



KEY TO SUCCESS

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS EILEEN SHAFER RECEIVES PATERSON'S KEY TO THE CITY FOR A STERLING CAREER IN EDUCATION

In a ceremony held in the City Council Chambers at Paterson's City Hall, Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer received the Key to the City from Mayor Andre Sayegh. The ceremony was attended by City Council members, school district officials and guests. The award was given in recognition of Superintendent Shafer's decades of service to the students of Paterson and for the leadership that she provided in the six years that she held the top position of the school district.

Ms. Shafer's career spans forty-two years, the first ten was in another school district. She came to Paterson in 1992 as a supervisor. She would spend the rest of her career climbing the ladder, with notable positions such as the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. She became the Deputy Superintendent in 2012. After the resignation of her predecessor, Ms. Shafer became the Acting Superintendent of Schools in 2017 and eventually the Superintendent of Schools. For the last six years she led the Paterson school district through teacher union contract negotiations, a pandemic, the resultant year of remote-learning, and the reopening of schools. Highlights to her tenure as Superintendent of Schools include improvements in graduation rates, facility upgrades, providing students with modern laptops to close the "digital divide", establishing two five-year contracts with the Paterson Education Association teachers' union, the reopening of Hinchliffe Stadium, and meeting all New Jersey Department of Education standards to regain local control of the Paterson school district which allows the Paterson Board of Education to make all of the final decisions in the school district's operation. Superintendent Shafer will retire on July 1.

Superintendent Shafer said, "The greatest key any of us can be bestowed with is knowledge. It unlocks hidden potential and opens pathways to new possibilities. In a city like Paterson, with its wide-ranging socio-economic and cultural diversity, effective public education is the best chance for our youth to attain a level playing field with our surrounding districts." Referring to June 20th being International Refugee Day she said, "I want to point out that families who have fled from dangerous conditions in their countries of origin and came right here to Paterson to enjoy safety and a stable education for their children."



Speakers at the event besides Superintendent Shafer included Mayor Andre Sayegh, Councilman Louis Velez, Board of Education President Nakima Redmon, and Sheriff's Department Deputy Coordinator Robert Scott.

“The true testament to a leader’s legacy is the foundation in what you leave behind to the next leader to assure his or her success,” Mayor Sayegh said. He continues, “You’re fond of using the phrase, ‘Together we can’, and together we did. We did a lot.” Finishing with, “So today we salute you for being a champion for our children.”

“You will be missed. You will be missed,” said Councilman Velez. “Despite what anyone else says, we had a relationship,” he added in referring to the close working relationship city had with Superintendent Shafer’s administration.

Nakima Redmon, Board of Education President said, “You are leaving this district in the better,” continuing, “When I say the better, you forced us to think outside of the box.”

“As a parent, as someone working for the public, I just want to thank you for everything that you have done, especially with bridging the gap between our kids,” said Deputy Coordinator Robert Scott, continuing, “working together and pushing forward for a good working relationship.”

[City of Paterson Facebook video of the ceremony.](#)



JUNIOR RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS (JROTC) MILITARY CEREMONIAL BALL



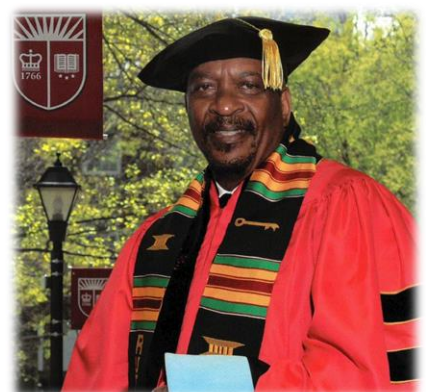
The U.S. Army Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) is one of the largest character development and citizenship programs for youth in the world. Congratulations to all the cadets, trainers and staff.



TWO NEW DOCTORS IN THE HOUSE!



The 2023 school year proved to be a very educational year for School 12 principal Boblyn Dobbs and 8th grade ELA teacher Garrett Thomas, both of whom earned their doctoral degrees. Dr. Dobbs earned her Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from Nova Southeastern University, and Dr. Thomas earned his Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from Rutgers University. They are an inspiration to the School 12 students to set high educational goals and achieve them.



FUTURE PLAYGROUNDS

DALE AVENUE WILL RECEIVE AN ALEXANDRA'S PLAYGROUND

Dale Avenue will be celebrating just like other District schools with a playground donated and built by a non-profit organization called the Alexandra's Playground. The playground will have our students entertained with a safe space to play. Superintendent Shafer states, "Dale Avenue is a great school and it will be even better with a new beautiful playground that our very young students will be able to enjoy." Look over the link of this delightful story by Paterson News.

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/paterson/sections/education/articles/alexandra-s-playground-to-help-construct-new-play-space-dale-avenue-school>

A grant received from the Children and Nature Network and the National League of Cities will provide Public School No. 21 an outdoor recreational area designed for learning, engaging and exploring. Superintendent Shafer is excited about the project for students to be able to learn and play in its natural space. Filled with gardens and pathways, it will be open beyond school hours, so that the surrounding community will be able to utilize it as well. Look over the link of this groundbreaking story by Paterson News.

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/paterson/sections/education/articles/green-schoolyard-coming-to-paterson-school-21>

BRINGING OUTDOOR LANDSCAPE TO SCHOOL NO. 21

SCHOOL NO. 25 GETS A REVAMPED FOOTBALL FIELD

Public School No. 25 received from the City of Paterson and Paterson Parks a generous donation. The money will be used to install bleachers, fencing and new grass to transform the field into a play space for outdoor activities. Superintendent Shafer states, "Updating our school's facilities and grounds has been one of the long-standing missions of my tenure as Superintendent of Schools. I'm happy that the students and staff of School 25 will someday be able to enjoy their updated field."

Look over the link of this exciting story by Paterson News.

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/paterson/sections/education/articles/school-25-playing-field-to-get-upgrade>

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THIRD GRADERS AT SCHOOL NO. 27 WILL RECEIVE ACTIVITY BOOK DONATION FROM PARTNERSHIP FOR A DRUG-FREE NEW JERSEY (PDFNJ) AND THE PSEG FOUNDATION

RECENT STUDIES SUGGEST RESEARCH-BASED, AGE-APPROPRIATE PREVENTION MATERIALS HAVE HAD A POSITIVE IMPACT AS SUBSTANCE USE HAS DECREASED AMONG AMERICAN TEENAGERS



Representatives from The Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey (PDFNJ) and the PSEG Foundation visited Public School No. 27 to donate Third Grade Life Choices Coloring and Activity Book, a booklet aimed at educating young students on how to make safe and healthy living choices. It is part of drive by the collaboration to reach 35,000 young New Jersey students across the state. Speaking to the students were Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer, Executive Director of PDFNJ Angelo Valente, and PSEG Foundation Program Manager Maria Spina.

The activity book contains prevention education activities and a

contract for students, teachers, and parents to sign, committing to a healthy lifestyle. Students taking part in the assembly that was held in the auditorium were enthusiastic about receiving the activity book and keen on asking plenty of questions related to the effects of illegal drugs. Mr. Valente was happy to answer each student's question, echoing statements from the other speakers on how to avoid illegal drug use.

Superintendent Shafer said, "I want you, the students to know, as your Superintendent, not too long ago I was a teacher. I was also in charge of the drug program here, in the Paterson school district. One of the most important lessons about avoiding bad drugs is to make good decisions and not be afraid to say no and report it to an adult." Of the activity books, she told the assembly, "It can't be stressed enough that we need to teach our students how to make good decisions and those are the kinds of lessons that are going to be in your activity book." Then to the students, "I want to say to each one of you, I couldn't be prouder of the students here at School No. 27. I know you're going to listen. I know that you're going to complete these activities."

"The Third Grade Life Choices and Activity Book provides students information and encouragement to make healthy decisions," said PDFNJ Executive Director Valente. "The prevention efforts of family members and the educational system are as vital to the mission of this program as the students' commitment to live drug-free," Valente added. "Parents and caregivers provide the guidance and emotional support to steer their children toward healthier life choices, while schools educate students on the positives of healthy living and the consequences of substance use." "PSEG is committed to supporting the communities we serve — including the young people in those communities. We believe strongly in the good work of the Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey and are proud to partner with them to help communicate the importance of making smart decisions at any age," said Ms. Spina, of the PSEG Foundation.



AROUND THE DISTRICT

The 13th Annual Peach Island Institute Art & Essay Contest Awards Ceremony was held at Montclair State University. Honorable Mention Award Winner and John F. Kennedy student Mohammad Rahman attended with his parents to receive a \$100 check and certificate for his poster illustrating 'The Impact of Social Media on Peacebuilding'. All award recipients enjoyed with their families with remarks from Adam Bulent Ozdemir, Executive Director of the Peace Island Institute, Christopher Kaczmarek, Chairman of the Art Department at Montclair and Tim Blunk one of the art jurors who is also a full-time art professor at Bergen Community College. *Photo courtesy of So Yoon Lym.*



Students from Paterson STEAM High School took a tour of News 12. Principal Kelli A. hopes to be able to provide additional learning opportunities for our "STEAMERS". *Photo courtesy from staff member.*



The district's 2nd High School STEAM Symposium at the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine had participants from the STEAM High School, P-Tech High School and Rosa Parks Fine & Performing Arts High School. Students presented workshops and poster sessions on topics ranging from Robotics, Graphic Art & Accessibility, Exercise Intensity vs. Spinal Response, Diffuse Lung Disease also called A Crossover Syndrome with Light Chain Deposition and Lymphoid Interstitial, Creating Soaps, Lotions and Antacids from common household ingredients to How COVID-19 Impacted Students' Performance. The symposium participants had an opportunity to tour the medical school labs and clinical study rooms where simulations are performed to assist medical students with diagnosing a patient's illness. A panel of first year medical students shared their pathway to medical school, mentors and sound, practical advice students can use while making decisions on college and career paths in any STEAM career. *Photo courtesy school staff.*



TWO YEAR LONG YOUTH EQUITY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM CONCLUDES WITH STUDENT-LEAD PROJECTS SHOWCASE

YOUTH EQUITY STEWARDSHIP (YES) PROGRAM LOOKING TO EXPAND THE PROGRAM TO A TOTAL OF TEN SCHOOLS FOR NEXT YEAR, THE INITIAL FIVE SCHOOLS WITH AN ADDITIONAL FIVE NEW SCHOOLS.

[Watch a student produced video!](#)

Students and faculty from five schools gathered at Rosa L. Parks High School to wrap up a two-year program aimed at addressing equity in school communities. Funded through ESSER II, the Youth Equity Stewardship (Y.E.S.) program was initiated at Eastside High School, Kennedy High School, The Rosa L. Parks School of the Fine and Performing Arts, the Dr. Frank Napier, Jr. School of Science & Technology, and the Charles J. Riley School in October of 2021 to bring young people's perspective, vision, creativity, and passion to the forefront of policymaking for schools in the 21st century. The day was a reflection on the students' two-year journey towards this goal.



The Y.E.S. program, as implemented for Paterson Public Schools (PPS), consisted of five meetings per year, called Y.E.S. Days, in which students and their advisors would meet with program founders Wade Antonio Colwell and Benjie Howard of Corwin Press, a division of Sage Publications, to explore culture, creative expression, community awareness, and social justice. There were 100 students in the program in grades six through twelve, divided into five cohorts, one from each school. The PPS iteration of the Y.E.S. program differed from other school districts in that it culminated in two students developed and lead initiatives: Professional Development (PD) sessions for teachers and peer

equity projects for students. Some PD sessions included suggestions and constructive strategies from students to teachers to build empathy and effective communication. The sessions consisted of conversations, surveys, a short film and other informational exchanges. Peer equity projects included improving school culture through the creation of Social Emotional Learning spaces and anti-bullying workshops. For this tenth and final Y.E.S. Day, the cohorts presented their school's initiatives to each other.

Speaking to the students, Superintendent Eileen Shafer said, "I just have to say, as your Superintendent, just how proud I am of each one of you. I always knew that the students in Paterson were the best, today, you're going to see the proof of that." She would add later, "You're going to see your peers from across the city that did great work over the two years. I only ask that you take this into your school and spread the word." She then thanked Assistant Superintendents Cicely Warren and David Cozart for setting up the program, the advisors for helping the students with the projects, and the participating students for being leaders in the program.

Assistant Superintendent Cicely Warren would praise the students' projects, relaying some of the positive feedback that the school faculties have shared with her about the student-created PDs. Addressing the students, she told them, "You are in our schools every day, you experience our schools every day; so you should have the most to say about it, and the most to teach about what it's like being a student in this district." Adding that, "You have done something incredibly powerful."

Assistant Superintendent David Cozart said to the students, "This whole vision was about giving you an opportunity to stake your claim in your district and your future. Advocacy coming from the grassroots, from the kids in the community has always been a way to make change happen." He continued, "Now you have taken your place in making Paterson great. You are part of Paterson's new renaissance. Take that with you wherever you go." Mindful Schools, which already provides mindfulness programs for District staff, will help faculty process feedback received from students. Cigna Healthcare will fund the expanded program, pending Board of Education approval.



BREAKING SCHOOL NEWS



Above and Beyond the Call of Duty

We would like to send a SHOUT-OUT to School No. 28 Crossing Guard Mr. Carlos Felipe. This young man is being acknowledged for his cheerful display of his exceptional services which sometimes gets unnoticed. Mr. Felipe's hard work and dedication to the students at this school makes him an outstanding professional giving that extra effort to protect the students and families of School No. 28.



The Esther Forero Chapter of the Eastside National Spanish Honor Society (ENSHS) of Paterson, New Jersey, held its Induction Ceremony. The ENSHS advisor, Mrs. Marbel Tamayo, handed out stoles, gold cords, and recognition plaques to the graduates, wishing them success in their new stage of life. Also, thirty-two new members received a warm welcome to the ENSHS. The Eastside H.S. Principal of Instruction Andre McCollum thanked all the guests for their presence and especially the ENSHS advisor, Marbel Tamayo. Administrators, teachers, and parents congratulated ENSHS students on all their academic accomplishments. ¡Todos a una!

Photo courtesy school staff.



Joseph A. Taub School is the lucky recipient of a brand-new Aquaponics Lab! Through the acquisition of grant funding, the District was able to partner with "Drop the Beets Farms," which focuses on building various types of farming systems for schools around the state of New Jersey. Students now have a tilapia and locally sourced plant greenhouse. JATS students will be involved in taking care of the fish in order to grow a variety of plants, all the while developing skills associated with gardening, self-management and empathy. The staff and students look forward to teaching and learning about growing and sustaining the plants and fish for years to come!

Photo courtesy school staff.



Martin Luther King Elementary Complex held a wonderful Multicultural Celebration. The event was sponsored by the PTO. Students, parents, teachers, and administrators celebrated culture and diversity. The event was well attended; dishes from many countries were shared. The MLK community celebrated together with music, food, and positive conversations. We look forward to celebrating together again. *Photo courtesy online.*



The National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) Induction Ceremony at Public School No. 10. The NJHS was established by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) in 1929. It was established “to create enthusiasm for scholarship; to stimulate a desire to render service; to promote leadership; to encourage responsible citizenship and to develop character in the students.” Members of the NJHS maintain a minimum of 3.0 GPA (B in all content areas.) School 10 Titans started a Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society in 1998. To date, hundreds of students have been inducted through this chapter. *Photo courtesy school staff.*

Public School No. 3 received a generous donation from the Summit Public School District. The school district donated 2,000 books for a special reading program at School 3. Superintendent Shafer understands that educating our youth is a shared effort amongst classes and even school districts. School 3 teachers, school administrators and Shafer thanks the Summit School District for their donation and the Paterson Board of Education also approves their open-handedness by accepting this donation.

[Read more about the story](#)



Gun Violence Awareness Month is acknowledged annually by cities, towns, and communities nationwide. June 2nd is National Gun Violence Awareness Day. Renaissance One had their school-wide National Gun Violence Awareness Walk! Students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade and staff wore orange clothing and ribbons to show our support for this very important cause. *Photo courtesy school staff.*

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS' STEAM HIGH SCHOOL HOSTS ITS 2ND ANNUAL WEAR ORANGE GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS WALK

ROBERT CUADRA'S MOTHER, IVERNIS SANTIAGO, WHO LAUDED THE STUDENTS FOR THEIR EFFORTS TO SUPPORT ENDING GUN VIOLENCE AND SPOKE ABOUT HER SON, "HE WAS MY ROLE MODEL."

<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/paterson/sections/education/articles/paterson-steam-high-school-honors-slain-student-in-annual-gun-violence-awareness-walk>



Left to Right: Robert Cuadra's mother Ivernys Santiago and STEAM High School Principal Kelli White

In January of last year, a Paterson STEAM High School honor student who had earned a full scholarship to Montclair State University was killed in a crossfire while bringing groceries to his grandmother. Robert Cuadra was remembered during STEAM High School's Wear Orange Gun Violence Awareness Walk, which was held on school grounds. Last year's event raised over \$7,000. All proceeds were given as scholarships to graduating seniors and a donation was made to Everytown for Gun Safety. Recent fundraising for The Robert Cuadra Fund includes the selling of t-shirts and local food trucks that have agreed to donate a portion of their proceeds to The Robert Cuadra Fund.

Present at the event was Paterson City Mayor Andre Sayegh, who spoke of the continuing effort to end gun violence in the city.

Superintendent Shafer, who wasn't able to attend, stated, "Each time we lose someone to gun violence it is a hard hit to the community and the city. Especially if it is a young person, like Robert was, whose life was just beginning, it just strikes deeper. We are losing so much potential to gun violence and we all must find a way to help end it. My team, those being the District's administrators and school principals, and I, with the help of teachers, staff and parents, work together to make Paterson Public School buildings as safe as possible. It's not enough to make our schools safe though, we need to work as a community to make the streets safe as well."



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DISTRICT SPORTS SECTION

The All County Female Student Athlete of the Year award goes to John F. Kennedy High School Softball Student Lytania Ortiz. She was awarded this achievement not only because she has a GPA of over 3.9, but because of her athletic and leadership skills.

Photo pictured from left to right AD Scott Durham, Lytania Ortiz, and Head Softball Coach Cotton.



John F. Kennedy rakes in the awards. (L-R) AD Scott Durham, 1st team All County winner in Soccer Criss Escoto, 1st team All County in Soccer Johann Sanchez-Castro, and 1st team All County and Student Athlete of the Year in Soccer Luis Portillo. A.J. Mouzone 1st team All County in Football, and 1st team All County and State Sectional Winner Yousef Elzahaby.



Yousef Elzahaby, in his last Kennedy High School Outdoor Track and Field meet, placed 9th in the Shot Put for the entire State of New Jersey. Next year he will be serving our country in the Army.

Photo pictured from left to right Yousef Elzahaby, Coach Martinez, and Coach Art.



The Paterson Old Timers Athletic Association honor Luis Portillo as its top Athlete in Soccer. Last season Luis led the John F. Kennedy Soccer Team to its first Passaic County Soccer Championship in over 20 years. Luis was 1st team All-League, 1st team All Passaic County, and 1st team All State Group 4.

Kennedy High School Football Knights Senior Quameer Maddan was accepted to Montclair State University Pre-Medical Program. Superintendent Shafer congratulated Quameer for being accepted to this prestigious university and thanked all the staff who helped him achieve this program. Read the article from tapinto.net.
<https://www.tapinto.net/towns/paterson/sections/education/articles/john-f-kennedy-senior-quameer-maddan-commits-to-montclair-state-university-s-pre-medical-program>



Batter Up: Negro League Baseball and STEM Culminating Event held at Mary Ellen Kramer Park the Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park. Read more about this intriguing presentation by clicking the link on the right.

[.\School Activities\BatterUpCulminating Presentation.pdf](#)

Former John F. Kennedy High School football player Nazier Wright Collins has just signed with the USFL San Antonio Brahmas. *Photo courtesy school staff.*



[Click here to see more photos from the graduation ceremonies.](#)



Important Dates

July 3	District Closed – 4th of July Recess
July 4	District Closed – 4th of July / Independence Day
July 5 - August 11	District Office Summer Hours 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. District Closed – Fridays
July 10	Summer School Begins
July 13	Virtual Teacher Job Fair 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
August 22-24	Summer Administrator Institute
August 29-31	New Teacher Orientation



Board of Education Meeting

The August 9th Board of Education Workshop meeting will be held at a location to be determined (TBD). 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 for the meeting.

Simultaneous Language Interpretation

Online simultaneous language interpretation is available at all Board meetings in Spanish, Arabic, Bengali, and Turkish. Simply choose the preferred language at pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents.

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.

We would like to thank the involvement of all staff members and administrators to have your school, program, students, etc. represented in PPS BEAT this school year.

We would like to send well-deserved wishes and success to all 2022-2023 Graduates.

Mr. Daniel Juan, Interim Director of Communications Department
Mrs. Maria D. Rosado-Leon, Confidential Secretary to the Communications Department

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