Summer 2026

EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS

Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District News



Congratulations to the Plainview-Old Bethpage John F. Kennedy High School Class of 2026!

On June 21, Plainview-Old Bethpage John F. Kennedy High School held its 35th annual commencement ceremony at Hofstra University. The ceremony began with the national anthem, performed by graduating choir students and signed by graduating American Sign Language students.

Board of Education President Seth Greenberg opened the ceremony by reminding graduates that success is not defined by avoiding challenges, but by how they respond to them. Several student speakers then reflected on the lessons they learned throughout their time at POBJFKHS.

Salutatorian Soha Jhaveri compared life's experiences to brushstrokes that come together to create a larger work of art. "Every mistake, challenge and triumph is simply a brushstroke that contributes to a bigger picture," she said. "Have the courage to make mistakes, the humility to ask for help and the confidence to try again. You may be amazed by how everything eventually comes together."

Valedictorian Mingshen Shi compared the high school experience to a soundtrack. "Little by little, we found our places, and together we created something that sounded pleasantly harmonious," she said. "When the bell rings, we'll go in different directions, join different ensembles and create new soundtracks, but I hope we always treasure this one."

The Senior Choir then performed "A Parting Blessing," followed by remarks from Student Government President Yana Shor, who reflected on the importance of everyday moments. Class President Jacob Blackman delivered the final student address, encouraging his classmates to move forward with confidence and perseverance.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Mary O'Meara spoke about the importance of maintaining genuine human connections in an increasingly digital world.

Principal Dr. Heather Dvorak concluded the ceremony by reflecting on the Class of 2026's homecoming theme, "United We Soar." She assured, "None of us soar alone," Dr. Dvorak then reminded, "United you soared, and united you will continue to soar, even when you are no longer side by side."

Congratulations to the Class of 2026. We wish you continued success and look forward to all you will accomplish in the years ahead.



Superintendent's Message



Dear Plainview-Old Bethpage Community,

On behalf of the Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District and the Board of Education, congratulations to the Class of 2026. As we close the 2025-26 school year, it is important to highlight this impressive class, the achievements of our District, and reflect on what those achievements represent for our entire school community.

Our graduates leave POB with an extraordinary record. They earned thousands of college credits and community service hours, received nearly $17 million in scholarships and more than $94,000 in community awards, and distinguished themselves in academics, athletics, the arts, business, science research, robotics, and service.

This year, the District was recognized as an AP School Honor Roll Platinum district, our students earned outstanding NYSSMA honors, POB was named one of the nation's Best Communities for Music Education for the ninth consecutive year, and our students continued to earn recognition at the regional, state, national, and international levels, specifically at ISEF science research fairs, DECA competitions, robotics, debate, Moot Court, athletics, and at the annual BASH awards for media and journalism students.

As important is that our schools accomplish all of this with a keen focus on creating environments where all students feel a sense of belonging with hundreds of clubs, all schools earning the No Place for Hate distinction and mental health and wellness events.

As the year concludes, thank you to our PTA. Their volunteers helped make Tenure and Retirement Recognition Nights, Moving-Up and Graduation Ceremonies, field days, arts-in-education programs, and countless school traditions possible. Their partnership is another example of the strength and connectedness that make Plainview-Old Bethpage such a special community.

Thank you for another outstanding year. Wishing all families a wonderful summer. We look forward to welcoming everyone back as we continue living our commitment that Every Student Matters, Every Moment Counts.

Sincerely,
Dr. Mary O'Meara
Superintendent of Schools







SENIOR WALK

The school community celebrated our seniors as they enjoyed the Annual Senior Walk. This tradition has our seniors, donning their caps and gowns, visiting their elementary and middle schools to share their gratitude and job with students and faculty.



LEADING The Class

Mingshen Shi | Valedictorian



Mingshen Shi, valedictorian of the Class of 2026, earned a 102.99 GPA while pursuing the most rigorous course load available. Described by teachers as one of the most intelligent and driven students they have encountered in decades, Mingshen has also demonstrated a strong commitment to leadership and service. She serves as a teaching assistant for her violin instructor, helping organize monthly studio classes and mentor younger musicians, and works as an SAT math tutor. Her teachers note that her intellectual excellence, combined with humility and gracious character, make her especially deserving of this honor. Mingshen plans to attend Princeton University to study psychology.

Soha Jhaveri | Salutatorian



Soha Jhaveri, salutatorian, earned a 102.75 GPA and distinguished herself as a double-accelerated mathematics student, culminating her coursework with multivariable calculus. She completed a demanding program that included numerous Advanced Placement courses and participated in the AP Capstone and Independent Research programs. As a visiting scholar at the Feinstein Institute for Medical Research, Soha collaborated with physicians on departmentwide research initiatives and contributed to scholarly articles pending publication. She also interned with the Neuroscience and Yoga Conference, translating peer-reviewed research into accessible content for a global student audience, and completed 10 independently designed research projects across mathematics, behavioral science and social science.

In addition to her academic accomplishments, Soha demonstrated sustained leadership and service. She served as vice president of Science Olympiad, mentoring younger students in anatomy, physiology and disease detection, and held an executive board role as tutoring coordinator for the Math Honor Society. Her service includes volunteer work at St. Joseph's Hospital and Long Island Jewish Medical Center, and participation as a junior firefighter with the Plainview Volunteer Fire Department. Her honors include recognition at the Long Island Brain Bee, the Long Island Math Fair and the New York State Science and Engineering Fair, as well as designation as a National Merit Scholar semifinalist. Soha plans to pursue a pre-med track at the University of Pittsburgh.

Class of 2026 Community

Anthony Monaco Memorial Sports Scholarship: Jonah Block

Baha'i Race Unity Award: Marshall Bank

Ben Sofe & Mae Greenspan Memorial Scholarship: Maia Alexander

Brian Harley Assa Memorial Scholarship: Ava Frangas and Shreena Shah

Brooke Zimmerman Memorial Scholarship: Kloe Kaplan

Career Day Inc. Arie A. Bucheister Memorial Scholarship: Suhani Jhawar

Carjoy Scholarship: Sierra Weiss

The Cattry Family Career Day Inc. STEM Scholarship: Suhani Jhawar

Crestwood Country Day School Scholarship: Dylan Rose and Jack Wasserman

Debbie C. Bernstein Kindness & Compassion Scholarship: Shreena Shah

Gottlieb-Weiner Family Scholarship: Sienna Katz and Layla Spears

Jeffrey M. Bernstein Anti-Bullying Scholarship: Alexis Vitagliano

Jeffrey Miller Award: Maria Rountos

Jordan Abramowitz Memorial Scholarship: Dieneth Calderon

Joseph Morello Memorial Scholarship: Aveva Pavic

Joshua Golbert Memorial Award in Music: Brady Bedell and Lauren Kang

Karen Smith Memorial Art Scholarship: Celina Zheng

Kathleen McNally Dillon Scholarship: Madelyn Landman

Kevin D. Berkowitz Memorial Scholarship: Pranav Mohankumar

KidOYO Student Mentor Scholarship: Ethan Stern

Leonard & Miriam Berkowitz Memorial Scholarship: Amanda Klein and Rebecca Rabinovich

Linda Lippolt Ray of Sunshine Scholarship: Liana Blecha

Long Island Blood Services Scholarship: Sydney Adelstein and Lindsey Greenberg

Lucian Veneziano Memorial Scholarship: Seok Hoon (Alex) Lee

Mark Koehler Scholarship: Soha Jhaveri

Maury D. Golbert Music Award: Zhuokun (Kevin) Liu

Michael Eichenbaum Memorial Lacrosse Scholarship: Alexander Kantrowitz

Michael Secko Memorial Scholarship: Jacob Levine and Drew Retmanski

Nanette Strenger Memorial Learning Ally Scholarship: Sebastian Castro and Sydney Taub

P.A.L.-Nassau County Police Activity League Scholarship: Nicholas Altmann, Lucas Baim, Ava Frangas, Nicole Futerman, Lindsay Gleiber, Brandon Greenbaum, Matthew Halpin, Ian Kotler, Jack Landman, Jesse Leffel, Rowan Leibowitz, Jacob Levine, Dominic Macedonio, Vir Patel, Jordan Rabinovich, Drew Retmanski, Rushabh Sanghvi, Brandon Sherriff, Yana Shor, Benjamin Starr, Guraman Vasir, Jacob Wayne, Sierra Weiss, Matthew Winslow and Samantha Witz

Paul Rubin Memorial Scholarship: Sean Bank

Plainview-Bethpage Lions Club Award: Jonathan Philip

Plainview Hospital Medical Scholarship: Vir Patel

Plainview Hospital Nursing Scholarship: Liana Blecha

Plainview Little League Scholarship: Lindsay Altman and Jacob Levine



Scholarships and Awards

Plainview Powerball/Mega-Millions Facebook Page Scholarship: Ryan Carey and Ava Nadboy

Plainview-Old Bethpage JFK HS PTA Scholarship: Sean Bank, Ryan Carey, Joanna Casavina, Michael Lacerenza, Jack Landman, Madelyn Landman, Benjamin Starr, Kyle Tisdale, Alexis Vitagliano and Cameron Voss

Plainview-Old Bethpage Senior Citizen Club Scholarship: Nanda Guntupalli, Ariana Mascarelli and Rebecca Rabinovich

Plainview-Old Bethpage Soccer Club Scholarship: Rebecca Kunz, Dominic Macedonio, Angelina Marioni and Joseph Zino

POB Chamber of Commerce Award in Memory of Marcia Finkelstein: Isabella Beretsky and Sebastian Castro

POB Chamber of Commerce Scholarship: Naomi Schlank

POB Association of Administrators (AOA) Leadership Scholarship: Soha Jhaveri and Drew Retmanski

R.A.G.E. – Residents Against Garbage Expansion Scholarship: Avani Arjune and Maria Rountos

Rae Saltzman Scholarship: Amanda Klein and Jonathan Philip

Rechler Equity Partners Scholarship: Michael Zuckerman

Rinaldi Scholarship Fund: Madeline Kashdan

Ruth Gaiptman Memorial Scholarship: Alexander Wolfson

SCOPE Education Services Scholarship: Soha Jhaveri

SEPTA Scholarships: Joanna Casavina, Samantha Cohen, Lily Esteves, Jake Knee, Rebecca Kunz, Elizabeth Kuperberg, Jacob Levine, Hannah Slomovicz, Sydney Taub, Kyle Tisdale

Spencer Cares Scholarship: Ceylin Baytan, Ava Frangas, Amanda Klein, Blair Menikoff

Stacy's Warriors Scholarship: Dylan Bloom and Kayla Denson

Steve Pollicino Memorial Scholarship: Brandon Sherriff

The Susan Rusinek Memorial Scholarship: Joshua Pasternack

Swimmer Scholar Award: Issac Chen

Tri-M Music Honor Society Awards: Lauren Kang and Ian Kotler

Office of the NYS Attorney General Triple "C" Award (Letitia James): Lindsey Greenberg and Ava Nadboy

Office of the NYS Attorney General Civic Ambassador Award (Letitia James): Evyenia Mantzoukas

Office of the State Comptroller Student Achievement Award (Thomas P. DiNapoli): Madison Lee

National School Development Council Award for Academic Growth & Student Leadership in Learning (George L. Duffy): Juee Kotwal and Yana Shor

Congressional Recognition for Excellence in History & Civics Award (Thomas R. Suozzi): Jacob Blackman

New York State Senate Citizenship Award (Steven Rhoads): Samantha Hecker and Maxwell Kaufman

County Executive Blakeman's Community Service & Academic Excellence Award (Bruce A. Blakeman): Benjamin Starr

NY State Senate Rising Star Award (Jack M. Martins): Dylan Katz

Office of the Nassau County Comptroller: High School Math, Accounting & Finance Award (Elaine Phillips): Lucas Baim



Next Steps for the CLASS OF 2026











Adelphi University
Arizona State University
Auburn University
Bentley University
Boston University
Brandeis University
Broadway Dance Center-NY
Brown University
California State University, East Bay
Case Western Reserve University
Clemson University
Coastal Carolina University
Colgate University
College of Charleston
Cornell University
Baruch College, CUNY
The City College of NY, CUNY
Hunter College, CUNY
John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY
Macaulay Honors College, CUNY
Queens College, CUNY
Drexel University
Embry Riddle Aeronautical University
Emory University
Employment
Fairfield University
Five Towns College
Florida Atlantic University
Florida Gulf Coast University
Florida International University
Florida State University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Hofstra University
Illinois Wesleyan University
Indiana University
Ithaca College
College in Japan
Johns Hopkins University
The Juilliard School
Juniata College
Keiser University
Lafayette College
Le Moyne College
Lehigh University
Long Island University, Post
Marist University
Mass. College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences
Miami University, Oxford
Michigan State University
Midreshet Lindenbaum-Gap Year in Israel
Misericordia University
Military
Molloy University
Nassau Community College
National Guard
New York Institute of Technology
New York University
Northeastern University
The Ohio State University
Pace University
Pennsylvania State University
Princeton University
Purdue University
Quinnipiac University
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Ringling College of Art & Design
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rutgers University-New Brunswick
Sacred Heart University
Savannah College of Art & Design
School of Visual Arts
Seton Hall University
Siena University
Southern Adventist University
St. John's University
Stevens Institute of Technology
University at Albany, SUNY
Binghamton University, SUNY
University at Buffalo, SUNY
SUNY Cobleskill
SUNY Cortland
SUNY Delhi
Farmingdale State College, SUNY
SUNY Geneseo
SUNY Maritime
SUNY New Paltz
SUNY Old Westbury
SUNY Oneonta
SUNY Plattsburgh
Purchase College, SUNY
Stony Brook University, SUNY
Suffolk Community College
Susquehanna University
Syracuse University
Temple University
Texas A&M University
Trade School
The University of Alabama
University of California, San Diego
University of Colorado, Boulder
University of Connecticut
University of Delaware
University of Florida
University of Georgia
University of Hartford
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
University of Maryland
UMass-Amherst
University of Miami
University of Michigan
University of North Carolina at Charlotte
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh
University of Rhode Island
University of Richmond
University of Rochester
University of South Carolina
University of South Florida
University of Tampa
University of Tennessee, Knoxville
University of Texas at Austin
University of Wisconsin
Utica University
Vaughn College of Aeronautics and Technology
Villanova University
Virginia Tech
Wentworth Institute of Technology
Wesleyan University
The College of William & Mary

Moving Up in Plainview-Old Bethpage





Judy Jacobs Parkway Elementary School



Old Bethpage Elementary School







Pasadena Elementary School





Stratford Road Elementary School





Plainview-Old Bethpage Middle School





Howard B. Mattlin Middle School

Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District
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Dr. Mary O'Meara, Superintendent of Schools

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Central School District

Congratulations to Our Newly Tenured Staff and Retirees

The Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District is proud to recognize 27 educators and staff members who have earned tenure. This significant achievement reflects their dedication and commitment to supporting student success and educational excellence.

Ryan Brandow
Marisa Bruno
Desiree Buffolino
Marissa Cancellieri
Michaela Carnesi
Lauren Cassel
Emily Esposito
Kaci Falcone
Thomas Ferrari
Katelyn Gensinger
Ilyssa Goncalves
Nicole Heuschneider
Sara Kenny
Christine Krowles
Melissa Marquez
Caleigh O'Dwyer
Jessica Pearlman
Brianna Pisano
Jessica Pina
Daniella Rawlings
Sarah Schuldenfrei
Payton Seltenreich
Keionna Simpson
Kristen Spiro
Alexandra Weiler
Casey Walegir
Daniel Wendelken



The district also extends its gratitude to this year's 40 retirees for their many years of service, leadership and contributions to the school community. Their lasting impact on generations of students, families and colleagues will be felt for years to come. We wish them all the best in their retirement.

Wendy Adelman
Marjorie Alford
Eileen Annino
Traci Aramini
Holly Berger
Michael Burke
Christopher Catalano
Laurie Lynn-Claps
Margaret Coakley
Dawnmarie DeMatteo
Lisa Deitch
Beth Dennis
Robert DiTolla
Glenn Doxey
Dorothy Drexel
Irene Efstathiadis
Ellen Feldman
Gulzade Gulum
Maureen Kenney
Edith Kracker
Agripina Llinas
Thomas Meier
Denise McKenna
Nina Melzer
Jacqualin Truelove Mikulski
Caroline Morello
Regina Newman
Stacey Peat
Lisa Pearson
Sheila Personelli
Deborah Perry
Pauline Pignataro
Teri Polis
Marilyn Raimondi
Donna Rivelli
Renee Rose
Elise Saltzman
Michelle Schwamb
Maria Stamatiou
Andrew Ward

