

PM RAIDER CONNECTION

PATCHOGUE-MEDFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT

STAY TUNED! HOMECOMING 2025 WILL CELEBRATE OUR ACES AND CTE STUDENTS



Even though fall 2025 seems so far away, we are already gearing up for a celebration of school pride. Homecoming 2025 will spotlight our incredible ACES (Academic and Career Explorers) and Career and Technical Education (CTE) students—true game-changers in our school community! Throughout the year, they’ve wowed us with their achievements, their dedication and school spirit, and the hard work of our ACES students has helped fund essential resources, including tents and float trailers, empowering our students to design and build one-of-a-kind homecoming floats.

This hands-on initiative strengthens connections across programs, as our CTE construction students will play a key role in assembling and disassembling the float structures. It’s a true team effort that embodies Raider pride—students collaborating, creating, and making lasting memories together. We’re also proud to announce that our ACES students will take center stage at this year’s Homecoming parade, leading the way as our 2025 Grand Marshals! Their leadership is a testament to the inclusive, supportive spirit of our school community.

Stay tuned for more updates on Homecoming 2025, promising to be an event unlike any other in our District’s history—because as we all know, “Nobody does it like Pat-Med!”



Students in Patchogue-Medford’s Construction Trades program are building reusable float bases for special trailers. These trailers and bases are designed for our homecoming parades, with frames that make it easy to put up and take down different float designs each year. This creates a lasting solution for future parades while giving the students hands-on practice with the construction skills they’re learning.

BUILDING A CULTURE OF CARE: HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR NEW HIRE ORIENTATION

At our new hire orientations, we strive to provide incoming staff with a comprehensive understanding of the values and expectations that define our District. More than just an introduction, this program lays the foundation for a culture of care, support, and understanding—principles that we expect every member of our team to uphold. The following is a snapshot of the philosophies and principles covered during our new hire orientations.

Our Foundational Principles

Our District is committed to fostering an educational environment that welcomes and celebrates the unique backgrounds and perspectives of all students. Alongside academic excellence, we emphasize three key principles: fair opportunities for everyone, creating a sense of belonging where all voices are valued, and developing understanding and compassion for different experiences and viewpoints.

All Means All: Meeting Individual Needs

Equality provides the same resources for all, while equity ensures that individuals receive the support they need to succeed based on their unique circumstances. In practice, this means:

- Recognizing the diverse backgrounds of our students and staff
- Providing personalized support tailored to individual needs
- Ensuring every member of our community has the opportunity to thrive

Inclusion is about more than simply acknowledging differences—it's about actively celebrating them. Each person in our District contributes a unique perspective and experience that strengthens our community. We see diversity not as a challenge, but as an asset.

The Power of Literature and Perspective

Books such as *Out of My Mind* and *Esperanza Rising* provide valuable insight into the lived experiences of some of our students. By providing our new teachers with an opportunity to discuss these stories, we better understand the challenges some students face, develop deeper empathy for different life experiences and recognize the resilience and strength within our community.

Cultivating a Culture of Kindness

By taking the time to understand and appreciate different perspectives, we create a Districtwide culture built on respect and connection. When we truly listen to one another, we foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment, break down barriers of misunderstanding, and ensure that every individual feels valued, heard, and respected.

Our Commitment

As educators and staff, our role extends beyond academics—we are shaping human potential. Every interaction is an opportunity to demonstrate kindness, model empathy, and uplift those around us. Our goal is to create a District where every individual feels seen, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential.



INVESTING IN EXCELLENCE: OUR COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Our District is dedicated to fostering educational excellence by prioritizing meaningful professional development for educators. Through structured collaboration, we ensure that teachers and teaching assistants continuously refine their skills, share expertise, and enhance student learning.

At the elementary level, teachers participate in 40-minute professional development sessions twice weekly during the school day. Secondary educators benefit from common Professional Learning periods, allowing for department-wide curriculum planning and instructional collaboration. This intentional scheduling—a rarity among Long Island school districts—demonstrates our deep commitment to continuous improvement. These dedicated sessions serve as dynamic learning communities where directors and principals facilitate discussions on curriculum, instructional strategies, and pedagogical innovation. A comprehensive schedule, developed at the start of each academic year, ensures consistent leadership and structured growth opportunities.

Beyond the school day, educators also engage in six hours of additional professional development, choosing from a thoughtfully curated catalog designed in collaboration with teachers, administrators, and our assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. This year alone, 143 distinct training sessions were offered, covering a wide range of topics that align with Districtwide priorities and individual educator goals.

By embedding professional development into the workday and extending learning opportunities year-round, our District is investing in a community of lifelong learners. We firmly believe



that when educators grow together, students reap the benefits, creating a stronger, more innovative learning environment for all.

Our District's commitment to equity extends beyond language learning. We have scheduled more than 154 professional development sessions focused on supporting students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and celebrating diversity. These training sessions provide educators with the skills and resources necessary to create inclusive classrooms where all students can thrive. Additionally, we continuously evaluate our disciplinary practices to ensure that every student is treated with fairness and respect. By incorporating restorative approaches, we foster a school culture where students learn from their experiences, build meaningful relationships, and develop a positive outlook on their education.

PATCHOGUE-MEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPIONS UNITY AT DAY OF UNITY CONFERENCE

Patchogue-Medford High School proudly participated in Walt Whitman High School's fourth annual Day of Unity Conference, reinforcing our commitment to bringing students together, fostering mutual respect, and creating an environment where everyone feels welcomed and valued.

Students from Patchogue-Medford joined peers from high schools across Long Island, including schools such as Commack, Elwood-John Glenn,

Half Hollow Hills East and West, and Westbury, to engage in meaningful conversations about embracing differences and promoting understanding. The event, hosted by Walt Whitman High School's Muslim Student Association, provided a space for open dialogue, allowing students to share experiences and learn from one another.

"At Patchogue-Medford, we believe that true unity comes from recognizing and celebrating what makes us unique," said

school representatives. "Participating in the Day of Unity Conference is another step toward ensuring that our community remains welcoming and inclusive for all."

By taking part in this important event, Patchogue-Medford High School continues to lead by example, proving that acceptance isn't just a theme—it's a daily commitment to fostering respect, empathy, and a stronger, more connected community.

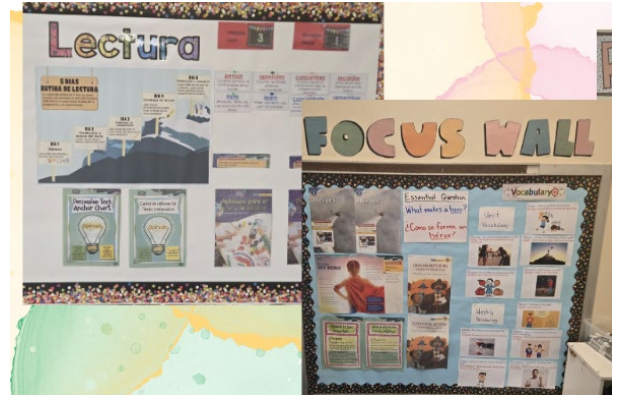
FOSTERING A COMMUNITY COMMITTED TO EVERY STUDENT.

At Patchogue-Medford School District, creating a welcoming atmosphere, providing fair opportunities, and appreciating different perspectives are more than just concepts—they are guiding principles that shape our educational environment. Our District is home to a vibrant student body representing many backgrounds, with students bringing a wealth of cultural and linguistic traditions into our schools. We recognize that embracing these varied experiences strengthens our community, enriches learning, and ensures that every student feels valued and empowered to succeed.

Expanding Opportunities for Multilingual Learners

A major cornerstone of our commitment to inclusion is our Dual Language program, which continues to grow and flourish. The success of this program is evident in our students' achievements—this year, we are on track to recognize more than 80 students for their proficiency in multiple languages.

In an exciting milestone, we have seen a growing number of students earning the Seal of Bilingualism in multiple languages. Over the past six years, one student received the Seal in three languages, and this year, four students are on track to achieve this honor—including one student receiving recognition for Portuguese! The top languages spoken in our District include English, Spanish, Turkish, and Chinese, reflecting the rich linguistic diversity of our school community.



Did You Know?

We have 24 Dual Language classes in grades K-5 across the District.

Did You Know?

Last year, 35 students graduated with the prestigious Seal of Bilingualism.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

The Dual Language Department has been working closely with Savvas bilingual consultant Blanca Campillo to enhance cross-linguistic instruction. This collaboration has led to key initiatives, including:

- Savvas-focused walls in Dual Language classrooms to reinforce key learning concepts.
- Cognate Walls to help students build connections between languages.
- Strategic language development practices such as Total Physical Response (TPR), the Language Experience Approach (LEA), and cognate analysis to strengthen biliteracy skills.
- Specialized training for our educators, leading workshops on differentiating instruction for English Language Learners (ELLs). These sessions have equipped teachers with the tools to scaffold and adapt lesson plans, ensuring that multilingual learners receive equitable and accessible instruction.



Did You Know?

There are 28 languages spoken in our District families: English, Armenian, Bengali, Chinese, Creole, English, Esperanto, Estonian, Filipino, French, German, Gujarati, Haitian-Creole, Korean, Malayalam, Panjabi, Punjabi, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Spokane, Tamil, Turkish, Ukranian, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

Building Community Through Culture and Connection

Patchogue-Medford believes in creating opportunities for students to connect through shared interests, whether in academics, athletics, or the arts. One of our most impactful programs is Unified Sports, where students from special education and general education programs compete together against other districts. This initiative promotes teamwork, inclusion, and mutual respect, reinforcing our mission to make every student feel valued.

A shining example of our commitment to cultural celebration is our multicultural nights, held at each school in the District. At our elementary schools' multicultural nights, we had more than 400 students, families, and community members come together each night for a vibrant showcase of student projects, international cuisine, musical performances, and cultural exhibits representing nations from around the world. The evening concluded with a moving display of farewell messages in dozens of languages, reflecting the unity and diversity within our school community.

Celebrating Diversity Through Curriculum

Our middle schools are embracing the Savvas curriculum as a powerful tool for promoting diversity and inclusion. Aligned with the Superintendent's theme, "Many Stories, One Community," this curriculum incorporates literature and perspectives from authors of various cultural backgrounds. By integrating these diverse voices into the classroom, we ensure that students see themselves reflected in their learning while gaining a deeper appreciation for the experiences of others.

At Patchogue-Medford, we remain steadfast in our commitment to fostering an environment where all students, regardless of background or ability, have the resources, support, and opportunities needed to succeed. Through language programs, inclusive curriculum, professional development, extracurricular activities, and community events, we continue to celebrate our differences while building a stronger, more unified school community.



PAT-MED RECOGNIZED AS A CHAMPION OF CHANGE!

At Pat-Med, we take pride in fostering innovative programs that enrich our students' education. We are thrilled to share that the New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA) has honored our Plays in Spanish Initiative and commercial kitchen through its Champions of Change recognition program!

To celebrate, NYSSBA has created a special banner for our district, which was unveiled at a recent board of education meeting. This honor highlights the dedication of our Board of education, administration, and staff in providing exceptional learning opportunities. We are proud of this recognition and grateful to everyone who has contributed.



PROMOTING INCLUSION AND MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH SCHOOL SPORTS

Sports have the power to bring communities together, foster resilience, and promote both physical and mental well-being. The Patchogue-Medford School District exemplifies this by emphasizing inclusion, sportsmanship, and mental health awareness through its athletic programs. Whether through acts of integrity on the court, expanding Unified Sports opportunities, or championing mental health initiatives, the District continues to prioritize the well-being of all students.

Our Basketball Team Embodies Sportsmanship and Integrity



The Patchogue-Medford Boys' Varsity Basketball Team demonstrated the power of character and resilience during a challenging game in December. Facing racially charged insults from spectators, the student-athletes and coaches refused to engage in negativity, choosing instead to rise above the hostility. Their composure and commitment to respect were formally recognized at the January Board of Education Meeting, where they received a plaque for their exemplary sportsmanship. Their actions serve as a reminder of the values that sports can instill—respect, inclusion, and perseverance—and set a standard for all student-athletes to follow.

“We are extremely proud of these young men for representing the department, District, community, and their families with class and respect,” said District Athletic Director Anthony Cracco in a statement praising the team.

Expanding Inclusion Through Unified Sports

The District's unified sports program continues to flourish, offering students of all abilities a chance to compete and connect. This winter, the Unified Top Golf Team had a successful season, culminating in a county-wide competition where many students earned medals. The excitement carried into the Unified Bowling season, with 33 athletes and partners building friendships while showcasing their skills.



The spring will bring back the Unified Basketball Team, the most popular program, alongside the much-anticipated Unified Basketball all-star game. Hosted by Patchogue-Medford High School in collaboration with Section XI and P.A.L., this event fosters camaraderie, teamwork, and community engagement.

A significant driver of this program's success has been the introduction of the Unified Physical Education class, which encourages students to participate in meaningful physical activities together. By expanding these initiatives, Patchogue-Medford continues to break down barriers and create an environment where all students feel valued and included.

Running for Mental Health Awareness

Beyond physical inclusion, the District is also championing mental health awareness through athletics. For the first time, Patchogue-Medford hosted the 2025 Using Our Voices 5K Mental Health Run on April 6th. This event, inspired by P.S. I Love You Day, brought together students, staff, and community members to promote mental well-being, positive coping skills, and support networks.

The inclusive race welcomed all participants, offering multiple ways to get involved:

- 5K Run/Walk – For those seeking a challenge
- Non-Competitive Mile Run – Ideal for casual runners and walkers
- Kids Fun Run – Encouraging the youngest athletes to get moving

The student-led event was free for all students and featured local mental health resources and fundraising opportunities to support student participation and community organizations.

Through a steadfast commitment to inclusion, respect, and mental health advocacy, Patchogue-Medford is setting a powerful example of how sports can uplift and unify a community. Whether through displaying integrity under pressure, expanding Unified Sports, or promoting mental health awareness, the District's athletic programs are shaping a more inclusive and supportive environment for all students.

PATCHOGUE-MEDFORD STUDENTS SHINE AT SKILLSUSA REGIONAL CONFERENCE

In March, Patchogue-Medford High School students showcased their talents at the SkillsUSA Regional Conference at Suffolk Community College, competing against 480 students from 20 Long Island schools. Our students demonstrated exceptional skill, dedication, and professionalism, bringing home an impressive 12 medals across five competitions.

Our Criminal Justice competitors, under the guidance of Mr. Pizzuto, excelled, with Shannon Nash earning 1st place and Monty DeGasperi securing 3rd place. In the Health Knowledge Bowl, Shan Nathaniel Talento, Genesis Bonas, Karina Fuentes, and Justin Linares Axume placed 2nd, highlighting their expertise.

The Medical Assisting competition saw Giuliana Atcosta take 1st place, while Julianna Owens earned 2nd, both trained by Mr. Harris. Katie Greenberg delivered a standout performance in Prepared Speech, earning 2nd place, and our Promotional Bulletin Board team—Alyssa Atcosta, Gianna Bevacqua, and Aurora Dougherty—also secured 2nd place under Ms. Perez's guidance.

This success reflects Patchogue-Medford's commitment to career and technical education, preparing students for excellence beyond the classroom. As we head to the SkillsUSA State Conference in Syracuse this April, we celebrate our students and the dedicated advisors, Mr. Damian Walsh and Mr. Paul Pizzuto, who made this achievement possible. Congratulations to all!



Patchogue-Medford Schools

241 South Ocean Avenue
Patchogue, New York 11772
www.pmschools.org

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PATCHOGUE-MEDFORD CELEBRATES BRAND-NEW LIFE SKILLS APARTMENT FOR ACES STUDENTS

The Patchogue-Medford School District proudly opened its brand-new Life Skills Apartment during the 2024-2025 school year. This innovative space, designed to support elementary students in the Academic and Career Explorers (ACES) program, mimics a real studio apartment—complete with a kitchen, washer, and dryer—helping students develop essential daily living skills.

This classroom represents our commitment to providing students with the skills they need for greater independence,” said Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and Pupil Services Dr. Jessica A. Lukas. “The project was completed using existing funds, ensuring no additional cost to taxpayers.



This initiative builds on the District’s ongoing efforts to expand opportunities for ACES students. In March, Patchogue-Medford High School unveiled a commercial kitchen to provide vocational training, and plans are in place to enhance life skills programs at the middle school level. With this new space, the District reaffirms its dedication to fostering independence and success for all students.

Spanish Theater Company Expands Opportunities for ELL Students

The district’s Spanish theater company, launched last year, continues to grow, providing students with a unique space to perform and develop theatrical skills in Spanish. In April 2024, the company debuted with two one-act plays: *Se Vende una Mula* (*A Mule for Sale*) and *El Delantal Blanco* (*The White Apron*). Their November production, *The Man with Large Wings*, was based on a book from the English Language Learner (ELL) curriculum.

While the cast and crew primarily consist of ELL students, this year’s performances included two students whose first language is English, highlighting the program’s expanding reach. Beyond acting, students gain hands-on experience in lighting, costume design, and stagecraft.

Part of the district’s initiative to broaden theatrical opportunities, the program now offers acting workshops, further supporting students’ passion for performance. With each production, the Spanish theater company continues to foster creativity, collaboration, and confidence.