



THE PULSE

The Heartbeat of the District.

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 

SEPTEMBER 2025 | VOL. 3

PPS STUDENTS TO COMMUNICATE WITH INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION



Paterson Public Schools

• LIVE with the

International Space Station!

Coming in October!

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS   **ARISS**  **P-Tech** 

Paterson Public Schools will have 12 students representing schools from across the district participate in a live communication with the International Space Station (ISS) inside the Paterson P-Tech High School Planetarium in October as part of the prestigious Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program.

The date and time of the communication will be announced soon and it will be live streamed at www.pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents.

A unique and once-in-a-lifetime experience for young learners, ARISS allows students to engage in live, voice-only communication with astronauts aboard the ISS using amateur or satellite radio. This innovative program introduces students to space technologies and the science behind space communications, offering a unique hands-on learning experience. Students will connect with the ISS at the P-Tech Planetarium, with support from the Fair Lawn Amateur Radio Club (FLARC).

The district's participation in ARISS is the result of a rigorous proposal process led by Carlos Miranda, Ed.D., Planetarium Manager at Paterson P-Tech High School. The proposal detailed how the program would be integrated into the curriculum to enrich students' education. As one of only four districts in the state with a P-TECH high school, Paterson P-tech equips students with an associate degree in applied science upon graduation, along with valuable tech-sector experience.

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

Greetings Paterson Public Schools Community,

This week, we are excited to begin celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month, which is recognized each year from September 15th to October 15th. Please be sure to explore our [Hispanic Heritage Month webpage](#).

This year's theme for Hispanic Heritage Month is "Collective Heritage: Honoring the Past, Inspiring the Future." All month long, students across the district will learn about Hispanic culture and the multitude of important contributions that Hispanics have made in our world. Based on this important theme, our educators will develop creative ideas for projects, lessons, and events that will help our students learn more about the rich traditions and achievements of Hispanics in the United States. I believe that these exercises not only enrich the classroom experience, but also enhances the lives of our students to understand different cultural backgrounds.

One of our first Hispanic Heritage Month events in the district took place on Monday, September 15th, when a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held for the newly-named María Magda O'Keefe School (formerly School 24). There was no better way to kick off Hispanic Heritage Month and the district's year-long celebration of its collective diversity than renaming one of our schools after María Magda O'Keefe, who was the first Hispanic elected to office in the city of Paterson. The weather was perfect and it created an ideal atmosphere to celebrate such a historic moment. María Magda O'Keefe impacted so many lives in the city of Paterson and her extraordinary legacy will live on with this renaming.

Here at Paterson Public Schools, we will always be proud to celebrate our diversity, which serves as a foundational element of our young learners' educational experience. Our respective cultures are what make us unique as individuals. The more that students learn about the cultures of their friends and classmates, the more welcoming and inclusive they will become as adults. The work begins at an early age, and it is supported by a district that embraces all cultures.

I'm looking forward to our continued celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month and our diversity as a district for the remainder of the school year. Thank you for reading and have a great weekend!

Sincerely,

Dr. Laurie W. Newell
Superintendent of Schools



Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell stands alongside Debbie Martínez, the daughter of María Magda O'Keefe, at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for María Magda O'Keefe School on September 15th.

THE RIBBON IS CUT FOR MARÍA MAGDA O'KEEFE SCHOOL



Paterson Public Schools celebrated the newly-named María Magda O'Keefe School (formerly School 24) on the morning of Monday, September 15th, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony that was attended by district leadership, Board of Education Commissioners, elected officials and dignitaries, and friends and family of María Magda O'Keefe. [Read more.](#)

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ATTEND PASSAIC COUNTY COLLEGE FAIR



Paterson Public Schools high school students had the opportunity to speak to 168 colleges and universities at the Passaic County College Fair that took place at William Paterson University on Monday, September 15th. Vital information about scholarship opportunities, academic programs, and admissions processes were provided to the attendees. The district also provided students with free bus transportation. The district's participation in the event was coordinated through Paterson Public Schools' Department of Guidance and Counseling, led by Director of Guidance and Counseling Tamisha McKoy.

The Guidance and Counseling department will next be hosting a College and Career Fair at John F. Kennedy High School on Wednesday, October 29th from 9:15 AM from 1:30 PM.

STUDENTS EXPAND CAREER SKILLS AT BERKELEY COLLEGE SUMMER PROGRAM



Paterson Public Schools students had an opportunity to learn life and career skills, and explore an array of paths through community service and experiential learning during the second annual Career Exploration Summer Youth Program, a partnership between Berkeley College and Paterson Public Schools. The five-week program, hosted by Berkeley College in Woodland Park, NJ, was offered in July and August 2025.

“Paterson Public Schools is proud to continue our partnership with Berkeley College in providing meaningful summer programming for our young adults,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell. “This year, we were able to expand the program to serve more than 100 students, and we look forward to increasing participation in the years to come. This collaboration reflects our district’s commitment to offering students high-quality learning experiences beyond the traditional classroom and ensuring they are prepared for future success.”

The 2025 program was tailored to student input and included hands-on experiential learning, classes about life skills, community service events, and visits from potential employers. Courses included CPR and first aid training, mock trial seminars, conflict resolution, resume building, and networking through golf.

The Career Exploration Summer Youth Program culminated in a luncheon and closing ceremony during which students were awarded certificates of completion and staff members were given certificates of appreciation.

“This program gives our students the chance to build new skills, gain real-world experiences, and see themselves thriving in higher education settings,” said Deputy Superintendent Dr. Rodney A. Henderson. “At Paterson Public Schools, we are intentional about creating pathways that help our young people imagine and prepare for their futures. Expanding this program to reach more than 100 students is a clear step forward in that mission.”

WE WILL NEVER FORGET



Schools across the district last week took time to recognize the September 11th attacks, which took place 24 years ago, and to honor all of the lives that were lost on that day.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell visited John F. Kennedy High School to join Principal JoAnne Riviello, school staff, and 80 students in acknowledging Patriot Day and September 11th with six moments of silence. Following the moments of silence, those in attendance saluted the flag for the playing of the National Anthem.

Dr. Newell then visited Eastside High School as its JROTC Mighty Ghost Battalion hosted a 9/11 remembrance ceremony that was attended by Principal Dr. Dorothy Douge, school staff, and district leadership.



AHA HOSTS SECOND ANNUAL KINDERGARTEN ORIENTATION



Alexander Hamilton Academy Principal Cosmo Braico and Vice Principal Jennifer Cassini welcomed more than 20 families of incoming kindergarteners for a special meet-and-greet at the end of August.

It was a fantastic opportunity for everyone to get acquainted! Parents met the kindergarten teachers, instructional aides, and guidance counselors, and learned valuable ways to support their children's academic and social success. Meanwhile, our new students got to meet their future classmates, listen to a story, and play games in their new classroom.

AHA's PTO President, Rocio "Rosie" Pena, also spoke with parents about the importance of getting involved with the PTO. To top off the event, each new student received a welcome goody bag filled with fun surprises. Families who attended will also receive Foundations phonics backpacks filled with books to practice reading with their child at home. These books match the ones they are learning to read with at school.

It was a wonderful day, and we're so excited to welcome the Class of 2038 to the AHA family!

DR. HANI AWADALLAH SCHOOL WELCOMES BACK STAFF AND STUDENTS

Students and staff from Dr. Hani Awadallah Middle School recently enjoyed a complimentary meal on behalf of the Awadallah family in partnership with the Best Spudz Food Truck. The Awadallah family donated over 200 meals.

"Our father dedicated his life to uplifting others through education and community involvement," said the Awadallah family. "Providing meals to the students and staff of his namesake school is our way of carrying his legacy forward."



BACKPACK GIVEAWAY A RESOUNDING SUCCESS



218 backpacks were given away to students by Angels Over Me, a local organization founded by School 10 Full Service Community School Treatment Coordinator Maria Ruiz, at Pennington Park on August 30th.

“Just seeing the smiles on the children’s faces was so joyful because they received backpacks with supplies. It was so beautiful,” said Ruiz. “Next year will be even bigger!”

Ruiz founded the organization in 2020 in honor of her late father. The day included a local fire truck on site, an ice cream truck, face painting, tattoos, and balloon animals that the children could adopt with a certificate. Staff from Full Service Community Schools were also on-site to inform parents about the services that FSCS offers at partnering schools.



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PPS IN THE NEWS

Paterson High School Students Expand Career Skills During Second Annual Career Exploration Summer Youth Program, Hosted by Berkeley College and Paterson Public Schools

September 11, 2025

Kennedy Blanks Rival Eastside in 5-0 Shutout

September 11, 2025

Kennedy Girls Soccer Pulls Away from Eastside for Season-Opening Win

September 12, 2025

Aquaponics Program to Continue at Paterson's Joseph A. Taub Middle School

September 14, 2025

Paterson Renames School 24 to Honor Trailblazing Leader Maria Magda O'Keefe

September 15, 2025

Eastside Girls Volleyball Picks Up First Win of the Season Against Passaic

September 16, 2025

Kennedy Stays Unbeaten with 2-1 Win Over Passaic County Tech

September 17, 2025

Paterson Schools to be Focus of New Study on Assistive Technology in Special Education

September 18, 2025

COMING UP NEXT WEEK

September 26 Monthly Vice Principals Meeting - District Office

[Full 2025-2026 School Calendar Here](#)

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

<u>DATE OF MEETING</u>	<u>TYPE OF MEETING</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
October 8th, 2025	Workshop	90 Delaware Avenue
October 15th, 2025	Regular	Virtual

The **Board of Education Workshop Meeting** will be held on Wednesday, October 8th, at 90 Delaware Ave. Those wishing to provide public comments must do so in person and are required to register for the meeting. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6 PM.

Those wishing to provide public comments for the **Board of Education Regular Meeting** on Wednesday, October 15th are required to register for the meeting. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6 PM.

Online language interpretation is available for all pre-recorded Board meetings in Spanish, Arabic, Bengali, and Turkish. Simply select your preferred language at pps.eduvision.tv/LiveEvents.

The District Newsletter is a publication of the Department of Communications. We welcome your submissions on school and district-related news.

Submit stories and photos by using our newly launched **Newsletter Submissions** Google form. This form and our **Publicity Request** form can be found on our Communications page at www.paterson.k12.nj.us

Questions? Email us at ppscommunications@paterson.k12.nj.us

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