

The STANDARD

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEER PARK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Deer Park Launches Exciting **NEW BILINGUAL PROGRAM** *for Third Graders*

Deer Park launched a brand-new bilingual program for third graders this year, designed to help both English and Spanish speakers thrive together in an engaging learning environment. The initiative reflects the community's longtime diversity, which has only deepened as the district has recently welcomed numerous Spanish-speaking families from all over the globe.



hello

hola

This new pilot program features two classrooms that embrace a “dual language” approach. Each dual language class is comprised of both native English speakers and native Spanish speakers, creating a vibrant atmosphere full of language and culture. In this setup, English speakers will dive into foundational Spanish while honing their skills in English. At the same time, Spanish speakers will work on mastering English while continuing to develop their Spanish skills. This daily exposure to both languages creates a rich learning experience and fosters appreciation for each other's cultures. As students embark on this bilingual journey, they can look forward to amazing growth. After just one year, they will be well on their way to basic conversational proficiency in both languages. Within two to three years, they will reach foundational proficiency and after five to seven years, many will achieve near-native fluency. The goals of this dual language program go far beyond just speaking two languages, however.

“We want to help our students succeed academically, become bilingual and biliterate, and develop a deep understanding of different cultures,” Executive Director of Elementary Education Danielle Sheridan said. “Research

shows that students in dual language programs often see improved academic performance, enhanced thinking skills, better communication skills, enhanced cultural

awareness, increased creativity, greater job opportunities, stronger memory skills, enhanced social skills and increased self-esteem.”

“The instruction happening in each of our bilingual classrooms is impeccable,” Director for ENL and World Languages Ashley Rosenberg said. “Both teachers have created warm, welcoming environments in which both English and Spanish speakers feel comfortable. If you were to visit either room, you would see student work, charts, books and much more in both languages. Students are welcomed in both languages, and often students work in partnerships, speaking with friends whose background may be different than their own. While instruction happens in both Spanish and English, students are offered differentiated support in their native languages to make sure they understand grade-level content.”

“I can already tell the difference in my daughter's accent when she speaks Spanish,” parent Jennifer Hernandez said. “It's a warm feeling knowing that Ms. Melgar is giving her all to help our babies learn a second language.”

SCHOOL NEWS ROUNDUP

All-County and All-State Musicians *Exemplify Spirit of Excellence*



Seven talented Deer Park High School student musicians – William Fox, Dylan Girard, Nathalie Martillo, Gloria Min, Arielle Salgado, Sophia Sheeler and Lorelai Silverstein – were recently selected to participate in the New York State Council of Administrators of Music Education’s High School All-County Festival in November. This prestigious NYSCAME event brings together outstanding student musicians from across the county to perform together, showcasing their dedication and skill. Silverstein was also selected to participate in an All-State ensemble this December at the New York State School Music Association’s Winter Conference in Rochester.

AP SCHOLAR DESIGNATIONS FOR 72 STUDENTS

The College Board recently recognized 72 current Deer Park High School students for earning AP Scholar designation for 2024, honoring their hard work and high achievement in college-level AP courses and exams.

Thirty-eight students were named AP Scholars, granted to students who receive scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP exams. Fifteen students were named AP Scholars with Honor, granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.25 on all AP exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams. Nineteen students were named AP



Scholars with Distinction, granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.5 on all AP exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams.

Senior **ZARA HOSSAIN** Earns National Merit Commended Student Status



Deer Park High School senior Zaara Hossain recently was named a Commended Student in the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program. She

is one of only 34,000 Commended Students recognized nationwide for their exceptional academic achievement. Their high scores place them among the top 50,000 students who took the 2023 PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

NETS AND JOVIA TREAT ROBERT FROST MIDDLE SCHOOL TO \$5K DONATION



Robert Frost Middle School was a recent recipient of the Jovia Financial Credit Union and Long Island Nets basketball team partnership’s third annual Back-To-School Donation Drive. The school received \$5,000 worth of supplies for students, including novels, backpacks,

sports equipment, and board and card games for indoor recess. Nets mascot Dale and representatives from the Nets and Jovia visited Robert Frost on Sept. 20, and treated the middle schoolers to a fantastic dance party to celebrate the delivery of the supplies.

“We are so honored to be chosen as one of only two schools on Long Island to receive this generous donation,” Principal Dr. Eliana Levey said. “Seeing the joy on our students’ faces, and now being able to support our students and parents with school supplies to ease financial burdens when we can, is just incredible.”

Kimberly Connolly Appointed as Transition Coordinator



The district recently appointed Kimberly Connolly as its districtwide transition coordinator. Connolly has worked in the field of special education for over 25 years, beginning as a 1-1 aide in an inclusion classroom implementing ABA methodologies and in-home settings. She later served as the educational out-of-district liaison and interim assistant special education director for the North Shore Central School District, and most recently as the Committee on Special Education chairperson/program administrator for SCO Family of Services.

“I have obtained valuable experiences through my diverse background, and I am eager to apply my skills to developing this new role for our district,” Connolly said.

“Transitioning from school to postsecondary life should be an exciting journey for every student. A successful transition process is based on the student’s strengths, preferences and interests, and requires collaboration between the school district, student, family and community agencies. Transition planning and services are designed to prepare a student with a disability to achieve his or her postsecondary goals related to living, learning and earning within the community. My focus is to create a positive legacy for our students’ future while ensuring the support and resources are effectively utilized. I am incredibly enthusiastic about joining this wonderful community and contributing to our shared successes.”

DEER PARK WELCOMES THE *Following New Teaching Staff for 2024-2025!*

ROBERT FROST MIDDLE SCHOOL



Kiera Carter
Family & Consumer Science



Chad Marinelli
Math



Nicole Massop
Art



Cassandra Stucklen
Physical Education/Health



Victor Zhao
ENL

MAY MOORE PRIMARY SCHOOL



Lauren Carolan
Elementary



Marissa Snider
Elementary

JOHN F. KENNEDY INTERMEDIATE



Jacqueline Beza
School Psychologist



Kristina Bonser
Elementary Special Ed



Kristen Irani
Elementary ENL



Tracy Lopez
Elementary Bilingual



Jennifer Melgar
Elementary Special Ed

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS PRIMARY SCHOOL



Hanna Giovino
Elementary



Emma Grzybowski
Elementary

DEER PARK HIGH SCHOOL



Kayla Conti
Special Education



Matthew Grzybowski
Special Education



Julia Ingemi
Music



Sean Kelly
Physical Education/
Health



Rebecca Yackel
Art



Ashley Woolsey
Art

**MAY MOORE/ JOHN
QUINCY ADAMS
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

*****ECRWSS***
Postal Customer**

Introducing Deer Park Alternative High School

Deer Park High School has developed an additional learning environment to better meet the diverse needs of our students in today's educational landscape. This new initiative, Deer Park Alternative High School, aims to provide a more personalized and enriching experience for our learners. This program was created in response to the increasing number of students who were falling behind academically and at risk of not graduating with their cohort or dropping out of school, especially after the challenges of the pandemic. Many of the students identified as being eligible for the program have fallen behind due to limited academic proficiency, absenteeism, behavior issues or failing grades. The program serves a small population of students who are in need of these specialized services, offering them community-based work experience, occupational education components for vocational training and job skills for the future. It also establishes a strong support system that includes guidance for career and personal decision-making.

"Our Alternative High School program feels like an extension of the Deer Park philosophy that education should not be one size fits all," said Laurie Osbern, a teacher in the program. "We try to meet our students where they are and provide what they need to prepare them for their next steps. The flexibility of the program allows us to build a different type of relationship with our students, and that's a win for both students and staff."

DPHS Auditorium *Receives Major Upgrade*



Deer Park High School is excited to announce the completion of a major transformation of its auditorium, a project that has been underway for the past six months. This impressive upgrade was a joint effort between the Fine and Performing Arts Department, led by Bradley Murphy, and the Instructional Technology Department, headed by Executive Director Jay Murphy. The renovation includes new stage lighting, a freshly painted stage for added visual appeal and a short-throw projector for vibrant digital scenery. Two 2x2 video walls now sit on either side of the stage, adding dynamic visuals to enhance the audience's experience. Additionally, new acoustic curtains optimize sound quality, allowing performances to sound their best. The auditorium also received an upgraded electrical system and energy-saving LED lighting, modernizing the space while promoting sustainability.

ParentSquare Is Here!

The district is excited to announce the addition of ParentSquare, a new communication tool designed to keep families informed and engaged. ParentSquare allows for easy and secure communication between parents, teachers and school staff, providing updates on events, announcements and important reminders. With features like messaging, event RSVPs and automated notifications, ParentSquare helps streamline communication, ensuring everyone stays connected and informed. We look forward to enhancing our partnership with parents and creating a stronger school community with this new platform! Scan the QR code for additional information.

