

The STANDARD

A PUBLICATION OF THE DEER PARK UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

DEER PARK DRIVES

Back To Normal

In contrast to the recent past, in which the educational experience was severely curtailed by the challenges of the pandemic, the 2021-2022 school year has seen a return to normal school life for the students of Deer Park. From clubs and arts programs to sports and other extracurricular activities, the rich and diverse array of student programs the district has always been known for is back in full swing.

“At May Moore we have a goal and a focus to provide our students a school year with as much normalcy as possible,” Principal Tammy Alcalde said. “This year we are proud that all student clubs for second graders are live and in person. Our students will have the opportunity to participate in Music Club, Mindfulness Club, Time for Tech Club, Art Club and ‘Moore’ Than News Club. The painting of our blacktops continues with our Playground Committee. These paintings provide our students with opportunities for games at recess, sensory paths and seating for outdoor learning. We are also happy to have reconnected with the Federation of Organizations and the Foster Grandparent Program and have welcomed back our foster grandparents. We are currently hosting six grandparents, and our students and staff could not be more appreciative to see them back at our school once more.”

“One of the big ways we’ve gotten back to normal is the STEAM Lab and Creation Station,” JQA Principal Christopher Molinelli said. “Another is eating in the cafeteria again, which is a huge thing for parents. We are also bringing a lot of events back, like the Halloween parade. We are looking for ways to get kids and their parents here.”

“Our kids are able to work more collaboratively this year, work in small groups, work on projects together and partner read,” JQA Associate Principal Lynn Coyle said. “In that aspect, the kids are spending more time together working in the classroom. And parents are slowly coming back into the buildings, which they weren’t allowed to do last year at all. This was a ghost town last year. Everyone is feeling positive about the direction we are going.”

At JFK, activities starting the last week of October and continuing through May include Art/Literary Club, Computer Coding Club, Engineering and Robotics, Intramural Club, Let’s Make a Difference Club, Math Olympiad, Problem Solvers (Gifted and Talented Club), Science Enrichment Club, Technology Club and Yoga Club.

“The overall feel in the building is that things are slowly getting back to normal,” JFK Principal Kelly Benson said. “When you walk in the building, the kids are walking down the hallways freely. The fact that we can eat in the cafeteria brings a sense of normalcy. Assemblies are happening, which we do in a safe manner. At recess they can play together this year, which I think is huge because last year they were isolated with their own class. Now they can make friends in different classes and interact with them on the playground. We are now permitting small groups in a safe manner within the classrooms, which allows for a sense of collaboration, for teamwork and for interaction with each other.”

At Frost, all sports have returned alongside 26 different clubs and activities, including the new #FrostFamily Connect Night and Robert Frost News Room.



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"It is so satisfying and heartwarming to walk the hallways of Robert Frost and see students engaging in meaningful activities and lessons," Principal Eliana Levey said. "We've been apart for so long, and the opportunity to reengage with peers and teachers is amazing. We will continue to provide opportunities for our students to immerse themselves back into the school community by offering clubs, activities and social experiences for them."

"Last year, a lot of kids were full virtual," seventh grader Ethan Lin said. "This year, kids actually come here and experience what's going on."

"I think things are more back to normal," said eighth grader Noah Romero, who plays for the junior varsity soccer team. "We now have full sports, which we didn't have last year. There's a lot more games this year and the season is longer."

"I could not be happier with the work that our team of dedicated teachers, administrators and support staff have done to open Deer Park High School for our student body," Principal Charles Cobb said. "We are all ecstatic to have our students do what they do best – be involved, dedicated students that our school and community can be proud of. I look forward to all of the rich, valuable experiences that this school year will bring."

"Going back to school in person has led to a significantly improved school year," said senior Rumesa Camilica, who serves as Spanish Honor Society president, Science Honor Society vice president and Science Olympiad historian. "Although it's only the beginning of the school year, I feel more connected with my teachers and further engaged in my

learning. Extracurriculars have gone back to being productive because students are able to collaborate with each other in person, and I believe this will enable us to accomplish even greater things."

"I believe that going back to school in a year where everyone goes back in person five days a week is really important," said senior Sonam Katarina, who serves as class treasurer, French Honor Society president, SADD Club vice president, Science Olympiad vice president and Math and Science Honor Society vice president. "Being in my senior year, it is important because of all the classes we have and all the extracurricular activities we are involved in. With everyone being able to come back and participate in all the activities here, it offers much more of an engaging environment and a hope for things to get better in the future."

"Going into this year, I wasn't expecting much at all," said senior Saima Hoque, who serves as Red Cross, Student Council and Math Honor Society president; French Honor Society and DECA co-president; Class Council vice president; SADD and Science Olympiad treasurer; and National Honor Society tutoring chair. "That is not due to the fault of anyone, but the circumstances of the world around us. However, my expectations were blown away in the best way possible. With students coming in person five days a week and with clubs up and running better than ever, this year is truly more than I ever could have hoped for, and I know it will only get better from here. Although things will never be 'normal' in the traditional sense of the word, I will be forever grateful for the hard work that the staff has put in to making this year as 'normal' as possible."

NEW Elementary Seating Plan

The elementary schools have developed a new plan for the placement of desks in the classroom which will limit the number of students being quarantined while at the same time promote increased socialization and collaboration.

"This new setup allows our students to learn how to collaborate with each other," JFK Principal Kelly Benson said. "Our students have been working in isolation for the last year and a half and they finally have the opportunity to do group work

together, so it really promotes that socialization they've been craving."

It's nice to hear accountable talk in the classroom. It gives us a sense of normalcy."

"The new seating works for small groups even with teachers pushing in from other areas like ENL, reading or math," JOA Associate Principal Lynn Coyle said.

"This group arrangement ends up having more space and keeping kids more distanced even though it looks like it's not," JOA Principal Christopher Molinelli said. "We're actually putting kids at tables

together, so it really promotes that socialization they've been craving."



Summer Academic Support Classes

During the month of August, the district offered online academic support classes for mathematics and English language arts for students in grades 6-12. The classes were an opportunity for the students to further develop their math and ELA skills to prepare for the 2021-2022 school year. Students worked on interactive virtual platforms, meeting with their teachers weekly as well as working together individually. The programs offered a condensed curriculum in the following courses: Algebra 1, Algebra 2, ELA 6-8, ELA 9-12, Geometry, Pre-Calculus and Calculus.

AN ENRICHING EXPERIENCE FOR DEER PARK'S *'Unplugged' Attendees*



Deer Park students from incoming sixth graders and outgoing eighth graders to seniors attended the high school and Robert Frost's successful summer Unplugged programs, which provided secondary students with a unique opportunity to reconnect and socialize with their classmates and teachers, helping build better relationships. Classes included crocheting, knitting, clay basket weaving, drama, band, arts and crafts, woodburning, rocketry, Science Olympiad, college essay writing, yoga, mindfulness, stress management, tortilla making, culinary creations, outdoor sports tournaments, Wiffle ball, and constructing planter boxes, raised herb gardens and picnic tables.

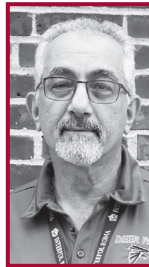
"This was such a wonderful opportunity for our secondary students," District Administrator for Secondary Curriculum and Instruction Jeanne Kozlowsky said. "I appreciate all the administrators, teachers and staff who contributed to making this an enriching experience."

RAYMOND SCOTTO TAPPED TO HEAD SECURITY

Raymond Scotto was recently named lead security guard for the district.

He worked since 2015 as a locksmith for Farmingdale State College and also serves as lead instructor at BSI Security Training in Levittown. Scotto was previously employed as a security officer for Country Club Gardens in West Babylon and Dowling College Campus Security, an executive protection agent for NYC Executive Protection Services in the Bronx, a supervisory security officer at the Federal Bureau of Prisons Department of Justice in New York City, a security guard supervisor at Peace Security in Bohemia, a locksmith at Nassau Suffolk Hardware in Roslyn, and a locksmith and physical security specialist at Mr. ADI

Lock Inc. in Franklin Square. During his long career of providing law enforcement, security and locksmithing services in federal, state, corporate, residential, retail and construction settings, Scotto was a lead instructor in numerous security, firearms and first aid fields, and earned Instructor of the Year and Officer of the Year accolades. The Deer Park resident also served for three years as an inventory management specialist in the U.S. Air Force.



"It is my goal to use my 40-plus years of experience and expertise as a security professional to improve the safety and security of the Deer Park School District, to give back to our community for the excellent education my children received," Scotto said.

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New Admins IN THE DISTRICT

Philip Paniccia - Elementary Special Education



Philip Paniccia was named the new administrator of elementary special education, replacing David Renahan. Paniccia had served as May Moore principal since 2019, and previously as an associate principal at Frost, a teacher in the Sayville School District and principal of Sayville Summer School.

Dina Pannone - Deer Park High School Associate Principal

Dina Pannone was named an associate principal for the high school. She had recently worked for Deer Park as a Spanish teacher at the high school for the past five years and previously at Frost for 14 years. During her time as a district teacher, she has served as the adviser of the Spanish and French honor societies as well as the English as a New Language Study Buddy program, a first-year teacher mentor, and a member of the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, High School Reopening Committee and Professional Learning Committee. Pannone was recently awarded the New York Association of World Language Administrators Teacher Leadership Award for the 2020-2021 school year.



Matthew Comiskey - May Moore Associate Principal



Matthew Comiskey was named an associate principal at May Moore, replacing Tammy Alcalde. He comes to Deer Park from the Northport-East Northport School District, where he spent the past six years as a curriculum and instructional coordinator. Prior to that he taught for nine years, also in Northport, in both second and third grade and as a math interventionist.

Lynn Coyle - John Quincy Adams Associate Principal

Lynn Coyle was named an associate principal at JQA, replacing Tammy Alcalde. She had worked for the past 19 years as an elementary classroom teacher in the Islip School District, most recently as a second grade teacher at Maude S. Sherwood Elementary School. Prior to that, she was a New York City classroom teacher for three years.



Vanessa Langdon - Social Studies Curriculum Associate

Vanessa Langdon was appointed as the new social studies curriculum associate, replacing Heather Stewart. Langdon had previously served as a social studies teacher at Deer Park High School since September 2001.

