

Press from:

The New Providence School District
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Phone: (908) 464-9050
Date: May 1, 2026
For Release: Upon Receipt



Subject: **New Providence School District awards Certificates of Excellence in Visual Arts, Music Performance, and Writing.**

The New Providence School District was pleased to recognize the 2025/2026 school year recipients of the Certificate of Excellence in Visual Arts, Music and Performing Arts, and Writing at the Board of Education meeting on Thursday, April 30, 2026. Certificates were bestowed by Board of Education member, Laura Castellano.

The New Providence School District is incredibly proud to recognize this year's Scholastic Art & Writing winners. These students have demonstrated exceptional talent and dedication, with several individuals earning multiple honors across various creative categories. Their commitment to artistic excellence reflects the vibrant spirit of our educational community.

Among those recognized for multiple submissions, **Eren Aveyedi** earned both a Regional Gold Key and a Regional Honorable Mention for Digital Art. **Susan Davies** displayed notable versatility, securing a Regional Silver Key alongside three Regional Honorable Mentions for her work in both Digital Art and Jewelry. Additionally, Middle School student **Francesca Munoz** was honored with a Regional Gold Key and a Regional Honorable Mention for her contributions to Digital Art.

In the categories of Ceramics, several students were awarded Regional Keys for their excellence. **Olivia Jackovino** received a Regional Gold Key in Ceramics, while **Carsten Lepre** and **Elisabeth Pazinko** both earned Regional Silver Keys for their work in the same medium. We also celebrate the creative contributions of students who received Regional Honorable Mentions. In the realm of various mediums, **Hannah Lomba**, **Maggie Liu**, and **Mia Pardo** were all recognized for their artistic vision. A special distinction goes to **Alec Potolsky**, who received a Regional Honorable Mention for Screenplay. Alec holds the unique honor of being New Providence's first-ever recipient in the Screenplay category.

Students who excel in writing know that their work is an iterative process that depends upon their commitment to honing their craft. New Providence takes pride in giving students a multitude of opportunities to develop their literary voices through engagement with mentor texts for inspiration, exposure to various mediums of writing, and the cultivation of a revision process that treats constructive feedback as a catalyst for growth. One student from New Providence Middle School, **Lillian Cai**, has been awarded a Gold Key by Scholastic for her short story, titled

“The Final Wish.” A Gold Key is the highest regional honor in the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, awarded to the top 5–7% of entries for exceptional originality, technical skill, and personal voice. Winning a Gold Key for a short story or other writing submission signifies top-tier creative talent and automatically advances the work to the national level of judging. She has earned special recognition for excellence in writing a fictional narrative in prose.

We recognize Lillian for her artistic achievements during the 2025-2026 school year.

Students who excel in music exhibit a high level of motivation and work ethic to develop their skills. Those who perform in ensembles become outstanding team members and experts at collaboration. New Providence takes pride in providing opportunities for young musicians to fully develop this musical potential within the school program, as well as in auditioned honors ensembles.

The New Jersey Music Educators Association divides the state into three regions. The central region, C.J.M.E.A., sponsors auditioned Honors Bands, Orchestras, and Choirs at the intermediate and high school levels every year. Hundreds of students throughout the region, who are sponsored by their school music teachers, prepare and audition. Only the highest scoring applicants are accepted. This year, 14 students represented New Providence in region ensembles, representing all four schools within the district.

Raajan Bhor, and Asher Chow were selected for the Intermediate Region Symphonic Band, **Lillian Cai** and **Alex Roth** were selected for the Intermediate Region Wind Ensemble, **Maura Steed**, and **Alicia Xu** were selected for the Intermediate Region String Orchestra, **Abigail Kim**, and **Naomi Wu** were selected for the Intermediate Region Chamber Orchestra, **Julia Halldorson**, and **Rachel Zack** were selected for the High School Region Chorus, **Alexander Gigliotti** was selected to play Double Bass for the High School Region Wind Ensemble, and **Ernest Feng, Alexander Gigliotti**, and **Ryan Hsieh** were selected for the High School Region Orchestra.

As an additional honor, both **Alicia Xu** and **Alexander Gigliotti** were selected as First Chair in their ensembles for earning the highest scores in their ensembles in the entire region. As the First Chair Violinist, **Alicia** was selected as the Concertmaster of the Intermediate Region String Orchestra.

Along with regional ensembles, N.J.M.E.A. sponsors auditioned all-state honors ensembles at the elementary, middle, and high school levels every year. Hundreds of students throughout the entire state, who are sponsored by their school music teachers, prepare and audition. Only the highest scoring applicants are accepted. Membership in an all-state ensemble is a prestigious distinction.

In collaboration with N.J.M.E.A., the New Jersey chapter of the American Choral Directors Association sponsors auditioned all-state honor choirs at the elementary and junior high school levels.

This year, 10 students represented New Providence in All-State Ensembles. **Ana Sofia Alves Infante**, and **Ivy Hentsch** were selected for the Elementary All-State Chorus, **Isabella Arias**, **Nola Farese**, **Raina Kamath**, and **Annie Liu** were selected for the Junior High All State Chorus, **Abigail Kim**, and **Naomi Wu** were selected for the All State Intermediate Orchestra, **Julia Halldorson** was selected for the High School All State Chorus, and **Alexander Gigliotti** was selected for the High School All State Orchestra.

All of these students have earned special recognition for excellence in visual arts, music performance, or writing. New Providence is very proud of their achievements and encourages them to continue with their arts and music education.



