MAY 2026

SUPERINTENDENT NEWSLETTER

"ENGAGE, EQUIP, ELEVATE TOWARD EXCELLENCE."

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Elmsford Community,

I would like to offer my sincere thanks for your support of the 2026–2027 budget. On May 19, voters chose to support district goals and initiatives, including maintaining current programs, preserving class sizes, and sustaining our facilities while prioritizing the safety and well-being of our students and staff, all while strengthening and preparing our students for future success.

There is truly so much to look forward to in the year ahead, and I once again thank you for your continued support and partnership.

I also want to congratulate Dr. Charlotte Phoenix on being selected to our Board of Education and look forward to getting to know her and working with her on district goals.

The last several weeks have been heart warming with many activities taking place throughout our schools. From the amazing Districtwide Concert and the AHHS Art Show to the AHHS National Honor Society Induction, Grady Sharing Day, Dixson Career Day, AHHS Awards Ceremony, Memorial Day Parade, Family Fitness Friday, SGA Grady Game Night, and celebrating our special friends during the Muffins for Mom Breakfast, our students and staff have much to be proud of — and we are not done yet!

These events serve as reminders that learning extends far beyond the classroom walls. Whether through academics, the arts, athletics, service opportunities, or extracurricular involvement, our students continue to demonstrate creativity, leadership, resilience, and compassion. I continue to be inspired by the dedication of our faculty and staff, who work tirelessly to create meaningful experiences and opportunities for every student each day.

June will be full of celebrations and activities as well, and it will no doubt be an academic sprint to the finish line for our students as they wrap up another year of learning.

We especially look forward to honoring the accomplishments of the Class of 2026 and celebrating all that our students have achieved throughout the school year. AHHS Graduation will be held on June 25.

My congratulations also go out to Valedictorian and Salutatorian, Joshuanaeen Navaneetharaja and Joseph Salhab on their academic achievement.

As we look ahead to the final weeks of the school year, I remain grateful for the continued support of our community and proud of all that our students and staff continue to accomplish together.

Sincerely,

Susan Yom
Superintendent of Schools

JUNETEENTH

As a reminder to all our families, our Schools and District Offices will be closed on Friday, June 19 in recognition of Juneteenth.

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Meet the Class of 2026 Valedictorian and Salutatorian

Both the Class of 2026 Valedictorian and Salutatorian agreed there was one word to describe their class.

“They're unexpected,” Valedictorian Joshuanaeen “Joshua” Navaneetharaja said immediately when asked.

The Salutatorian, Joseph Salhab, didn’t hesitate either.

“They're very unexpected,” he said. “You can never overestimate or underestimate them.”

Perhaps the two of them are an outlier, as when the two learned their respective class rank late last year, it did not really come as a surprise.

“I wasn't too surprised, but I felt happy,” Joseph said.

“I wasn't that surprised, but I was pretty grateful that I found out I was that high of a rank,” said Joshua.

And while the ranking is nice, both agreed they were committed to working hard, but appreciate the acknowledgement and knowing their commitment to academic excellence paid off.

Throughout their time at AHHS, the two have enjoyed participating in the many clubs, primarily those focused on technology, that were offered.

Joshua was a member of the Science Olympiad in seventh and eighth grade. He started the Robotics Club in high school, as a freshman and joined the Coding Club the same year and currently serves as Team Leader for the club’s competitions as well as President of the Robotics Club.

Joseph is also a member of the Coding Club, serving as Vice President, and the Robotics Club too.

The two have more in common as well, as they both have worked on independent research projects.

“I'm currently doing weather research for something I plan to build over the summer,” Joseph explained. “I'm working right now with one of NASA's climate researchers. His name is Alex Ruane. We had a little interview a few weeks ago about the plans for this. I'm going to start building this antenna, which is kind of like a weather gathering device. It's supposed to gather atmospheric data and basically use a simple algorithm to calculate the chance of this happening or that happening weather-wise. I'm going to be taking the statistics of that and hopefully getting a paper done by the end of the summer.”

Meteorology is not just a personal interest. Joseph plans to do a double major in mechanical engineering and meteorology.

Joshua has done a significant research project as well. He has been interning at Hostos Community College, conducting in-depth research on the role of artificial intelligence in shaping teen safety on social media platforms. The community college partnered with Barnard College, and he was able to present at the Barnard Expo.

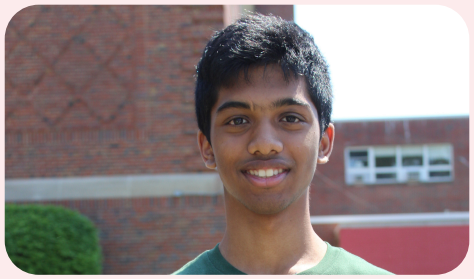
“We were trying to mitigate the risks on social media because the amount of scam calls and random DMs you get, people don’t know about the privacy filters,” Joshua said.

“It was fun educating the community on how to get better,” he continued.

With just a few weeks of school left, the two are looking forward to the fall, although they both agree they will miss their small school where



On the left, Salutatorian Joseph Salhab and on the right Valedictorian Joshuanaeen “Joshua” Navaneetharaja





everyone knows one another and the sense of community that exists here.

In the fall, Joshua will be attending SUNY Binghamton, although he is waitlisted at Columbia University. No matter where he ends up, he plans to major in Computer Science.
Joseph has committed to attending Villanova University, but he too is waitlisted at Cornell.

As to any words of advice they would have to the underclassmen, it amounts to work hard, don’t stress about grades, join as many clubs and activities as you can.

“Have fun over these four years,” said Joseph.

AHHS inducts several students into National Honor Society

Congratulations to the newest inductees into the Alexander Hamilton High School Chapter of the National Honor Society!

During a special ceremony on May 21, 2026, several students received certificates in acknowledgement of their academic achievement and commitment to their community.

Members are selected for excellence in the four pillars of the organization: **Scholarship**, **Service**, **Leadership**, and **Character**.

















Brothers find own beat in band

As one Pagano brother prepares to leave, another one will be stepping up to keep the beat going.

Senior Anthony Pagano and his younger brother, rising eighth grader Dylan, both play percussion in the Alexander Hamilton High School Band.

"I've been playing since I was in the fourth grade," Anthony said, adding he picked up the drums because he thought it would be simpler than learning a wind or brass instrument.

"You don't have to rely on the lungs to play, and you don't have to bring anything home," he joked.

Dylan maintained the same practicality, deciding since his brother played drums, he would too.

"I joined the band because he was in the band," Dylan said. "And it's easier than anything else. I consider myself lazy."

Be that as it may, Dylan said that he enjoys the drums, and thinks it's the most fun instrument to play.

"You play faster, there are more rhythms, and you can sound good without everyone else," Dylan said.

While the two may play together in the band during concerts or at events, like marching in the Memorial Day Parade, the two typically don't have an opportunity to be in band at the same time. Anthony is there in 9th period, while Dylan takes his turn during first period.

"During performances we help each other out," Anthony said.

For Dylan, his love of drums continues outside of school. He received a drum set as a gift and takes private lessons.

In the fall Anthony will be attending Penn State at the Altoona, Pa. campus where he plans to study Rail Transportation and Engineering.

"I've been interested in trains ever since I could speak," Anthony said. "I love trains."

Ultimately, he said, he would like to design systems for passenger rails to help them operate more efficiently.





The Pagano brothers played side-by-side in the 2026 Milt Williams, Jr. District Concert.

And does he plan to continue playing the drums? Anthony said he would like to but would be more interested in continuing to play in a smaller ensemble.

The one thing he won't miss, he admits, is the drums marching harness, it is uncomfortable.

Dylan, however, will be back with the AHHS band!

For anyone who plays an instrument, Anthony encouraged them to join the band, "it's something to do and it's fun."

Dylan agreed, "it's not boring!"

Milt Williams, Jr. District Concert 2026

Our music department outdid themselves this year during the annual district concert. Performances included the Grady Choir, the Grady Band, the AHHS Choir and the AHHS Band.





















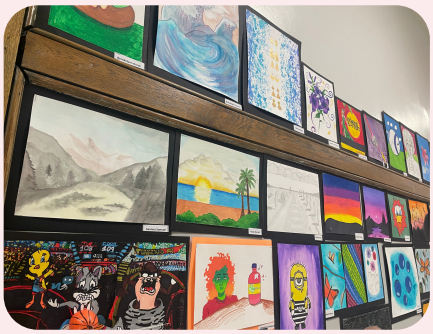
First Annual AHHS Art Show

The halls of Alexander Hamilton High School were recently transformed into an art gallery displaying student work all for an inaugral AHHS Art Show!

Student work included photography, ceramics, jewelry, and portraiture inspired by Bisa Butler. Subjects ranged from cartoons and pop art to album covers and much more.

What an amazing display of creativity and talent!

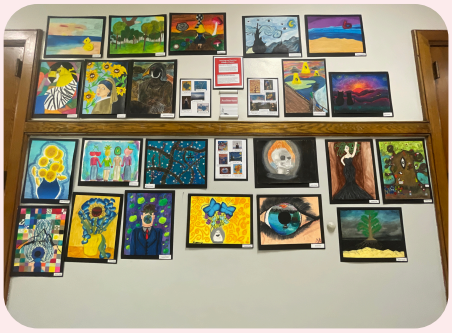


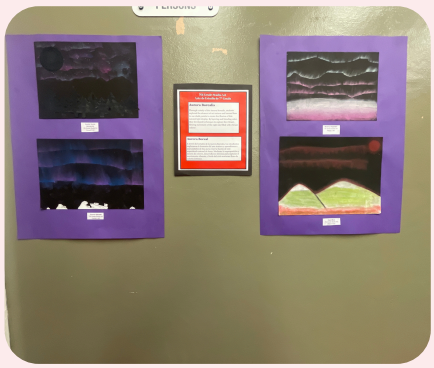






















Students showcase their work

This month students at Grady had an opportunity to showcase their work. Class by class, they gathered in the cafeteria to share special projects and research activities they had done. Parents and friends were invited in to learn more about the students' work and congratulate them on a job well done!























Dixson Career Day!

What do you want to be when you grow up? What a great question, and students at Dixson had an opportunity to think about the possibilities during the annual Career Day! Thank you to all the parents and friends who visited to talk about the work they do and why they love it!









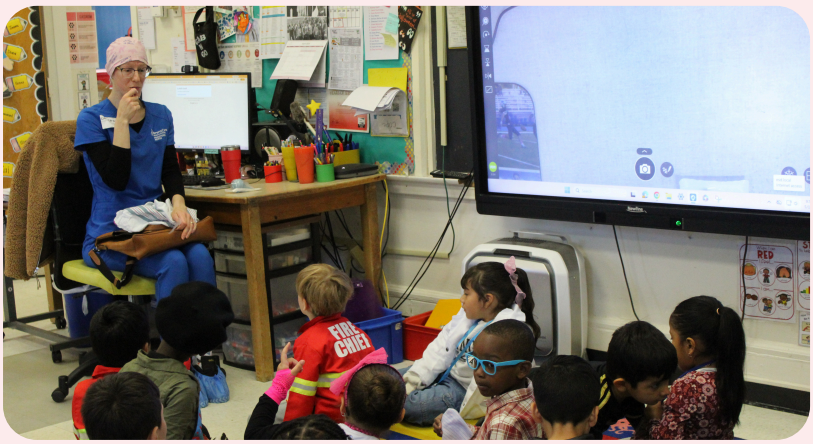












Muffins for Mom

On Friday, May 8, Dixson hosted a Muffins for Mom Breakfast! That's right, some Very Important People joined us to celebrate Moms and the special people in the lives of our students. Thank you to all those who came out and spent some time with us!

















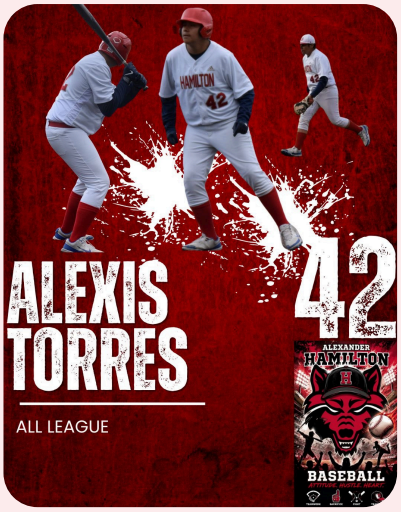






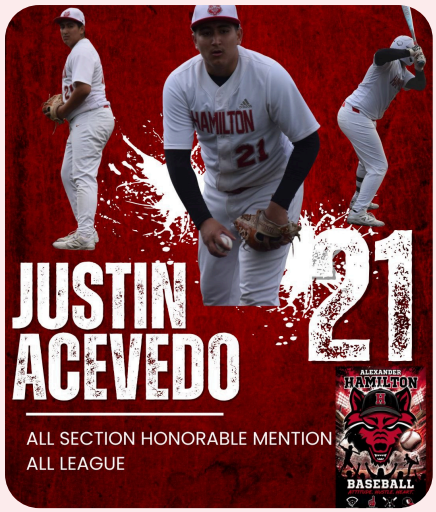


Congratulations to our Red Raiders on their awards!













Best of luck to our Senior Track stars!



Thank you to the Striar family for being a part of this year's Coach Al Classic!

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 4, AHHS Prom

June 10, Board of Education Meeting Recognizing Tenure and Retirements, AHHS Auditorium, 7 p.m.

June 16, AHHS Last Day of Classes

June 22, Dixson Field Day

June 23, Grady 6th Grady Moving Up Ceremony, 9:30 a.m.

June 24-26, Half Day for Students

June 25, Dixson 1st Grade Moving Up Ceremony, 9:30 a.m.

June 25, AHHS Graduation, 5:00 p.m. (Rain Date June 26)

June 26, Last day of School, Half Day for Students

This spring several of our AHHS musicians participated in the New York State School Music Association (NYSSMA). The organization offers elementary through high school students an opportunity to participate in a musical festival enabling musicians to perform solos, ensembles or jazz for adjudication.

Congratulations to our AHHS NYSSMA Performers

Aaron Mathew
Grade 9
Piano solo, Level 4

Sabrina Fernandez
Grade 10
Clarinet solo, Level 2

Rachel Gonzales
Grade 7
Violin solo, Level 4

Celeste Gonzales
Grade 7
Violin solo, Level 4