

Educational Horizons

SPRING 2015

pobschools.org PLAINVIEW-OLD BETHPAGE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Artistry Abounds at Plainview-Old Bethpage

The arts offer an invaluable outlet for expression and creativity for students of all ages, and teachers and administrators at POB are always thrilled to see students being recognized for their accomplishments and contributions to the arts. Over the last few months, POB student-artists past and present have distinguished themselves on Long Island and beyond.

High School Arts Students Create Artwork for U.S. Military

Plainview-Old Bethpage's National Art Honor Society Board Members Madeleine Schulz, Marisa Lombardo, Emily Martin, Josh Aber, Sae Otaka, Antonia Brogna, Lauren Palumbo, Gabrielle Block and Victoria Ring recently received certificates from the U.S. Army recruiting office in Hicksville. The student-artists had the opportunity to design a ceiling tile for use in the local military recruiting office. They worked together to create a design that would show their passion for the arts and the pride they have for the school. The project offered a wonderful opportunity for POB students to show their support for the men and women in the military and learn first-hand how artwork has applications in all walks of society.



POB Student's Artwork to be Showcased at Metropolitan Museum in NYC

Angela Lee, an eleventh grade student from POB JF KHS recently received awards at the Regional Scholastic Art Competition for her art work titled Loneliness. The piece, which you can see to the left, portrayed concern for problems currently facing society. Angela's artwork will be displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City later this year and at the Parson's School of Design at the New School. Congratulations to Angela for this prestigious recognition!

Unique Art Project Promotes Understanding and Kindness

The Friendship Bench Project—a result of the joint efforts of POB's Director of Pupil Personnel Services Ellie Becker, Supervisor of Art Dr. Judith Chen and elementary principals—aimed at creating a lasting symbol of kindness and inclusion at the elementary level. John DiNaro, the BOCES Arts-in-Education Artist, worked with all second graders districtwide to both design and paint a bench that authentically represented their work and their school's activities and themes. Second grade was chosen so that students would have several years to appreciate their contribution while attending their respective schools. Each bench will be placed in a prominent location as a visible reminder to all who attend and visit the school.



Plainview-Old Bethpage Central School District

Administrative Offices • Washington Avenue • Plainview, NY 11803
pobschools.org

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Superintendent's Message



We have just emerged from one of our worst winters, with snow piled so high we may have thought we would never see the ground again. The activities in our schools kept the warmth in our hearts needed to get us through to Spring. Within the pages of this Newsletter we proudly share many of those activities that have made Plainview-Old Bethpage Schools valued by the community. It is essentially this unique characteristic that the Board of Education focused on preserving as they deliberated throughout the budget development process. In the end, they emerged to establish a budget for the 2015-16 school year that is well below the tax levy cap, yet still maintains the high quality programs the district is known for.

Next year our middle school students will begin and end their day on the same time schedule, ensuring equity of opportunities across the district. To accomplish this new schedule, we have had to change the start times for our Kindergarten Center and our elementary schools. You have received notice of these times in a post card mailed home and posted on our website. With the projected decline in enrollment the Board of Education will be presented with a plan for moving our Kindergarten students into their home elementary schools on May 26th at 7:30 pm at a Community Forum at the high school. All are encouraged to attend and give input and have their questions addressed.

This summer will be a busy one for all of our schools as you will see construction from the bond referendum, budget and capital reserves beginning. We have received the go-ahead from the state for roofs, asbestos tile removal and construction of the tennis courts at Mattlin and POB JFKHS. Some of our buildings will be closed to accommodate the construction. We ask for your patience as we begin the first phase of our facility face lift. This is all made possible by your continued support of our schools.

We are building futures together in a great district with great students. I urge each of you to stay informed about all the wonderful events occurring across the district. Please mark your calendar now, and be sure to vote on May 19 from 6am to 9pm. Follow us on Twitter (@pobschools) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/pobschools) or contact my office at 434-3001.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lorna R. Lewis
Superintendent of Schools

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2015 VALEDICTORIAN AND SALUTATORIAN

Tyler Fenton and **Evan Rinder** are the POBJFKHS Class of 2015 valedictorian and salutatorian, respectively. Tyler conducted research at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and he founded the Ride 4 the Ribbon fundraiser, which supports the Conquer Cancer Foundation. He was named a finalist in the National Merit Scholarship Competition (see page 6). Evan Rinder, also a National Merit finalist, has received school, state and national honors in math, social studies English, world languages and music. Be sure to check out the graduation issue of *Educational Horizons* for more information about Tyler and Evan and the many other tremendous accomplishments by our District.



What's Happening in Our Schools

K-Center Children Study Outer Space

Recently, children at the **Kindergarten Center** had the opportunity to learn about a truly phenomenal subject: outer space and the world beyond our skies. It was part of a program called StarLab, a roving inflatable planetarium experience. Children sat in the StarLab and learned about NASA, astronauts and space exploration. They also learned about constellations, mythology and how different cultures historically viewed the night sky. Other areas covered included gravity, rockets, propulsion, atmosphere, space travel and lunar ecology. StarLab represented a fun way to learn about an endlessly fascinating subject.



A Journey Into Colonial Times at Old Bethpage Elementary

Fourth grade students at **Old Bethpage Elementary School** recently participated in a fascinating colonial life program presented by Benner's Farm in Setauket. The event, which was held right in the school, provided an opportunity for children to experience first-hand some of the daily activities of colonial times. Best of all, the event was interactive; in workshops, students had the opportunity to spin wool, weave on looms, grind corn into meal, make wooden toys, and write with quill pens.

The presenters from Benner's Farm put a special emphasis on the role of children in colonial times, which allowed our students to draw comparisons between contemporary life and that of the past.

Parkway Students Working as Journalists

A talented class of fourth graders at **Parkway Elementary School** will soon become published journalists! As part of a project presented by *Newsday* called "Kidsday," children in Ms. Lovett's class will be writing up to three articles each that will be published in a September issue of *Newsday*. Each student will be working with a *Newsday* editor who will help the students generate ideas and formulate their articles. Many of the articles will be in the form of student-conducted interviews; the young writers will interview Chinese teacher Helen Jung and some will even leave the school to interview a to-be-determined local celebrity. Pictures taken by the students will also be published in the newspaper.



Congratulations to Ms. Lovett's fourth grade class for being selected for this exciting project. We can't wait to read your articles in *Newsday* this fall!



Pasadena Students Learn a Powerful Message Through a Unique Performance

In early March, third grade students at **Pasadena Elementary School** took part in a nationwide program aimed at inclusiveness and teaching students about interacting with their peers with disabilities. Called The Kids on the Block, this revolutionary program uses entertaining puppet shows to teach students about difficult and too-often avoided topics.

At the Pasadena event, several of our high schoolers visited third graders to teach them about autism. It was a fun event enjoyed by all in attendance, but more important, it helped children understand the challenges faced by their fellow students living with autism.

The Return of Spring Celebrated via Poetry at Stratford Road

Students at **Stratford Road Elementary School** recently celebrated the long-awaited return of spring by participating in a poetry project. It was all part of the school's Reading Partners program, which groups together fourth and first graders in order to build reading comprehension. Participating students met with their reading buddies to brainstorm spring-related nouns and adjectives to use in their poems, learning about literary forms such as personification and point of view.

In a creative twist, the young poets crafted their poems from the point of view of a spring object such as a flower or animal. When the students completed their work they shared it with their classmates and the other students had to guess the object they were writing about.



Mattlin Students Create Literary 'Selfies'

Instagram, one of the fastest growing and most popular social media sites, is used and enjoyed by people the nation over. Students at **Mattlin Middle School** recently used the app to strengthen their reading comprehension skills. Teacher Stacey Peat designed an Instagram-themed bulletin board for students to post selfies of characters from the books they are reading in class and at home.

Students created the selfies from the point of view of a character during a major event in the story. The activity delivered lessons in character analysis through textual evidence such as physical appearance, moods, actions, etc.; summary; point of view; and visualization of setting and facial expressions. The students used paper cut-out "likes" to show their appreciation for their classmates' work, just as they would on Instagram. The school plans on revisiting the program for future fifth grade students.

World Culture Fair Celebrates Diversity at POBMS

As part of their school's World Languages program, seventh and eighth grade students at **Plainview-Old Bethpage Middle School** teamed up to host a World Culture Fair. Aimed at exposing middle schools students to the diversity of cultures represented in the community, the World Culture Fair featured interactive displays, representative dress and cuisine, and musical performances.

Represented countries and territories included Argentina, Bahamas, Belgium, Bermuda, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, England, Fiji, France, Germany, Greece, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Korea, Madagascar, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, Tanzania, Turkey, US Virgin Islands and the Ukraine.



POBJFKHS' Mathletes Shine at County Competition

The Mathletes of **Plainview-Old Bethpage JFK High School** recently competed in the Nassau County Math Tournament. Comprising students Matthew Hirsch, Aaron Meyers, Kevin Park, Evan Rinder and Aaron Tetens, POB's Mathletes put their mathematical skills to the test against dozens of teams from schools across the county. They did not disappoint. Of the 64 teams competing in the Upper Division, the Mathletes finished in the top 20. In the individual scoring, Aaron Tetens finished in 20th place out of 152 seniors. Aaron Meyers finished in 16th place out of 160 juniors.



During the competition, students solved 15 math problems without calculators, 10 complex math problems with calculators and 20 final problems in teams. Congratulations to our Mathletes for an outstanding competition!

POB's American Sign Language Honor Society Meets With Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf

Students in the POBJFKHS American Sign Language Honor Society aren't just learning the intricate and fascinating language of American Sign Language (ASL), they are learning firsthand about the issues faced by those in the hearing-impaired community. At a recent event, the Plainview-Old Bethpage students recently interacted with students from the Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf. Students and teachers from both schools communicated with ASL, and the barriers, that too-often separate students of different backgrounds and languages, faded away.

A high level of conversation marked the occasion. No topic was off limits. Students discussed the similarities and differences between hearing and hearing-impaired teenagers, the impact of scientific and technological advances on the hearing-impaired community, and the necessary college preparation for being an interpreter or for using American Sign Language in other fields of social service. The conversation was not exclusively a high-brow, hot-button issue; the students also talked about the everyday topics relevant to teenage life.

Learning about the ways in which students with different circumstances and challenges communicate, interact and learn is one of the most important lessons educators can instill in students. It's why we as a District put so much emphasis on diversity programs and multicultural events, and it's why POB teachers are dedicated to helping our students understand the challenges faced by students with disabilities. Events such as the collaboration between the Mill Neck Manor School for the Deaf and POBJFKHS are a prime example of the good that comes from this belief. Thank you to the American Sign Language teachers, Kim Preston and Debbie Goldmeier, as well as Department Chair, Robert Dennis, for helping to organize this enriching experience for our students.



ARTS NEWS AROUND THE DISTRICT



Class of 2014 Graduate Receives Only Perfect Score in the World

Plainview-Old Bethpage JFK High School Class of 2014 graduate and current New York University freshman Sharon Lee was recently announced as the **only student in the world** to receive a perfect score on the AP Studio Art: 2D Design Portfolio Exam. Additionally, Sharon was one of only 285 students worldwide to earn a perfect score on any AP exam. This unbelievable accomplishment is a reflection of the Sharon's extraordinary talent and work ethic, as well as the dedication and ability of Plainview-Old Bethpage's art instructors, particularly department head Dr. Judith Chen and Sharon's AP Studio Art teacher Wendy Ritholtz. Congratulations, Sharon! Our class of 2014 continues to make us proud!

POB Students Work With Kennedy Center

The internationally renowned Kennedy Center visited Plainview-Old Bethpage elementary schools over the winter to help integrate two seemingly disparate subjects: science and theater arts. Through the Partners in Education program, and under the direction of esteemed theater educator Karen Erickson, several first and second grade teachers explored a step-by-step process of integrating science concepts with drama strategies in the classroom. Teachers learned how to transform traditional science lessons into active, explorative science through drama strategies such as expressive movement and storytelling. Teachers also learned about activities that develop teamwork and students' creative problem solving skills. Special thanks to Stratford Road Elementary School, and Mr. Josh Golbert, Director of Music, for hosting and organizing this event.

Please Join Us

For a Community Forum Regarding Your Kindergarten Students Tuesday, May 26, 2015

At this community forum, a comprehensive plan for moving kindergarten students into their home schools in 2016-17 will be presented. The community will have an opportunity to have their questions addressed.

WHERE: Plainview-Old Bethpage John F. Kennedy HS Auditorium

WHEN: Tuesday, May 26 at 7:30 p.m.

* Background information is available on the District website: www.pobschools.org *

* Babysitting will be provided by POBJFKHS students from 7:30 - 9:00 pm *

Follow POB!



Recently, we have created a District Facebook page, Twitter handle, and app for iOS and Android. Our Facebook page, which we started this year, can be found at www.facebook.com/pobschools; our Twitter handle is @pobschools; and the POB app can be found by searching for "Plainview-Old Bethpage School District" on the Apple Store or Google Play.

The main purpose of our accounts and app is to provide parents and the POB community with information on school and District events; student awards, recognitions and commendations; closings and delays; weather-related issues; and important educational articles and publications.

Five POBJFKHS Students Named Finalists in National Merit Scholarship Competition

More than 1.5 million students nationwide take the Preliminary Student Aptitude Test to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Competition. Only five percent—less than 15,000—score high enough to be honored as finalists. Of that tiny number, POB is proud to announce that five came from our District. Congratulations to Tyler B. Fenton, Susan T. Huang, Jennifer Hwang, Evan S. Rinder and Roshni Sethi. Each of them will now be considered for a portion of a National Merit Scholarship totaling \$33 million.

