

Paterson Post

Paterson — A Promising Tomorrow

Together We Can

January 31, 2021

TOGETHER, WE DID

Paterson Public Schools earns local control ending 30-year state takeover



Local officials gather at a local control press event.

Photo by Daniel Juan



BOE President Simmons speaks as Vice President Manuel Martinez looks on. *Photo by Daniel Juan*

The restoration of local control of Paterson Public Schools became a reality on January 6th as the New Jersey State Board of Education voted unanimously to end a 30-year era of state control of the district. The decision followed the district's competition of a two-year transition plan.

At a special press conference held a week later by the Paterson Board of Education, Board President Kenneth L. Simmons emphasized the importance of the board to stay focused on students' needs when making decisions. "The board is more empowered now to act than it has been in 30 years, but we must always act with the needs of our students as our top priority," he said.

Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer thanked the many people who worked locally to bring local control back to the district. "I am tremendously grateful for the hard work of the Paterson Board of Education Commissioners who have taken their role very seriously to achieve local control, as well as the district's parents, the teachers, principals, vice-principals, supervisors, administrators, counselors, nurses, secretaries, paraprofessionals, food service professionals, facilities staff, custodians, child study teams members, and all school and district employees."

Among the dignitaries who attended the press event were N.J. Senator Nellie Pou, Paterson Mayor Andre Sayegh, City Council members Dr. Lilisa

Mimms and Ruby Cotton, Passaic County Commissioner Theodore "T.J." Best, who also served as one of the state's three highly-skilled professionals who guided the district through the two-year transition. Also in attendance were many former Paterson Board of Education commissioners.

‘Veteran’ PPS Educators In WP Video



Scene from *Veterans In The Classroom* Photo courtesy of WP

We're looking for a few good men and women.

That's the message of a new video produced by William Paterson (WP) University aimed at recruiting veterans of the United States military services to become public school teachers. The video, called *Veterans In The Classroom*, features the following district educators:

- Edgard Nieves, Principal of Operations of the Eastside Educational Campus, who served in the U.S. Marine Corps.
- Orlando Pagan, a teacher at the School of Government and Public Administration, who

served in the U.S. Marine Corps.

- Augustin Castillo, a teacher at the School of Information Technology, who served in the U.S. Marine Corps.
- Jay Brock Decker, a teacher at the School of Information Technology, who served in the U.S. Army Reserves.
- Marlon Flores, a bilingual teacher at New Roberto Clemente School, who served in the U.S. Marine Corps.
- Herlan Avella, Jr., a teacher at the School of Government and Public Administration, who served in the U.S. Army.



NRC Bilingual Teacher Marlon Flores Photo courtesy of WP

The video, which can be seen at <https://youtu.be/8wNry5rJzcU>, was a collaborative effort between WP's College of Education and its Office of Veteran and Military Affairs.

"Veterans make great teachers," said WP College of Education Dean Amy Ginsberg, Ph.D. "We welcome veterans to join our teacher preparation programs, especially alternate route and career and technical education (CTE) options in which they can be hired as teachers of record while completing their coursework."

"Veterans who teach after completing their military service have given

twice to their nation. Paterson Public Schools is fortunate to have many veterans teaching our students," said Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer. "I am very proud of our teachers and administrators who have served in the military, and grateful to William Paterson University for choosing a few of them to be a part of their video project."

P-TECH Goes To College

Even though they won't graduate from high school for some time, 12 students at P-TECH (Pathways in Technology and Early College High School) at PANTHER Academy started college on January 27th. They have become the first P-TECH students to begin the college component of the groundbreaking high school program in which students complete high school, earn an associate degree in applied science, and get practical tech-sector work experience in four to six years.

The students who are starting courses at Passaic County Community College (PCCC) were among 26 ninth-graders and 10th-graders who took an exam in mid-December to qualify for enrollment in English Composition 101, College Algebra, or both. The students will continue with classes toward their high school diplomas while they are taking the college courses.

Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer said that students starting college last week was one of P-TECH's promises being fulfilled. "That promise is for these students to have the opportunity to earn college credits while they are in high school, which will help their families save money on college tuition and reduce the chances of the students being burdened by student loan debt. I want to thank Assistant Superintendent Joanna Tsimpedes, Director of Secondary Education Will Graulich, Dr. Holder, the principal, and the teachers at P-TECH for their dedication; and PCCC President Dr. Steven Rose for his enthusiastic partnership in the P-TECH program."

"We are proud of our students who are beginning their college studies today, and we look forward to the rest of our P-TECH students following in their footsteps," said Dr. Charla Holder, Principal of P-TECH at PANTHER Academy. "To see our first students begin work in college courses is particularly exciting now, as we are reviewing applications for our third class of students at P-TECH."

Friday, January 22nd was the deadline for eighth-graders to submit applications to P-TECH at PANTHER Academy, and about 250 applications were submitted. Sixty students will be selected from the applicants to begin classes in September.



P-TECH Principal Dr. Charla Holder in August 2019 speaking to the school's first incoming class. Some of the class' students began college last week. *File photo*

Follow PPS Social Media!

On **Facebook**, it's @PatersonPublicSchools.

On **Instagram**, it's Paterson_Public_Schools_NJ.

On **Twitter**, it's @Paterson_Public.

Board of Ed Leadership Continues, New Commissioner Sworn In

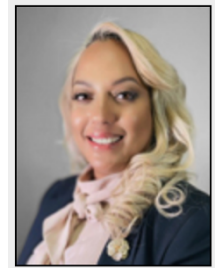


Mr. Kenneth L.
Simmons
President



Mr. Manuel
Martinez, Jr.
Vice President

Just hours after having control of the district returned to the Board of Education, board members re-elected Kenneth L. Simmons and Manuel Martinez, Jr. as president and vice president respectively. The voting was part of the board's virtual reorganization meeting on Jan. 6 that included the swearing in of Dania Martinez as the newest board commissioner. A special honor of recognition was given to departing board commissioner Joel Ramirez.



Ms. Dania
Martinez

Female Diversity In AP Computer Science Becoming A District Norm

Female diversity in AP Computer Science is becoming a district norm as the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program at International High School was awarded the College Board's Advanced Placement (AP) Computer Science Female Diversity Award in January for the third consecutive year. Meanwhile, PANTHER Academy received the honor for the first time.

The award is given to schools that have 50 percent or higher female representation in their AP Computer Science Principles (AP CSP) course.



Only 1,119 schools earned the AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award out of the 20,000 institutions that offered AP courses in 2019-2020.

A total of 39 students enrolled in AP CSP at the IB Program during the 2019-2020, with 27 being female. During the 2018-

2019, 40 students enrolled in the course, with 28 of them being female. In 2017-2018, there were 21 female students among the 33 who enrolled in the course.

At PANTHER Academy, eight of the 16 students enrolled in AP CSP during the 2019-2020 school year.

According to a 2020 College Board study about AP CSP, female students who take AP CSP in high school are more than five times as likely to major in computer science in college, compared to similar female students who did not take AP CSP.

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PPS School Nurses Volunteer To Give COVID-19 Vaccinations

If you go to International High School to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, don't be surprised if the person asking you to roll up your sleeve is someone you know.

The district's school nurses have been among the volunteers providing COVID-19 vaccinations at International High School since January 4th. The inoculations were provided in

partnership with the City of Paterson's Department of Health and Human Services, and the effort is part of the State of New Jersey's COVID-19 vaccination program.



PPS school nurses listen to training guidelines *Staff photo*

"I am enormously proud of our school nurses who have been going above-and-beyond as volunteers providing vaccinations," said Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer. "I want to thank Kimler Williamson, the district's supervisor of nursing services, Dr. Paul Persaud and Kate Bond of the Paterson's Department of Health and Human Services for leading the vaccination effort in Paterson. This is a significant step in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. But it's important to remember that the fight is not over yet, which is why I continue to urge

everyone to continue to wear face coverings, practicing social distancing, regular hand washing, and avoiding large gatherings and crowds."

JFK-STEM Recognizes Students of the Month

Dr. Dante Petretti, principal of the School of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) at Kennedy High School announced the Students of the Month for the first marking period of 2020-2021. STEM teachers nominate students based on their academic progress as well as their demonstration of key social-emotional learning skills including leadership, resiliency and good manners. The graphic at the right was recently posted on all of STEM Academy's Google Classrooms.

CONGRATULATIONS

— STEM Students of Marking Period 1

Shabaz Ali 12th	Asiful Islam 12th
Tasfia Bashra 10th	Tahmina Mili 11th
Josue Bien <u>Amie</u> 11th	Brian Pizarro 9th
Raymond A. B. Sanchez 12th	Flavia Rios Davila 10th
Jarin Chowdhury 11th	Emad Rouf 11th
Tawhida Haque 12th	Chloe Shepard 12th

JFK-BTMF's Mackiah Henry Accepted Early Decision To Columbia University



Mackiah Henry

Photo courtesy of Gilman Choudhury

Mackiah Henry, a senior at the School of Business, Technology, Marketing and Finance (BTMF) at the John F. Kennedy Educational Complex has received early decision acceptance to Columbia University. "I was really excited and jumped around frantically," he said about receiving the news in December. The Ivy League university has reported that it accepts only 6.3 percent of its applicants. Apart from his busy academic schedule, Henry also takes part the JFK Robotics/College Prep Team, the Ramapo College Upward Bound Program, The Rutgers University Society of Minority Engineers, the BTMF DECA Program, the Paterson Youth Council, and numerous other clubs and programs. Henry's college prep coordinator, Gilman Choudhury, described Henry as "an honorable and very soft-spoken individual." "He is kind to everyone and is very mindful of his actions," said Choudhury.

JFK Athlete Jalen Hargrove Scores Rice University Football Scholarship

Jalen Hargrove, a 2020 International High School graduate who played football and basketball for the Kennedy Knights, has been awarded a full athletic scholarship to play football for Rice University in Houston, TX. Hargrove's coaches held a special signing ceremony in his honor in December, at which JFK Knights Head Football Coach Ronald Jackson told Hargrove, "A kid from Paterson going to Texas to play football is phenomenal. We're just happy for you." JFK Knights Head Boys Basketball Coach Tommie Patterson said, "I look forward to following you for the rest of your life." Hargrove will be playing for the Rice University Owls football team's defensive line starting in Fall 2021. "Hargrove can do a lot of different things for a big guy, but his power up the middle is one aspect that stands out the most. He just won't be blocked," said a Rice University press release. "Once Hargrove gets moving, it's hard to slow him down. He's going to be fun to watch."



Jalen Hargrove

Photo by Daniel Juan

JFK-STEM's Noor Hassan Accepted To Stanford University

Last year, Noor Hassan, currently a senior attending the STEM Academy at the John F. Kennedy Educational Complex, won the Private Prep scholarship for ACT prep and college coaching. Through hard work and the help that the scholarship program provided, she was able to achieve acceptance to Stanford University. The Private Prep Scholarship Program places high-achieving students from low-income or underserved backgrounds with individual tutors and admissions coaches who will help them navigate the test prep and college application process. In addition to her regular studies as an AP/Honors Program student at JFK-STEM, Hassan is a co-captain of the Robotics Team, an Upward Bound student at Ramapo College, an executive member of the Rutgers University Society of Minority Engineers, and a member of the NJCDC's Paterson Youth Council. Hassan also participated in the Montclair State University Journalism Program, and attended the Unilever Leadership Development Institute, the Rutgers University Shadow Engineering Program, and the Fairleigh Dickinson University Technical Outreach Program. She also continues to be an active community volunteer helping with various projects.



Noor Hassan

EHS' Jonathan Gonzalez Signs With American International University

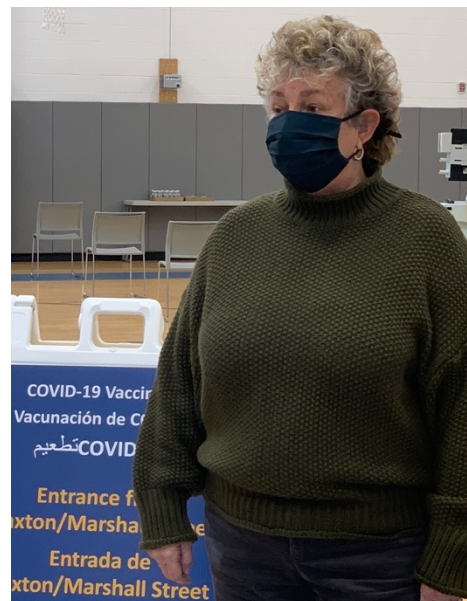


Jonathan Gonzalez, left, with TJ Hill and Yiraida Gonzalez, Jonathan's mother *Staff photo*

The Eastside High School (EHS) Football Ghosts' Jonathan Gonzalez will be playing for American International University this fall now that he has accepted a full athletic scholarship to the Springfield, Mass. university. "It means everything to me. I worked so hard for it," said Gonzalez. Despite wearing a protective mask, it was easy to see that Gonzalez, his mother, Yiraida, and EHS football alumnus TJ Hill were all smiles after a special signing ceremony was held at the EHS gymnasium. "He's been playing since the sixth grade," said Yiraida Gonzalez proudly. "I always pushed him to the end."

District, St. Joseph's Health Partner To Make COVID-19 Vaccines Available At DHA

Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer joined St. Joseph's Health officials at the Dr. Hani Awadallah (DHA) School gymnasium to announce that COVID-19 vaccines would be distributed to eligible members of the public. Those who are currently eligible, according to the state's Phase 1a and Phase 1b categories, are healthcare personnel, long-term care residents and staff, first responders, individuals who are age 65 or older. Also eligible are individuals considered to have conditions that increase the risk of severe illness from the virus including cancer, chronic kidney disease, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), down syndrome, heart conditions (heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies), obesity and severe obesity, sickle cell disease, Type 2 diabetes mellitus, and being a smoker. Vaccinations at DHA are made by appointment only. To make an appointment, visit www.stjosephshealth.org.



Superintendent Shafer delivers remarks at the DHA School Staff photo

School 18 Student Wins 'Golden Sneaker' For Essay About Walking To School



A Public School No. 18 student's essay about what she likes about walking to school has garnered her the "Golden Sneaker Award" from the EZ Ride transportation company's Safe Routes To School program. The student, identified as Marilyse F., wrote that she likes walking to school because it's fun. "I find rocks and old toys and we stop for empanadas," she wrote. Normally, the Safe Routes To School program would hold contests for students that would encourage walking or biking to school. The pandemic has curtailed those activities. However, the short essay contest was one of many virtual ways that the Safe Routes To School Program continued through the pandemic. Several Paterson Public Schools were also recognized for promoting Safe Routes To School. They are featured in the program's video presentation, which can be seen at <https://youtu.be/Uij1ivdwqQw>

School 18's Marilyse F.
Photo courtesy of EZ Ride

Social Studies Academic Journal Publishes Article On District, WP Work On NHD

The latest issue of *Teaching Social Studies*, a joint publication of the New York and New Jersey State Councils For The Social Studies, features a peer-reviewed article about the district's collaboration with William Paterson (WP) University in preparing district students for the National History Day competition. The article was co-authored by International High School Social Studies Teacher Vincent Giardina and WP Education & Curriculum Materials Librarian Neil Grimes. It recounts their efforts that included Social Studies Coordinator Gloria Van Houten and Deputy Director of Accelerated & Innovative Programs Rita Route in preparing students from International High School, Kennedy High School and Eastside High School for the competition.

Important Dates

- Feb. 8:** Report Card Parent Conferences, grades pre-K to eight
4:30 – 6:30 p.m.
- Online Community Forum For Wards 5 and 6
6:00 p.m. – Participate at pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents
- Feb. 9:** Report Card Parent Conferences
Public School No. 7, Don Bosco Technology Academy &
New Roberto Clemente School
4:30 – 6:30 p.m.
- Feb. 10:** Board of Education Workshop Meeting*
6:00 p.m.
- Feb. 11:** Report Card Parent Conferences, grades nine to 12
4:30 – 6:30 p.m.
- Feb. 15 & 16:** Presidents' Day Weekend – District Closed
- Feb. 17:** Board of Education Regular Meeting*
6:00 p.m.

*All Board of Education meetings are 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 5:00 p.m. on February 10th and 5:00 p.m. on February 17th. 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.