



SEAFOORD EDUCATION *Spotlight*

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Summer 2026

Milestone Unlocked, MANY MORE TO COME FOR **CLASS OF 2026**



"Milestones" was the theme for Seaford High School's graduation ceremony on June 12 at the LIU Post Tilles Center for the Performing Arts, where 165 seniors received their diplomas in their green and white caps and gowns.

Principal Nicole Schnabel cited one important milestone in history, the invention of the telephone, because it changed communication forever. In an era of texting, she reminded graduates to put a greater emphasis on connection as they begin a new chapter in their lives.

"We type messages when a conversation might mean more," Ms. Schnabel said. "And while technology has given us countless ways to reach one another, it has not replaced the power of hearing someone's voice. There is something special about a phone call."

Superintendent Dr. Adele Pecora spoke about how the milestone was literally a stone to mark a mile, dating back to ancient Rome, before it took on a more figurative sense to describe significant events, achievements and turning points. She noted that while everyone identifies milestones they hope to reach, life rarely unfolds as a straight, predictable path. The detours life takes may become the most important chapters of their stories.

"I encourage you to be an optimist and see the opportunities in the imperfect paths," she told the graduates.

Valedictorian Matthew Kind highlighted a love for photography in his family to capture the milestones and all the ordinary moments in between. He said that if their high school years were a photo album, the most important pictures wouldn't be prom, pep rallies or even graduation,



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Graduates:
165

Seaford Scholar
Laureate
Distinction:
53

Seal of Civic
Readiness:
83

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but the “blurry, imperfect snapshots” like conversations in the hallway.

Salutatorian Brian Karaman noted that graduation took place on the birthday of Anne Frank, whose writings had a profound impact on the world. The seemingly insignificant moment of receiving a red and white checkered book for her 13th birthday ended up being of great consequence.

“What may seem like an ordinary thought could be an idea that changes the course of history,” Brian said.

Class of 2026 officers announced the senior gift of six green Adirondack chairs for a soon-to-be-created outdoor learning space at the high school. They will also be launching “Seaford Salutes,” a display across

from the gymnasium to celebrate veterans and first responders.

For the first time, 52 graduating seniors were designated Seaford Scholar Laureates. This program was designed to encourage and reward students who actively pursue college-level learning experiences throughout their high school careers. Students who earned this highest academic honor wore a special sash at graduation.

Assistant principals Melanie Judson and Alex Mantay announced each graduate, along with his or her future plans and accomplishments at Seaford High School. Diplomas were presented by Board of Education President Lisa Herbert, and graduates received a Seaford Scholars gift from Dr. Pecora.

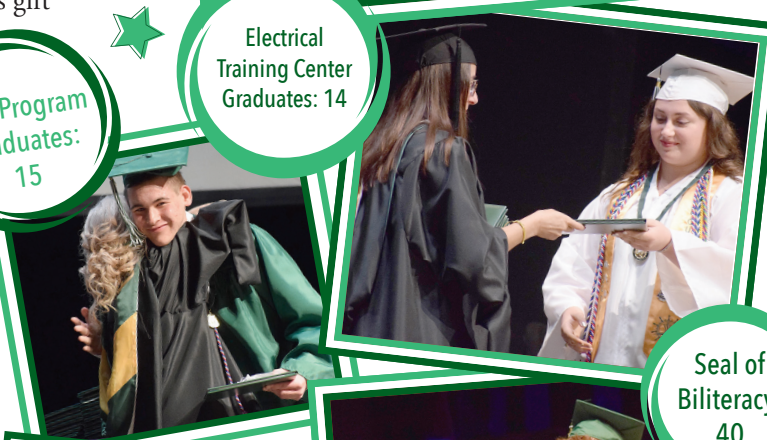


Colleges
Attending:
64



Electrical
Training Center
Graduates: 14

EMT Program
Graduates:
15



Seal of
Biliteracy:
40



Pathways
to Service
Commendation:
38

Graduation Award Recipients

Seaford Middle School/High School PTSA Academic Award

Matthew Kind
Brian Karaman

SASA Student Leadership Award

Dylan Alt
Brianna Sidoti

United Teachers of Seaford Scholarship

Mia Leggio
Valerie Martin

Anthony J. Varuolo Student Council Award

Autumn Feitzinger

Patriot Award

Emily Brown
Michelle Evangelista
Brian Falk
Paiten Haskell
Matthew Kind
Valerie Martin

FROM DAY 1 TO GRADUATION:

Viking Valedictorian and Salutatorian Embody Excellence

Matthew Kind and Brian Karaman have been by each other's side since their first day of kindergarten at Seaford Harbor Elementary School, so it was fitting that they graduated at the top of Seaford High School's Class of 2026. With a weighted grade point average of 107.47, Matthew was named the valedictorian, and Brian's 106.25 GPA earned him the rank of salutatorian.

Both graduates challenged themselves academically throughout high school, with Matthew taking 14 Advanced Placement courses and Brian enrolling in 13. They are AP Scholars with Distinction and earned the AP Capstone Diploma, the Seal of Civic Readiness and the Seal of Biliteracy – Matthew for Spanish and Brian for French.

Matthew was named a National Merit Finalist, received the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Medal, was captain of the varsity football and baseball teams, was named to the Newsday All-Long Island football team, was one of 63 students in the country to be named to the National Football Foundation Team of Distinction and received the Jay Fiedler Award as Nassau County's top scholar-athlete in football. He was also senior class president and the 2025 homecoming king.

This year, he served as Seaford's first ex officio student representative on the Board of Education, giving a monthly report at each meeting on behalf of the student body.

“That was an extraordinary experience,” Matthew said,

noting he had a biweekly planning meeting with Superintendent Dr. Adele Pecora. “I was able to learn about the behind-the-scenes of the school district. It prepared me so well for college, for networking and for serving others.”

Brian was named a National Merit Commended Student and received the Pathways to Service Award. He has excelled in the music program, earning a selection as a clarinet player to the 2025 NYSSMA All-State Music Festival. Additionally, he has served as a drum major for the marching band, treasurer of the Tri-M Music Honor Society and a saxophone player in the jazz band. He was captain of the varsity bowling team which won its eighth consecutive Nassau County championship and finished second in the state tournament. Both students received the Seaford Scholar Laureate designation.

In the fall, Matthew will attend the University of Richmond on a full scholarship to double major in cognitive science and leadership studies and will be on a pre-law track.

After four years of undergraduate work, he plans to attend law school and hopes to be a corporate lawyer. He chose Richmond because it has a small population but a big-college vibe, and there is a strong connection between students and faculty. There are lots of networking opportunities, and he hopes to play club baseball and study abroad during his junior year to expand his horizons and learn about other cultures.

Brian will head to the Southern Tier to attend Binghamton University, where he plans to major in psychology and be on a pre-physician assistant track. After earning his bachelor's degree, he expects to apply to schools to pursue his career as a PA. At Binghamton, he will be in the Scholars Program as well as a research program, and said the school appealed to him for both its academic offerings and great social life.

Senior year was filled with great memories for the graduates. Matthew fondly recalls spirit week, the pep rally and homecoming, and the inaugural battle of the classes which featured lots of competitions and was won by the senior class. For Brian, marching with the band in the New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade and a trip with the music program to see “MJ: The Musical” on Broadway were top moments.

“Seaford has been great,” Brian said. “I've gotten so many opportunities to explore so many different fields and take many different courses. I have the necessary skills to succeed in the future.”



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Dr. Adele V. Pecora
Superintendent of Schools

Light Shines Bright on Seaford's Fifth, Eighth Graders

Seaford High School's Class of 2026 had a lot of time in the spotlight in June, but the light was big enough and bright enough for the classes of 2029 and 2033, as well. Moving-up ceremonies for the district's fifth and eighth graders marked milestones in the educational journeys of more than 300 students.

Fifth graders from Seaford Manor Elementary School marked the culmination of six years of learning during their moving-up program on June 15. Principal Joann Krudis centered her message around the symbol of a lighthouse.

"A lighthouse stands strong through storms, shining its light to guide others," Ms. Krudis said in her address to the future middle schoolers. "And that's exactly who you've become. Each of you has learned how to shine, not just in your learning, but in your kindness, your resilience and your ability to lift others up. That is what it means to be a Seaford Scholar."

Each student was gifted a lighthouse keychain, which Ms. Krudis asked them to keep as a reminder that they have the power to be a guiding light wherever they go.

Seaford Harbor Elementary School's ceremony followed on June 16, and Principal Jennifer Bisulca talked about the daily reminder in school: "Let your light shine bright." She reminded the young graduates that no one shines alone, and they have a "Viking Village" behind them.

"You've had classmates who lifted you up, teachers who guided you and

families who supported you every step of the way," Ms. Bisulca said.

Fifth graders also received a gift – a key – which represented the connection they will always have to their home at the Harbor School.

At Seaford Middle School's moving-up ceremony on June 24, Principal Dr. Raphael Morey recounted experiences of the past three years. In sixth grade, students from Manor and Harbor schools merged into one class and new friendships were formed. Seventh grade was their full transition to the secondary years with different teachers for every period and choosing a world language. In eighth grade, they were further challenged academically with classes like algebra and biology. These experiences helped them better develop Seaford Scholar traits like being flexible, mindful and resilient.

Dr. Morey highlighted the "smaller opportunities" that were equally important and meaningful for their growth.

"In little ways, day after day, you showed kindness and compassion and took opportunities to improve the daily lives of your classmates," he said.

Dr. Morey ended his remarks with the presentation of the first Viking Valor award for the middle school, borrowing a tradition started four years ago at the high school. The recipients, Alexandra Goldberg, Anthony Guttilla, Ryan Kind and Mila Rogdakis, were recognized for the positive impact they had on their peers.

