November
EDITION
2026



SUPERINTENDENT'S BRIEF



Uniondale UFSD

"There is no greater joy than the joy of giving back."
-**Dr. Monique Darrisaw-Akil, Superintendent of Schools**

A SEASON OF GRATITUDE AND SERVICE

grateful



As we enter November, our thoughts naturally turn toward gratitude and Thanksgiving. When families gather around the table this season, many will take time to reflect on their blessings. In the Uniondale Union Free School District, one of the most meaningful ways we express gratitude is through service to others.

Service is a core value we cultivate in our scholars year-round—whether they are performing at senior centers, collecting food for neighbors in need, or raking leaves for community members. Beyond our students, so many dedicated staff members give selflessly of their time. This month, we are proud to highlight a few inspiring examples of service in action across our district.

STAFF & STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS: LIVING OUR VALUES

Brenda Floyd | Safety Agent, Walnut Street Elementary School



Mrs. Floyd is a dedicated Safety Agent in our district, who proudly serves at Walnut Elementary School. In her free time, she serves as the head of the security team at Grace Cathedral International, Church where she has been a member for 15 years. Mrs. Floyd also serves on the decorating committee at her church, bringing care and creativity to beautify the church for all parishioners.

Valerie McFadden | Community Advocate & Youth Mentor



Valerie McFadden is a longtime community advocate and the founder of **Lady Diamonds**, a mentorship group at Turtle Hook Middle School. She created the program to give young girls a safe, supportive space beyond the classroom to build confidence, navigate adolescence, and embrace their self-worth. Her mentorship also extends to Uniondale High School, where she has served as an adviser for **The Diamond Club**. Beyond her school involvement, Mrs. McFadden works tirelessly in violence prevention and family support, earning well-deserved public recognition as a Nassau County community activist.

Uniondale High School Varsity Club | Student-Athlete Leaders

The UHS Varsity Club brings together standout student-athletes who volunteer their time to inspire and empower middle school scholars. Visiting middle schools across the district, these student leaders facilitate interactive team-building activities, share their personal academic and athletic journeys, and offer proven strategies for high school success. Initiated by Athletic Director **Peter Cardone**, the club is co-led by Physical Education teachers **Caitlin Woods** and **Adrian Berry**.



HONORING OUR VETERANS



In observance of Veterans Day, all district schools will be **closed on Wednesday, November 11th**. We extend our profound gratitude to our service members and their families—both at home and abroad—for their sacrifice, courage, and dedication to protecting our nation.

MAXIMIZING PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences are right around the corner. Remembering my own experience as a parent—rushing from work, navigating school hallways, and trying to meet with each of my children's teachers—I know firsthand how hectic these evenings can feel!

Despite the busyness, conferences are one of our best opportunities to build strong partnerships between home and school. They offer insight into your child's development well beyond letter grades.

Suggested Questions for Your Conference:

- **What are the major assignments and learning goals for this semester?**
- **In what areas or subjects is my child excelling?**
- **Are there specific concepts, standards, or habits my child is working to overcome?**
- **What strategies or resources do you recommend to support learning at home?**

Don't hesitate to share your own observations about your child's routines, interests, and study habits at home. Open communication helps us tailor our support to your child's unique needs.

WHAT'S NEW IN CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE)?

The old debate of "College OR Career" is in the past—today's Uniondale scholars are prepared for both.

Our expanding CTE pathways offer hands-on technical coursework in high-demand fields, including:



- Robotics
- TV & Media Production
- Welding
- Small Engine Repair

These courses allow scholars to earn industry certifications while exploring potential career fields. We are currently working to secure official New York State recognition for our CTE pathways, which will enable students to earn specialized diploma endorsements upon graduation. Keep an eye on the district website for updates on newly added CTE course offerings!



DISTRICT EXCELLENCE & CELEBRATIONS

MICHELLE PETERSON-DAVIS HONORED WITH INAUGURAL STATE AWARD



The New York State English Council (NYSEC)—the state affiliate of the National Council of Teachers of English—honored **Michelle Peterson-Davis** on October 23, 2026, at its annual conference in Albany, NY. In recognition of her exceptional contributions to education and her legacy as NYSEC's first president of color, the organization officially named the honor the **Michelle Peterson-Davis Educator of Color Leadership Award**, naming her its inaugural recipient.

SYLVIA KALLICH, MSN, RN
NAMED OUTSTANDING SCHOOL NURSE ADMINISTRATOR



The district proudly congratulates **Sylvia Kallich, MSN, RN**, School Nurse Administrator, for receiving the **2026 New York State Association of School Nurses (NYSASN) Award for Excellence in School Nursing** for Zone 1 (Nassau County). This distinction celebrates Nurse Kallich's outstanding leadership, clinical excellence, and unwavering commitment to the health and well-being of our school community.

HAPPY DIWALI!

Warmest wishes to all members of our Uniondale community celebrating **Diwali**, the Festival of Lights! May the season bring light, harmony, peace, and prosperity to your home.



UPCOMING EVENTS & KEY DATES

Parent/Teacher Conferences
Time for All: 1:00PM-4:00PM and 5:30PM-8:30PM:

- **Elementary Schools:** Thursday, December 3rd
- **Middle Schools:** Wednesday, November 18th
- **High School:** Thursday, November 19th

Friday, November 20:

- Show Choir Salute to Motown, 7:00PM @ UHS, Auditorium

Monday, November 23:

- Annual District Turkey Trot, 3:30PM @ UHS, Softball Field

Tuesday, November 24:

- Board of Education Meeting, 7:00 PM @ Northern Parkway Elementary School

Nov 25–Nov 27:

- Thanksgiving Recess, All Schools & District Offices Closed





