

TOGETHER PCS



SPLASHING INTO SUMMER

Welcome to TogetherPCS, the district's monthly newsletter featuring students, staff, alumni, coaches, curriculum, community partners and so much more!

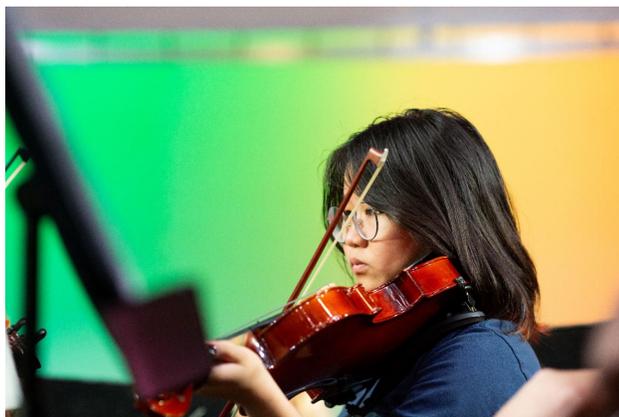
In this issue, we get to know the Desai sisters - one, a pediatrician in New York, and one, a doctor who joined her mother's oncology practice right here in St. Pete after both graduated from St. Petersburg High School's IB Program. We also feature two long-serving members of the district leadership team who have recently retired. And we celebrate SUMMER! Our campuses are bustling with activity - from enrichment camps to SAT prep to Driver's Ed to the new Jump Start program for incoming sixth graders - there's no summer slowdown at PCS.

Do you know someone who should be featured in TogetherPCS? Please click the "Nominate Here" button below.

[NOMINATE HERE](#)



School Staff Returns:



August 2

First day of School (students):
August 12

Please visit our **Back-to-School** page for important reminders and dates



WHAT'S INSIDE



Tamara McKinney is one of almost 30 current PCS employees participating in the Teacher Apprenticeship Program.

PCS partners with SPC on new teacher apprenticeship program

Tamara McKinney has a number of excuses not to go back to school – she can't afford it, she is a mom to a special-needs son, she is comfortable in her role, she doesn't have time.

PCS Continues to Elevate Academic Excellence

According to the Department of Education, Pinellas County Schools outpaced the state in many areas in the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) Progress Monitoring 3 (PM3) testing. PCS had more students scoring Level 3 or higher in:

- Pinellas County Schools is **first** among the large districts in ELA proficiency and ranked 15th in the state across all school districts.
- Pinellas County Schools is **first** among the large districts in Mathematics proficiency and ranked 17th in the state across all school districts.
- Among the large districts in Grade 5 science proficiency, the district is **first** and ranked 7th in the state among school

But all those excuses came to a screeching halt when Principal Jacque Cassidy recommended her for the Teacher Apprenticeship Program.

“You think about elevating yourself, but life gets in the way, so you just put things off and put things off,” said McKinney, who has been a paraprofessional and sign language interpreter at Nina Harris Exceptional Student Education Center for more than 10 years. “I wanted to do it and I knew I could do it, but I didn’t have that push. So, when the opportunity was presented, I pounced on it.”

On Monday, McKinney and 28 other Pinellas County Schools classroom support employees met on the Clearwater campus of St. Petersburg College to officially register for fall classes. As part of the program – a collaboration between PCS and SPC’s College of Education – apprentices will obtain a bachelor’s degree in Exceptional Student Education, Elementary Education or Primary Pre-K tuition-free.

Read the full article

- Among large districts, Pinellas County Schools is **first** in Civics and ranked 15th in the state among school districts.

“I am incredibly proud of the results of our students during the 2023-24 school year,” said Superintendent Kevin Hendrick. “These results demonstrate the daily commitment of our students, families and staff to elevate excellence for all across our district.”

Read the full article and see results

SUPPORT TOGETHER

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Mom Pratibha Desai, left, is proud of daughters and St. Petersburg High School graduates Pooja and Poorvi Desai, for following in her footsteps.

Pooja and Poorvi Desai may have worked their way through years’ worth of school to become successful doctors, but their biggest source of inspiration came from one person: their mom.

Pratibha Desai, who started Comprehensive Hematology/Oncology, her private practice, when the girls were little, says she didn’t just choose to *tell* her daughters they were capable of anything, she wanted to *show* them.

And she kept her word.

“I think the girls saw it was a juggling act between raising them and running the practice, but that I still enjoyed it,” Desai said. “And I think they decided to become physicians because of it.”

Read the full article





Chief Academic Officer credits teachers for his path in education

Dan Evans fully admits to seeing life in metaphors.

After all, he is and always has been a writer, so the double meanings work for him.

“When I was a kid, I had to do chores every Saturday, including dusting the house,” said Evans, who spent his last two years in his 30-year career with Pinellas County Schools as the Chief Academic Officer. “My dad wanted me to do things the right way and taught me to never dust around the vase on the table. I had to pick it up and dust underneath.”



Educator leaves a legacy of wisdom and advocacy

From the moment Lewis Brinson walked into the classroom five decades ago, he knew it.

“It was instant. It was automatic. I mean, it was meant to be,” said Dr. Brinson, a smile spreading over his face. “I’ve always had a passion to be a teacher, always had a passion to work with younger people and to give them opportunities, more opportunities than I had.”

Two weeks ago, Brinson ended his 50-year career in education.

He was hired to steward Pinellas County Schools' plan

"So, I try never to dust around the vase in anything I do. I never cut corners."

[Read the full article](#)

to close the achievement gap between Black students and their peers. But he describes his role a bit differently: "Doing what's right for kids."

[Read the full article](#)

The Superintendent Says...

"Happy Summer! I am thrilled to report that Pinellas County schools are busier than ever. With Summer Bridge wrapped up and camps in full swing, we are seeing thousands of students taking advantage of PCS's summer offerings.

We can't wait to get back into the classrooms on August 12, but until then, please continue to enjoy time with family and friends. See you soon!"



To help spread the word, please forward this newsletter to community members who are interested in public education. Sign up by clicking the button below.

[SIGN UP HERE](#)



VISION: 100% STUDENT SUCCESS
MISSION: EDUCATE AND PREPARE EACH STUDENT FOR COLLEGE, CAREER AND LIFE

[PCS Compliance Statement](#)