



CELEBRATION OF CHAMPIONS

EHS BASKETBALL MIGHTY GHOSTS WIN FIRST GROUP IV STATE CHAMPIONSHIP IN EIGHT YEARS

DISTRICT, BOE, & EASTSIDE OFFICIALS HONOR MIGHTY GHOSTS, LADY GHOSTS FOR CHAMP SEASONS



MOMENT OF TRIUMPH: Eastside Senior Guards Jaheim Best and Bryce Stokes raised the Group IV State Championship trophy surrounded by their teammates at Rutgers' Jersey Mike's Arena in Piscataway. *Photo by Paul Brubaker*

Following a thrilling championship season for the Eastside Basketball Program; district officials, Eastside High School administrators, and Board of Education commissioners honored the Eastside Mighty Ghosts, Lady Ghosts, and Winter Cheerleaders at the Board of Education meeting on March 8th

"Everyone in this room tonight has always known that greatness comes from Paterson. But rarely have we seen so much greatness come from so many people of Paterson at the same time," said Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer.

On Saturday, March 4th, the Eastside Mighty Ghosts

won the team's first Group IV State Championship since 2015 defeating the Egg Harbor Eagles, 52-45, at Rutgers' Jersey Mike's Arena in Piscataway. The title came after the Might Ghosts won the Passaic County Championship. Both wins were achieved under the leadership of Head Coach Marquis Webb.

The Eastside Lady Ghosts won their second consecutive Passaic County Championship under the leadership of Head Coach Brandon Pilgrim and his coaching staff. With both teams throughout the season were the Eastside High School Winter Cheerleaders.

"Together, they achieved a truly remarkable basketball season, and perhaps more importantly, instilled pride in all of us in Paterson Public Schools and in the City of Paterson," said Shafer.

Assistant Superintendent David Cozart said that years ago he, Eastside Principal of Operations Dr. Gerald Glisson, and Eastside Athletic Supervisor T.J. Hill envisioned the caliber of student-athletes that achieved this year's championship season.

Please see "Champs" on p. 2.



Head Coach Marquis Webb

Champs continued from p. 1.

“I really appreciate the efforts, the hard work, the drive, the mental toughness – everything was there,” said Cozart. “They dominated but they weren’t arrogant about it.”

Superintendent Shafer acknowledged the efforts during the past season of Mighty Ghosts Head Coach Marquis Webb and his staff, Lady Ghosts Head Coach Brandon Pilgrim and his staff, and Cheerleading Head Coach JaNiece Jenkins and her staff. She also had special words for Eastside’s athletic supervisor, T.J. Hill.

“He has built upon the foundation that was laid by our departed friend and colleague Dr. Gerald Glisson and his ethic of, “All, Us, We,” Shafer said. “And so, I say thank you to T.J. Hill for taking “All Us We” and making it your own and establishing a championship culture at Eastside High School.” Glisson died on May 2, 2020 after testing positive for the COVID-19 virus early in the pandemic.

Hill thanked Shafer, the Board of Education, and many school and district administrators for their support and recognition of the Eastside Athletic Department’s efforts.

“From my perspective, it takes a village,” said Hill. “I appreciate the support. As long as I am in this position, with you continuing to give us support, we’re going to make Paterson a success.”



David Cozart, left, and T.J. Hill. *Photo by Dan Juan*



Lady Ghosts Head Coach Brandon Pilgrim laughs with his team at the PPS celebratory dinner. *Photo by Dan Juan*



EHS Cheerleaders honored at the BOE meeting. *Photo by Dan Juan*



Darcell Medley-Stokes and Jamal Stokes, Bryce’s parents. *Photo by Dan Juan*



NJSIAA Group IV State Final Photos by Paul Brubaker

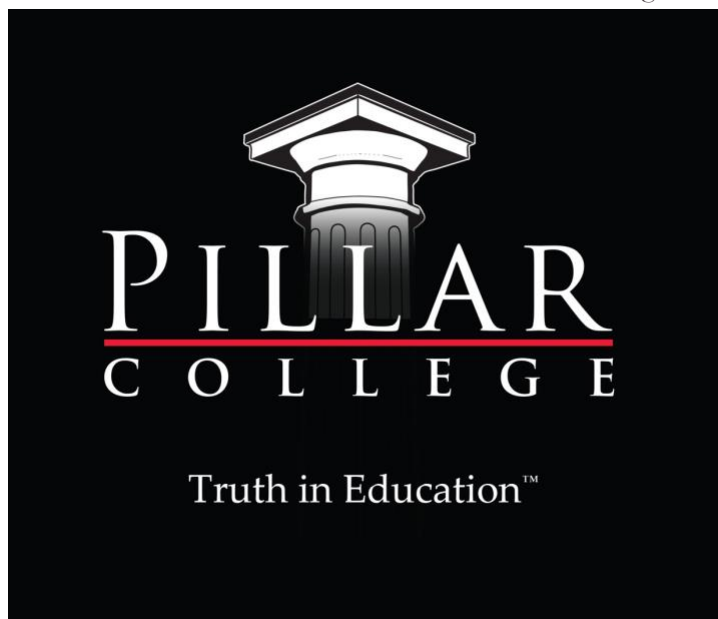
PPS PARTNERS WITH PILLAR COLLEGE TO CULTIVATE TEACHERS

ACCELERATED, COST-REDUCED PROGRAM HELPS PARAPROFESSIONALS GET CREDENTIALS

How do you get more teachers in the classrooms? At Paterson Public Schools, one answer could be, “We grow our own.”

The district has partnered with Pillar College to create a way for paraprofessionals who are already working in the district's schools to become teachers.

“We have a lot of paraprofessionals who have 60 credits or associate degrees. This program helps those paraprofessionals complete their bachelor's degrees and become certified teachers,” said Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer. “This is a tremendous advantage for the district because these are people who are already in our classrooms. They know our students and their families. At the same time, our staff members can achieve their teacher's certification without taking on a tremendous amount of student debt.”



At a presentation before the Board of Education on March 15th, Pillar College Associate Vice President Dominic DiGioacchino said that the new partnership is based on the N.J. State Department of Education's 5-year pilot program on Certificate of Eligibility (CE) and Certificate of Eligibility with Advance Standing (CEAS). The state's pilot program allows candidates with bachelor's degrees to waive one of the following state requirements for teacher certification:

- A minimum number of subject-matter course content credits

- A minimum grade point average

- A minimum score on a state-approved assessment of basic skills or core competencies

- A passing score on state-approved Praxis subject matter assessments.

Paterson Public Schools is one of more than 200 school districts approved by the state for the pilot

program. DiGioacchino said that Pillar College offers a 2-year accelerated bachelor's degree completion program.

Since 2018, four cohorts of district employees had enrolled in the program. However, the urgency of the national teacher shortage led Pillar College to offer an accelerated bachelor's degree program for paraprofessionals, instructional aides, substitute teachers, and coaches to earn their bachelor's degree in even less time – three semesters instead of four – and at a reduced cost. Pillar College's annual tuition is \$23,000, the least expensive private four-year college in New Jersey, according to DiGioacchino.

To offset tuition costs, DiGioacchino said that in addition to the federal Pell Grant and the state's TAG Grant, Pillar College offers per semester grants of up to \$3,500 to eligible students plus additional \$500 per semester grants and a one-time \$2,500 “Superintendent's Grant” from the college available to eligible students upon enrollment.

“Where the real savings come in when we condensed it from four semesters to three semesters, which is a 25 percent savings overall in tuition,” said DiGioacchino. “Students will save overall on their tuition \$11,500.”

Twenty-eight district employees are currently in the program.

During the public comment portion of the March 15th board meeting, Paterson Education Fund Executive Director Rosie Grant gave the partnership her approval.

“We are growing our own teachers in Paterson,” Grant said.

RETIRED PPS SOCIAL WORKER & NSW SUB RELEASES BOOK OF PROFILES OF NOTABLE PATERSONIANS

SKIP VAN RENSALIER'S *UP CLOSE AND PATERSON* INCLUDES STORIES OF 35 PATERSON PEOPLE

When Dale “Skip” Van Rensalier retired in 2010, he capped off 37 years of working as a social worker for Paterson Public Schools. But he didn’t stop working.

Van Rensalier soon took a job as a substitute teacher at the Norman S. Weir School, where he was a trusted and reliable colleague for his longtime friend, Principal Grace Giglio, until the pandemic closed the district’s school buildings. But he didn’t stop working.

It was during the pandemic shutdown when Van Rensalier began working on what he calls a labor of love that has now become [his new book, *Up Close And Paterson*](#). The 35 people profiled in the book include those who may be considered household names among Patersonians like vaudevillian-style entertainer “Uncle” Floyd Vivino, William James Pascarell, Jr., a former mayor who has been the city’s congressman since 1997, and Nelida “Nellie” Pou, who has been a stalwart fighter for Paterson as the city’s state senator for many years. There are elders of the community like educator Alonzo “Tambua” Moody, former Councilwoman Veradene “Vera” Ames, and the recently deceased patriarch of Paterson youth sports, Ray Lyde, Sr. And there are younger voices including tutoring entrepreneur Shanikwa Lemon and educator/musician Scott Cumberbatch.

“Mr. Van Rensalier has done a tremendous service for the City of Paterson by capturing these profiles of so many different people in the city’s richly diverse community,” said Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer. “Anyone who wants a crash course on the people of Paterson will get it in *Up Close And Paterson*. I also think that this is a project that can go far into the future, given that there are so many people in Paterson. I look forward to the publications of *Up Close And Paterson*, volume 2, volume 3, and so on.”

“There is no denying the love and the pride this man has for the City of Paterson,” said Norman S. Weir School Principal Grace Giglio at a special book signing the school hosted on Friday. At the event, Van Rensalier gave signed copies of the book to staff and students.

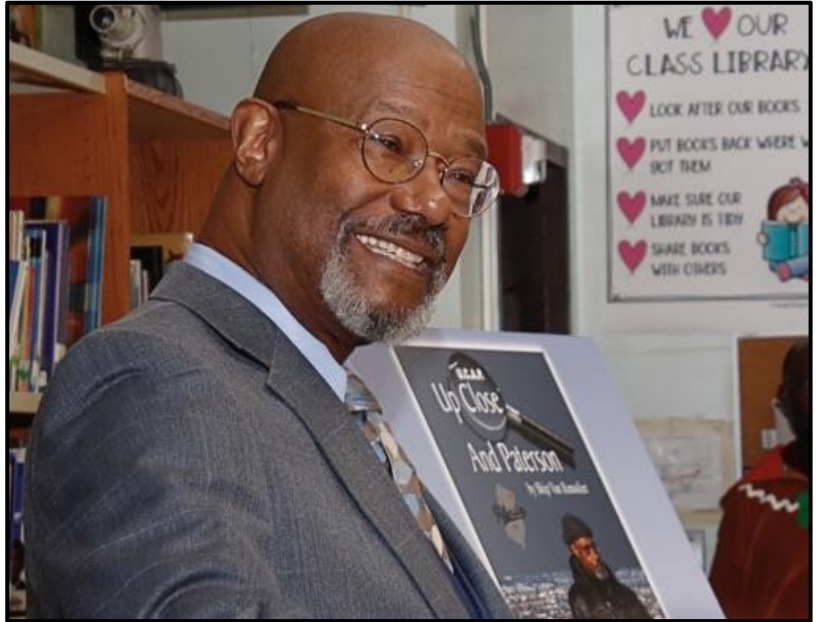
“People were very candid,” said Van Rensalier as he spoke to the gathering in the school’s library. “These people’s lives, when they were growing up, were very similar to yours,” he said to the young students. “People had a lot of problems, but now they’re successful.”

He said the title, *Up Close And Paterson*, was a nod to Mayor Andre Sayegh’s 2018 “One Paterson” campaign platform.

Anna Pelosi Adams, an educational consultant who retired from the district after a career as a teacher coach and administrator, said that Van Rensalier worked very closely with his profile subjects.

“When you read the book, you’ll see that the style is very conversational,” Adams said.

He interviewed everyone twice at the A.M.E. Zion Baptist Church, making audio recordings of each interview, Adams said. He allowed his subjects to review his synopses of the interviews, giving his subjects the opportunity to reel in some of their candor if they wanted. Only a handful did, Van Rensalier said.



Dale “Skip” Van Rensalier

BOARD APPROVES \$780.5M PRELIMINARY BUDGET

LAYOFFS AVOIDED FOR THE FOURTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

Paterson Board of Education Commissioners approved a \$780.5 million budget for the 2023-2024 school year on March 17th that marked a four-year trend of the district avoiding layoffs and maintaining funding for many vital programs and services that students and families depend upon.

“I want to thank the Board of Education commissioners for approving a preliminary budget that prioritizes the needs of our students and their families,” said Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer. “I also want to extend my gratitude to the Budget Team for developing a comprehensive budget that reflects our shared priorities. Their dedication and expertise have been essential in keeping our district moving forward towards greater financial stability.”

“This preliminary budget provides the resources needed to put our students on the path to greater academic achievement while maintaining a high standard of fiscal responsibility,” said Board of Education President Nakima Redmon. “I want to thank everyone in the Budget Team for putting together the preliminary budget. I also want to thank the members of the Board’s Fiscal Committee and all of the Board of Education Commissioners for their dedicated participation in the budgetary process.”

Positive Impact On Staffing

The last time the district needed to lay off staff, in what is called a reduction in force, was in 2019 in order to balance the budget for the 2019-2020 school year. Since then, the district has had no reason to have a reduction in force. The preliminary budget adds staff in critical areas including:

- 11 new bilingual positions
- 11 new personal aides
- 3 new Facilities Department positions
- 9 new student assistance coordinator positions
- Additional board security guards

What Happens Next

The preliminary budget will be sent to the Passaic County Executive Superintendent of Schools for a line-by-line review on Monday, March 20th. The county authorities have until Thursday, April 20th to either send the budget back to the district with edits or approve it and forward it to state authorities.

A public meeting on the budget has been scheduled for Thursday, April 20th, at 6 p.m., which will be held remotely. A public hearing on the budget as well as the Board of Education’s vote to adopt the budget has been scheduled for Thursday, April 25th, at 6 p.m. at the Joseph A. Taub School, 202 Union Avenue.

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DHA CULTURE DAY

STUDENTS, STAFF SHOWCASE SCHOOL COMMUNITY'S CULTURAL DIVERSITY



DHA Principal Nahed Badawy

Photos by Dan Juan

Principal Badawy and her team, and all of the teachers, students, and parents who worked very hard to make the event happen. Cultural Day at Dr. Hani Awadallah is a wonderful celebration of the diversity that is at the core of the City of Paterson.”

With entertainment, food, and hands-on experiences; the students, staff, and parents at the Dr. Hani Awadallah School (DHA) held its Cultural Day celebration on Thursday, reviving an annual event that had been celebrated until the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The event celebrated the DHA students’ and families’ many diverse cultural backgrounds.

The DHA Multicultural Committee and the school’s Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) spearheaded the event. Among the activities that were held throughout the building were a cultural variety show, a food buffet that featured the variety of cultures at the school, and a Cultural Showroom where students visited grade-specific groups to see cultural items from all over the world.

Under the leadership of Principal Nahed Badawy, The Cultural Day was first instituted at the school in 2018. Until Thursday, the event had been put on hold when school buildings closed due to the pandemic. Thursday’s Cultural Day marked another step closer to pre-pandemic normalcy for the school community.

“I commend the students, staff, and parents on their efforts and passion in sharing their cultures,” said Badawy. “It was a valuable learning experience for all and a joy to see the passion of students expressing themselves.”

“The kids have been practicing so hard,” said Vice-Principal Daniel Krankel. “They’ve been really investing a hundred percent of their effort to make it a success.”

Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer congratulated the DHA students, staff and parents on the successful event.

“Everyone worked together to have a terrific celebration of the beautiful diversity that makes up the DHA school community,” said Shafer. “I want to thank



PPS HOSTS EVENT FOR IPAC'S BLACK HISTORY MONTH ART & ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

Paterson Public Schools hosted the InnerFaith Performing Arts Center (IPAC)'s 2023 Black History Month Art and Essay Contest and announced 29 student winners on March 15th. It has been a banner year for the contest, with more than 600 students from throughout the City of Paterson participating in the annual competition.

"In addition to everything that is taught in our schools during Black History Month, 600 students went the extra mile to apply what they have learned into their own creative expressions," said Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer. "We are very proud of what they have accomplished, and very appreciative of the recognition they have received from Rahsona Patterson of the InnerFaith Performing Arts Center, and all who worked with her in holding this year's contest."

"We are thrilled to see so many students taking part in this year's competition," said Rahsona Patterson, founder and executive director of the InnerFaith Performing Arts Center. "It is an opportunity to inspire young people to learn more about the contributions of African-Americans and their impact on our society."

A total of 29 students won honors in the contest, which has been an annual event in Paterson for more than a decade and is open to K-12 students in all schools throughout Paterson.

This year's judges and volunteers included Paterson First Lady Farhanna Sayegh, Paterson City Councilwoman Ruby Cotton, Nancy Grier, Shanikwa Lemon, Rahsona Patterson, Imani Jarvis, Julia Gonzalez, Michael DeRosa, Robyn Spencer, Tia Holloway, Coach Stafford Patterson, Winnie Harrison, and Mohammed Khalil.



From left, Kayla Sayegh, Farhanna Sayegh, Eileen Shafer, Ruby Cotton, and Rahsona Patterson. Photo by Dan Juan

Art – Elementary School (K to 8)

First Place

Mia Diaz, 7th grade
Public School No.13

Second Place

Kayla Sayegh, 2nd grade
Public School No. 28/
Paterson Academy of the Gifted and Talented

Third Place (Tie)

Jazmin Ramos Santos, 7th grade
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Educational
Complex

Brian Bertucci, 6th grade
Public School No.13

Honorable Mention

Chris Sanchez-Perez, 6th grade
Public School No.13

Art – High School (9 to 12)

First Place

Tiana Little, 12th grade
Paterson STEAM High School

Second Place (Tie)

Sumyra Jimenez, 11th grade
International High School

Jerry Cuenca, 11th grade
Paterson P-Tech High School

Third place

Giovanni Ramirez, 9th grade
John F. Kennedy High School

Honorable Mention

Elliona Gaskins, 11th grade
Paterson STEAM High School

Art – Judges' Special Recognition

John F. Kennedy High School
Arieth Montero Burgos, 9th grade
Hails Martize Lara, 9th grade
Hank Willis, 9th grade

International High School
Scarlett Lopez, 9th grade
Vanessa Hoyas, 12th grade
Leonna Kenner, 11th grade
Ah'Kiya Hodges, 12th grade

Paterson STEAM High School
Isaiah Jacobs-Whitaker, 12th grade
Tiana Little, 12th grade
Jaheim Best, 12th grade

Essay – Elementary School (K to 8)

First Place

Anny Gomez, 7th grade
Public School No. 28/Paterson Academy of
the Gifted and Talented

Second Place

Na' rue Lee, 8th grade
Public School No. 28/Paterson Academy of
the Gifted and Talented

Third Place

Liliana Negron, 8th grade
Public School No. 28/
Paterson Academy of the Gifted and Talented

Honorable Mentions

Kasey Palma-Rayne, 6th grade
Public School No.13

Entuela Haxhillari, 6th grade
Public School No. 18

Essay – High School (9 to 12)

First Place

Thaddeus Chestnut Jr., 11th grade
Paterson P-Tech High School

Second Place

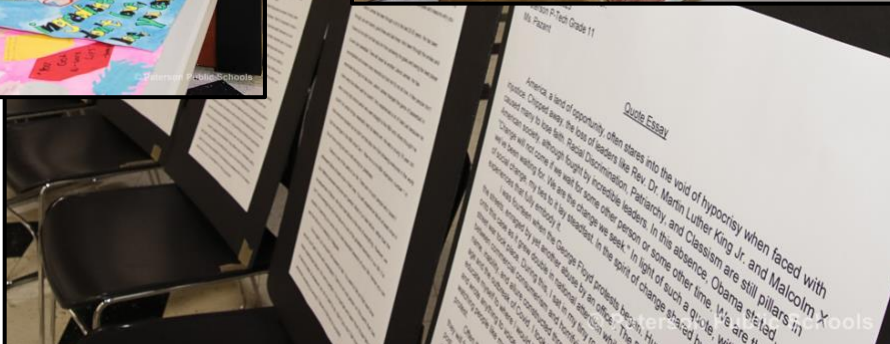
Amina Pleasant 11th grade
Paterson P-Tech High School

Third Place

Jesus Pimienta, 11th grade
Paterson P-Tech High School



From left, Eileen Shafer, Tiana Little, Little's mother, and Dr. Jaymie Stein, Art Teacher at Paterson STEAM High School. *Photo by Dan Juan*



Photos by Dan Juan

SCHOOL 2, HALLS THAT INSPIRE UNVEIL NEW HALLWAY MURALS

ARTWORK CREATED WITH THE HELP OF PUBLIC SCHOOL NO. 2 STUDENTS



Celebrating Student Artists: The dozens of School 2 student-artists who worked with Halls That Inspire received special commendations from the district, the Passaic County Sheriff's Department and the state. *Photos by Paul Brubaker*



Della McCall

District officials and Public School No. 2 administrators and faculty welcomed David Thompson, executive director of Halls That Inspire, and many local dignitaries on March 13th for the unveiling of new hallway murals that were created with the help of students at the school.

"For many years, Paterson Public Schools has had a long-standing partnership with David Thompson and his team at Halls That Inspire to provide opportunities for students to be involved with the beautification of the schools they attend," said Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer. "The power of the whole Halls That Inspire effort starts with the idea that what we see everyday matters. It affects

how we feel and how we think. And that is particularly true in our schools."

The dozens of School 2 student-artists who worked on the hallway murals received special commendations from the district, the Passaic County Sheriff's Department, and Paterson's state representatives, N.J. Senator Nellie Pou, Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly, and Assemblywoman Shavonda Sumter.

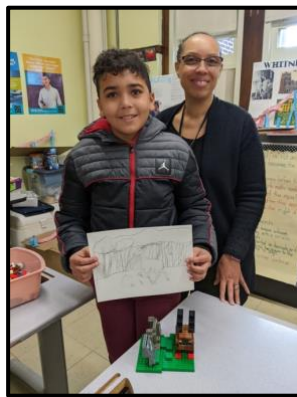
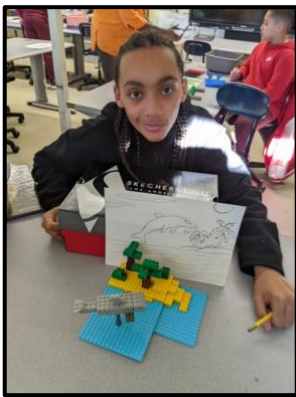
The ceremony was emceed by Paterson Board Commissioner Della McCall.



Tree Mural: The handprints were made by students with special needs.

AROUND THE DISTRICT

ESHS Celebrates Black History The Eastside Spanish Honor Society (ESHS) Chapter Ester Forero celebrated Black History Month by awarding plaques of recognition to Principal of Instruction Andre McCollum, Art Teacher Darrell Jones, and student, Ab-I-Hai Landle. *Photo courtesy of staff.*



School 12's STEAM Visionaries Students in Public School No. 12's STEAM Club have been creating a roller coaster with a vertical loop for a marble, designing with Tinkercad, and creating 3-D models of drawings using Legos. The students are also learning vocabulary related to the tasks, all with the help of faculty advisors Michelle Albritton and Anissa Martin-Conyers. *Photos courtesy of staff.*



Welcoming Newcomers. On March 14, Newcomers High School (NHS) students took a field trip to City Hall, where they were given a tour by Councilman Luis Velez and met Mayor Andre Sayegh. This trip was just one in a series of activities at NHS, including visits from Paterson Police officers who spoke about careers in law enforcement and representatives of Montclair University's Project C.O.P.E, who are providing eight sessions about avoiding the dangers of substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, tobacco, and other topics. *Photo courtesy of staff.*

Self-Care at P-Tech. Students at Paterson P-Tech High School were engaged in a day full of mindful and social-emotional activities and experiences. The point was to help the students create and foster connections with each other while providing them an opportunity to slow down and be present in the moment. The activities promoted team building, self-reflection, yoga, and other decompression methods to support each student. *Photos courtesy of staff.*



School 5 Students Light the Way. Jehad Hazin's fourth-graders at Public School No. 5 recently took on the challenge of making circuits using D-cell batteries, wires, and lightbulbs – without any input from their teacher. Before tackling this task, students brainstormed what might be needed to light a bulb and what pathway the electricity might follow in a circuit. These budding engineers used scientific vocabulary as they worked together to problem-solve and connect the wires to create their own tiny beacons. *Photos courtesy of staff.*

Remembering The King of Pop. Public School No. 21's Black History Month Celebration featured a tribute to the King of Pop, Michael Jackson. Students performed a variety of songs, dances, poems, fashion tributes and collaborative art featuring the life and work of Michael Jackson. *Photo courtesy of staff.*





Once A Teacher, Always A Teacher. Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer returned to her roots as a physical education teacher for a few lessons at the Charles A. Reilly School. The classes she taught were part of the Paterson Education Association's "Teacher For A Day" program. Students in Shafer's class got a lesson on the fundamentals of soccer.

Photos by Dan Juan

KHS Student-Artist's Work Hangs In The State House Maryam Khalil, a junior at Kennedy High School, created a drawing that was selected for the Art Educators of New Jersey's "Youth Art Month" exhibition at the State House in Trenton. Another student at STEAM High School, Irving Watkins, also had artwork chosen for the exhibition. *Photo courtesy of staff*



Paterson Wins With Taub-Doby. Many of the Silk City's finest student-athletes participated in the Taub-Doby Foundation's All-Star Game on March 22nd at the school formerly known as Paterson Catholic High School, now Paterson STEAM High School and home of the STARS and TIES programs.

Photos courtesy of Vincent Arrington



A Tree Grows In Paterson. Supervisor of Student Support Services Laurel Olson and Supervisor of Guidance Michael DuBose pose by The Giving Tree in the lobby of 90 Delaware Avenue. Staff members were invited to write messages of affirmation on the trees' leaves as part of SEL Week. *Photo by Dan Juan*



We've Got Spirit (Yes, We Do). The Central Office's Climate & Culture Committee was in full effect as it led the PPS Central Office Spirit Week. Staff members were encouraged to bond with each other by dressing alike (one day was "Wear Red Day," another was "Crazy Hat Day"). There was even a day when the committee served hot dogs. *Photos by Dan Juan*



READ ACROSS AMERICA

Welcome to Dr. Seussville! On March 3rd, Fifth Grade Language Arts Teacher Claude-Danielle Erisnor transformed her classroom at Public School No. 20 into Seussville Station, which was illuminated and surrounded by Truffula trees, inspired by Dr. Seuss' famous book "The Lorax." There were several interactive stations, each highlighting a Dr. Seuss book, including face painting, read-aloud stories, popcorn, a movie, and even an Oobleck station! School 20 Vice Principal Dr. Wanda Kopic, a published author, read her book, *In Love with Milani*. The speech therapist, Mrs. Bernardo, read "Oh the Places You'll Go," which was followed by a classroom discussion that led to a writing piece about decision-making and future goals. *Photos courtesy of staff.*



READ ACROSS AMERICA



School 21 Will Not Be Outdone! Public School No. 21 had their own brand of Seussville on Friday as they decorated part of the schools in Dr. Seuss themes, and welcome many local dignitaries, including Superintendent Shafer, to read to the students. *Photos by Paul Brubaker*

READ ACROSS AMERICA



Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly



Former Board Commissioner Vincent Arrington



Eastside Spanish Honors Society



Early Childhood Education Director "Fancy" Nancy Holtje

Just A Few Familiar Faces Here are just some of the folks who stopped by district classrooms to participate in Read Across America this month.
Photos by Dan Juan and staff

SUPERINTENDENT TESTIFIES BEFORE STATE BUDGET COMMITTEE

SHAFFER ADVOCATES FOR STATEWIDE STARTING TEACHER'S SALARY, GREATER QSAC EQUITY

Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer testified before the N.J. State Assembly's Budget Committee on Monday and advocated for a statewide starting teacher's salary, a faster track for educators to obtain bilingual and special education certifications, and greater equity in the administering a waiver for urban school districts as they are evaluated by the state, through the N.J. Quality Single Accountability Continuum, or QSAC.

"The shortage of teachers affecting schools throughout the nation has presented one of the most significant challenges to our district," said Shafer, in a 4th floor committee room in the State House. "As new teachers come in, teachers who have been with us get lured away by other school districts that offer higher salaries. It is this district-versus-district scenario that I find most troubling."



Superintendent Shafer at the Assembly Budget Committee Hearing *Photo by Paul Brubaker*

The establishment of a statewide minimum starting salary would help quell that scenario, Shafer.

"This was done before in the State of New Jersey," Shafer said.

Another way to help districts hire the teachers they need is to expedite the processes through which paraprofessionals obtain bilingual certifications and special education certifications, and make them less costly, she said.

Shafer called for greater equity in the administration of a waiver given to school districts for QSAC, the state's process for evaluating school districts in five areas, including Instruction and Program.

A district's scores on the Instruction and Program section of QSAC are largely based on students' performance on state assessments. Test scores have been low in districts throughout the state due to the pandemic shutdown's impact on student learning.

In order to help districts achieve the minimum score of 80 on the QSAC's Instruction and Program section, the state issued a waiver that took into account the pandemic shutdown's impact on students' assessment scores.

However, in urban districts, the waiver does not have the intended impact of achieving the Instruction and Program score of 80. Therefore, urban districts have not received the full benefit of the waiver.

"The urban districts have been left behind, such as Newark, Orange, Passaic, and Paterson to name a few," Shafer said. "Where is the equity? A waiver should be there to help everyone, not a select few. COVID did not discriminate, but the waiver for QSAC Instruction and Program does discriminate. It separates the urban districts from all of the others."

Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly, vice chair of the Assembly Budget Committee, asked what the impact is on urban school districts that do not have the full benefit of the waiver.

"For that particular area, Instruction and Program, if a district doesn't receive 80 percent, then the district would be put on a Corrective Action Plan," said Shafer, who noted that Paterson Public Schools as well as Newark Public Schools has just earned back local control ending decades of a state takeover.

"For us not to benefit from the waiver as others do is just discriminatory," Shafer said.

[CLICK HERE](#) to see the video of Superintendent Shafer's testimony.

Important Dates

Apr. 3 - 10	Spring Break – District Closed
Apr. 11	Teacher Job Fair 90 Delaware Ave. – 1st-floor café Paterson, 4 – 7 p.m.
Apr. 12	Board of Education Workshop Meeting 6:00 p.m. – Joseph A. Taub School, 202 Union Blvd., Paterson
Apr. 18	Board of Education Special Meeting 5:30 p.m. – Remote
Apr. 19	Board of Education Regular Meeting 6:00 p.m. – Joseph A. Taub School, 202 Union Blvd., Paterson Public hearing for the incoming Superintendent
Apr. 20	Meeting on the 2023-2024 Budget (Hearing & Adoption) 6:00 p.m. – Joseph A. Taub School, 202 Union Blvd., Paterson
Apr. 21	Eid Al Fitr – District Closed
Apr. 25	Meeting on the 2023-2024 Budget (Discussion) 6:00 p.m. – Joseph A. Taub School, 202 Union Blvd., Paterson



Board of Education Meetings

The April 12th and April 19th Board of Education meetings will be held in-person at 6:00 p.m. at the Joseph A. Taub (JAT) Middle School, 202 Union Avenue. It will also be live streamed at pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents. Those who want to give public comment must do so in person. They should register when they arrive at the JAT School for the meeting.

The April 18th Board of Education meeting will be held virtually at 5:30 p.m. and live-streamed at pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents. Those who want to give public comment should register in advance by emailing public@paterson.k12.nj.us by 4:30 p.m. on April. 18th. Participants are asked to provide their name, address, and phone number from which they will be calling.

PPS Beat is a publication of the PPS Department of Communications. We welcome your submissions on school and district-related news. Submit stories and photos to ppscommunications@paterson.k12.nj.us.