HEMPSTEAD SCHOOL DISTRICT

TIGER NEWS

APRIL 2026 2025-2026

INNOVATION ACCOUNTABILITY PURPOSE



Hempstead High Shines With *In the Heights*

Hempstead High School's production of *In the Heights* was a powerful and uplifting showcase of student talent, culture, and community pride. Performances took place on March 27 and March 28, featuring two memorable evenings in which students brought energy, passion, and professionalism to the stage. In addition, the cast performed for elementary school audiences, providing younger students with an inspiring opportunity to experience live theatre and see their peers shine in a meaningful artistic production. Highlights of the performances were also shared on the district's social media platforms, allowing the broader community to celebrate this outstanding achievement.

This production represented more than a school performance; it reflected the growth, dedication, and artistry of Hempstead students. Many of the students involved have developed from their early high school years into confident performers, leaders, and seniors, embodying the district's commitment to nurturing student potential over time. *In the Heights* highlights themes of home, identity, and belonging that resonate deeply within the Hempstead community. The district remains committed to ensuring that the arts remain a vital part of a well-rounded education, where all students are welcomed, supported, and given opportunities to showcase their talents while celebrating the rich culture and pride of Hempstead.

Message from Superintendent Gary Rush

Hello Hempstead Family,

As we enter the final stretch of the school year, I want to take a moment to reflect on the progress, achievements, and moments of pride that have defined our third quarter. Across the district, we continue to see the powerful impact of our collective commitment to excellence, opportunity, and growth for every student.

This quarter also showcased the incredible talent and dedication of our students beyond the classroom, most notably through our high school's outstanding production of *In the Heights*. This performance was more than a musical, it was a celebration of culture, community, and student voice. Our students delivered a vibrant and heartfelt performance that highlighted their artistic abilities, confidence, and teamwork. The energy, storytelling, and pride on display were truly inspiring, and I commend our cast, crew, and staff for bringing such a powerful production to life.

Moments like these remind us that education is not only about academics, but also about creating spaces where students can express themselves, explore their passions, and connect with their community. The arts continue to play a vital role in shaping well-rounded, confident individuals, and this production was a shining example of that impact.

Our students also had the opportunity to participate in the New York State Association of Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic & Asian Legislators (NYSABPRHAL) Youth Summit trip to Albany. The Youth Summit provided students with a unique opportunity to engage in meaningful discussions on leadership, civic responsibility, and issues impacting communities across New York State. Throughout the experience, students attended workshops, heard from state leaders, and collaborated with peers from across the state to share ideas and perspectives.



During their visit to Albany, students also had the opportunity to observe government in action and gain insight into the legislative process. The trip reinforced classroom learning while inspiring students to think critically about civic engagement and public service.

The upgraded tennis courts provide a modern, high-quality facility designed to support both competitive athletics and recreational use. This project reflects the District's continued commitment to enhancing student experiences through improved facilities. The project is part of the District's broader effort to modernize facilities and create spaces that inspire excellence in all areas of student life.

As we move forward, our focus remains on sustaining strong attendance, supporting our students socially and emotionally, and continuing to provide high-quality instruction across all schools. We are committed to finishing the year strong and ensuring that every student is positioned for success.

The Hempstead Union Free School District remains committed to investing in initiatives that support academic achievement, student wellness, and community pride.

Sincerely,
Mr. Gary Rush
Superintendent of Schools



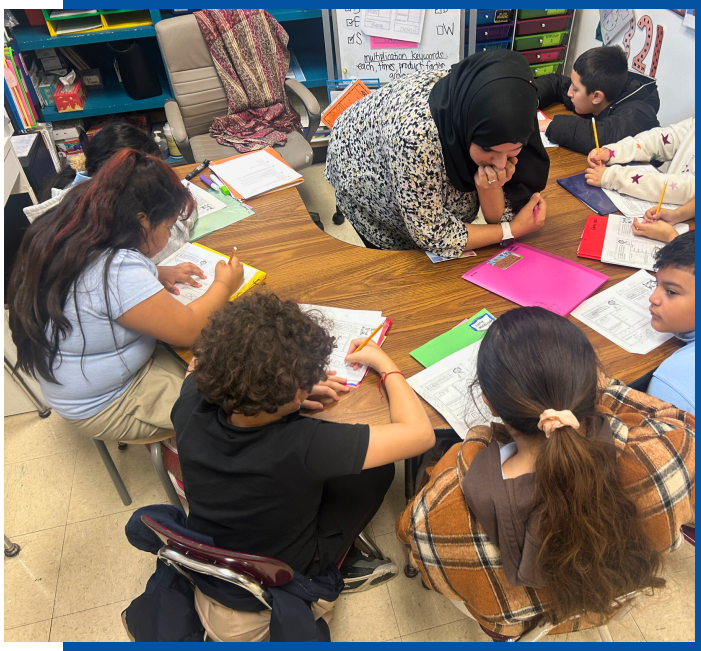
Celebrating 41 Years of Dedication: Angela Abrams

The Hempstead Union Free School District proudly recognizes Angela Abrams for 41 years of dedicated service as a Teaching Assistant. Currently serving at Jackson Main Elementary School, she has consistently supported instruction, fostered positive classroom environments, and built strong relationships with students and staff. In addition to her school-day role, Ms. Abrams is the founder of Creative Expressions in Motion, a successful afterschool program under the Empire State Afterschool Program serving students at Prospect School and Jackson Main Elementary School. The program provides students with opportunities to engage in dance, movement, and performance while developing confidence, teamwork, and self-expression, reflecting Ms. Abrams' lasting impact on the academic and personal growth of students across the district.

District Spotlights & Community Engagement

Small Groups, Big Growth

Academic Interventionists in their element—leaning in, listening closely, and guiding learning one student at a time. Through targeted support and meaningful connections, they turn challenges into confidence every day. This is where growth happens, one strategy, one conversation, one breakthrough at a time. 85% of students in Math Intervention showed growth on their Middle of the Year (MOY) screeners.





Math in Action: Seeing Thinking, Hearing Growth, Celebrating Excellence

Students across the district are demonstrating strong mathematical thinking through the RDW (Read, Draw, Write) process during Magma Math check-ins, clearly showing their problem-solving and reasoning skills. Teachers are strengthening math discourse with purposeful talk moves that encourage explanation and peer discussion, while Movement to Mastery students build fluency by skip-counting in the hallways. Excitement continued with the Pi Day Competition, where top scholars recited over 100 digits of π, and the First in Math Competition, as students honed speed, strategy, and numeracy through the 24® Game.

Middle School Spotlight: Building Independent Readers

At ABGS Middle School, refreshed classroom libraries are helping promote independent reading. Led by Abigail Turner, ELA classrooms now feature updated, engaging book collections. Through outreach to The Book Fairies, Ms. Turner secured a wide range of titles already inspiring students to read more frequently and independently.

Special recognition also goes to Ms. Calabrese and Mrs. Corvi, whose collaboration helped make this initiative possible and expand student access to books that spark curiosity and joy in reading.



Students Explore Science & Sustainability

Students participated in three group projects focused on Climate Change:

- Carbon Footprint: Students collected real data on individual carbon footprints, charted and graphed results, and proposed strategies to reduce environmental impact.
- Clean Transportation: JAM Mobile – Using survey data, students analyzed how vehicle use contributes to Climate Change, designed a clean-energy JAM Mobile, and created a 3D-printed model.
- Energy Detectives: Lunchtime Food Waste – Students measured lunchroom food waste over several weeks, graphed findings, and recommended procedures to reduce waste and build sustainable habits.





Expanding Workforce Opportunities

Students enrolled in the Adult Education Clinical Medical Assistant program are gaining valuable hands-on experience as they learn essential clinical skills, such as accurately taking a patient's blood pressure. Clinical Medical Assistants focus on direct patient care, perform a wide range of clinical procedures, and support healthcare providers in busy medical offices, clinics, and other healthcare settings. Upon successful completion of the program, students will earn industry-recognized certification, preparing them for employment in this high-demand and rewarding healthcare field.

Celebrating Multilingual Excellence

We are proud to prepare our students for this prestigious honor, which recognizes high-level proficiency in two or more languages. Our seniors have shown incredible dedication to this goal, even coming in on a Saturday to complete their comprehensive national language proficiency exams. As they now finalize their culminating projects for the review panel, they are proving their readiness to lead in a global society. This seal is a powerful credential for college and career success, and we commend our students for their hard work and commitment to celebrating our community's rich linguistic diversity!



Elementary Spotlights

Prospect School



In February and March, Prospect School celebrated Black History Month and Read Across America Week. Students attended engaging Black History assemblies featuring music, dancers, and interactive participation, learning about diverse cultures and traditions. Read Across America Week marked a joyful conclusion to the kindergarten IB unit, *How We Express Ourselves*. Students dressed in crazy hats, enjoyed a librarian visit, made and ate green eggs and ham, welcomed parents for a reading playdate, and explored new titles at the school book fair.



Rhodes Academy

This year, our College and Career Week featured an exciting lineup of special guests who shared their experiences and career paths with our students. We welcomed police officers, college students, barbers, clothing designers, and many others who highlighted a wide range of future opportunities. In addition, students had the unique opportunity to shadow school administrators and special area teachers, giving them an inside look at careers within our own school community.

David Paterson School

David Paterson School was honored to host a special assembly featuring Senator Siela Bynoe, who shared powerful reflections and words of inspiration with our 5th and 6th grade scholars, families, and staff. The message resembled our Women's History Month theme, "The Woman in the Mirror: Her Voice, Her Vision, Her Legacy," the event highlighted the impact of leadership, purpose, and service. The scholars expressed their heartfelt appreciation for Senator Bynoe's dedication and continued support of our school community. The celebration concluded with the presentation of a small token of gratitude, along with thoughtful cards created by both staff and students, making it a truly meaningful and memorable occasion.



Elementary Spotlights

Jackson Main School



Jackson Main Elementary School launched the third quarter with joyful community events and celebrations of learning. Family Game Night brought students and caregivers together for fun and connection, while scholars honored Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. through music and Reader's Theater. Students also shined during the Black History Celebration, and the Book Buddies program continued to build reading fluency, confidence, and a love of literacy through meaningful partnerships.



Joseph McNeil School

March was an exciting month at Joseph A. McNeil! McNeil School began with a Parent Resource Meeting and impactful workshops with Dr. Spicer, followed by a powerful Black History Program. Family events like the JAM PTO Meeting, S.T.O.M. Celebration, Movie Night, and Bake Sale brought our community together. Students shined during the iReady Challenge, District Art Exhibit, and Dairy in Our Classrooms. McNeil School wrapped up the month with a joyful Easter Egg Hunt and an inspiring Women's History Exhibition.

Barack Obama School

In February, scholars participated in our schoolwide Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Oratorical Contest, where students in grades 1–6 demonstrated confidence and poise while reflecting on Dr. King's I Have a Dream speech. Sixth-grade scholars shared powerful personal interpretations of Dr. King's legacy, expressing hopes for a more just world while thoughtfully acknowledging challenges faced by many families. Later in the month, Hofstra University physician assistant graduate students visited to lead wellness workshops focused on self-esteem, bullying prevention, healthy choices, and overall well-being, empowering students with knowledge to care for both their minds and bodies.



Secondary Spotlights

Alverta B. Gray Schultz Middle School

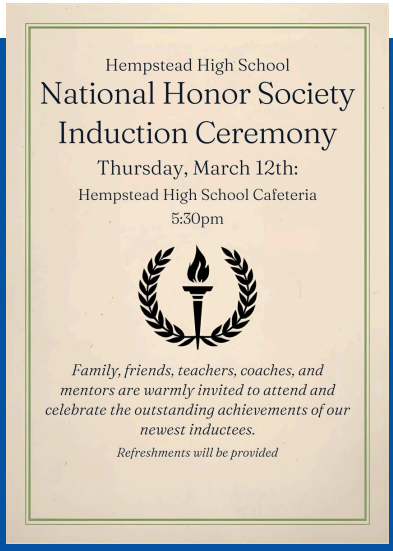
ABGS Middle School students continue to learn beyond the classroom through enriching cultural and career-focused experiences. Students participated in the ZUZU African Acrobats Cultural Performance, exploring East African traditions through dynamic, interactive performances. In addition, 7th and 8th graders attended the Women in Law Conference with their law teacher, connecting with legal professionals and gaining inspiration to pursue careers in law and leadership. These experiences empowered students to dream big, explore their futures, and proudly represent ABGS.





Hempstead High School Celebrates National Honor Society Induction

Hempstead High School hosted its 2026 National Honor Society Induction Ceremony on Thursday, March 12, welcoming a new group of students into one of the nation's most respected academic organizations. The ceremony honored students who exemplify the pillars of scholarship, service, leadership, and character. Family members, faculty, and community members gathered to celebrate the inductees' achievements and commitment to excellence. Membership in the National Honor Society reflects dedication both inside and outside the classroom, and the evening concluded with students pledging to uphold the organization's values.





High School Athletics

The Hempstead High School Girls Track Team enjoyed an outstanding winter season, highlighted by five athletes competing at the New York State Championships on March 6–7. The 4×400 meter relay team achieved a personal best performance, showcasing focus and determination. Success continued at the national level from March 12–14, where the team earned a 3rd-place finish in the 4×400 relay with another personal best time. This impressive achievement reflects the team's youth and talent, led by standout student-athletes Samora Petersen (9), Charlotte Sykes (9), Destiny Hescott (10), Rhenia Clarke (11), and Riley Belle (11), and signals a bright future for Hempstead Track and Field under Coach Raffington.

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www.hempsteadschools.org