



Outreach

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District to Receive Grant For Efficient Management & Actualized Savings from Reorganization

Due to its commitment to taxpayers to create an efficient and affordable school system, the Mineola Union Free School District has been selected to receive a \$213,129 grant for the 2012-13 school year from the New York State Education Department. Mineola is receiving the School District Management Efficiency Competitive Grant as a result of its application that detailed the ways in which it has streamlined its costs by closing two school buildings and by reorganizing to more efficiently utilize resources while still providing top-notch educational programs for its students.

"The Board of Education and I are happy to bring this additional revenue to our district," Superintendent of Schools Dr. Michael P. Nagler said of the grant.

In the application, Dr. Nagler had to detail the actualized cost savings of the district's reorganization plan during the 2011-12 school year, which totaled nearly \$2.4 million. He also detailed how the savings, combined with the income from leasing Cross Street School, has enabled Mineola to become a pioneer with its utilization of technology in the classroom.

By detailing its efficiency and savings each year, Mineola is eligible for the grant not only this year, but for the next two school years as well.

Distinguished Scholars from the Class of 2013

Thirteen years of hard work, determination and commitment to succeed have proven to be worth it all for the Class of 2013's top 10 students. Their outstanding academic achievements have brought them to the forefront of their graduating class. They are certain to continue to distinguish themselves and the community as they pursue their dreams.

1. Sujith Maracheril
2. Julianne Falotico
3. Razvan Tohanean
4. Julia Fabiano
5. Annette Voll
6. SangMin Bak
7. Patrick Murray
8. Stephin Jose
9. Lina Kim
10. Danielle Martinez-McCormack

Valedictorian Sujith Maracheril is no stranger to success. This year alone he has already been named an AP Scholar with Distinction as well as a National Merit Semifinalist. He is president of the Science Honor Society, captain of the Brainstormers challenge team and a member of the National Honor Society, Mathletes and Student Service Center. Sujith also participates in spring track, plays the violin for the school orchestra and takes advantage of the district's science research program. Planning to major in pre-med in the fall, Sujith spent three weeks this past summer shadowing his uncle, Dr. Balaji Zacharia, who is a doctor in India.

Salutatorian Julianne Falotico excels both in the classroom and on the playing field. Her list of accolades includes being named an AP Scholar with Honors, receiving the 2012 Fairfield University Book Award, and being named All-Conference and All-Class for basketball, All-Class for soccer and Academic All-American for girls lacrosse. A scholar-athlete, she is also a member of the National Honor Society, Science Honor Society, Leadership Council, Literary Society, Athletes Helping Athletes, SADD and the Lunch Bunch, in addition to serving as president of the Key Club and vice president of the Red Cross Club. Julianne plays flute in the high school's concert band and works as a camp counselor during the summer months.

Congratulations and best of luck to each of these scholars.



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

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MINEOLA U.F.S.D.

A MESSAGE FROM *Your Superintendent*

Dear Residents,

While it has certainly been a trying two months for some of our staff members and families here in Mineola, it is nice that most of us can now start to feel “normal” again. If you didn’t have any structural damage, you were certainly affected by the gas crunch, lack of electricity and, at the very least, disruption of your daily life. The students, staff and entire Mineola community have been graciously donating to the many districtwide organizations that have been collecting and fundraising for relief efforts to benefit our neighbors who did not fare as fortunately through this storm. Everyone has truly been embodying our mission of “exhibiting strength of character and contributing positively to a global society.” I must also take a moment to acknowledge Mineola’s teachers and staff, who never wavered in their dedication to our students and who

have been here from the reopening of school, despite what may have happened to their own homes during the storm.

In other news, I am proud to report that the district is receiving validation for its decision to not only close two school buildings but to also reconfigure as a means to enable more offerings for its students. As you read on page 1, Mineola is receiving a management efficiency grant from the SED in the amount of more than \$213,00 for the next three years. This speaks volumes about our community and our Board and its dedication to providing the very best, in the most efficient manner and through the most affordable means. To be recognized for our actions by the state so soon after reconfiguring, and in the form of grant monies which will further expand our offerings, is truly astounding.

Board trustee Artie Barnett said it best on my blog: “It is amazing to see how many districts around the state have come to see and try to emulate what

Mineola is providing its students. While the road to our current configuration was rocky at times, receiving this management efficiency grant, to me, is an endorsement of the direction we have taken.”

You can read his full comment to my post through www.mineola.k12.ny.us. Click on the District Info tab and a drop-down menu will give you options, one of which is “Superintendent’s Blog.” If you weren’t aware, I post to this blog quite frequently and would encourage everyone to check it out.

I hope you all enjoyed the holiday season. I wish you a very happy and healthy New Year and hope to see you at any of our upcoming Board meetings or school events.

Sincerely,

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

2012-13 Board Goals

As our district advances, the Board of Education is constantly adapting their goals to facilitate even higher levels of achievement for our students. Listed here are the goals adopted by the Board of Education for the 2012-13 school year:

Educational

- To use technology and NWEA assessment data to provide differentiated homework, thereby increasing individual student achievement.
- To implement the Common Core Curriculum with an emphasis on assuring a correlation between the grade-level unit assessments and state exams.
- Create grade 7-12 ELA curricula in line with the Common Core shifts in ELA/Literacy.
- Continue to encourage high school students to challenge themselves with AP and/or college-level course work, with the goal of every student gaining this experience before they graduate.
- Continue to engage the community in the district’s Strategic Plan, with a specific focus on the quality indicators that define Mineola’s expectations of academic excellence.
- Assess the long-term viability and explore the expansion of the elementary world language program. Assess the current program through parental input and student data.
- Implement, monitor and assess the effectiveness of the pre-K-7 science program.

Facilities

- Continue projects that incorporate “green” technologies, which over time will decrease our dependency on fossil fuels.
- Begin to fund our Capital Reserve with the goal of achieving new windows and doors in all four elementary buildings.

Finance

- Not to exceed the allowable tax levy cap for the next three years, while continuing to maintain and enhance all of our programs.

Construction UPDATE



Jackson Avenue Bus Loop – This project officially broke ground on Thursday, Dec. 6. The loop will accommodate the four buses that normally occupy Jackson Avenue at the times of arrival and dismissal. The loop will run approximately from the entrance to the staff parking lot, swings in toward the building, and swings out near the corner of Saville and Jackson Avenue. Weather permitting, the project could be completed within two weeks, with finishing touches lasting until the spring.

Meadow Drive Library – Contracts have been signed and as of the time of print, work is slated to begin in early January.

A Focus on Our Future



“Solar Walk. You actually visualize the entire solar system. It’s really fun and educational.” -
Edwin Melara, Grade 7



“I like iBooks because I like to read and it makes us not need textbooks anymore. It also gives links to more information on a particular subject.”
- Josie Jones, Grade 6

“Strip Design because it allows me to make my own comic design for any topic and show my creativity.”
- Jorge Megia-Manzano, Grade 7



“Pages because you can use it for every class. I use it to take notes and do projects.”
- Ankita Patel, Grade 5



“Stack the States because it teaches you what the states look like and tells you cool facts about each one. It’s also really fun to watch them stack up.”
- Emma Brown, Grade 5



Students Speak: What is your favorite iPad app and why?

“My favorite app is Stop Motion because it’s easier for me to create slideshows and it’s fun to be able to make things move.”
- Madison Rees, Grade 6



“Presidents vs. Aliens. I like it for two reasons – you get to hit the aliens and it really helps me memorize the political parties and presidents.”
- Jason Price, Grade 5



“EdModo. It’s a school version of Facebook. If I ever forget my homework at school or need to know when a project is due I can easily look it up.”
- Cary Novick, Grade 6



“iMovie because I like to film movies with my brother and I get to share the videos with my friends.”
- Jimmy Tighe, Grade 5



“iMovie because I really want to get into making video games and it’s the first step for me in terms of filming and editing.”
- Daniel Mengler, Grade 6



“Show Me. I like it because I get to draw on it and make videos to share with my friends if they need help with homework.”
- Morgan Brady, Grade 5



“The Jungle Book app. It’s fun to read because it has cool animation features to accompany the story.”
- Nerogica Nimalan, Grade 7





Marching Band Mania:

An In-Depth Look at the Marching Mustangs



Fast Facts

- 91 students in grades 9-12 participate in marching band, approximately 15 percent of the total student population.
- In recent years the band has moved up in its ranking, making it part of the Small School I category.
- The colorguard also works as a Winter Guard from Dec. through April and is nationally ranked.
- Mineola's Parade of Champions has been a marching band tradition for over 30 years.
- Parent volunteers are responsible for much of the production and distribution of materials and props needed for each show.
- The band season itself never really ends – work is always being done for the next show.

BAND VOCABULARY

How many of these terms do you know?

- Field Major: Conducts the band for certain segments and plays during others; not needed for every show
- Drum Major: Conducts the entire show from a podium, keeps the band in time
- Band Director: Oversees all decisions and ideas, maintains staff, and is in charge of scheduling and selection of music
- Colorguard: Students who provide a visual representation of the show by utilizing color, dance and props
- Drill Designer: Sets movement (step) to the music; responsible for where everyone is on the field at all times
- Movement: Different pieces of the same show connected by one overall theme
- Silks: Flags that the colorguard uses

KEY PLAYERS OF THE 2012-13 SEASON

- Kerri Barnett – junior, drum major, plays alto saxophone
- Meghan McCabe – junior, field major, plays clarinet
- Angela Ribeiro – senior, drum major, plays clarinet and viola
- Frank Mauriello – band director for past two years (nine years total with Mineola's program)

BEHIND THE SCENES

If you have ever wondered what goes into putting together a typical 15-minute marching band set, this year's key players have shared all of the details.

A typical band season runs from November of the prior year to October of the current year. "The process doesn't really ever end," said band director Frank Mauriello, who selected the music for this year's show in November 2011. "We try to pick music with a theme, something you can really make a show out of."

Once a theme and music are selected, work is done from November through May to lay out the details of the "story": How many layers should we have? What will the steps be? What will the colorguard add to it and how do we work them in?

Field and drum majors are very involved in the entire process and are responsible for a great deal of paperwork and communication efforts during this time. They are selected each year through an audition process that includes an observation, an interview and an essay on what makes him or her a good leader.

In May 2012, the marching band received the final music selections for the 2012-13 season and began rehearsing. Over the summer, students rehearsed twice a week at school and also attended a one-week band camp, which served as a time for them to perfect their music, learn the steps and take direction from the drill designer. The band ultimately perform its show at approximately six or seven competitions throughout September and October, in addition to performing during halftime at home football games.

"My favorite parts of being in the band are the friends you make and learning what it means to work hard

for something," said Meghan, sharing her experiences as a field major. "Absolutely," added Angela. "I'm very close with the friends I've made in marching band and know that we'll stay close long after we graduate."

Mineola hosts an annual Parade of Champions band competition each September. The event, which also serves as a fundraiser for the marching band, has been a tradition for more than 30 years. Other fundraising efforts hosted by the band to offset its expenses include car washes and fruit sales, as well as sales of entertainment books and journal ads.

"It's a real community effort," said Peter Freeman, the district's supervisor for fine and performing arts. "It would be a real challenge to put on a show without any one group, and especially the parent volunteers."

As the season goes on, tweaks are sometimes made to the band's movement or music, based upon feedback and suggestions from judges. This serves not only to perfect the band's overall performance, but also to give the audience a slightly different show each time.

"I'm always nervous until we actually start playing," Kerri said. "I just go over everything I have to do in my head. I try to visualize a perfect performance."

Each official band season ends with a late October performance at the Carrier Dome in upstate Syracuse, where the top bands from across the state compete for the championship. This year's performance was held on Oct. 28, a time when winds on Long Island from Hurricane Sandy began to pick up speed and fear of bridge closings threatened a speedy trip home. Mineola's band, given special permission to perform first instead of last in their class due to the impending storm, was thankful for the opportunity to perform. The band earned its highest score of the year and the third-highest score in Mineola's history.

"The score doesn't even matter though," Meghan added. "It's about loving the activity. And we all love it."

"The mentality of the season was 'everyone matters,'" Mr. Mauriello concluded. "Marching band is much like a sport; whatever your role is, you serve an integral purpose and no one else can 'pinch hit' for you."

A Pleasant Surprise

In an unprecedented event, the Mineola Marching Band was hired this year by Miami's Triton Production Company to perform for the 20th anniversary of the Cartoon Network at Lincoln Center's Frederick P. Rose Hall. The company had been looking for a New York band to perform and saw clips that had been posted on the Mineola band's website. The entire marching band was part of a surprise performance for 500 television executives. Joining the students was Barry Koch, a former high school marching band baritone horn player and current senior vice president and general manager for kids and animation at the Cartoon Network. The Mineola students were true "professionals" for the evening and were required to learn special music for the event.

Applying to College in One Click

With the college application season in full swing, seniors have been actively meeting with their school guidance counselors to narrow down their decisions. This year's process is a bit different than in years past; in addition to the new CommonApp, the guidance department is utilizing the Naviance Family Connection program. These two new components work in conjunction to provide a complete college search and application submission process for teachers, counselors, students and parents.

Naviance Family Connection is a one-stop online program that provides all the tools a family, student and guidance counselor need throughout the college process. For counselors, it provides a way to track which colleges students are interested in, where they have sent applications, and whether they have been accepted to those institutions. For students, it provides comprehensive college searches and college acceptance criteria, a forum to keep track of colleges they are interested in and apply to, and a means to search not only for financial aid, but also for national scholarship opportunities. For parents, it provides a portal where they can join their young adult in their college search, garner financial aid information and be involved with the college application process.

CommonApp is a tool that allows seniors to submit their college applications online. It stores their general information, such as profiles, transcripts and teacher recommendations, and provides step-by-step instructions for completing online college applications.

All seniors and staff members have been trained on the new program and given independent logins. A workshop was held for parents, and letters were sent home explaining the new process and the interactive role parents can play this year with the Naviance Family Connection.

"Naviance has allowed the guidance department to coordinate the college application process. From one program, we are able to see a student's college searches, their resume, "brag sheet" and all supporting college application documents. Teachers submit their recommendations here as well. Additionally, students have a wealth of college scholarship information available," Guidance Supervisor Dr. Whitney Smith summarized the program.

Dr. Smith plans to expand Naviance access to sophomores and juniors in the spring so that they can begin to build their resumes, utilize the college search features and get a head start on planning their future.



"In my personal opinion, Naviance is a well-organized site that helped me through the college selection process and the writing of my resume. I highly recommend it to all students."
- Ana Cueter, senior

Published Teacher Chosen for Global Conference



Over the summer, Denise Maynard, a kindergarten teacher at Hampton Street School, presented her research paper, "The Magic of a Creative and Engaging Classroom," at Mansfield College, Oxford University. As a result of her presentation and abstract at the three-day 8th Global Conference: Creative Engagements, her work was chosen for publication in an Inter-Disciplinary Press e-book on the subject. Ms. Maynard was the only elementary school teacher from New York State and one of 35 worldwide chosen to participate in the conference.

The focus of Ms. Maynard's research was how academic rigor can be enforced through play in a developmentally appropriate way to promote creative engagement across all grade levels. The conference was part of the "At the Interface" series of research projects sponsored by Inter-Disciplinary.net, which aims to bring people together from different disciplines to share ideas and engage in various discussions that are both innovative and challenging.

"If we have to teach academics as rigorously as we do, then we need to utilize methods that creatively engage our students," Ms. Maynard said of her approach, which she has branded as Maynard's W.I.S.D.O.M., Inc. (Working Individual Strategies Differentiating Original Methods). The basis of these methods is to utilize games and play as a means for acquiring academic skills and knowledge.

"Ms. Maynard's classroom exemplifies what early childhood education should be about: engaging students in learning with activities that involve play, movement, hands-on exploration and creativity," Hampton Street Principal Devra Small stated. "Children learn the most when they are motivated to learn because learning is fun."

A 27-year veteran teacher in Mineola, Ms. Maynard has been teaching kindergarten for 15 of those years. She holds a bachelor's degree in elementary education from LIU/C.W. Post, a master's in Liberal Arts and Sciences with her cluster in educational theater from SUNY Stony Brook, and a second master's in S.A.S./S.D.A. from Touro College. Ms. Maynard also had her essay, "Gender Equality in an Early Childhood Classroom" published in an e-book format as a result of her presentation at a global conference in Warsaw, Poland in 2011.

Students Helping Students



Immediately upon returning to school after the storm, PTAs and student organizations throughout the district began collections to benefit local families in need after Hurricane Sandy. At each of the buildings, food, clothing and toiletry drives have been in full swing. The entire staff and student body, as well as those within the community, have been donating items to the cause. For now, the collection is intended to be ongoing at many of the buildings.

Pictured with kindergarten students from Meadow Drive School is social worker Zoila Castillo, who, in addition to a food drive for the holiday season, also collected backpacks and school supplies which were donated to students in areas such as Oceanside, where school buildings were completely lost to the storm.

A Voice for Fundraising

Amanda Lapierre, a third-grade student at Jackson Avenue School, recently sang a song with her aunt, recording artist Dahna Bender, for the benefit of Hurricane Sandy victims. Ms. Bender, who recorded the album "Giving of the Heart," asked her niece to sing the prelude to the track "Winter Wonderland."

"It makes me feel good to know I was actually helping others," Amanda said of her decision to do the recording. "It makes me feel very happy."

The song, which sells for 99 cents on iTunes, is part of an album that is less than \$6 and benefits hurricane victims in the Rockaways. Amanda and Ms. Bender's goal is to raise \$1,000 for the cause.

"It makes me feel good to know I was actually helping others."



The Season of Giving

The holiday season is a time for giving at Hampton Street School. The "Giving Tree" which was located in the school's main office, had mittens with the names of presents for local families in need of assistance with their holiday shopping this season. Students and staff removed mittens, purchased the items listed and returned them to the main office for Nurse Laura Schneebaum to organize and deliver prior to the holidays. In addition to the Giving Tree, a food drive had been running since November and benefitted local Hampton families in need. Students are pictured holding donated items in front of the Giving Tree.

UPCOMING Events

Thursday, January 17

Board of Education Business Meeting
7:00 PM @ WI

Monday, January 21

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Schools Closed

Thursday, January 31

Board of Education Workshop Meeting
7:00 PM @ WI

Friday, February 8

Middle School Musical Production
7:30 PM

Saturday, February 9

Middle School Musical Production
2:00 PM & 7:00 PM

Wednesday, February 13

District String Night 7:00 PM @ HS

Thursday, February 14

Board of Education Business Meeting
7:00 PM @ WI

Monday, February 18-Wednesday, February 20*

Winter Recess – Schools Closed

Thursday, February 21 & Friday, February 22*

SCHOOLS OPEN

Thursday, February 28

District Choral Night 7:00 PM @ HS

Thursday, March 7

Board of Education Workshop Meeting
7:00 PM @ WI

Sunday, March 10

Daylight Savings Time Begins
Put Clocks Ahead One Hour

Friday, March 15

High School Spring Musical 7:30 PM

Saturday, March 16

High School Spring Musical 2:00 PM & 7:30 PM

Tuesday, March 19

Districtwide Parent University Workshop 7:00 PM

Thursday, March 21

Board of Education Business Meeting
7:00 PM @ WI

Monday, March 25-Monday, April 1

Spring Recess – Schools Closed

*DENOTES CHANGE FROM ORIGINAL
2012-13 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Storm Make-up Days

Please Note: Due to the need to make up days from the hurricane and snow storm, Feb. 21, Feb. 22 and May 24 are NO LONGER days off. School will be in session on these three days and students are expected to report.

In addition, Feb. 19 and 20 will remain days off ONLY IF NO ADDITIONAL SNOW DAYS ARE USED FROM NOW UNTIL THEN. If additional snow days are needed, these two days will become regular school days. Parents will be notified if this becomes the case.

SPORTS CORNER

The Mineola Physical Education Department congratulates Erica Cunha and Frederic Lang on receiving the 2012 Physical Education Student of the Year Award. Both Erica and Fred were selected as award recipients based on their achievements in school as students, athletes, volunteers and leaders.

The awards were presented at the annual Physical Education Award Dinner held on Dec. 10 at the Crest Hollow Country Club. The sponsor for the evening was New York State Association of Physical Education, Health, Recreation and Dance. State and local leaders in the field were on hand to honor Erica and Fred and the rest of the award recipients.

Erica and Fred list an impressive resume as students at Mineola. Erica is involved in the PE Leadership class, as well as in several clubs and plans on studying biology and pre-med at the University of Buffalo. Frederic is also involved in the PE Leadership class and is captain of the cross-country, winter and spring track teams. He plans to study Nursing in college next fall.

We again congratulate Erica and Frederic on being recognized for their hard work, scholarship and leadership as students at Mineola High School.



Broadway Comes to Mineola

Shaun and Noemi Taylor-Corbett, Broadway performers with film and television credits, visited with performing arts students at Mineola High School on Nov. 19. Coordinated by teacher Megan Messina, who knew Shaun through college, it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for many of the Mineola students. During their 12-hour visit, the Taylor-Corbetts ran an interactive workshop with dance classes; provided vocal coaching to the concert choir, a cappella singers and student soloists; held an audition techniques workshop with the Thespian Troupe, and answered questions from the musical theater class.

The couple's professional and artistic advice was taken to heart by many of the students, especially those wishing to pursue a career in the field. "Every song you sing is a story," Noemi told vocal students. "Really act out what you are singing. If you are a singer, you are really an actor, as well."

The pair were members of the original Broadway cast of "In the Heights," which Mineola High School is presenting this spring. Shaun also appeared on the PBS show "Hi-5."

