

# Paterson Post

Paterson — A Promising Tomorrow

Together We Can

*Happy Holidays!*

DECEMBER 2021

*Happy Holidays!*

## SHAFER TO RETIRE

*After more than 30 years at PPS, Superintendent will step down in June*



Superintendent Shafer in September  
Photo by Daniel Juan

Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer, the first woman to hold the district's top job, announced that she intends to retire at the end of the current school year, which would make her last day June 30, 2022.

"It is after much personal reflection and thoughtful consideration of all that has been accomplished and all of the people I have been honored to work with and come to know, that I have come to the decision to notify the Board of Education Commissioners tonight of my intention to retire," Shafer said at the Board of Education's Dec. 8th meeting. "Those aren't easy words to say, especially about a career I have loved so much. I have been immensely proud to work for the students and families of Paterson Public Schools – not only while serving as Superintendent of Schools, but during every single day of the 30 years I have been here."

Shafer noted that when she was first appointed as superintendent, the district's top priority was restoring local control after 30 years of being run by the state. She knew that

one person, even a superintendent of schools, could not do it alone. She enlisted the help of her cabinet and numerous stakeholders in launching her administration. As a personal priority, she reached a new contract with the Paterson Education Association within her first 100 days.

In 2018, when Shafer was first appointed superintendent, restoring local control appeared to be the pinnacle of district success. But the district and the community achieved even more during the pandemic, Shafer said. Among the successes Shafer counted were the closing of the digital divide by providing students with internet access and devices and making sure that students received meals while school buildings were closed.

Shafer thanked many people who have worked to take care of the district's thousands of students every day including the Board of Education commissioners, the members of the Cabinet and the executive directors, directors, her Superintendent's Office colleagues, the principals, vice principals, supervisors, paraprofessionals, secretaries, custodians, nurses, and food services workers.

"The pandemic is not over, and thousands of students need a thorough and efficient education," Shafer said. "For the remainder of my tenure, I will continue to focus on the needs of the staff, students, and their families. There's much work to be done."

# IHS Senior Accepted To UPenn

2

*Stefany Morales will be the first in her family to go to college*

Stefany Morales, an International Baccalaureate (IB) senior at International High School (IHS), has received early decision acceptance to the University of Pennsylvania (UPenn). Morales is the third IHS student to be accepted to UPenn during the past three years, and the fourth to be accepted to an Ivy League university during the same time period.

"This is truly wonderful news and I want to extend my most heartfelt congratulations to Stefany Morales on this significant academic achievement," said Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer. "I also want to congratulate Stefany's family, teachers, administrators, and her principal, Dr. Catherine Forfia-Dion for doing everything they could to help Stefany reach this tremendous milestone. To be accepted early decision to an Ivy League university is outstanding. To achieve that during a continuing pandemic is even more so – and it has happened four times at International High School."

"Stefany is an incredibly hard-working student who has a tremendous amount of concern for the people around her," said International High School Principal Catherine Forfia-Dion. "She has a particular interest in protecting the environment and promoting sustainability. But no matter what field she ultimately chooses, Stefany will be successful and have a very positive impact on the world."

Morales was in the midst of celebrating her eighteenth birthday when she got some exciting news from UPenn.

"After I cut my cake, I ran to my room to check my application portal," Morales wrote in an email. "To my surprise and joy, I found out that I'd been accepted and went crying towards my family. And they were as emotional as I was."

Two IHS alumni will be on campus when Morales begins her studies in the fall. Amaya Perez, who graduated in 2019, and Cindy Munoz, who graduated in 2020, and currently pursuing their undergraduate degrees at UPenn.

Morales is a Paterson native whose mother immigrated to the United States.

"I'm extremely grateful for my mom who has sacrificed so much to come here from Mexico to give me and my siblings a better education and life," Morales said. "I will continue to conquer every challenge ahead of me in order to succeed and make my relatives proud."

Since her freshman year, Morales has been involved with the Girls United For The Earth organization, which is dedicated to exploring environmental issues around the Paterson community, which has led to Morales' developing interest in earth science.

"I am extremely grateful for Mrs. Sarah Sterling Laldee, who is the coordinator of this organization," Morales said. "Since fourth grade, she has helped me become an open minded individual." Sterling Laldee is a former Paterson Public Schools administrator.

Morales also founded her school's Environmental Club, which has allowed her to share her environmental knowledge with other students. She has also been the captain of the Kennedy High School wrestling team, a member of her school's Chinese Club, and served her community by being involved with the Paterson Youth Council.



Stefany Morales

*Photo courtesy of Dr. Catherine Forfia-Dion*

# NSW PRINCIPAL GETS HONOR OF A LIFETIME 3

*Grace Giglio honored by PMYGC for compassion and commitment to Paterson youth*



NSW Principal Giglio, center in the blue plaid coat, surrounded by her colleagues after receiving the Paterson Municipal Youth Guidance Council's first-ever lifetime achievement award. *Photo courtesy of staff*

The Paterson Municipal Youth Guidance Council (PYMGC) honored Norman S. Weir (NSW) School Principal Grace Giglio with the organization's first-ever lifetime achievement award. The award was given in recognition of Giglio's "compassionate and transcending commitment to the children of the City of Paterson."

Paterson Youth Guidance Council Chairman Frank Filippelli bestowed the honor to Giglio at the end of the special ceremony at City Hall that honored students from Paterson schools including Public Schools No. 10 and 16, the Dr. Hani Awadallah School, and the Norman S. Weir School for making a difference in their community. The students had done a variety of good deeds including writing notes of comfort to Paterson's senior citizens that were delivered with Thanksgiving meals last year and creating a special online presentation of "Twas The Night Before Christmas" for children in pre-K through the third grade.

## Full Service Community Center Provides Dozens Of Turkeys To Those In Need



In the days leading up to Thanksgiving, the district's Full Service Community Center provided 155 turkeys to people in need with boxes and bags filled with all the trimmings for a complete Thanksgiving dinner. Many of the turkeys were donated by local organizations and individuals.

*Photos courtesy of Evelyn Peña, MSW*

# December 1st Proclaimed As 'Rosa L. Parks Day'

*Ceremony held at high school named after civil rights leader*



RPHS Senior Class President Shamar Williams addresses the crowd on Dec. 1st.

*Photo by Daniel Juan*



The RPHS Drama Club dramatizes the civil disobedience that Rosa Parks did on a Montgomery, Alabama bus 66 years ago. *Photo by Daniel Juan*

"Rosa Parks' legacy challenges us to respect ourselves as individuals, to stand against injustice everywhere, and to honor the

On the 66th anniversary of Rosa Parks' historic act of civil disobedience on a Montgomery, Alabama bus, Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer, Mayor Andre Sayegh, and local community leaders proclaimed December 1st as "Rosa L. Parks Day" on the grounds of the district's high school named after the civil rights leader.

The entire student body of the Rosa L. Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts (RPHS) was present at the outdoor ceremony that commemorated Rosa Parks' refusing to give up her seat on a public bus to a white person as a state law required.

"Rosa Parks disobeyed that law to demonstrate how unjust it was," said Superintendent Shafer. "I ask everyone gathered here, especially our students, how will you choose to honor the legacy of Rosa Parks? Will you begin by renewing your own respect for yourself by considering the role you want to play in the world? Or will you start on this day, Rosa L. Parks Day, to dedicate yourself to making life easier for someone else? We may not all become historic figures like Rosa Parks, but we all have the power that Rosa Parks had to make tremendous change in the lives of other people."

"Rosa Parks was truly a historic figure and an inspiration to many," said Mayor Sayegh. "I am proud to join Superintendent Shafer in proclaiming December 1st as Rosa Parks Day in the City of Paterson."

**Please see, "Parks"**  
**on page 5.**



The RPHS Chorus performs at the Rosa L. Parks Day ceremony. Photo by Daniel Juan

## Parks

*Continued from page 4*

human dignity in everyone,” said Paterson Board of Education Commissioner Corey Teague. “I am proud that Paterson Public Schools and the City of Paterson are honoring the legacy of this great civil rights leader through the proclamations of ‘Rosa L. Parks Day.’”

The proclamations of “Rosa L. Parks Day” issued by Paterson Public Schools district and the City of Paterson came after the advocacy of local community activities Jimmy Richardson, who was present at the ceremony. In her remarks, Shafer thanked Assistant Superintendent Cicely

Warren and Rosa L. Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts Principal Nicolette Thompson for their work in organizing the event.

Other dignitaries present were N.J. State Assemblywoman Shavonda Sumter, Paterson Councilwoman Ruby Cotton, President of the Paterson NAACP Reverend Kenneth Clayton.

Members of the high school’s drama club and student participants in the school Youth Equity Stewardship (YES) program gave presentations to honor Rosa Parks’ legacy. The ceremony was emceed by Senior Class President Shamar Williams while Student Government Association Representative Ivan Malave opened the day’s program.



From left, Commissioner Teague, Superintendent Shafer, Principal Thompson at the Rosa L. Parks Day ceremony. Photo by Daniel Juan



Commissioner Teague  
Photo by Daniel Juan

Christian McBride, a seven-time Grammy Award-winning jazz bassist who is currently nominated for his eighth Grammy, and Nat Adderley, Jr., a multi-Grammy Award-winning pianist and arranger best known for his work with Luther Vandross, performed a holiday concert at the Sen. Frank Lautenberg School/Public School No. 6 for the students entering Jazz House KiDS' Music Scholars Program. Sixty SFLS/School 6 students in grades five through eight will begin the program in January.

The concert came a few days after Jazz House KiDS held an "Instrument Day" for SFLS/School 6 at which five different instruments were demonstrated in order to help students decide on an instrument to learn how to play. ([See VIDEO here.](#))

The instruments were the clarinet, the flute, the trombone, the trumpet, and the alto saxophone. Instruments will be provided to the students with the help of a \$10,000 donation from Jazz House KiDS' Give An Instrument – Build A Musician program.

McBride was introduced at the concert by Monae Clancy, a trombonist who graduated from Rosa L. Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts in 2014 and participated in Jazz House KiDS when she was a student.

The "All Star Band" that performed with McBride and Adderley included drummer Donovan Marshall, who also participated in Jazz House KiDS before he graduated from Rosa L. Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts in 2016. The other musicians in the band were Mark Williams on trombone, Wallace Roney, Jr. on trumpet, Zoe Obadia on alto saxophone, Anthony Ware on tenor saxophone and clarinet, and Ellah Brown on vocals.

Adderley comes from a family that is revered as jazz royalty, as his uncle was the legendary saxophone player Julian "Cannonball" Adderley. However, Adderley has primarily been associated with the genres of pop and R&B, working as Luther Vandross' music director.

## ALL THAT JAZZ

*Multi-Grammy Award-Winning Musicians & Jazz House KiDS Instructors Perform for SFLS/School 6 Students*



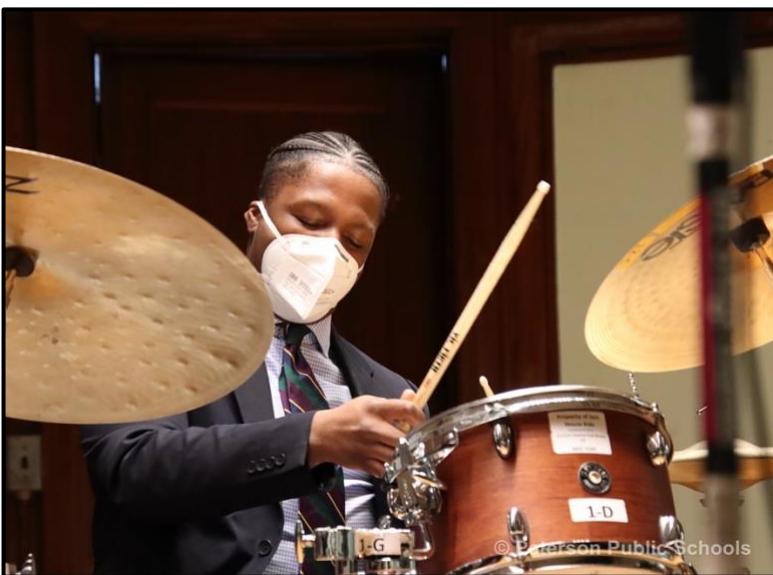
**ALL ABOUT THAT BASS:** Seven-time Grammy-award winning bassist Christian McBride performs for School 6 students.

*Photo by Daniel Juan*

**Please see, "Jazz"**  
on page 7.



**Jazz Royalty:** Multi-Grammy Award-winning pianist and arranger Nat Adderley, Jr. Photo by Daniel Juan



**Drummin' Alum:** Donovan Marshall performing at the elementary school he attended as a child. Photo by Daniel Juan

playing today got their start in middle school at the Jazz House and are now talented young professional artists today."

**At Right:** From left, RPHS alumna Monae Clancy, Superintendent Shafer, and RPHS & School 6 alumnus Donovan Marshall

## Jazz

*Continued from page 6*

"To have such accomplished musicians come to the Sen. Frank Lautenberg School/Public School No. 6 to perform and talk with our students is a tremendous honor for Paterson Public Schools and a huge inspiration for our students," said Superintendent of Schools Eileen F Shafer.



Commissioner Emanuel Capers

"We look forward to our SFLS/School 6 student embarking on their musical education through the Jazz House KiDS Music Scholars Program in January and seeing all that they will accomplish through the rest of the school year."

"We are thrilled to be able to bring world-renowned musicians for a special holiday concert kicking off the Jazz House Scholars Program in the Paterson School District," said Melissa Walker, founder & president of Jazz House KiDS. "Several of the musicians



# New Middle School Officially Dedicated To Joseph A. Taub 8

*District, state, and local officials great family of the late philanthropist*

Members of the Taub family were welcomed by district, state, and local officials for the official dedication ceremony of the Joseph A. Taub Middle School. Taub, who died in 2017, had attended



Members of Joseph A. Taub's family in front of the new school bearing his name.

*Photo by Daniel Juan*

Public School No. 6 and was remembered by the dignitaries at the ceremony as a generous philanthropist who never forgot his Paterson roots.

"I want to posthumously thank Joseph A. Taub for his commitment to doing everything he could for the young people of Paterson, for every time he was there when someone in Paterson reached out to him asking for help, for his generosity in helping to provide athletic facilities for our student-athletes," said Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer, who, in 2001, was the coordinator of the Taub-Doby Basketball and Cheerleading Program that Taub had founded. "I thank him and everyone in the Taub family who is with us today,"

Shafer said. "Thank you for being here with us as we officially dedicate this middle school in Joseph A Taub's honor. I sincerely hope that you find our being here at center court, where his name is prominently displayed, and indeed this entire school are fitting tributes to a very great man and the legacy that he left behind."

"This building is a fitting honor for the legacy of the Taub family," said Paterson Board of Education Commissioner Vincent Arrington, who addressed Taub's family members, including his widow Arlene, directly. "On behalf of the Board of Education of Paterson I want to say thank you for everything you have done."

In his remarks, N.J. State Assemblyman Benjie Wimberly recalled that it was the barrier-breaking baseball legend, and Paterson native, Larry Doby who introduced him to Taub. At the time, 1993, Wimberly was a teacher and baseball coach at Eastside High School.

"He bought uniforms for the team that year," Wimberly said. "In 1993, we won the county championship and the league championship for the first time in



Assemblyman Wimberly

*Photo by Daniel Juan*

**Please see, "Taub"**  
*on page 9.*

**Taub***Continued from page 8*

Eastside's history, all because of the magical Joe Taub-Larry Doby uniforms."

The opening of the new middle school at 202 Union Avenue ended years of long commutes for students in the neighborhood who, prior to the pandemic, had been attending classes at the former Paterson Catholic high school building on the other side of the city.

"The opening of the new building has provided everyone with a sense of belonging, enjoyment, and a safe learning environment," said Musammat Nekjabin, a seventh-grader at the Joseph A. Taub Middle School who described herself as a Bengali immigrant. "All students are academically challenged and valued for their cultural diversity at our school."



# School 24's Partners With Newark Art Museum To Enhance Arts Education

10



Artists in residence work with School 24 students through the school's partnership with the Newark Art Museum. *Photo by Daniel Juan*

Students' artistic endeavors are in abundance this year at Public School No. 24/Fine and Performing Arts Academy thanks to the school's partnership with the Newark Museum of Art (NMOA) that is bringing eight artists in residence programs into classrooms. The museum's eight Artists In Residence are teaching students in grades three through eight through hands-on experiences in mosaics, print-making, fiber arts, ceramics, sewing, jewelry making, and book and paper making. The artists-instructors are trained to develop the students' voices through artistic activism. Students also have access to the museum and are able to survey other art through virtual tours. The program will culminate in an exhibition of the students' artwork at the Newark Museum of Art at a later date.

## School 12 Students Learn About 'Underwater Forest'

*WPU professor gives students virtual lesson in paleontology, geology, and more*



William Paterson University Paleontology Professor Martin Becker recently paid a virtual visit to Michelle Albritton's eighth grade science students at Public School No. 12 to share his insights about paleontology, geology, evolution, fossils, sharks, and the underwater forest. Becker appears as one of the featured scientists in the film, *The Underwater Forest*, which details the discovery and exploration of an ancient cypress forest found 60 feet underwater in the Gulf of Mexico. Research discoveries like the Underwater Forest as well as shark's teeth found high on mountains give us insights about how sea levels have changed throughout Earth's history. The photo shows Becker with fossil Megalodon teeth he recently collected during a trip to Florida.

*Photo courtesy of Dr. Betsy Golden*

# School 10 Recognizes 'Star Students'

11

*School counselor initiated practice more than 10 years ago*



*Photo courtesy of staff*

For more than a decade, School Counselor Karen Patterson has been showcasing Public School No. 10's "Star Students." These are students in kindergarten through the eighth grade who have displayed great character, leadership, integrity, respect, or improved grades, behavior, or attendance. In addition to being displayed in the school building's foyer, students are provided a certificate, and are recognized through announcements over the school's intercom as well as in their individual classrooms. The theme for December was, "Showing Kindness During the Season of Giving."

## District Updates 2021-2022 Calendar

*Updates include Saturday make-up days, rescheduled in-service time*

The district's 2021-2022 calendar has been updated to include a number of changes.

The updated calendar includes Saturday, January 22nd as a school day for the entire district to make up for October 26, when the district was closed due to a declared state of emergency.

Also Saturday, January 29th will be a school day only for the Dale Avenue School, the New Roberto Clemente School (NRC), the Newcomers Program at NRC, and the Edward. W. Kilpatrick School to make up for days when those schools needed to close. The Dale Avenue School, NRC, and the Newcomers Program at NRC were closed on Wednesday, November 3rd due to problems with the heating systems. The Edward. W. Kilpatrick School was closed on Wednesday, November 22nd due to a power failure.

The updated calendar also includes three new staff in-service half days when students will be dismissed at 1:00 p.m. The three new staff in-service days are Friday, January 14th; Friday, February 11th; and Friday, April 1st. The days make up for the full-day of professional development that was supposed to have happened on September 2nd. The district was closed on that day due to Tropical Storm Ida.

The updated district calendar can be downloaded from the district's website at the following link: [http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us/11\\_pages/Calendar\\_2021\\_2022.php](http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us/11_pages/Calendar_2021_2022.php)

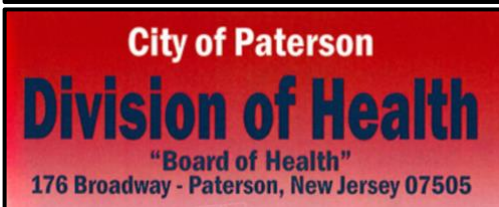
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- When referring to staff members, please include their first names.
- To request coverage of live events, please complete a Versiform request.

# Where To Get COVID-19 Vaccines & Boosters

*PPS partnerships with St. Joseph's Health, City Division of Health Continue*

Paterson Public Schools' partnerships are continuing to make COVID-19 vaccines and booster shots available to the district's staff, students and families. The details can be found on the district's website at the following link: [http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us/11\\_pages/COVID19Vaccination.php](http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us/11_pages/COVID19Vaccination.php).



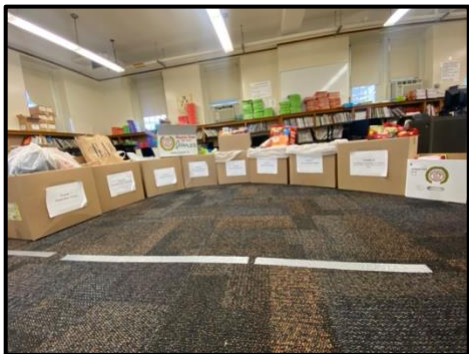
Both St. Joseph's University Medical Center have the Pfizer-BioNTech and the Moderna vaccines. Currently, only the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine has been approved for children as young as five years old.

The district partnered with St. Joseph's University Medical Center to hold two online community forums that addressed many questions about COVID-19 vaccines and boosters.

The forum with Chief Pediatric Epidemiologist Helen Kest, MD, MPH, which was held on Dec. 1st in English, can be viewed by [CLICKING HERE](#).

The forum with Carmen Mallamaci, MD and Eileen Matos, MD, which was held on Dec. 2nd in Spanish, can be viewed by [CLICKING HERE](#). More COVID-19 forums are being planned for Jan. 6 (English) and Jan. 13 (Spanish).

## School 18 Food Drive Benefits Eva's Village



Sixth grade teacher Tanya White led a successful food drive at Public School No. 18 for the benefit of Eva's Kitchen. "I started the drive as a way to teach my homeroom about philanthropy, especially during this time of year," White said. After White received a list of needed items from Eva's Kitchen, students, staff and administrators throughout the school collected a dozen boxes and bags for the organization in just one week. "Our school was honored to help many families this holiday season," White said.

*Photo courtesy of staff*

## School 12 Student Creates A Comic A Day



Public School No. 12 seventh-grader Albert Gutierrez has been crafting original comics since he was in the first grade. He creates a comic every day after school and even more on the weekends, according to teachers Brigette Shahin and Gail Harvey. Inspired by his mother who is a devoted comic creator, Gutierrez aspires to be a professional comic book writer.

*"Crazy World" by Albert Gutierrez*

*Photo courtesy of Dr. Betsy Golden*

# HR, Aiken & Clark, Maldonado Take Top Decorating Honors

*2021 Central Office Decorating Contest Winners Announced*

## **2021 Central Office Decorating Contest Winners**

### **Department Category**

- 1st Place - Human Resources Department
- 2nd Place - Special Education Department
- 3rd Place - Division of Academic Services

### **Group Category**

- 1st Place - Tara Aiken & Rashanda Clark  
(Home For the Holidays)
- 2nd Place- Nicole Dennis & Coreen Williams  
(Christmas in July)
- 3rd Place – Tineish Crawley & Juleka Kurury  
(Silver Bells)

### **Individual Category**

- 1st Place- David Maldonado  
(Winter Wonderland Park)
- 2nd Place- Eliada Aviles  
(Christmas at Hogwarts)
- 3rd Place - Grisell Gonzalez  
(Once Upon a Story Time Holiday)

On Broadway, it's the Tonys. In Hollywood, it's the Oscars. At 90 Delaware Avenue, the most anticipated event of the year (or at least, this year) is the announcement of the 2021 Central Office Decorating Contest Winners.

Accompanied by a digital drum roll, Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer bestowed the honors to the contest winners at the Dec. 23rd Central Office meeting, just before the district closed for a long winter's nap through the holiday break.

The contest was a team-building endeavor for the entire building that raised everyone's spirits for the holiday season. It was the Human Resources Department that took top honors in the department category, while the duo of Tara Aiken & Rashanda Clark was the top group and David Maldonado was the first place individual.

During her remarks, Shafer thanked Executive Supervisor to the Superintendent/Deputy Superintendent for Special Projects Eliza Rodriguez for instituting the contest.

Dan Juan of the Communications Department compiled a video of highlights from the decorative displays throughout the building. [CLICK HERE](#) to see the video.



The Award-Winning Human Resources Department  
*Photo courtesy of staff*



Luis "Santa" Rojas with the Superintendent & Deputy Superintendent  
*Photo courtesy of staff*

## ***Upcoming Events***

- Dec. 23:** Early dismissal; 1:00 p.m. for students, 1:10 p.m. for staff
- Dec. 24 - Jan. 3:** Holiday Break  
District closed
- Jan. 4:** Remote instruction begins
- Jan. 5:** Board of Education Reorganization Meeting\*  
6:00 p.m.
- Jan. 14:** Staff in-service, 1:00 p.m. dismissal for students
- Jan. 17:** Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
District closed
- Jan. 18:** Remote instruction ends
- Jan. 22:** Saturday School Day (Districtwide)
- Jan. 28:** 2nd Marking Period Ends
- Jan. 28:** Staff in-service, 1:00 p.m. dismissal for students
- Jan. 29:** Saturday School Day  
(Dale Ave, School, EWK, NRC, and Newcomers at NRC only)

\*All Board of Education meetings are live-streamed at [pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents](https://pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents). Those who want to give public comment should register in advance by emailing [public@paterson.k12.nj.us](mailto:public@paterson.k12.nj.us) by 5:00 p.m. on January 5<sup>th</sup>. Participants are asked to provide their name, address, and the phone number from which they will be calling.

***The Paterson Post*** 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).