

Paterson Post

Paterson — A Promising Tomorrow

Together We Can

October 28, 2019

Restorative Justice Peace Center Opens at EHS



Paterson Public Schools officials gathered with community organization leaders and city officials for the opening of Eastside High School's new "Peace Center." The new facility serves as an alternative for students who need to serve out-of-school suspensions. It also provides a respite for students seeking a break from school day pressures or experiencing a crisis. "Suspended students who are forbidden from coming to school and left to sit at home have no way to improve themselves. They can't learn. They can't develop

coping skills to avoid the behaviors that get them suspended in the first place," said Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer. "The Peace Center gives suspended students, or any students needing help, a place to go where learning can continue – especially students learning about themselves. I want to thank Principal Gerald Glisson and his staff, as well as EHS Academy Principals Vivian Gains, Miguel Sosa, and Edgard Nieves for being committed to restorative justice. I also want to acknowledge our partners at the Paterson Education Fund and Youth Consultation Services for all they have done to bring restorative justice practices to the district and help launch this fantastic new Peace Center."

SET Academy Students Tour Seton Hall University

A group of students from the district's School of Education and Training (a.k.a. SET Academy) spent a day last week at Seton Hall University touring the campus and learning about the programs at the school's College of Education and Human Services. "A day like the one our SET Academy students had today makes the idea of going to college less abstract and more concrete for our students," said Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer. "Now that they have been on a college campus, they can visualize the opportunities they are working toward when they come back to our classrooms. I want to thank Dr. Edmund Adjapong and everyone at Seton Hall University for providing our students with this great opportunity."



PPS Students Rhyme and Shine at the Paterson Poetry Festival

The second annual Paterson Poetry Festival took place on October 5 hosted by the city's Poet Laureate, Talena Lachelle Queen. The festival included a poetry contest, a masterclass, and several poetry readings. Communication arts students from Rosa Parks High School swept the high school category for the festival's student poetry contest. Iyana Williams, Shiqira Paulson, Kiara Guzman, and Jennifer Guizar were awarded first, second, and third place awards, and Honorable Mention respectively. Rosa Parks High School Junior Michelle Depena was awarded the festival's first Poet Laureate's Choice award. The award was created to acknowledge her exemplary submission.



Left to Right: Michelle Depena, Tranisha Tuck, Talena Queen

Superintendent's Forums Enlighten Students and Parents About Vaping



Vaping is not safer than smoking cigarettes. This was just one of the facts that surprised students and parents at roundtable discussions about vaping's harmful effects held by Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer. The two meetings – one with high school students, another with parents – focused on the harmful effects of vaping. Among the most startling facts presented by Laurel Olsen, the district's supervisor of student assistance programs, was that a single vape cartridge can contain as much nicotine as

20 to 30 cigarettes. Many who attended the meetings thought that the opposite was true and had believed that vaping was a healthier alternative to smoking. "Many parents came here tonight believing that vaping wasn't as serious as smoking," said Tiffany Jacobs, a parent of five students who attend Paterson Public Schools. "Tonight's workshop helped parents understand the truth about vaping." Shafer said that the group of high school students she met with were just a surprised by the harmful health effects of vaping. "The students didn't know. They really believed that vaping is safe," Shafer said.

Thinking Pink for Breast Cancer



Renaissance One School of Humanities paraded their Think Pink! support for people facing the challenge of breast cancer. Staff and students generously donated \$266.00 to the Little Pink Houses of Hope, an organization that empowers breast cancer patients and families to live each day to the fullest through free, week-long vacation retreats.

Superintendent Holds the First Meeting of the All City Education Council

For the first time in the history of Paterson Public Schools, leaders from the school district sat down with charter school leaders to explore opportunities to work more cooperatively. The meeting was called by Superintendent of Schools Eileen F. Shafer and the educational leaders who attended are now collectively known as the All City Education Council. The discussion covered a variety of topics from improving communications between district and charter schools when closing due to inclement weather to sharing ideas for professional development opportunities for staff and administrators. "Everyone on the All City Education Council shares the same common ground. We want to lead out the best in Paterson's students," said Shafer. "Today was an important first step to developing a more cooperative climate among the different schools so that we can all serve Paterson's students and their families better." "The meeting was unbelievably great," said Nihat Guvercin of iLearn Schools, Inc. "This was a turning point in charter schools and district school relations. I am very pleased that we are in the process of building a better future together."



Math Class: Where Center Time Means Shopping Time

Kim Astarita's fourth grade math students at Public School No. 12 are discovering that their math intervention time gives them an opportunity to play "The Shopping Game." Every student begins this board game with \$100, in bills that look surprisingly authentic. They must pay the other players the cost of the items on which their place markers land. The game requires quick tallying as students watch their stockpiles of cash grow and shrink. Whoever has the most money at the close of the game wins. All the students are winners in the end, however. They have practiced their math skills while having a great time.



Fall Festival at School 15

Public School No. 15, a Full Service Community School (FSCS), hosted a fall festival on



October 15th where they enjoyed pumpkin picking and other activities. This event was organized by the Positive Behavior Support in Schools (PBSIS) team which includes the guidance department, a parent coordinator, an FSCS coordinator, a health clinic treatment coordinator, physical education teachers, an art teacher, a music teacher, a technology teacher & administrators. The school's Parent Teacher Organization members and volunteers set up the event and activity tables.

Linking up at School 13

Public School No. 13 implemented a team-building activity on October 8th that was inspired by Respect Week. The activity consisted of each individual class making paper chains. On each paper chain link, students wrote ways that they could show respect. The school then came together and each classroom was responsible for linking up with their neighboring classes to make a chain that went from the basement all the way up to the third floor. This activity involved all students working together while using their critical thinking skills to make sure the links would make it through doorways and stairwells. The school hopes to continue to encourage students to be respectful of their peers, teachers, and administrators.



RPHS Hosts Arts & Humanities “Through the Years”



The Rosa L. Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts (RPHS) hosted its annual arts & humanities show on October 24th, which showcased the City of Paterson’s young and flourishing talent and highlighted the encouragement young artists receive at the school. This year’s theme was “Through the Years,” a theme reflected in the art pieces, and performances. Alumni were included in the event, underscoring what the high school has meant for young artists “Through the Years.” The performances included the vocal ensemble singing classics from the 20th century, the Jazz

Band playing their own student-arranged piece, drama students acting out a hilarious comedy sketch. A breathtaking dance piece choreographed by RPHS alumna Tara Arrington (Class of 1994) was also presented, as well as poetry recitations of original works by both students and the city’s Poet Laureate and RPHS alumna, Talena Queen (Class of 1991). The art walk-through, held before the show, featured portraits of notable Hispanic figures and a mural of Rosa Parks.

Literacy in the Afternoon

Wednesdays are “WPU Days” at Public School No. 12, where third grade literacy teacher and



William Paterson University (WPU) adjunct professor Anissa Conyers teams up with Professor Liz Brown to teach Literacy for Learning on site. Fourteen WPU teacher candidates have the opportunity each week to teach lessons and work as afterschool tutors with the students. The school’s third-graders will also have the opportunity to visit their WPU friends at the college campus in November to take part in a Paterson falls fair.

RPHS Fall Food Festival Honors Hispanic Heritage

The World Language Department at the Rosa L. Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts (RPHS) celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month on October 18th by hosting a Fall Food Festival. Students experienced Hispanic culture as they sampled regional cuisine, listened to traditional music, and learned the backgrounds of some prominent Hispanic figures. The event began with performances by José Mejía-Aponte, a junior at the high school, who played a traditional Mexican piece on the piano; and Carolyn Rodriguez, a senior, who sang “Como La Flor” by the late singer Selena. Students also displayed artwork that honored Hispanic culture. “I had the opportunity to help out by serving food during the event. It was really fun seeing the excitement on the faces of my classmates,” said Jennifer Guizar, a junior.



Affirmative Action Training Held

Affirmative Action Officer Houry Yeganeh conducted a professional development session for building-based Affirmative Action representatives on Thursday, October 17. The topic of the session was “Cultural Awareness and Acceptance,” and the focus of discussion was on the importance of personal identity, language and cultural norms. The session also emphasized the importance of understanding the cultures of the district’s students, staff and community. The session included think/pair/share activities and many related videos on the topic. Building-based Affirmative Action representatives are volunteer staff members who go above and beyond their contractual duties to assist their school leader and the Central Office-based Affirmative Action officer by investigating student-on-student discrimination cases, ensuring bias-free education for all students, sharing Affirmative Action-related policies to school staff, and ensuring that the Affirmative Action program is implemented effectively. Representatives are also encouraged to share the information obtained from professional development sessions to school staff during an assigned professional development day.

Upcoming Events

Oct. 28 - Nov. 1: Breast Cancer Awareness at Napier Academy

Oct. 29: High School CHOICE Fair

6:00 p.m.-8:00 p.m. at the John F. Kennedy Educational Complex Gymnasium

Nov. 5: Election Day

District Closed

Nov. 6: 1st Marking Period Ends

Nov. 7 & 8: NJEA Convention

Schools Closed

Paterson Post is a publication of the [Department of Communications](#).
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