



## !!!!CHAMPIONS!!!!

**“HUMBLE & HUNGRY” KHS BOYS SOCCER TEAM WINS PASSAIC COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP IN 26 YEARS**



The Kennedy Boys Soccer Team gather with their fans after winning the Passaic County Championship

*Photo by Paul Brubaker*

For the first time since 1996, the Kennedy Boys Soccer Team has won the Passaic County Championship. Senior Luis Portillo scored a goal in sudden-death overtime to defeat the #1 ranked Clifton Mustangs, 1-0

“It took us four years to get to this level,” said Head Coach Richard Solis after the game. “Last year, I remember we were almost there. Experience, that’s what we needed. Today, we showed it and we delivered.”

“It’s something that we dreamed about,” said Senior Luis Portillo while the celebration continued on the pitch.

“We’re humble and we’re hungry,” said Portillo, when he was asked what was special about this year’s team.

“Every single one of us, we’re hungry and we wanted it, and we brought it home to Paterson.”

It had been an intense game with Clifton, marked by many fast breakaways down the sidelines, scrums in front of the goals, penalty kicks, and the occasional long shot on goal that threatened to give the advantage to the Mustangs.

But in the end, it was Portillo who was at the right place at the right time – the left post of the Clifton goal – to head the ball into the bottom right corner and end the game with about four minutes left in the overtime period.

Goalie Javier Sanchez proved to be an impenetrable defense again for the Knights, earning him another celebration of being tossed in the air by his teammates after the game – this time, while they chanted, “MVP!”

Emotions ran high as many of the Knights were overcome with emotion at the reality of their achievement. Some were held by their coaches and teammates as they felt the relief of having the county championship in hand.

After the team and their supporters posed for photos, Assistant Coach Alfredo Serrano stood up and said, “First, we have to thank Him” with his finger pointed skyward. Then Serrano dedicated the Passaic County Championship plaque to Kennedy High School Athletic Supervisor Scott Durham in gratitude for his support.

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**Soccer** continued from p. 1.

Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer was among the many Knights supporters at the game, dressed in her authentic Knights hoodie.

“This is truly a historic achievement that has brought so much pride to Paterson Public Schools and the great City of Paterson,” said Shafer. “It was a tough game, but everyone on the team had heart – that internal drive that helps you achieve heights you may have thought weren’t possible. Congratulations to Head Coach Richard Solis, Assistant Coach Alfredo Serrano, Athletic Supervisor Scott Durham, and every one of the Kennedy Boys Soccer Knights!”

Among the other district officials at the game were Assistant Superintendent David Cozart, Kennedy Principal of Operations Michael Hill, and Board of Education Commissioners Vincent Arrington and Emanuel Capers.

[CLICK HERE](#) to see a video of Luis Portillo’s game-winning goal and the celebration that followed.



Kennedy Boys Soccer players celebrate the end of a county championship drought that lasted more than a quarter century. *Photo by Paul Brubaker*

## KHS FORWARD NAMED *THE RECORD'S* SOCCER PLAYER OF THE WEEK



Luis Portillo

After scoring what *The Record* called “one of the most important goals in Kennedy history,” Kennedy soccer forward Luis Portillo was voted North Jersey Soccer Player of the Week by the newspaper’s readers.

“My centerback crossed it in to the second post,” Portillo said, reliving the play after the team won the Passaic County Championship. “I knew I was going to be there. I saw the moment and I headed it in.”

Voting was open to the newspaper’s readers for four days last week. Five other soccer players were nominated for the honor. When the final tally was made, Portillo had nearly 46 percent of the votes – almost 10 points ahead of the players who received the second-highest percentage of the votes.

After [the results were announced](#), Kennedy Athletic Supervisor Scott Durham was grateful to the many people in the Paterson Public Schools who took the time to cast their votes for Portillo.

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# EASTSIDE FOOTBALL POWERS INTO THE NJSIAA PLAYOFFS

## GHOSTS DEFEAT PISCATAWAY CHIEFS 28-7 AT BAUERLE FIELD IN PLAYOFFS' FIRST ROUND

The Eastside Football Ghosts wasted no time to get the advantage over their opponent in the first round of the N.J. Interscholastic Athletic Association (NJSIAA)'s North Jersey Section 2, Group 5 playoffs on Friday.

Only 14 seconds had elapsed when Wide Receiver Elijah Carroll entered the end zone after returning the Piscataway Chiefs' opening kickoff 90 yards. Eastside never gave up the lead and handily defeated the Chiefs, 28-7.

The Ghosts' defense, which hasn't allowed opposing teams to score more than seven points in the past four games, forced four turnovers, two of which resulted in Eastside touchdowns. In the first quarter, Defensive End Nyreek Clyburn intercepted a pass and ran 70 yards to the end zone. That was followed by Defensive End Carnell Goodwin's interception in the fourth quarter, which he ran back 60 yards for a touchdown.

Goodwin, playing quarterback, threw a pass caught by Running Back Romadon Adams, who ran 40 yards for a touchdown.

The post-season game at Bauerle Field was a rarity for the Ghosts, whose standings in previous seasons had not earned them the ability to host a playoff game at home. But [Eastside's victory over the Passaic County Technical Institute Bulldogs](#) on Oct. 20th, capped off their winning 5-3 regular season that led to Friday's game being played home at Eastside.

"No matter how far they go in the playoffs, the Eastside Football Ghosts have become a great source of pride for the district and the entire City of Paterson," said Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer. "Head Coach James Magazine, Defense Coordinator 'Coach K' Jacobs, and Athletic Supervisor T.J. and all who work with them have successfully instilled sportsmanship in the student-athletes. And our student-athletes have shown us over and over again that they are a team that brings their A-game to every game. I wish them the best of luck in the next round of the playoffs."

The Eastside Ghosts will face the undefeated Phillipsburg Stateliners in an away game on Friday, Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>.



Running Back Romadon Adams on a 60-yard run to the end zone after receiving Carnell Goodwin's pass and getting a block from lineman Taiwan Davis. Photo by Paul Brubaker

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# SCHOOL 21 DANCE TROUPE HITS IT BIG IN ATLANTIC CITY

SOARING EAGLES PERFORM AT NJSBA CONFERENCE AS LEAD-IN TO NJDOE COMMISSIONER

Public School No. 21's Soaring Eagles Dance Troupe performed at the N.J. School Boards Association (NJSBA) annual conference in Atlantic City last week in a prized performance slot: just before New Jersey Commissioner of Education, Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan's keynote address.

The student dancers in grades four through eight performed a special dance choreographed by School 21 ESL Jose Rosario entitled, *Dia do los Muertos (Day of the Dead)*, which was presented to music of the cantata, *Carmina Buranda*.

"We could not be prouder of our School 21 Soaring Eagles dancers for representing Paterson Public Schools so magnificently to the entire state," said Superintendent of School Eileen F. Shafer. "This is a great honor for our students, and I want to thank School 21 Principal JoAnn Riviello, ESL teacher Jason Velante, and ESL teacher Jose Rosario who coordinated the students and choreographed their routine. This was certainly one of the biggest highlights of the NJSBA conference."

Commissioner Allen-McMillan was very impressed by the students' performance, which she called, "stupendous."

"They epitomize the great education students receive in New Jersey," said Allen-McMillan. "The best is yet to come for each student as all are talented beyond measure."

[CLICK HERE](#) to see a video of the School 21 Soaring Eagles' performance.



**A Singular Sensation.** The School 21 Soaring Eagles pose with acting NJDOE Commissioner Angelica Allen-McMillan.

*Photo courtesy of the NJDOE*

## BOE TO RESUME IN-PERSON MEETINGS

The Paterson Board of Education will resume holding meetings in person as of November 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at the Joseph A. Taub Middle School, 202 Union Ave. "The decisions and processes of the Board of Education require the input and the participation of the families served by Paterson Public Schools. That is why we are very glad to return to in-person board meetings and help encourage public involvement," said Board of Education President Kenneth Simmons.

Board meetings will continue to be live-streamed at <https://pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents>. Members of the public who want to comment during the public portion of the meetings will be required to attend the meeting in person and sign up to speak when they arrive at the meeting.

For a schedule of upcoming Board of Education meetings and other information pertaining to the board, please visit [the Board of Education's page](#) on the district website.

# ESSENCE OF PATERSON

**WORLD CHAMPION WNBA  
PLAYER TURNED MUSIC  
BUSINESS EXEC COMES HOME**

Before she was a WNBA champion playing for the Los Angeles Sparks, before she was the 7<sup>th</sup> overall draft pick for the New York Liberty, before she made multiple appearances in the NCAA Basketball Tournament playing for Rutgers University under the legendary coach, C. Vivian Stringer, before she was named as a McDonald's All-American as an Eastside High School Ghost, Essence Carson was a student at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Educational Complex learning the fundamentals of the game in the gymnasium.

Today, that same gymnasium now bears her name after a special ceremony on Oct. 15 to name the facility after her before a gathering of many district and local officials, school administrators and students, and many family members, friends, educators, and coaches who had known Carson way before the world of sports did.

"When I was a young girl, I just wanted to be good. I just wanted to have an opportunity," said Carson, who now works for Motown Records. "People outside this city sometimes make you feel like this is the only place where we belong and that we can't go anywhere else and that there is no upward movement. My first goal was to just go to college. I can't tell you how surreal this feels. I thank Paterson for being my home."

[CLICK HERE](#) to see WNBC News' coverage of the event. The following day, Carson held a youth basketball clinic at Eastside High School where she coached young athletes – most of them girls – who hope to follow in her footsteps.

*Photos by Daniel Juan*



# NINE PPS STUDENTS TAKE 2022 YOUTH POETRY CONTEST HONORS

Nine Paterson Public Schools students were named winners of the 2022 Youth Poetry Contest and were awarded their honors at the 5th Annual Paterson Poetry Festival.

Nearly 100 students submitted works to the contest.

The winners in the Grades 3 to 5 category were Anayah Munoz, Somadrita Paul, Nylah James who won first, second, and third place respectively. They are all fourth-graders at Public School No. 19.

The winners in the Grades 6 to 8 category were Kate Escamilla and Joseph Negron Jr. who won first and second place respectively. They are both eighth-graders at the Dr. Hani Awadallah School. Anny Gomez, a sixth-grader at Public School No. 28, won third place.

The winners in the Grades 9 to 12 category were Jazlyn Lopez, Alana Fredericks, and Amy Santana who won first, second, and third place respectively. They are tenth-graders at Eastside High School.

Special thanks to all of the district's teachers who help bring out the best in our students. In particular, we thank Talena Lachelle Queen, the festival organizer, Paterson Poet Laureate, and an Eastside High School ELA teacher, for her efforts and congratulate her on the five years the festival has been running.

# PARENTS COME BACK TO SCHOOL AT PTO KICKOFFS

More than 350 parents participated in the districtwide Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)'s Back To School Kick-Off events held on October 1st at Eastside High School and on October 15 at Kennedy High School.

The events, which were held in conjunction with the district, marked the first time parent events were held in school buildings in three years and served to help build momentum behind the efforts to launch a PTO in every one of the district's schools.

Special thanks to PTO President GE Soriano, First Vice President Oriana Acevedo, PTO Second Vice President Nyha Mathis, as well as the Paterson Police Department's Community Policing Division, The Family & Community Engagement Department – in particular Kemper McDowell and Bridget Arrick, and Deputy Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Susana Perón.

# 2022 HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

All photos by Dan Juan





## SCHOOL 13 STAFF & STUDENTS RAISE \$1,000 FOR CHARITY IN HONOR OF DECEASED TEACHER



Jennifer Ann Doherty

Staff and students at Public School No. 13 raised \$1,000 for the Sander and Matits Burn Foundation in honor of Jennifer Ann Doherty, a School 13 science teacher who died on Oct. 2nd at the age of 52.

Doherty, who worked in the district for 21 years, had been a burn victim in 2012, [according to her obituary](#). After she recovered, Doherty volunteered to help other burn victims heal from their injuries. Donations to the Sander and Matits Burn Foundation were requested in lieu of flowers by Doherty's surviving family members.

Donations can be made at the following link:

<http://www.thesanderandmatitsburnfoundation.com/>

Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer led a moment of silence in remembrance of Doherty at the Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> Board of Education meeting.

## IN-PERSON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION TRAINING RESUMES

Affirmative Action Supervisor Houry Yeganeh conducted the first in-person Affirmative Action training since the pandemic began to all school-based representatives, on Thursday, September 15. The session was filled with information pertaining to Affirmative Action related policies, procedures, and investigation processes.

The department has transitioned to electronic reporting through EDS with the assistance of Director of Climate and Culture Nicole Payne. Yeganeh and Payne worked collaboratively with EDS team to accommodate Affirmative Action needs on the portal, and to provide training to the representatives on the new reporting protocol.

Building-based Affirmative Action representatives are volunteer staff members who go above and beyond their contractual duties to assist their school leader and Central Office-based Affirmative Action supervisor by investigating student-on-student discrimination cases, presenting Affirmative Action-related policies to their school staff, and ensuring the program is implemented effectively.

### HEY! WHERE'S THE STORY I SUBMITTED? DID YOU...

...include ALL of the five W's (who, what, when, where, and why?) in your item?

...include the full names of everyone in the item, including the teachers?

...avoid using anacronyms?

*Details like these can help lead to faster publication.*

## AROUND THE DISTRICT



**Some Salsa With Your Governor?** Tom Gaydos, right, a music teacher at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Educational Complex, went to Drumthwacket, the Governor's Mansion, for a Salsa performance in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month. Gaydos is pictured at the far right in the photo.

**Walking The Walk.** Staff and students at the Dr. Frank Napier School of Science and Technology took to the streets for a Breast Cancer Awareness Walk on October 21st. Their efforts raised \$1,000 for the Hackensack Meridian Health Foundation.



**RPHS Student Keeps The Beat.** Blanca Navarrete, a ninth-grader and a percussionist at the Rosa L. Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts, has been accepted into the Cali Pathways Project at Montclair State University's John J. Cali School of Music. Earlier this year, when Navarrete was an eighth-grader at Public School No. 16, she became the district's first student-musician in more than a decade to be accepted into the New Jersey Intermediate Regional Concert Band. School 16 Music Teacher Jason Quevedo has been instrumental in helping Navarrete prepare for these opportunities.

# PPS WINS TOP NJSPRA AWARD FOR MEDIA RELATIONS

**AWARD RECOGNIZES COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT'S EFFORTS TO PROMOTE STORIES ABOUT STUDENTS ACCEPTED INTO ELITE COLLEGES IN 2022**

Paterson Public Schools has won first place in the N.J. School Public Relations Association (NJSPRA)'s annual School Communications Awards in the Media Relations – Human Interest category.

The award was given in recognition of the Communications Department's efforts, led by Communications Director Paul Brubaker, to earn numerous stories in the media about three members of International High School's Class of 2022 who were accepted into elite colleges.



Stefany Morales was co-captain of the Kennedy High School wrestling team when she was notified that she was accepted to the University of Pennsylvania. She was raised by her single mother from Mexico.

Juan Marrero was accepted by Johns Hopkins University with his sights set on becoming a surgeon. It was only a few years earlier when he first arrived in the United States from the Dominican Republic not able to speak English, which is why he went to the New Roberto Clemente Middle School to encourage English language learning students who were following in his footsteps.

Isabella Gonzalez was raised by her mother who immigrated from Venezuela. Gonzalez's acceptance to Harvard University fulfilled her lifelong dream of going to the prestigious university and made her the 10th district graduate to be accepted to an Ivy League school in 10 years.

Stories ran locally and nationally that profiled the students' backgrounds as immigrants or children of immigrants, the obstacles they and their families overcame, and their efforts to give back to the district by encouraging younger students to follow in their footsteps.

The media coverage not only highlighted three outstanding Paterson Public Schools students but was also a major step forward in redefining the narrative of Paterson Public Schools.

"We greatly appreciate the recognition the NJSPRA has kindly granted the district with this award," said Superintendent of School Eileen F. Shafer. "The media coverage our students, teachers, and staff have received for their accomplishments happens through regular, consistent contact with members of the media. That has always been a top communications priority, and I congratulate our communications director, Paul Brubaker, and his team on this honor."

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## Important Dates

- Nov. 2** Board of Education – Workshop Meeting  
6:00 p.m., Joseph A. Taub Middle School, 202 Union Avenue.  
Live stream at [pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents](https://pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents).
- Nov. 8** Election Day – No school for students. PD for staff.
- Nov. 9** First marking period ends
- Nov. 10 & 11** District closed – NJEA Convention
- Nov. 11** Veterans Day
- Nov. 16** Board of Education – Regular Meeting  
6:00 p.m., Joseph A. Taub Middle School, 202 Union Avenue.  
Live stream at [pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents](https://pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents).
- Nov. 17** Report Card Parent Conference (In-Person)  
Grade 9 through 12  
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
- Nov. 21** Report Card Parent Conference (In-Person)  
JAT and NRC  
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
- Nov. 22** Report Card Parent Conference (In-Person)  
Grades pre-K through 8  
5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
- Nov. 23** Early Dismissal
- Nov. 24 & 25** District Closed – Thanksgiving Break

As of Nov. 2, Board of Education meetings are held in-person at 6:00 p.m. at the Joseph A. Taub (JAT) Middle School, 202 Union Avenue, and live streamed at [pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents](https://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.

***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](mailto:ppscommunications@paterson.k12.nj.us).