

PM Above & Beyond

Penn Manor School District

Spring 2025



PSSA test scores continue to rise

Penn Manor results outpace Lancaster County, state averages in math, science and English

Standardized test scores for Penn Manor students have been rising over the past three years and exceed the average scores for schools in Lancaster County and Pennsylvania.

Since the 2020-2021 school year, scores on the science, math and English/Language Arts portions of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessments tests have increased every year.

In science, the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced has risen from 72 percent in '20-21 to 79 percent in '23-24, exceeding the county average by 8 percent and the state average by 13 percent.

In English/LA, the percentage scoring proficient or advanced has risen from 66 percent to 69 percent, exceeding the county average score by 12 percent and state score by 16 percent in the '23-24 school year.

The numbers are similar for math. Penn Manor's PSSA scores rose from 49 percent to 57 percent over the four-year period, exceeding county averages by 13 percent and state averages by 16 percent in '23-24.

"The scores are a reflection of the reality that we have great people serving a great community," said Dr. Jerry

More PSSAs on [Page 3](#)

Schools 'Best' again

Congratulations to the students and staff at our elementary and middle schools, all of which earned a 2024 "Best Schools" designation from U.S. News & World Reports in the magazine's latest school rankings. Our schools

earned the honors for placing among the top 40 percent of all schools in Pennsylvania, based on academic measures.

Conestoga Elementary was ranked 146th of the more than 3,200 Pennsylvania elementary

More 'BEST' on [Page 6](#)

Harting earns teaching award

Citadel Heart of Learning honor

Penn Manor High School language arts teacher Courtney Harting recently was honored with the Citadel Heart of Learning Award.

Mrs. Harting is one of only three teachers in Lancaster County to receive the award, which honors exceptional teachers who inspire their students and make a significant impact on their communities.

Each year, students, parents, and colleagues nominate thousands of



Courtney Harting

More HARTING on [Page 3](#)

Team, coach and students named to Athletic Wall of Honor

Three former student athletes, one coach and an athletic team have been inducted into the Penn Manor Athletic Wall of Honor.

Jennifer Bradley, Greta Lindsley, Chris Perry, former soccer coach Dick King and Penn Manor's 2016 bowling team are the newest members, following an induction ceremony in January.

Bradley (Class of 2009) was an All-American, All-League, and All-State field hockey player and a member of Penn Manor's 2008 state championship team. In lacrosse, Jenn was twice named L-L League Player of the Year and was a member of the L-L League championship team.

She played field hockey at American University.



Former student athletes and coaches inducted into the Penn Manor Wall of Honor are, clockwise, from upper left, Chris Perry, Greta Lindsley, Jenn Bradley, Dick King, and the 2016 bowling team.

More WALL OF HONOR on [Page 2](#)

Wall of Honor



2016 Bowling team members accept their honors.

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Lindsley (Class of 2014) was named L-L League Cross Country Runner of the Year and L-L League Champion four straight years, won the district cross country championship and placed eighth in the state.

In track and field, she was a four-time L-L League champ (1600 and 3200 meters), three-time District III Champion (1600 meters) and placed second and fourth in the state (1600 meters), and was named an All-American.

She ran cross country and track at Penn State University.

Perry (Class of 2009), who passed away in 2022, was a Swimming All-American, two-time District III champ, and two-time state place winner. He held five school individual swimming records and three team records.

He was a swimmer at the University of Pittsburgh.

The 2016 bowling team was the first-ever state bowling champion from Lancaster County. The team also was L-L League and Section champions and



placed second in the Eastern PA Bowling Championships.

The team included Zach Bowers, Jordan Wakefield, Austin Curtis, Nicholas Fisher, Tanner Simet, Michael Morris and Nick Mease, along with coaches Chris and Neal Vital and Ed Fisher.

King, who died in 2023, coached boys' soccer from 1979 to 1993 and started the Penn Manor Youth Soccer Program. His teams earned a Section II Championship and finished third in District III in 1991, and he was twice named L-L Coach of the Year.

After the ceremony, the recipients were honored during halftime of the boys' basketball game against Cedar Crest.

Congratulations to these new inductees!



Patricia and Keith Perry speak on behalf of their late son, swimmer Chris Perry, at the induction ceremony.

Message from the Superintendent

How long does it take to create a new habit?

For some of us, the answer would be a long time, involving many attempts. Others would say a new behavior becomes second nature after only a few weeks.

Regardless of the length of time involved, making a commitment to the desired behavior is what makes the difference.

At the start of the 2024-25 school year, I challenged our teachers and administrators to make it a priority to unlock new opportunities for our students that will enhance their learning, in and out of the classroom.

Based on the number of field trips high school teachers have taken with students (close to 400 and counting), the new activities that students are involved in, and the people from outside the district who have visited our classrooms, the administrators and teachers have made unlocking new opportunities a regular habit.

Because space is limited, I would like to highlight just three of the new opportunities students have been provided with this year.

Since its inception in 2019, the Penn Manor Esports Team has grown in popularity and participation. With more than 100 students, the co-curricular program has earned numerous awards and championship titles. Recently, team members assembled their powerful gaming computer systems under the guidance of district IT staff. The opportunity for students to build their own computer systems provides an authentic learning experience and saves the district money.

Beyond technical experience and cost savings, our students are learning valuable teamwork and collaborative skills, essential

for success in both esports and future careers.

To encourage collaboration throughout the district, several opportunities have been unlocked for students to engage in projects across buildings.

In the spring semester, high school students in Elizabeth

Sheerer's Family and Consumer Science class worked with students in first grade at Pequea Elementary to create stuffed fish, based on the younger students' designs and descriptions.

Another collaborative project involved second graders from

Hambright and Central Manor Elementary Schools engaging in a pen pal project. Students wrote to their peers using proper letter formatting. After corresponding back and forth, the students visited each other's schools and are planning to meet again in late May at Charlestown Park.

Speaking of collaboration, our theater groups are displaying their talents onstage. A wonderful recent production of *Big Fish* showcased the abilities of many of our high school students.

Marticville Middle students performed in *Rise of the Superheroes*. And coming soon to the stage at Manor Middle will be *The Great American Talent Show*.

All of these new opportunities that have been unlocked for our students are enriching their education. The efforts of our teachers, staff, and administrators on behalf of our students are making a significant difference.

Thank you for your continued support of the Penn Manor School District and our students.



Dr. Phil Gale

- Dr. Phil Gale

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phil.gale@pennmanor.net

PSSAs

Continued from Page 1

Egan, Penn Manor assistant superintendent for personnel and operations. “The commitment of our teachers and staff, as well as the support of our parents, have contributed to our students’ success.”

In recent years, Egan said, the Penn Manor faculty and administration have developed systems to identify students’ academic needs and provide assistance to help them overcome these hurdles.

For example, the district is creating and implementing common, standards-based assessments for the end of each unit in most grades and subjects, enabling teachers to provide targeted academic support. Teachers use small group instruction, targeted mini-lessons and spiraled review throughout the year to help these students.

While the increasing test scores are encouraging, Penn Manor will continue to refine curriculum and instructional practices to target specific student needs.

Many thanks to our students, staff and parents for their efforts.

Harting

Continued from Page 1

teachers for the awards, which cover a six-county area. Winners are chosen based on their dedication, innovation, and commitment to education.

The awards were established in 2001 by Citadel Credit Union.

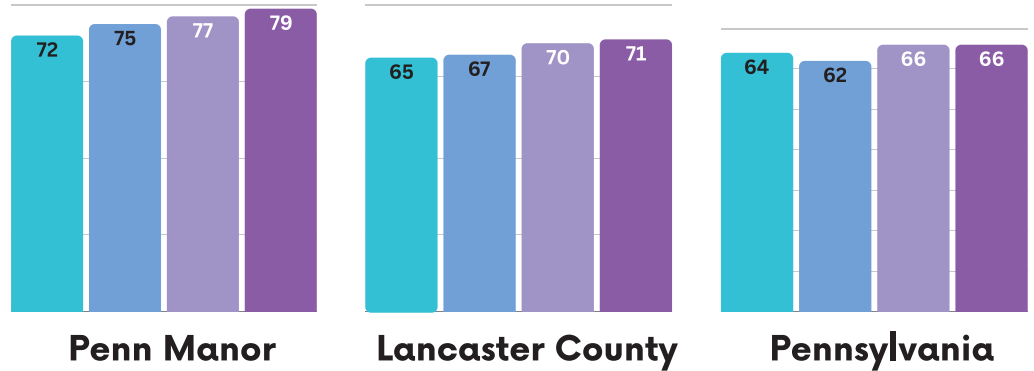
Courtney received \$1,000 for her classroom and a glass Citadel Heart of Learning paperweight.

“I feel incredibly honored to receive this award,” Mrs. Harting said. “I can think of so many deserving Penn Manor teachers. I am lucky to work in a district that recognizes, values, and celebrates the efforts of its teachers, and I am proud to represent the Penn Manor community and my colleagues.”

Mrs. Harting joined the Penn Manor staff in 2017 and teaches ninth-grade Honors Foundations of Literacy, College Preparatory Foundations of Literacy and

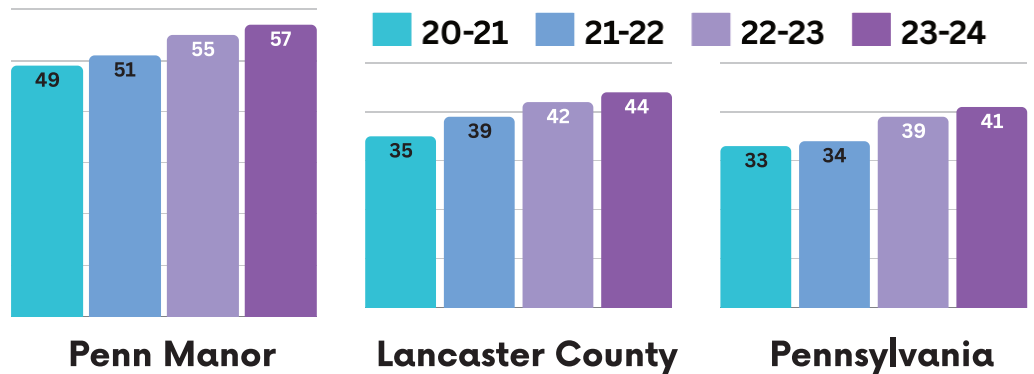
Science PSSA scores

% Proficient/Advanced



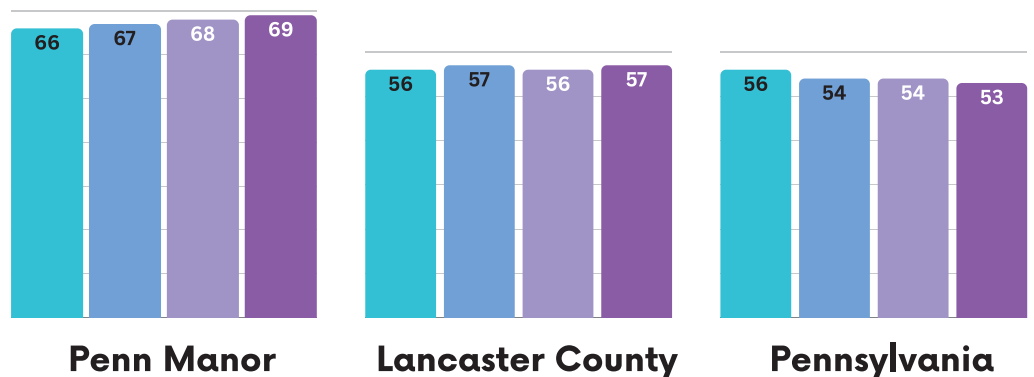
Math PSSA scores

% Proficient/Advanced



English/LA PSSA scores

% Proficient/Advanced



Foundations of Literacy B.

She also helps coordinate the Link Crew program, which supports ninth-graders as they transition through their first year at the high school.

Courtney’s colleagues and former students were on hand to support her during the awards presentation on March 11 in her classroom.

Lindsay Feger, Penn Manor’s Language Arts Supervisor, said Mrs. Harting “spends countless hours working to develop rigorous and scaffolded materials to ensure that all student needs are being addressed in the classroom.”

“She is an asset to our department, the high school, and Penn Manor School District.”

Fall & winter sports earn team honors, individual awards

Penn Manor fall and winter athletic teams had strong seasons, with several student athletes earning LL League, District and state honors.

The **field hockey** team had another outstanding year, qualifying for the PIAA State Championships after a fifth-place finish in the District III Championships. The team had several marquee wins, beating both Warwick and Emmaus.

Chloe and Morgan Hook both earned first team honors, while Kelby Dings and Liz Bustillo earned second team honors.



Michael Lower

Joelle Kroesen and Emma Koehler both were second team LL Section I All-Stars.

The **boys' soccer** team won a District III playoff game for the first time since 1991 and only the second time in the program's history.

Rylan Hertzog was a first team Section I All-Star, while

Peyton Landis and Tommy Lebo were second team All-Stars. The team also won the Section I Sportsmanship Award.

The **girls' soccer** team made another return to the district playoffs after an outstanding regular season.

Kylie Collins and Kennedy Dings both earned All-League recognition, and Paityn Smith and Brooklynn Showalter both earned Section I second team All-Star honors.

In **golf**, Jesse Shue qualified for the PIAA State Golf Championships for the third straight year after earning a sixth-place medal at Districts. Teammate Braden Souder was a first team Section I All-Star.

In **cross country**, Clair Roberts earned an LL League Medal to lead the team on the season. In addition, Roberts, Rae Sandt, Amelia Fetter, Hope Andreychek, Gemma Rodak and Greta Heitland all qualified for Districts.

On the boys side, Tristan Weaver, Caleb Howell and Jack Hightower



From left, Jesse Shue, Dru Landis and Trevor Olson.



Caden Boland

also qualified for the District Cross Country Championships.

Girls' volleyball players Alyssa Mattern and Abby Andrew both earned second team Section I All-Star honors. The team also was recognized as the Lancaster-Lebanon League Officials Sportsmanship Award winner.

The **girls' tennis** team had an outstanding season and just missed the District III team playoffs. Haley Hutchinson was named a

Section I All-Star.

Several **Comets football** players earned honors as Matt Neuman, Jahmai Torres and Josue Isosa all were named Section I first team All-Stars. Jack Warfel, Jalen Dupree, Elijah Hess, and Jason Osman were second team honorees.

Swimmers Dru Landis and Trevor Olson both competed in the 200 freestyle and 500 freestyle at the PIAA State Swimming Championships. Dru finished 10th overall in the 200 and 15th in the 500 freestyle.

Trevor finished 2nd overall in the 200 free, breaking a 23-year-old school record with a time of 1:37.65. He also placed 2nd in the 500 freestyle and broke his own record and lifetime best with a time of 4:26.05.

Dru and Trevor also won

More **ATHLETICS** on Page 6

Penn Manor hosts Girls & Women's Sports Day

Nearly 100 Penn Manor students from kindergarten through grade 8 took part in a National Girls and Women's Sports Day event on February 5, hosted by the athletic department.

Held nationally each year, the event celebrates the accomplishments of female athletes and promotes equity in school sports.

Penn Manor's event, held at the high school, featured interactive stations where

students could learn about Penn Manor girls' and coed athletic teams, Unified Sports, and sports medicine.

Recent Penn Manor Wall of Honor inductee Greta Lindsley was the keynote speaker, addressing the students about her career as an athlete. Greta, a 2014 Penn Manor graduate, was a standout in cross country and track who went on to compete at Penn State University.

Girls and Women's Sports



Day activities were organized by Rachel Suter, Penn Manor's head field hockey coach.

"This day is special," Suter said. "It's a day where we come together as a com-



munity to celebrate the extraordinary achievements of girls and women in sports, to acknowledge the strides we've made, and to inspire the next generation of female athletes."

MiniTHON raises \$27,000 to fight childhood cancer

Through MiniTHON activities this school year, Penn Manor students and community members raised more than \$27,000 to assist childhood cancer patients and their families.

The money was raised for the Four Diamonds Fund through such fundraisers as the Math Stall Day, FFA Line Dancing, Trunk or Treat, No

Shave November, Powder Puff football game, faculty-student basketball game, food sales, and donations from community members and businesses.

"It was a team effort by the community, staff and students of Penn Manor to raise that much money," said Billie Jo Kramer, MiniTHON Club adviser.

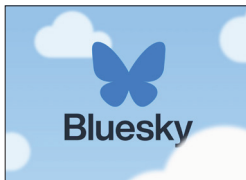


Penn Manor MiniTHON participants pose for a photo showing the amount they helped raise for Four Diamonds this year.

As part of closing night activities, Mrs. Kramer and five Penn Manor students cut their hair to make wigs for cancer patients.

Penn Manor's MiniTHON

Club includes more than 100 students. We thank them, and all the community members who joined them, in the fight to raise funds this school year "For the Kids!"



More ways to see PM news, board meetings

Penn Manor is expanding its outreach by sharing school district news on the Bluesky and LinkedIn social media platforms, in addition to Instagram and X.

The district also has begun to archive live streams of all school board meetings on its

YouTube page. These recordings will remain available for public viewing for at least a year.

Here's how you can follow us:

- Bluesky: pennmanor.bsky.social
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- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@PennManorSchoolDistrict/streams>
- Website: www.pennmanor.net
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Students earn gold, silver at FFA Nationals

Eight Manor FFA members earned gold and silver awards and five members earned American FFA Degrees at the recent National FFA Convention and Expo.

The Agronomy and Poultry Evaluation Career Development Event teams both won silver medals at the convention, held last fall in Indianapolis.

Agronomy Team

The team won a silver medal overall, and Ryan Brenneman won a gold. The other members, Nathaniel Frey, Weston Shertzer and Chase Vinson, each earned a silver medal.

Ryan also scored greater

than 70 percent on the written exam, which allows him to become an apprentice certified crop advisor.

The team was tested on crop/weed, plant and seed identification, and pest, disease and disorder identification. Members also had to complete a general knowledge test, a soils practicum and a team challenge in which they diagnosed a crop problem and made a recommendation on how to address it.

Poultry Evaluation Team

The team of Grace Garrett, Grace Keller, Maybelle Rineer and Lillian Walborn earned individual and overall silver medals.



Left photo: Agronomy team members, from left, Chase Vinson, Ryan Brenneman, Weston Shertzer and Nathaniel Frey. Right photo: Poultry team members, from left, Maybelle Rineer, Grace Garrett, Grace Keller and Lillian Walborn.

The students had to evaluate live birds, eggs, and ready-to-cook and processed poultry products, and complete a general knowledge exam and a team problem-solving activity.

American FFA Degrees

Five recent Penn Manor graduates – Logan Broderick, Brandon McMicheal, Danielle Oatman, Chloe Perry and Ezekiel Smith – received American FFA Degrees, the highest honor in FFA.

They qualified for the degrees by earning at least \$10,000 and productively investing \$7,500 in their supervised agricultural experience or earning and investing \$2,000 and working 2,250 hours in excess of scheduled class time; completing 50 hours of community service; and participating in FFA activities.

Congratulations to these students and graduates, and their ag teachers.

Special education services at PM schools

Penn Manor School District is required to provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities who are determined, through the evaluation process, to need special education and related services under IDEA and 22 Pa. School Code §14.

A school-age child with a disability who is determined to be in need of special education and related services is identified as a child in need of specially designed instruction.

The following are disability categories under IDEA:

- Autism
- Deafness
- Deaf/blindness
- Emotional disturbance
- Traumatic brain injury
- Hearing impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Intellectual disability
- Multiple disabilities
- Other health impairment
- Orthopedic impairment
- Visual impairment, including blindness
- Speech and language impairment

A full description of services and programs available is accessible at: www.pennmanor.net/special-education/ or by contacting Dee Galen, director of student support services, (717) 872-9500, extension 2221.

Annual notices

Federal and state laws require school districts to provide students, parents and/or the public with notices on such topics as privacy, nondiscrimination, child nutrition, open records and homelessness.

Penn Manor invites parents and guardians of students to review the information on notices at www.pennmanor.net/annual-notices/.

Please contact your child's principal with any questions or concerns about the information contained in these notices. You may also contact the superintendent's office at (717) 872-9500, ext. 2223.

Gym renamed to honor Harry Frey



Former basketball player Wally Walker joins Faye Frey and grandchildren Scarlett and Christian Breneman at the dedication.

Penn Manor's competition gym is now the Harry Frey Gymnasium, in honor of the late Harry Frey, a longtime Penn Manor coach and gym teacher who died December 9.

Frey taught physical education for 41 years at Penn Manor and spent 30 years coaching the Comets' mens' and womens' basketball, mens' soccer and baseball teams.

During a dedication ceremony on December 6, Harry's wife, Faye, and great grandchildren Scarlett and

More **FREY** on **Page 7**

'Best': Nine PM schools earn honor

Continued from **Page 1**

schools evaluated for the report. LeTort was ranked 168th, followed by Central Manor (219th), Pequea (258th), Eshleman (330th), Hambright (580th) and Martic Elementary (627th).

In the middle school rankings, Marticville was ranked 93th out of nearly 2,400 Pennsylvania middle schools evaluated for the report. Manor was close behind, ranked 97th.

U.S. News ranked the schools based on

students' math and reading proficiency and each school's socioeconomic demographics. Any school scoring in the top 40 percent is considered "high achieving."

"It's truly remarkable that all of our elementary and middle schools have earned this recognition," said Penn Manor superintendent Dr. Phil Gale.

"I am deeply grateful for this showcase of the exceptional education our students and teachers create together in the Penn Manor School District."

Athletics: Fall, winter athletes shine

Continued from **Page 4**

LL League and District gold medals. Dru competed in the 200 freestyle at the LL and District III Championships and won gold in the 500 at the LL event and silver at Districts. Trevor was a double champion in the 200 and 500 freestyle events at leagues and districts.

In addition, Kenzie Wolpert, Ellie Baldridge and Alivia Green earned LL League Medals and competed at the District III Swimming Championships.

Girls' basketball had an outstanding turnaround season, going 13-9 and advancing to the PIAA District III Championships.

The **boys' basketball** team for the second straight year qualified for the LL League and District III Championships after a 13-9 regular season. The boys lost a tight one in the last Section I game of the season – a win would have given them a share of the title for the first time in 50 years.

Michael Lower joined his father, GJ Lower, as a 1000-point scorer this season, becoming the seventh player in Penn Manor history to accomplish that

feat.

Boys' wrestling had a successful season, highlighted by Caden Boland qualifying for the PIAA State wrestling championships for the second straight year. Teammate Lincoln Yachanech was a sixth-place finisher in the District III Championship, missing qualifying for states by one match. Jacob Nesmith also was a district qualifier.

Chase Harnish, Ethan Corcoran, Ben Paterson, Boland, Yachanech and Nesmith all earned LL League medals.

Three **girls' wrestlers** – Sami Shaw, Maddi Frizado and Madi Stringer – advanced to the PIAA South Central Girls regional championships after placing in the top four at the sectional tournament. In addition, Zoey Yohe and Maddi Frizado won LL League medals.

Bowling continued its streak, advancing to the LL Tournament for the 20th straight year. Sam Joo earned Section I All-Star honors and qualified for the Eastern PA Bowling single championships, along with Kayla Wasche and Elizabeth Hull.

Lots of Comet Pride to go around!

Frey

Continued from Page 6

Christian Breneman walked onto the gym floor to accept the honor on his behalf.

Also on hand was Wally Walker, a member of the 1971 and '72 Comets teams, coached by Frey, that won league titles. Several other members of those teams were in the stands.

Coach Frey "pushed us beyond levels which we didn't know we had," Walker told the crowd, as Harry listened in from home via cellphone. "No matter how hard we worked, it was always fun."

Walker went on to play in the NBA, winning championships with the Portland Trail Blazers and Seattle SuperSonics.

Superintendent Dr. Phil Gale listed Coach Frey's many accomplishments at Penn Manor, where he was a member of the soccer, basketball, and baseball teams and was named First Team All-County in basketball and soccer.

Frey was hired as a gym teacher in 1962, beginning a 41-year teaching career, 40 of them as a high school PE teacher.

He coached the JV boys basketball team from 1963 to 1966 and the boys' varsity basketball team from 1966 to 1978. Frey also coached the girls' varsity basketball team from 1980 to 1985, and coached soccer and baseball.

The dedication was a fitting honor for a very dedicated coach and teacher.



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Ed Foundation awards \$54,000 in teacher grants

Projects enhance learning at all levels at all Penn Manor schools

Thanks to the Penn Manor Education Foundation, Penn Manor students are benefitting from more than \$54,000 in funding to enhance educational experiences, both inside and out of the classrooms.

The Foundation awarded Venture Grants totaling more than \$35,000 in fall 2024 and over \$19,000 in spring 2025.

The grants have enabled students to participate in educational field trips to Ellis Island, Gettysburg National

Military Park, Fulton Theatre, Zoo America, and Kelly's Run Nature Preserve.

Other grants funded drumming assemblies at all seven Penn Manor Elementary schools, ukuleles for four elementary schools, sewing machines for middle school theatre presentations, and expenses for a high school exchange trip to Bavaria.

Several grants involved collaboration between departments and grade levels, one of the goals of this year's program.

A grant-funded high school assembly explored the link between learning Spanish and working in the ag industry, and elementary students at several schools were paired with high school art students to collaborate on embroidery and ceramics projects.

Family and Consumer Science students created stuffed fish and monsters for students at Hambright and Pequea elementary schools, based on the youngsters' designs and descriptions.

Funding also was used for pickleball equipment for all elementary schools and admission and travel fees for



Above, Penn Manor senior Isabelle Ebersole begins work on a stuffed monster using materials purchased with a grant.



A Venture Grant funded equipment and uniforms for a new color guard program at Marticville Middle School.

students to attend Model U.N. competitions.

In all, the grants are impacting hundreds of students at all 10 Penn Manor schools.

In addition to Venture Grants, Penn Manor Education Foundation awards Strong & Healthy grants to students in need, and more than \$120,000 in scholarships to seniors each year.