



Outreach

WWW.MINEOLA.K12.NY.US

Signature School Semifinalist

Mineola High School is one of only 123 schools in the nation to be selected as a GRAMMY Foundation Signature Schools semifinalist for 2014. The program recognizes the top U.S. public high schools that are making an outstanding commitment to music education during the academic school year. In order to continue in the program, the district must submit recordings of the school's various music groups performing. Finalists will be announced in March and will receive a custom award, as well as a monetary grant ranging from \$1,000 to \$15,000 to benefit their music program.

The selection process to become a GRAMMY Signature School began in August with an online application. Once scored, Mineola was asked to submit additional documentation, including recordings of school concerts, sample music programs and repertoire. Items were reviewed by an independent blue-ribbon committee of top music educators and professionals to determine the schools that merit GRAMMY Signature School status. The foundation works to bring national attention to the value and impact of music and arts education and the urgency of preserving cultural heritage.

Mineola High School is one of only 123 schools in the nation to be selected as a GRAMMY Foundation Signature Schools semifinalist for 2014.

Mineola Union Free School District
121 Jackson Avenue
Mineola, New York 11501

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MINEOLA U.F.S.D.



Middle School Named Apple Distinguished School

Mineola Middle School has been named an Apple Distinguished School for the 2013-14 school year. Only 87 schools in the nation have been selected for the award, which is reserved for those that have demonstrated Apple's highest vision of a successful 21st-century learning environment. This award is a testament to the district's dedication to enhanced learning for students through iPads for home and school use.

In order to qualify for the award, schools had to be nominated by Apple and then demonstrate, through an application process, that they meet Apple's vision of success. This vision includes providing visionary leadership, innovative learning and teaching, ongoing professional development, a flexible learning environment and compelling evidence of success.

For those who may not be familiar, here is an overview of Mineola's iPad program:

- Spring 2010 – iPad program was piloted at Jackson Avenue in fifth-grade classrooms.
- October 2010 – All sixth-grade students at the middle school received iPads.
- August 2011 – Mineola was featured for its use of technology in the national paper, The Journal.
- February 2012 – Mineola was featured on the cover of Time for Kids magazine in the article "Technology Takeover."
- September 2012 – All fifth- through seventh-grade students at the middle school received iPads.
- August 2013 – iPads were released early to all middle school students.
- October 2013 – All third- and fourth-graders received iPads, expanding the initiative to grades 3-8.
- 1,200 students in the district are currently utilizing district-issued iPads for school and home use 10 months out of the year.

Thank You!

The Board of Education and district administration would like to thank the community for voting in the Nov. 19 special referendum vote. We thank you for your support on both propositions.

A MESSAGE FROM *Your Superintendent*

Dear Residents,

Welcome to 2014. I hope you had a joyous holiday season, filled with family, friends and good food.

I would like to thank everyone who voted in our November special referendum vote to increase the amount we can save in our capital reserve fund and utilize some existing funds for improvements to our facilities. Your support on these referenda is critical to protecting and maintaining our greatest capital assets – our buildings. Unlike other districts, the Board and I are committed to saving money for our capital work, while other districts may float bonds that incur debt for future generations. This conservative approach will address all of our capital needs, but saves our taxpayers money in the process.

Mineola's foresight in curriculum and

program has made for a seamless transition to the Common Core Standards. Programs like our Knowing Science K-5 initiative, which was implemented in first and second grade two-and-a-half years ago, aligns perfectly with the Common Core. You can read more about this program on page 5 of this newsletter. It is just one shining example of how Mineola has remained ahead of the curve in education. Common Core implementation has also been much more streamlined for us due to the use of iPads in our critical assessment age groups (grades 3-8).

When State Education Commissioner Dr. John King visited the middle school prior to his CCS public forum in November, he raved about Mineola's implementation of the CCS and has been using Mineola as an example in many of his subsequent visits and speeches. It is a testament to the

amazing teachers in our district, as well as to our Board members for their vision and the community for supporting the Board and our budgets. And so again, I thank you.

Please also be sure to check out our new Alumni Spotlight feature on page 5. I'm hoping to feature an alumnus in each edition of the Outreach, so if you would like to nominate someone, please reach out via the district website at www.mineola.k12.ny.us and click on the "Your Voice Matters" tab. I also encourage you to use this tab to sign up for district surveys, ask a question, voice a complaint, or, better yet, send us a compliment!

Sincerely,

Michael P. Nagler, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Top Academic Honors

The district would like to congratulate this year's valedictorian and salutatorian, whose academic standings have placed them at the top of their graduating class. In June, Kristen Sze-Tu and Joyce Hwang will lead the way to the Tilles Center stage for Mineola's Class of 2014 commencement exercises. Here is a brief overview of what got them to these top-ranking positions in their class:

VALEDICTORIAN *Kristen Sze-Tu*

- AP Scholar with Honor
- Member of science research team
- National Honor Society member
- Tri-M Music Honor Society member
- Science Honor Society member
- Secretary of Student Organization
- Stage crew member/paint manager for Drama Club
- Involved with various musical groups, including chamber orchestra and the Dynamics; plays the bass guitar, piano and violin
- Key Club member
- Mathletes participant
- Involved with art as an extracurricular activity

SALUTATORIAN *Joyce Hwang*

- AP Scholar with Honor
- Commended Student
- National Honor Society member
- Tri-M Honor Society member
- Science Honor Society member
- Secretary of Key Club
- Member of the science research program; working with a doctor at Winthrop-University Hospital on spine surgery
- Leader for Christian Club
- Environmental Club member
- Member of the Dynamics and the Acapella Choir
- Plays violin in chamber ensemble
- Mathletes participant
- Involved with Student Service Center



As evidenced by their numerous academic, extracurricular and co-curricular activities, both of these young women are deserving of their titles. We wish them continued success into the future as they begin life at college next fall.

Joining them at the top of the class are the following eight high-achievers:

3. Joyce Rhim
4. Caroline Mueller
5. Mallory Brady
6. Christopher Farrell
7. Christina Vafiadis
8. Kristina Goncalves
9. Jake Tavernite
10. Clare Connaughton



A Focus on Our Future



“Gregory from “Diary of a Wimpy Kid” because he’s funny and he has good journals. I really like him.”

- *Sofia Amador, Grade 4*



“Will from “Ranger’s Apprentice.” He shows that you don’t have to be big and strong to be a hero; it’s about the mind.”

- *Jessica Kern, Grade 12*

“Edward Tullane from “The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tullane.” He goes to different places and connects with people, but still keeps a lot of hope about getting home.”

- *Neilah Rustemi, Grade 7*



“Fudge from Judy Blume’s “Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing” because he is funny and does tricks like pretend to be a dog.”

- *Sergio Dacunha, Grade 4*



“Frankie Pickle because his imagination takes him on a lot of adventures.”

- *Dylan Boutin, Grade 2 Meadow*

Students Speak:

Who is your favorite literary character?



“AJ from “My Weird School” because he is funny. I read 12 of them.”

- *Kelsey Morrison, Grade 2 Meadow*

“Paul from “Misery.” He went through so much, including losing a finger and leg – but he ended up surviving. He was unhappy about it, but was such an interesting character.”

- *John Marques, Grade 12*



“Amelia Bedelia because she makes a lot of mistakes and it’s funny.”

- *Isabella Buono, Grade 1 Hampton*



“Goofy. Because he’s goofy.”

- *Nicholas Grotheer, Kindergarten Hampton*



“Timothy from the book “The Cay” because he goes through so much. He is stranded on an island, yet still remains positive and strong.”

- *Alexa Buongiovanni, Grade 7*

MUSICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

LISFA Students Selected

Three Mineola High School students were selected for the 2013 Long Island String Festival Association Honors Orchestra Festival in November. Eighth-grade violinist Halle Gumpel, ninth-



grade cellist Elizabeth Ryan and eleventh-grade violinist Emily Abrams were chosen for the event. Since 1956, the Long Island String Festival Association has been featuring young and talented string players of Long Island. The program has grown into a largely respected and successful festival throughout the years. LISFA'S dedication to educating young string players has allowed students to work with renowned conductors and musicians from all over the country.

Marching to Second Place

The Mineola High School marching band participated in the New York State Field Band Championship at the Carrier Dome in Syracuse on Oct. 27. Competing against seven other bands in its class, Mineola placed second with a score of 81.25 – missing first place by only .05 points. Marching band members performed with grace, serving as true ambassadors for the district. They returned home to a warm welcome from cheering parents, school administrators and the village mayor, as well as the Mineola Fire Department throwing confetti.

*Drum majors
Kerri Barnett and
Meghan McCabe
and field major
Kelly Behan with
their second-place
award.*



All That Drama

The Mineola High School Drama Club and Thespian Troupe 276 presented "The Heiress" on Nov. 22 and 23. Written by Ruth and Augustus Goetz, "The Heiress" is the emotionally charged tale of a young woman's desperate search for the love she has been deprived of all her life. The action took place in Washington Square, N.Y. in the 1850s, which the drama department went to great lengths to replicate. Exquisite period costumes were constructed, drawing the audience into Catherine Sloper's world and life. The performance received rave reviews from all in attendance.

Marching Band Takes *First Place* At Home Competition

The Mineola School District Department of Fine and Performing Arts and the Mineola Music Parent's Association hosted the 33rd annual Marching Band Competition on Oct. 19 at Michael J. Tully Stadium in New Hyde Park. Thirteen bands and approximately 1,300 students – including Mineola's – performed at the event, which was attended by more than 2,000 spectators. Mineola High School's marching band took first place in their class at the competition, tying Mineola for second place in the state.

Mineola's high school and district administrators, as well as Board of Education members, were in attendance to show their support for the award-winning band. The event was planned by Patty Fischer and Beth Walton with the assistance of more than 30 parent volunteers. All proceeds from the competition benefitted the Mineola Music Parent's Association, which is committed to providing scholarships and field trip funding for the school's marching band and music students.





Alumni Spotlight

John Watts, Class of 2010

Currently a senior at New York University Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development, John Watts from the Class of 2010 is in a five-year program to earn his master's in education with a dual degree in music education and music composition. While at NYU, the opportunity to newscast arose, and he took advantage. Now as a senior, he has hosted his own radio show for two years called "Weekend Review" (airing Saturdays at 4 p.m. on WNYU) with his cohost and friend Erica Ezeifedi. The political talk show has morphed into a variety show encompassing politics, entertainment and personal stories.

"I always knew I wanted to do something in entertainment, but I didn't know what it was going to be," said John with regard to his career path. "The teachers at Mineola High School enabled me to be a bit questioning and argumentative at times, which led to some great classroom debates. Dr. Moriarty specifically helped me vault myself into politics and entertainment by debating me and playing devil's advocate to my ideas. She sharpened me, helped me mature my own beliefs and become less naïve to the field of politics and debate."

During his time at Mineola High School, John

was drum major of the marching band, involved in all plays and musicals, first chair in the string orchestra and a member of all choir groups and the bowling team. "It wasn't until about seventh grade that I really catapulted with my musical interest due to increased opportunity for musical talents," he said, reflecting on his move to Mineola from Port Washington in the fifth grade. "I flourished because it was easy for me to get involved. I think the musical environment here enabled me to open up. The teachers really shaped me as a person and allowed me to be creative and independent. Tracey Campbell, Joe Owens, Meg Messina, and Matt Deluca gave me so much opportunity to shine. For me, it took time to understand that what they are doing is shaping lives constantly. Without them, a part of me would absolutely be missing. Maybe music, maybe my flare for politics, who knows."

John, who began composing music at age 6 (he had played by ear from age 3), most recently composed "The Dark I Know," a musical he co-wrote with Alex Eisen, also a Mineola graduate. The musical received a Kennedy Center Honor for Best Musical in April 2013 and was featured in the International Midtown Theatre Festival, where it



received the Producer's Award for best produced show. "It was really my biggest experience in writing," he shared. "I'd never done anything like that before."

Although he is now an award-winning composer, he modestly considers it a hobby. "My true passion right now is radio and teaching," he said.

John still resides in and has a love for Mineola. Most recently, he organized the "Les Miserables" reunion performance, which raised several thousand dollars for the district's music department. He enjoys playing tennis and golfing when he can. In his spare time, he conducts private music lessons in the Mineola area.

Expanding Kid Knowledge

SAVE THE DATE

View samples of projects completed using Kid Knowledge at the **4th Grade STEM Night**

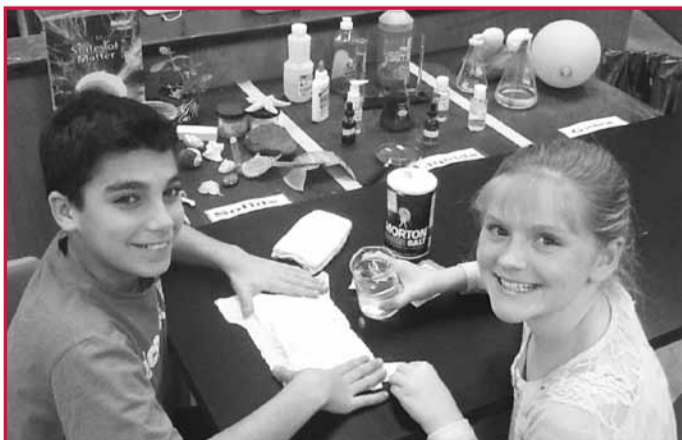
Featuring Kid Knowledge Creator, Dr. Banko
June 3, 2014 from 6-8:00 PM @ Jackson Avenue

Two years ago, as a tool to assist in aligning its science curriculum with the Next Generation Science Standards, the district implemented the Kid Knowledge science core curriculum for students in kindergarten through second grade. After much success at the primary level, the district has decided to expand its scope this year to include grades three through six. As developed by Knowing Science, Kid Knowledge connects literacy and math to science, as well as incorporates

science concepts and practices into everyday life. The Kid Knowledge curriculum aligns with framework of the Next Generation Science Standards, which emphasize learning about science and engineering and involves the integration of the knowledge of scientific explanations (i.e., content knowledge) and the practices needed to engage in scientific inquiry and engineering design.

In grades three through six, students are completing the content reading and vocabulary in their classrooms and conducting hands-on experiments or inquiry-based activities in the labs. In the middle school, the eBackpack application, installed on school-issued iPads, is used by teachers to distribute the homework and by students to access, complete and submit the finished assignments. Fewer topics are covered so that students can delve deeper into various subject areas.

A recent fourth-grade experiment had students producing electricity through the construction of devices that converted mechanical energy, using a manual crank, into electrical energy. In sixth grade, students are learning about kinetic energy through creating and collecting data from a motion machine. "It's exciting to see the students engaged and motivated by the experiments as they are learning scientific



As part of a unit on Matter, 5th graders at the middle school explored chemical vs. physical changes. They discovered that one of the chemicals, sodium polyacrylate, has a real world application. It is used in baby diapers to absorb liquid! In this photograph, students are experimenting to find out how much water a newborn diaper can hold.



Jackson Avenue fourth-graders test hydropower to generate electricity.

concepts," said Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Patricia Burns after a visit to the class. "Being hands-on makes it seem like a game to them. They are also learning to work collaboratively in an effort to succeed in each experiment."

The program was selected for its effectiveness, as well as its ability to enhance the curriculum for Common Core. Mineola is currently the only school district on Long Island utilizing this program. For more information, visit www.kidknowledge.com.

iPads Test Solar Energy

How easily can you heat up a can of soup using solar energy? Fourth-grade students in the Academically Gifted Program at Jackson Avenue tackled this question and more using their iPads in November. Working collaboratively with a school in South Africa, students used their iPads to exchange information and estimate the use of the sun as a viable



source of alternative energy. Students shared data through SkydrivePro, Office 365 and OneNote and designed and constructed a solar oven they thought would be able to not only convert the sun's energy the fastest, but also heat up a can of tomato soup the quickest. Using thermometers connected via Bluetooth to the iPads, students were able to record their data directly into the program and track their progress at heating the soup. Throughout the process, students could decide if they needed to alter the design of their oven for maximum results. After more than an hour outside, students took their data back to the classroom for analysis and discussion with the students in South Africa on how it went.



Learning the Ropes of Fire Safety

In honor of October as Fire Safety Month, students at Jackson Avenue learned the basics of fire safety at the Mineola Fire Department. Firefighters gave students a tour of the firehouse, displayed the trucks and equipment, taught them how to safely exit a burning building and how and when to call 911. Students were also shown special equipment,

such as the Jaws of Life and the hook-and-ladder truck, and given plastic firefighter hats and fire safety coloring books to take home. They were reminded to check the batteries in the smoke and carbon dioxide detectors in their houses, and urged to discuss everything they had learned with their families.

Power of One at Hampton

The Power of One was the theme behind Hampton Street School's recent bully prevention program for all students in grades K-2. The program featured a duo of performers who discussed cyberbullying, verbal bullying and physical bullying and the seriousness and repercussions of these actions in a fun and interactive workshop. "It's not about getting the bully in trouble, but about helping your friend," the pair stressed to students. They also reinforced that every action one takes can have a good or bad reaction, and to be mindful of the consequences.



Jumping Their Way to the Top

Hampton Street School was recently recognized by the Jump Rope for Heart program as being one of the top 10 Long Island school districts in terms of fundraising efforts. Last school year, Hampton raised more than \$5,000 for the program, which benefits the American Heart Association. The district wishes to thank the entire Hampton school community and everyone who donated to the cause.

Donating Food for Thanksgiving



Meadow Drive School sponsored a food drive to benefit local families for the Thanksgiving holiday. Each class was asked to donate seasonal food items to create baskets that would enable families to celebrate a happy Thanksgiving. As a result of the entire school community coming together, the student council was able to put together baskets that benefitted more than 20 families.



Honoring Veterans Through Crafts

In an effort to reinforce to students what Veterans Day is and to connect the holiday to their culture, students in the universal pre-K program at Hampton Street School created crafts to honor the day. Each student glued together pieces of construction paper to form a soldier and then attached little thank-you notes to each one. The craft activity, done by Christine O'Grady's morning and afternoon sessions, were sent to local veterans.

Pictured above are some of the students with their craft soldiers from the morning UPK class.



Author Visits Jackson

Students at Jackson Avenue School were visited by the famous "Joshua Dread" series author Lee Bacon. Mr. Bacon shared behind-the-scenes information on plot lines, character development and illustration creation with third- and fourth-graders at the school. Following a brief large-group presentation, Mr. Bacon visited individual classrooms, where he answered questions from fans and conducted a create-your-own-supervillain/superhero workshop with the children. The workshop followed a create-your-own-adventure format and asked students to work collaboratively with one another.

A Passport to Math

Kindergarten students at Hampton Street School received a "passport" to mathematics. As part of a fun lesson, each child made a book, or passport, with each page containing a number-based activity. In order to earn stamps in their passports, students had to complete the activity on each page and "travel through math."

This activity came two weeks after pumpkin math, in which students used their old pumpkins to do some creative problem solving in class. Broken into groups, and with the help of parent volunteers, students measured the circumference and height of large pumpkins in order to reinforce previously taught math concepts. The kids also had an opportunity to look inside the pumpkins and count how many seeds each one held. Together as a group, they filled in a worksheet and designed paper pumpkins of their own.



UPCOMING Events

Monday, January 20
SCHOOLS CLOSED –
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Thursday, January 30
Board of Education Business Meeting
7:00 PM @ WI

Wednesday, February 5
District Jazz Night 7:00 PM @ HS

Wednesday, February 12
District String Night 7:00 PM @ HS

Thursday, February 13
Board of Education Business Meeting
7:00 PM @ WI

Monday, February 17-Friday, February 21
SCHOOLS CLOSED – WINTER RECESS

Wednesday, March 5
District Choral Night 7:00 PM @ WI

Thursday, March 6
Board of Education Workshop Meeting
7:00 PM @ WI

Thursday, March 20
Board of Education Business Meeting
7:00 PM @ WI

Tuesday, April 1
Transportation Application Deadline for
Private/Parochial Schools

Thursday, April 3
Board of Education Workshop Meeting
7:00 PM @ WI

Monday, April 14-Tuesday, April 22*
SCHOOLS CLOSED – SPRING RECESS
(*NOTE: April 21 & 22 are if
NO snow days are used)

Upcoming Parent Workshops

ELA COMMON CORE STANDARDS

March 10 – Middle School

March 11 – Jackson Avenue

March 18 – Hampton Street School & Meadow Drive School

Superintendent Presents on iPad Implementation

Superintendent Dr. Michael P. Nagler was a featured presenter at the Oct. 16 meeting of the Association of Suffolk County Supervisors for Educational Technologies. Dr. Nagler, along with the district's technology director Marc Licht, presented on iPad rollout and implementation. Mineola was one of the first districts on Long Island to implement an extensive iPad program, which now spans grades three to eight, and has received numerous awards for its implementation, including the Apple Award for Innovation in Education. The meeting was held in the Three Village Central School District and featured presentations from three other school districts.



SPORTS CORNER

The Mineola athletic program looks to continue its success after an exciting fall season that featured outstanding team performances by the boys cross country team, football and girls volleyball teams. These three programs qualified for playoffs after successful seasons. The girls volleyball team advanced to the semi-finals before falling to Lynbrook High School in an exciting home playoff match.

Fall season award winners included the following athletes:

CROSS-COUNTRY TRACK

Douglas Demagistris	All-Division
Ryan Kelly	All-Division
Jake Tavernite	All-Class County
Marissa Cotroneo	All-Conference
Caroline Mueller	All-Conference

GIRLS SOCCER

Catherine Cunningham	All-Class
Sabrina Ferreri	All-Conference
Samantha Mendes	All-Conference
Nicole Forte	All-County and Scholar-Athlete

BOYS SOCCER

Christopher Farrell	All-Conference
Andrew Pereira	All-Conference

Daniel Pardo	All-County
Mersim Redzematovic	Scholar-Athlete

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

Courtney Capobianco	All-Class
Valerie Fischer	All-County
Tara Maloney	All-Conference
Samantha Pastore	All-Conference

FOOTBALL

Vincent Bieniek	All-County
Anthony Caruso	NFF Award
Justin Oommen	All-Conference
Ryan Eccher	All-Conference
Christian Martin	All-Conference
Zachary Vega	Unsung Hero Award

In addition to outstanding achievements on the field and courts, our students accomplished great heights in the classroom. NYS scholar-athlete teams are achieved by rigid criteria that includes a majority of the team holding a combined average above 90.

FALL SCHOLAR-ATHLETE TEAMS

Girls cross-country track, boys cross-country track, girls soccer, and girls volleyball.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Arthur Barnett, *President*

Christine Napolitano, *Vice President*

William Hornberger, Nicole Matzer, Patricia Navarra *Trustees*

Michael P. Nagler, Ed.D. *Superintendent of Schools*