community school director. Through their leadership and coordination, the school was able to serve 78 families with essential grocery items. Staff and students came together to support the effort and ensure the event ran smoothly. Student Government members played a key role by assisting with parent sign-ups, translating for families, packaging groceries, and distributing items. In addition, many teachers volunteered their time after school, demonstrating a strong spirit of collaboration and commitment to the school community.



# Elementary Spotlights

## Jackson Main School

Families enjoyed several joyful community events that brought creativity, fun, and celebration to Jackson Main. During Paint Night, families gathered for an afternoon of imagination as students created artwork and shared meaningful moments together. The Candy Land Builders event offered a festive experience where families worked together to create a Candyland Winter Wonderland, and the Winter Concert highlighted students' musical talents through heartfelt performances that filled the audience with joy and school pride.



## Primary Years Programme

## Barack Obama School

Scholars across all grade levels showcased their musical talents in a festive holiday performance prior to winter break. The celebration featured engaging selections by the band, orchestra, and chorus, highlighting the dedication and growth of our young musicians. Their strong understanding of musical notes, rhythm, and expression was evident throughout the performance, leaving families and staff impressed by the scholars' skill, confidence, and enthusiasm.



## Joseph McNeil School

Joseph A. McNeil Elementary School continued to strengthen learning, character, and community through experiences aligned to the IB Learner Profile, 7 Mindsets, and PBIS. Scholars engaged in academic challenges, service initiatives, global learning, student performances, and safety education, all reinforcing empathy, accountability, and growth. Together, these moments reflect a school community grounded in learning, kindness, and shared pride as it turns dreams into reality.





## Secondary Spotlights

### Alverta B. Gray Schultz Middle School



ABGS experienced strong service, school spirit, and community engagement that reflected what it means to be Tiger Strong. Students and staff supported families through food, winter clothing, and toy drives, connected with local seniors through service visits, and gathered for events such as the Students vs. Staff Volleyball Game, Student of the Month Paint & Gobble, and a festive December Assembly. Community Schools programming served hundreds of adults and children, while students expanded their learning through a STEM experience at the STEM•X Festival, highlighting ABGS as a caring and connected school community.

## Hempstead High School

Hempstead High School proudly hosted a Community Thanksgiving Dinner, providing warm meals and Thanksgiving baskets to families across the Hempstead community, reflecting our ongoing commitment to service, compassion, and strong community partnerships. Continuing this spirit of giving, the school also participated in the District-sponsored Winter Wonderland, where hundreds of holiday toys and gifts were distributed to families in need, with students volunteering as “elves” to support organization, distribution, and hospitality throughout the event; participating students earned community service hours and received formal recognition from event sponsors in appreciation of their dedication and service.



## Districtwide Athletics

Hempstead Athletics is off to an impressive winter season, highlighted by the Boys Varsity Basketball team’s strong 7-4 start and four-game win streak as they continue to play with pace, defensive focus, and toughness. On the track, the Girls Varsity team has delivered an exceptional winter, led by standout performances from Junior Riley Bell, Sophomore Destiny Hescott, Freshman Charlotte Sykes, and Freshman Samora Peterson, along with dominant relay teams ranking 1st in the Sprint Medley, 2nd in the 4x400, and 3rd in the 4x200, plus a long jumper ranked 5th overall, positioning the program well for the upcoming Conference Championship, County Championship, and State Trials.

# Hempstead Union Free School District

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