

# PONTIAC SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS

## SUMMER 2023



## Your Bond Dollars



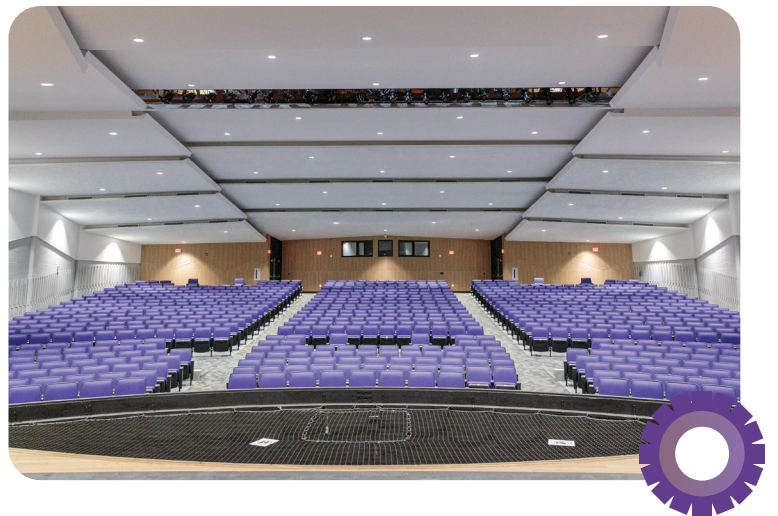
## AT WORK

### The 2022-2023 school year was an exciting year for our bond projects!

Over the past few months, we've seen extensive renovations and updates not only come to completion, but also be in use for students and staff.

The completion of the majority of WHRC allowed for the return of ITA and ILA students to their home building and experience brand new resources and updates that have directly and positively impacted their learning environments. From the state of the art brand new kitchen facility to new science labs, lockers, HVAC systems, and more, our students and staff are experiencing firsthand these improvements daily.

Additionally, our beautiful theatre at Pontiac High School is complete and will be ready to open its doors for performances and events in the fall. We can't wait for you all to experience performances from our many talented



musicians, singers, and other performers on the stage in this exquisite space!

Although our Middle School students remained displaced from their building for the whole year, we are excited to announce that they will be returning to PMS to start the new school year. The renovations and improvements have been extensive throughout that building and we cannot wait to reveal the changes.

Stay tuned for dates for fall open houses and a State of the District address from Superintendent Williams in the coming weeks.

Our work isn't done, we are continuing our projects throughout the district into the new school year and remain grateful to our community for voting for the passage of this bond which is allowing us to bring our schools to the forefront of design, amenities, and resources.



# TRANSPORTATION UPDATE



Some of the biggest challenges the Pontiac School District faced last year were due to bus driver shortages.

The national driver shortage continues to plague districts across the country, but our district seemed to face problems in this arena on a very large scale.

The district worked extensively with their transportation partner to try to find solutions to the issues, but unfortunately were unsuccessful in doing so. The district has since parted ways with that partner and has engaged in a new contract with First Student for the 2023-2024 school year.

This decision was made after careful consideration and exploration of all options available. We are confident and optimistic that First Student will be able to provide our families with consistent, safe, reliable service to and from school daily.

To minimize challenges at the start of the school year, we have been working with First Student throughout our Summer School session as an opportunity for their staff to familiarize with the district, street maps, and train.

We look forward to introducing you to your new transportation team at many community events this summer and are excited to begin the new school year with them. They are continuing to hire additional drivers for the new school year. ***If you, or anyone you know, is interested in becoming a driver please contact: <https://firststudentinc.com/careers/>.***



# Greetings

from  
**Superintendent Williams**

Greetings,

As the summer months get into full swing, I am excited by the energy and development happening across the district.

Even though the traditional school year is over, our district remains vibrant and active throughout these months. Our summer school program continues to grow featuring not only opportunities for our students who are working to improve grades, but for all students to gain additional enrichment experiences and knowledge.

Many of us spend the summer months out in our community at events and celebrations. I love these opportunities to interact with our families, to learn more about them and what they need from us, as a district. These conversations are invaluable and have led to great things.

Construction continues across the district with many large-scale bond projects coming to

completion. We are looking forward to welcoming all our students to their home school buildings as we kick off the 2023-2024 school year and we can't wait to showcase these improved spaces with our community.

The past school year was a challenging one, but also one with significant achievements. We received numerous accolades from national and state organizations for our innovative and successful approaches.

Our students continue to amaze me! At each board meeting this year we celebrated the victories and accomplishments of students across the district. These honors ranged from our State Champion Special Olympics Basketball Team to one of our students being accepted to over 40 colleges and receiving numerous scholarships. Highlighting these students is so special to all of us in our district and is a reminder of the true successes in our district. We plan to continue these honors at each board meeting in the 2023-2024 school year and encourage you to tune in via Facebook Live or YouTube to share in the excitement.

Our students are doing exceptional things, and we remain focused on best serving them to continue their success. Many of our student leaders expressed the need for mentors. We took that request to heart and have launched a brand-new mentoring program in conjunction with Concentric. Concentric is one of the leading educational training and mentoring companies in the country. They have had proven results with districts in regions across the country, and we are honored to bring them to Pontiac. Our mentors have been working with the Concentric team to train and implement standards for highly beneficial results for our students.

I look forward to watching the evolution of these relationships with our students in the new school year.

Our new school year is just around the corner, and I know even more outstanding things are headed our way. I look forward to sharing them with you!

With Gratitude,

**Kelley Williams, Superintendent**

## Board of Trustees

**President** Gill Garrett

**Vice President** G. Kevin Gross

**Treasurer** Marcus Terry

**Secretary** Anisha Hannah

**Trustee** Kenyada Bowman

**Trustee** Troy Craft

**Trustee** ShaQuana Davis-Smith



# Greetings

## from President Garrett

Greetings Phoenix Nation:

It's time to paint the town purple! The phoenix is flying up to the stratosphere and we are ready to let the world know it.

Over the past year, my fellow board members and I have had the opportunity to experience firsthand the incredible things happening here. We have been in the front row cheering for our students and staff as they received each accolade and overcame each challenge. We've also had the opportunity to see our district through the eyes of others across the country, and it has driven our Phoenix Pride to even greater heights.

Yes, we've received several honors this year, but we've also caught the attention of our

peers, which is where we really get fired up. We've reached a point in our metamorphosis as a district where other schools across the country are looking to us as a model. They're asking us the questions of, "How did you do it?" and "How can our district become like Pontiac?" these inquiries show us that what we are doing is working. We all know we've been through fire to get to this point, and we also know the work is far from done. We've reached the first peak, but we're not stopping there. We're going to continue to fly higher and you, as our community are important players in reaching each new height.

You are our most important ambassadors. You are our biggest voices to others. You are our eyes and ears in our neighborhoods to truly express the needs and desires of our families. We call on you to join us in this charge to continue to push our district to becoming one of the best in the country. We're on our way there, but it's going to take all of us to get there. We're calling on you to shout it from the rooftops with us.

Our district has had a long and storied history full of victories and despairs. The passion for this district is fierce, and memories good and bad remain emblazoned in our minds. We need to take that passion and focus it towards our present and future. The time has come for all of us to honor the past by learning from it and turning our efforts to the now and what's to come. Great things are happening here. The Phoenix Nation is turning out graduates and students who are doing exceptional things across the country. We're no longer the district that could. We are the district that does. Please join us in shouting it from the rooftops. Wear your Pontiac pride every way you can and tell anyone who'll listen that Pontiac is turning up and turning out.

I, and the entire board, look forward to experiencing this next chapter with all of you. It's going to be our best one yet.

Sincerely,

***Gill Garrett, President,  
Pontiac School District Board of Education***

## Board of Trustees

**President** Gill Garrett

**Vice President** G. Kevin Gross

**Treasurer** Marcus Terry

**Secretary** Anisha Hannah

**Trustee** Kenyada Bowman

**Trustee** Troy Craft

**Trustee** ShaQuana Davis-Smith

# SIGNING DAY From Phoenix to Warrior



## PONTIAC HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR, TYREE LONG RECENTLY SIGNED ON TO ATTEND ROCHESTER UNIVERSITY AND PLAY BASKETBALL.

Tyree was joined by his family, coaches, Board President Gill Garrett, Superintendent Kelley Williams, and numerous teachers and staff who were ecstatic to celebrate this exciting day.



### Congratulations, Tyree!

During the signing ceremony, Tyree expressed his gratitude to all who were there in support of him and the belief they had in him throughout his school career.

Pontiac School District is excited to celebrate several student athletes who have signed on to continue to pursue their athletic and academic endeavors at the collegiate level. We look forward to highlighting even more students in the 2023-2024 school year.



# SOARING IN PONTIAC



Black History Month Programs Were Out of This World!



Celebrating and Getting Promoted



Headed off and Ready for High School



Decision Day Sent Our Students Off to Their Next Adventures



Chief Gross, Trustee Gross, and the PAO Officers Treated Students to a Tigers Game for Their Exceptional Citizenship



# SOARING IN PONTIAC

Herrington's Community Event Was Filled  
With Mad Science, Partners, and Fun!



Our Littlest Phoenixes Are Soaring Forward  
to Elementary School



Kindergarten Round Up Celebrated Our  
Newest Class of Phoenixes



PCT & CNA Students Check Vitals at Our Career Pathways Expo



Our Kennedy Graduates are Ready for the World



PHS Students With Perfect Attendance Enjoyed a Pizza Lunch from Trustee Terry



Project Excel Career Day at Alcott Put Students Dreams in Motion



The First PHS DADS Event Showcased Positive Male Influences and Opportunities for Our Young Men



The Competition Was Fierce at Rogers Field Day



Thanks to the Waterford Regional Fire Department for Another Great Autism Acceptance Fundraiser

SOARING  
IN PONTIAC



The Kennedy Greenhouse Welcomed Spring With a Burst of Beauty!



Things Got Wild at the Exotic Zoo



Wings of Fire Went on to Win 2nd in the State



The PHS Pinning Ceremony Celebrated Our Senior's Achievements

# SOARING IN PONTIAC

# PSD LEAVING ITS MARK

The Pontiac School District has had a banner year for recognition and achievements on a state and national level. We're pleased to

announce a few additional honors the district and individuals in our team have received since our last publication date.



**Michigan Association of School Boards Honors Board Designation 2023**

This award is bestowed on districts whose school board members have universally completed all their certification requirements.



**Michigan School Business Officials Meridian Award of Excellence Honorable Mention**

The district was given this distinctive award for its Comprehensive Financial Plan.



**Women Rock Science**

Stacey Jackson, Educator of the Year



**NSBA Board of Directors, MSBA Board of Directors, CUBE Sub-Committee Chair**

Gill Garrett

## PONTIAC PROUD

### 25 PSD Students Earn the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy Award

It is an honor to share that 25 Pontiac School District English learner students were awarded the Michigan Seal of Biliteracy for their proficiency at an intermediate or high level in both English and at least one additional world language.

The awardees must show these proficiencies in the areas of reading, writing, listening, and speaking and their knowledge is measured by the

Avant Stamp language test.

Students this year received their certificates for Spanish and Chinese. Possessing these language skills will open up countless opportunities for these students on any path they choose for their futures.

We are proud of these students and celebrate the many diverse languages and cultures within our community.



## Communication is Key! Be in the Know on PSD

We know that even in this time of countless communication sources, it's often still difficult to know everything happening in our district, especially if you don't have students currently attending our schools.

We're excited to share the launch of a weekly e-blast to our community highlighting the latest updates and happenings across the Pontiac school district. This e-mail won't replace this

quarterly newsletter but serves as a way to keep our community informed consistently and as things happen.

If you're interested in receiving the weekly updates, please send your e-mail address to [communications@pontiacschools.org](mailto:communications@pontiacschools.org) to be added to our e-mail list. Additionally, we encourage you to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube and to tune in to PSD-TV22 on Comcast.

### BACK TO SCHOOL

#### **Back to School Rally Backpack Drive Prepares Students for the New Year**

The annual Pontiac School District Back to School Rally is one of the most anticipated events of the school year. Each year partners come together to donate, collect, fill, and distribute more than 4,000 backpacks ensuring that no students start school without the important supplies necessary for success.

Additionally, several of our partners will be on hand to not only pass out backpacks, but to also share valuable resources and surprises for families.

This year's event will take place on Wednesday, August 16, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. It will be a drive-thru format like last year.

A few important changes to this year's distribution are that all students must go to their school building to receive their backpacks. This will ensure that all students receive a bag filled with the appropriate



supplies for their grade level. Although, this may mean families will need to visit multiple schools, we are confident this will be a smoother and more effective process.

August 16th's event will be held exclusively for PSD students. A second drive-thru is scheduled for Tuesday, August 22nd for non-PSD students. This event will be held at the Odell Nails Administration Building.

We look forward to seeing everyone for this year's exciting Back to School Rally events! If you have questions, are interested in donating or volunteering contact: [communications@pontiacschools.org](mailto:communications@pontiacschools.org).

# PSD *Programs*



## CHECK OUT OUR DISTRICT'S PROGRAMS



### *Pontiac High School*

Through Pontiac High School we offer many great educational programs for our students. A few of these programs include The International Technology Academy, the Career Pathways Program, JROTC and a FIRST Robotics team.



### *Pontiac Middle School*

Pontiac Middle School also offers an International Technology Academy program along with many clubs for the students such as the Junior Optimist Club and Writers Workshop.



### *PSD Elementary Schools*

At the elementary school level we have a variety of types of programs offered. Some of the largest programs include International Technology Academy, International Language Academy and Kids First Initiative..



### *Peace Academy*

We offer a free GSRP program for our preschool aged students in the district.

## CONTACT US



47200 Woodward Ave. Pontiac, MI 48342



248-451-6800



[www.pontiacschools.org](http://www.pontiacschools.org)





| **PEACE Academy**

723 Cottage Street Pontiac 48340

# Preschool **ENROLLMENT**

**August 21st-23rd**  
**9:00 am–3:00 pm**

*The healthy development of  
your child is our top priority*

- A safe learning environment
- Qualified and experienced teachers
- Special Education Services
- Pre-K Readiness Curriculum
- Morning and afternoon meals



## **WHY PEACE ACADEMY?**

Our GSRP (Great Start Readiness Program) pre-school builds lasting relationships while fostering each child's intellectual, social, physical and emotional development in an academic-rich environment.

We provide a foundation for success for all children as they begin their schooling.

Our program is free to families who qualify financially.

**OFFICE PHONE | 248.451.7770**

### **To Enroll**

- Students must turn 4 before December 1 of 2023
- Birth Certificate
- Shot Records
- Health Appraisal
- Driver's License/Comparable ID
- Proof of Income
- Proof of Residence



# BECOME A PSD MENTOR

WE ARE LOOKING FOR INDIVIDUALS INTERESTED IN BECOMING MENTORS FOR PSD STUDENTS AT ALL GRADE LEVELS.

WE OFFER A STRUCTURED AND COMPREHENSIVE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM THAT HAS BEEN PROVEN TO BE BENEFICIAL FOR STUDENTS AND MENTORS ALIKE.

WE WORK WITH CONCENTRIC EDUCATIONAL SERVICES TO PROVIDE TRAINING AND GUIDELINES FOR OUR MENTORS AND MENTEES THAT:

- ENGAGE THE WHOLE STUDENT
- STUDENTS ARE MULTIDIMENSIONAL AND COMPLEX. INTELLECTUAL, SOCIAL, AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING IS INTERTWINED TO MEET AND SUSTAIN HIGH EXPECTATIONS IN SCHOOLS.
- WE MUST CONSIDER ALL EXPERIENCES THAT IMPACT A STUDENT'S ABILITY TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE CLASSROOM.

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN PLAYING A GAME CHANGING ROLE IN THE EDUCATION OF OUR STUDENTS AND WANT TO BUILD LASTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS. APPLY TO BE A MENTOR TODAY.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO APPLY OR E-MAIL  
COMMUNICATIONS@PONTIACSCHOOLS.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION.



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Waterford, MI 48328-

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248.451.6800

[pontiacschools.org](http://pontiacschools.org)

PSD- TV22

### FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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