



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS RECEIVE SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT IDS THAT PROVIDE INFO TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

District partnering with Passaic County Sheriff's Department on program to help protect students if they are in an emergency

Photos attached: see end of release for captions.

PATERSON – Special needs students at Public School No. 2 today had their photos taken for new identification cards issued by the Passaic County Sheriff's Department. The new IDs will provide information to law enforcement officials in the event the students are missing or involved in an emergency.

Information that would be conveyed through the IDs includes a condition a student may have, such as being on the autism spectrum or having a disability such as epilepsy, as well as a student's home address, names of parents or guardians, and contact information.

Principal Dr. Vanessa Serrano said School 2 has one of the largest special needs programs in the district, with 15 classes of special needs students. The services the school provides include occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech pathology.

"It's a huge safety factor," said Superintendent of School Eileen F. Shafer this morning at School 2, which has one of the district's highest special needs student populations. "Some of these students are not verbal. I can only imagine how upset a parent would be if a nonverbal student were to get lost anywhere."

"We're very pleased to partner with Paterson Public Schools to provide IDs to children with special needs," said Passaic County Undersheriff Kevin Dickson. "In the event of an emergency or if a child is lost this will help law enforcement officials to identify the child and be aware of any special needs the child may have."

Shafer thanked everyone at the Passaic County Sheriff's Department, in particular Commander Robert Scott, as well as Assistant Superintendent of Special Education & Services Cheryl Coy, District Director of School Safety Dalton Price.

"This is a great partnership between the school district and the Passaic County Sheriff's Department to protect one of our most vulnerable classes of students," said Price. "We hope this gives the parents of these children a little more peace of mind. This initiative also gives the school district and parents more information to share with law enforcement in case of an actual emergency."

IDs for special needs students are also being provided at the Dale Avenue School, Public School No. 6, and Public School No. 20.



Photo 1: Passaic County Sheriff's Department personnel at School 2 working on new IDs for special needs students.

Photo 2: A School 2 student gets ready to have his photo taken for his new ID.

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