THE PULSE

The Heartbeat of the District.

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SEPTEMBER 2025 | VOL. 2

FIRST WEEK FRAMES

Last week, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell welcomed back students at several schools including Charles J. Riley School/School 9, School 27, Joseph A. Taub School, Dr. Hani Awadallah School, and School 8. Dr. Newell also met with principals and said hello to staff members as they got their schools prepared for the start of the academic year.

Successful Opening Days

Greetings Paterson Public Schools Community,

I hope that everyone had a successful first full week of school! It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces in the halls of our schools once again after a long and relaxing summer.

Last week, while visiting schools across the district with members of my cabinet, I saw administrators and staff in action as they guided their schools through the opening hours of the new academic year. Our opening days went smoothly across all district schools, and it would not have happened without our hard-working staff who made sure that buildings were ready for learning. Thank you to everyone who made this possible and for setting the tone for a productive and rewarding school year.

I had the great pleasure of greeting students as they excitedly entered their buildings and paced the halls to get to their classrooms. Watching these learners interact with each other during such a special, tender moment in their young lives — their first days of school — served as a poignant reminder as to why educators do the work that they do.

(Left to right) Assistant Superintendent of Special Education and Services Cheryl Coy, Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services/Special Programs Joanna Tsimpedes and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell visit Dr. Hani Awadallah School on the first day of classes for students.

Seeing the joy on our students' faces inspires me even more to move this district forward in key areas. We have seen progress thanks to the areas of focus outlined in the Paterson Progress Plan's Five Levers — Human Resources, Data Literacy, Staff Capacity, Principal Capacity, and Parental Support. Our learners have made progress on their New Jersey Student Learning Assessments and New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment. Family engagement, one-on-one intervention, attendance review committees, and positive reinforcement and incentive programs, have all led to improvements in our attendance rates and reducing chronic absenteeism.

The work that we have put in has produced positive results, but we cannot stop now. Every day that a child is in school is another opportunity for them to develop not only as a student, but as a friend, a family member, and a citizen of this community. Building on the work that we have done will lead to more days like the opening days of this school year – schools filled with excited and eager young learners looking to make an impact on their world.

Thank you for reading and have a great weekend!

Sincerely,

Dr. Laurie W. Newell
Superintendent of Schools

DISTRICT SHOWS MEASURABLE IMPROVEMENT IN STUDENT ATTENDANCE

	Student Attendance *Most Improved Schools*	Chronic Absenteeism *Most Improved Schools*
UNIT I	Anna Iandoli Early Learning Center **+1.95%**	School 8 **-11.14%**
UNIT II	Senator Frank Lautenberg School **+4.38%**	Senator Frank Lautenberg School **-19.82%**
UNIT III	Dale Avenue School **+2.02%**	Alexander Hamilton Academy **-8.26%**
UNIT IV	Alonzo "Tambua" Moody Academy **+2.02%**	Alonzo "Tambua" Moody Academy **-16.17%**

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Paterson Public Schools is pleased to report measurable improvements in student attendance district-wide from the 2023-2024 school year to the 2024-2025 school year thanks to multiple concerted efforts and on-going collaboration among schools, families, and the community.

The district's chronic absenteeism fell by 3.57 percentage points last school year, and its daily attendance is now above 90 percent. The above chart shows the most improved schools in daily attendance and decreased chronic absenteeism by operational unit.

Senator Frank Lautenberg School (formerly School 6) is a positive example of the district's progress as it saw average daily attendance increase from 86.59 percent in 2023-2024 to 90.97 percent in 2024-2025, a 4.38 percentage point improvement. Additionally, the school's chronic absenteeism rate went down by nearly 20 percent in a single school year from 54 percent to just under 35 percent.

Additionally, Anna Iandoli Early Learning Center, School 8, Dale Avenue School, and Alexander Hamilton Academy registered impressive marks in their respective operational units. Alonzo "Tambua" Moody Academy posted the best marks in both attendance rate and chronic absenteeism in Unit IV.

The district's approach that addresses both school-based and community factors helped lead to these improved numbers. Paterson Public Schools has expanded its school-based intervention teams, which connect directly with families to understand why a student might be missing school. The district also introduced incentive programs that celebrate students' efforts. Attendance workshops, robo-calls, and school-based meetings ensure families stay informed and connected. The district actively utilizes Compulsory Attendance Specialists (CAS) to follow up with students and address attendance concerns. At the same time, Paterson Public Schools is strengthening partnerships that connect families to housing, health, and social services, addressing the real-life barriers that too often keep students from coming to school.

USING DATA TO REACH & TEACH EVERY CHILD

Administrators and teachers from Alexander Hamilton Academy, Senator Frank Lautenberg School, and School 13 welcomed Dr. Tracey Severens, a nationally recognized educator and owner of Teach 4 Results, to learn how to lead an inquiry based approach to data analysis. This work is intended to engage both staff and students with the goal of improving the academic performance of every child.

A three-part series that will continue into October, the program also helps establish data captains in each of the participating schools. Those captains will then bring what they learned to their Professional Learning Communities throughout the year as the staff focuses on ensuring that each and every student is making meaningful progress towards academic success.

THANK YOU MARCUS & MILLICHAP!

Paterson Public Schools thanks Marcus & Millichap's New Jersey office for the generous donation of 48 backpacks to our students! Representatives from Marcus & Millichap were welcomed to the District Office on September 9th by Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell, Deputy Superintendent Rodney A. Henderson, Assistant Superintendent Nahed Badawy, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Cicely Warren, Assistant Superintendent Dr. Melissa España, and Assistant Superintendent Dr. David Cozart.

NEVER FORGET: JFK HOLDS PATRIOT DAY CEREMONY

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell visited John F. Kennedy High School Thursday morning 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 in remembrance of the events that took place 24 years ago.

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JOSEPH A. TAUB MIDDLE SCHOOL HOSTS ANNUAL TAUBFEST

Joseph A. Taub Middle School ushered in the 2025–2026 school year with its annual TaubFest celebration on Saturday, September 6th — a gathering that blended resources, family engagement, and community spirit. Hosted by Principal Jorge Ventura and NJCDC Full Service Community Schools Coordinator Arlene Hernandez, the event brought students, parents, staff, and local organizations together in celebration of the new school year.

“At Joseph A. Taub, we are all about changing lives,” said Principal Ventura. “We know that with the help of our teachers, staff, and community, anything is possible—because we live by the words: Passionate Lives Change Lives.”

The celebration introduced families to the many opportunities available through a full-service school model. Parents met with the administrative team — including the school’s vice principals — who spent the afternoon answering questions, listening to concerns, and building relationships designed to ensure that families feel supported throughout the school year. Their presence underscored the school’s commitment to open communication and an authentic partnership with the community.

The support extended well beyond the classroom. NJ Family Care provided information and guidance on health coverage, while the Paterson Library’s Book Mobile offered students free books to inspire a love of reading. Local barbers donated their time and skills, giving fresh haircuts to students eager to look their best for the first days of school.

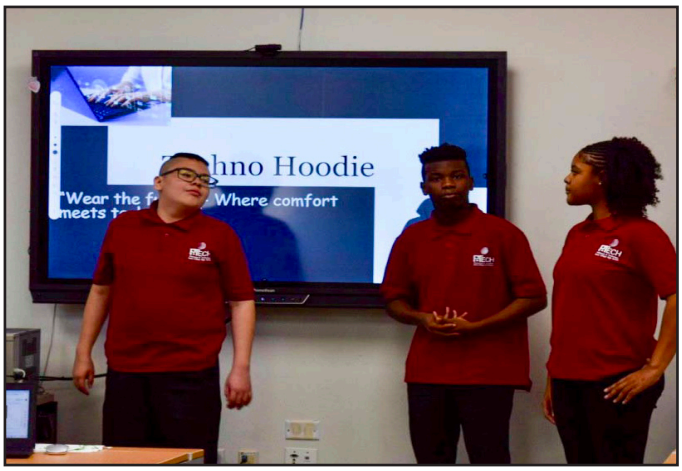
“This is a very important event where we introduce ourselves to the community,” said Ms. Hernandez. “It could not have been possible without the tireless work of our parents, teachers, and community members.”

SCHOOL 5 LEADERSHIP HOLDS MEET & GREET WITH FAMILIES

School 5’s new leadership, Principal Mr. Richard Sanducci and Vice Principal Dr. Veronica Ricigliano, hosted a Meet & Greet with students and families during the last week of August to introduce themselves to their new school community.

Along with returning Vice Principal Mrs. Ramona Marichal-Serrano, who continues to lead with care while making sure students and staff grow and flourish, School 5 will look to have an outstanding school year!

P-TECH SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM SHOWCASES STUDENT INNOVATION



Each summer, Paterson P-Tech High School hosts a Summer Bridge Program to welcome and prepare rising 9th graders for the transition to high school. Over three days, students engage in orientation activities, team-building exercises, and group assignments designed to foster collaboration and creativity.

The highlight of the program is the culminating project, where student teams develop original products complete with logos, designs, marketing campaigns, targeted demographics, and business plans. Their work concludes with presentations before a panel of corporate professionals who serve as “sharks,” offering real-world feedback and even mock offers to “invest” in the students’ companies. This year’s judges represented leading organizations including Verizon, AZ Venture, NBC, MI Technical Solutions, and CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA).

The final presentations were held on September 5th, the second day of school. The students impressed the judges with their ingenuity, teamwork, and professional-level presentations, setting a strong tone for the school year ahead.

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Have a story you’d like to share?

- Stories highlighting school activities or recognitions (i.e., awards)
- Inspiring stories involving students, teachers, and staff
- Fun events that took place at your school or in the community involving students, teachers, and staff

Use our Newsetter Submission Google Form

PPS IN THE NEWS

Mindfulness, Wellness to Be Introduced to Students at Paterson's Joseph A. Taub Middle School
September 10, 2025

Paterson School No. 21 to Build Outdoor Classroom with $10K Sustainability Grant
September 11, 2025

IMPORTANT CALENDAR REMINDERS

September 15 . . . . . Hispanic Heritage Month (through October 15)

September 16 . . . . . Back-to-School Night, 6-8 PM (PreK-8th Grade)

September 18 . . . . . Back-to-School Night, 6-8 PM (9th Grade-12th Grade, JATS, NRC, DHA)

October 2 . . . . . Yom Kippur - District Closed

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

DATE OF MEETING	TYPE OF MEETING	LOCATION
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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