



THE PULSE

The Heartbeat of the District.

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 

JANUARY 22, 2026 | VOL. 20

SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

Greetings Paterson Public Schools Community,

This week's corner is dedicated to the importance of community partnerships and the profound impact they have on our students.

In Paterson, we believe that providing a world-class education is a collective journey. Developing robust community partnerships does more than just expand our network of support; it helps us cultivate the inclusive, equitable, and vibrant learning environments our students deserve.

When our local partners step forward, they provide invaluable resources that create memorable experiences and life-changing opportunities for everyone involved. In recent weeks, we have seen the incredible fruit of these collaborations:

- **Technology for Success:** The Law Office of Scura, Wigfield, Heyer, Stevens & Cammarota, alongside the non-profit Educate Elevate Empower (E3), donated new laptops to a select group of seniors from John F. Kennedy High School and Eastside High School. This gift ensures our graduating leaders have the tools they need for their next chapter.
- **Warmth and Wellness:** Liberty Subaru and the non-profit Operation Warm partnered with School No. 2 to donate brand-new coats to nearly 500 students, ensuring they stay warm and focused on their learning during the cold months ahead.



These generous gifts address the needs of the whole child—social, emotional, academic, and physical. When our community invests in our schools, our students feel seen, valued, and empowered to succeed.

Building and engaging with community partners remains a primary focus of our district. We look forward to continuing this essential work and are deeply grateful to those who help keep the “heartbeat” of our district strong.

Sincerely,

Laurie W. Newell, PhD
Superintendent of Schools



VIEW THE DISTRICT'S 2025-2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

The Paterson Public Schools community is encouraged to view the district's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan on our [website](#). Approved by the Paterson Board of Education on October 15, 2025, this five-year plan, “Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow”, was the culmination of many years of thoughtful collaboration and input from board members, educators, families, students, and community partners.



SCHOOL NO. 2'S UNITY CREW GATHERS FOR UNITY DAY



School No. 2's Unity Crew came together on January 20 for its first Unity Day of 2026, where peer mentors entered special education classrooms for one instructional period of fun, collaborative activities.

Co-advised by School No. 2 Principal Dr. Vanessa Serrano and school psychologist Ms. Marni Mendez, the Unity Crew is a peer mentorship initiative designed to foster meaningful, inclusive connections between general education students and students receiving special education services.

Mentors and mentees worked together on structured art projects, and inclusive participation in art, music, and physical education classes. This predictable, low-pressure structure supports access for students with varying communication, sensory, and cognitive profiles while maintaining authentic peer interaction. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell and Deputy Superintendent Rodney A. Henderson took part in a classroom activity where Unity Crew students were working together on a music lesson.

Rooted in best practices for inclusive education, the program intentionally bridges the social and experiential gap that often exists between general education and special education settings. Along with Dr. Serrano and Ms. Mendez, the Unity Crew is supported by 8th grade teacher Ms. Kathryn Mauriber.



INTERNATIONAL HS STUDENTS LEARN MORE ABOUT ENGINEERING DISCIPLINES



Engineers and architects from Dewberry Civil Engineering Company visited International High School on January 15 where they presented on a variety of engineering disciplines for students pursuing the engineering Career Technical Education (CTE) pathway.

In addition to the engineering pathway students, International leadership invited freshman seminar students to the presentations. The freshmen will soon be choosing their CTE pathways and greatly benefited from learning about engineering disciplines.



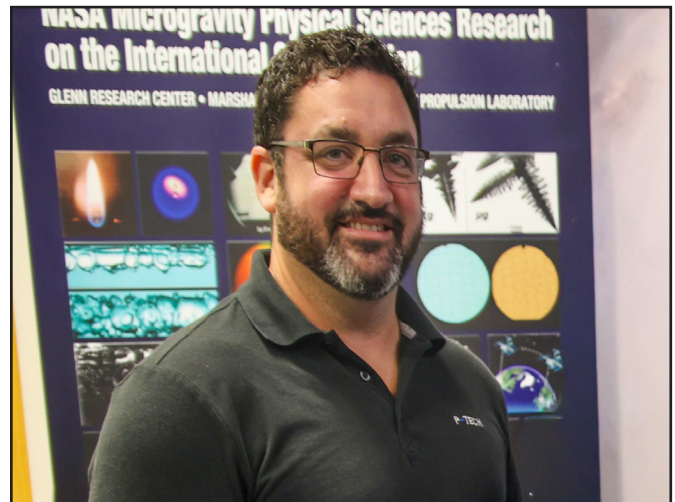
NEW DOCUMENTARY PROFILES SCHOOL NO. 26 PRINCIPAL

School No. 26 Principal Mr. Derrick Hoff is the subject of a new [documentary film](#) that profiles his exemplary work as the head fencing coach at St. Benedict's High School in Newark, NJ. [The first Black head coach](#) in the United States to win a fencing state championship, the Gray Bees posted 10 undefeated seasons under Mr. Hoff's tutelage en route to becoming one of the top programs in the state of New Jersey.



P-TECH'S PLANETARIUM DIRECTOR RECEIVES TEACHING AMERICA250 GRANT

P-Tech's Planetarium Director Dr. Carlos Miranda has been named New Jersey's recipient of the [Teaching America250 Award](#). The award features a \$5,000 grant from the Jack Miller Center. Paterson P-Tech students will use the grant to visit Philadelphia's Independence Hall and other key sites to develop a planetarium show highlighting the story of the Declaration through recorded footage taken during their trip.



ROSA L. PARKS DECA TEAM EARNS SPOT AT NJ STATE CHAMPIONSHIP



Rosa L. Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts' Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) Chapter have qualified for the New Jersey DECA state competitions to be held in Atlantic City, NJ, following its strong performance at the Northwest Regional Competition Ramapo College on January 12.

"The students put a lot of work and practice into their respective roles," said chapter advisor Dr. Reggie Hall. "We're excited that the chapter continues to perform exceptionally well at both the regional and state level."

Last year, Rosa L. Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts had two students who went on to compete at DECA's International Career Development Conference in Orlando, FL, representing their school among 25,000 student participants.



CHARLES J. RILEY SCHOOL/SCHOOL NO. 9 ALUMNI SPEAK TO CURRENT STUDENTS

Charles J. Riley School/School No. 9 alumni Rawan Hammoudeh and Bayan Hammoudeh returned to their former school to speak to students about their careers as nurse practitioners. These inspiring sisters are now serving the Paterson community with compassion, dedication, and heart.



JFK CELEBRATES MUSLIM AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

John F. Kennedy High School recently unveiled their festive displays celebrating Muslim American Heritage Month. Schools across the district are engaging in thoughtful activities that promote understanding, respect, and appreciation for the generations of Muslim Americans who have helped shape our nation.



PPS IN THE NEWS

Nearly 500 Paterson Students Receive New Coats Through Liberty Subaru, Operation Warm Partnership

January 17, 2026

PRESS RELEASE

School No. 2 Students Gifted New Coats by Liberty Subaru, Operation Warm

January 16, 2026

STAFF REMINDER

IN-PERSON CERTIFIED TEACHER JOB FAIR SET FOR FEBRUARY 5

Paterson Public Schools' Human Resources Department will be hosting an In-Person Certified Teacher Job Fair on Thursday, February 5 from 4 PM to 7 PM in the Central Office cafeteria. If staff members have questions regarding the event, please feel free to reach out to Human Resources' recruitment team:

Jessica Scafe, jscafe@paterson.k12.nj.us
Sheilee Chocolatl, schocolatl@paterson.k12.nj.us

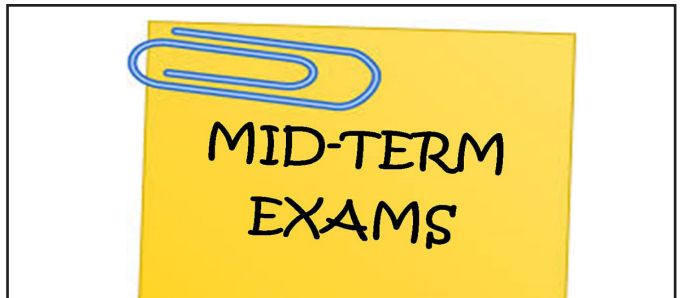


PARENT REMINDER

PREPARE YOUR STUDENT FOR UPCOMING MIDTERM EXAMS!

With the halfway point of the school year and end of the second marking period approaching on January 30, students are preparing for midterm exams!

Paterson Public Schools encourages parents to reach out to their child's school for their midterm exam schedule and information. Thank you for your continued partnership in your child's academic journey!



MONTHLY CALENDAR REMINDERS

January 30. 2nd Marking Period Ends

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

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

The **Board of Education Workshop Meeting** will be held on Wednesday, February 4th, 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.

The **Board of Education Regular Meeting** will take place virtually on Wednesday, February 11th. Those wishing to provide public comments 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 **Newsletter Submissions** form.

This 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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