

Celebrating Black History Month 2026

Marion P. Thomas Charter School
Board Meeting

February 26, 2026

By Any Means



"The future belongs to young people with an education and the imagination to create."

Barack Obama



"You can't always expect to be the smartest person in the room, but you can promise to be the hardest working."
—KETURAH BROWN JACKSON

OUR LIVES
BEGIN TO END
THE DAY WE
BECOME
SILENT ABOUT
THINGS THAT
MATTER

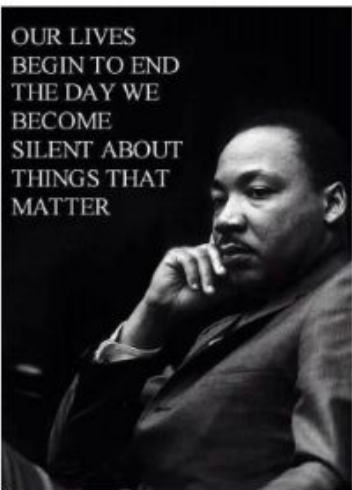


In loving memory of
Rev. Jesse Jackson



"IF THEY DON'T
GIVE YOU A
SEAT AT THE
TABLE, BRING A
FOLDING CHAIR."

SHIRLEY CHISHOLM
1924-2005



I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."



It is in collectivities that we find reservoirs of hope and optimism. -
Angela Davis

In Loving Memory



Sandra Shanks

"The ancestors are watching; they are not gone; they live in our tears and our laughter."
— African Proverb

Ms. Shanks is officially an ancestor. For over three decades, Ms. Shanks served as an educator and staff member in a variety of capacities within the Newark community and our Village.

Most recently, she served as an Office Manager at our high school, where she was one of the first faces to be seen by our scholars, staff, families, and extended community. Her presence will be deeply missed.

We thank her for her service and will take the opportunity to pause for a moment of silence.





The MPTCS Mission

Reimagining Education - It takes a Village!



The mission of Marion P. Thomas Charter School is to build culturally rich, transformative educational spaces that cultivate successful, lifelong innovators who use their passions, character, and intellect to better themselves, the greater Newark community, and the world beyond.



The Tree of Knowledge



The Torch



The Sankofa



The Tiger



The MPTCS Mission Board Meeting Agenda



Agenda:

- *Welcome & Mission*
- *Attendance Updates*
- *Highlights & Recognitions*
- *Charter Legislation*
- *Closing*



The Tree of Knowledge



The Torch



The Sankofa Bird



The Tiger

Digging Deep

DataDive

ANALYZING ATTENDANCE





Chronic Rate

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM (YTD)

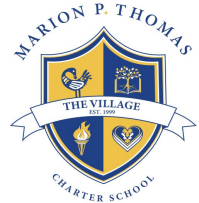
Campus	February 2022	February 2023	February 2024	February 2025	February 2026
HS	51.70%	41.10%	22.20%	23.39%	28.70%
PAC	59.40%	32.71%	35.50%	27.20%	29.80%
STEAM	37.00%	20.01%	28.60%	20.89%	15.15%
Sankofa	N/A	N/A	N/A	30.00%	17.40%
District	49.60%	34.00%	28.30%	23.55%	24.32%

Digging Deep

DataDive

ACADEMIC UPDATES





Academic Calendar Updates 2025-2026




Where we are...

- Recently completed our iReady MOY adaptive assessments (Gr. K-12) and universal screener (Gr. K-3)
- LinkIt! Form B (K-8 Campuses): Week of February 23rd

On the horizon...

- New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (Gr. 11) : Week of March 16th
- New Jersey Student Learning Assessment (Gr. 3-9): Week of May 4th

 Marion P. Thomas Charter School Academic Calendar - 2025-2026 SY		
<p>Legend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD: Half Day for Students No School Assessment Days Half Day (P/T Conferences) More info forthcoming 	<p>IMPORTANT DATES August 2025</p> <p>8/11 - 8/13 New Staff Institute</p> <p>8/14 - 8/22 MPTCS Summer Institute (All Staff)</p> <p>9/25 First Day for Students</p> <p>9/25 Quarter 1 Begins, Trimester 1 Begins</p>	<p>IMPORTANT DATES SEPTEMBER 2025</p> <p>9/2-9/30 WIDA Screening (K-12)</p> <p>9/8-10/3 ESI Screener (Prak)</p> <p>9/8-9/12 iReady ELA & Math Adaptive (K-11) Window</p> <p>9/15-9/19 iReady ELA Universal Screener (K-3) Window</p> <p>9/15-9/25 Finch Literacy Screener (Prak 4)</p> <p>9/15-9/19 iXL Diagnostic (4-8 Science) Window</p> <p>9/22-9/26 iXL Diagnostic (9-11 Science) Window</p>
<p>IMPORTANT DATES October 2025</p> <p>10/6-10/10 NJSLSA Fall (12th)</p> <p>10/7-10/10 LinkIt Form A Math, ELA & Science (K-11)</p> <p>10/29 PSAT/NMSQT (11th) & SAT (12th)</p>	<p>IMPORTANT DATES October 2025</p> <p>10/6-10/10 NJSLSA Fall (12th)</p> <p>10/7-10/10 LinkIt Form A Math, ELA & Science (K-11)</p> <p>10/29 PSAT/NMSQT (11th) & SAT (12th)</p>	<p>IMPORTANT DATES NOVEMBER 2025</p> <p>11/3 NJSLSA/NISPA Adaptive Field Test (Grades 4-10)</p> <p>11/5 NJSLSA/NISPA Adaptive Field Test (Grades 4-10)</p> <p>11/5 End of Quarter 1 (9-12)</p> <p>11/10 Quarter 2 Begins (9-12)</p> <p>11/11-11/12 NJSLSA/NISPA Adaptive Field Test (Grades 11-12)</p> <p>11/13 Quarter 1 Parent Teacher Conferences (9-11) 1:30-4, 5-7pm</p> <p>11/26 End of Trimester 1 (Prak-8)</p>
<p>IMPORTANT DATES December 2025</p> <p>12/1 Trimester 2 Begins (Prak-6)</p> <p>12/8 Trimester 2 Parent Teacher Conferences (Prak-8) (1:30-4, 5-7pm)</p>	<p>IMPORTANT DATES December 2025</p> <p>12/1 Trimester 2 Begins (Prak-6)</p> <p>12/8 Trimester 2 Parent Teacher Conferences (Prak-8) (1:30-4, 5-7pm)</p>	<p>IMPORTANT DATES JANUARY 2026</p> <p>1/5 School Reopens</p> <p>1/5-1/9 iXL Diagnostic (5-11 Science) Window</p> <p>1/6-1/9 iReady MOY ELA & Math Adaptive (K-11) Window</p> <p>1/12-1/16 iReady ELA Universal Screener (K-3)</p> <p>1/12-1/22 Finch Literacy Screener (Prak 4)</p> <p>1/27-1/30 LinkIt Form B-ELA, Math, Science (9-11)</p> <p>1/26-1/30 HS Final Exams (Semester Courses Only)</p> <p>1/30 End of Quarter 2 (9-12)</p>



New Jersey Student Learning Assessment Updates for 2025-2026



Previous NJSLA Format (Non-Adaptive)

- Same test questions presented to **all students**
- Fixed sequence and difficulty level

Limited ability to:

- Pinpoint individual student skill levels
- Capture a full range of student understanding
- Lessen the impact of testing fatigue on results

NJSLA Format for Spring 2025

- Computer Adaptive Test (CAT)
- Test adjusts in real time based on student responses
- Question difficulty adjusts (increases or decreases) as the student answers
- Each student experiences a unique testing pathway



New Jersey Student Learning Assessment Updates for 2025-2026



Benefits of Adaptive Testing

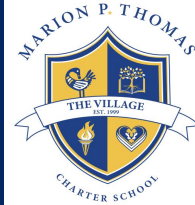
- More accurate picture of student performance
- Shorter test for many students
- Better differentiation between proficiency levels and actual student performance
- Improved instructional value of results

What did NOT Change:

- Alignment to NJ Student Learning Standards
- Accountability requirement
- Use of results for:
 - School and district reporting
 - Statewide comparison

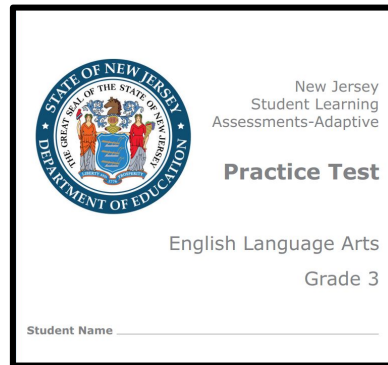


Preparing for the shift... 2025-2026 NJSLA Adaptive



Preparing for the shift to NJSLA Adaptive

- Exposure to released practice exams for leaders, teachers, and students (PALS, PD, in class)
- Proactive professional development (internal and external) on all facets (e.g., writing components, synthesizing multiple sources of evidence, etc.)
- Align assessment changes with district instructional goals (e.g., focused writing across contents, strategic typing exposure).
- Development of district data dashboard and corresponding NJSLA goal



English Language Arts **Reading**

8. Read paragraph 4 of Passage 1.

How does the author feel about the baby turtles that are coming to the pit?

- Ⓐ She wishes they were bigger.
- Ⓑ She thinks they will like the pit.
- Ⓒ She hopes they will find the pit.
- Ⓓ She believes they move too slowly.

15. Fill in **one** circle in each row to show whether each key detail is in Passage 1, Passage 2, or both passages.

	Passage 1	Passage 2	Both
Melting snow fills some bodies of water.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ
Some bodies of water are drinking sources.	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	Ⓕ
Animals often know how to find bodies of water.	Ⓖ	Ⓖ	Ⓖ



Academic Dashboard 2025-2026



Purpose of the Data Dashboard

Network Level

- Promote data literacy for teachers and school leaders
- Filter for historical and enrollment trends

Student Level

- Utilized to develop NJSLA goals by grade level and determine targeted student groups (e.g., small group, tutoring, enrichment)
- Continuous monitoring: Review and add benchmark data throughout the year
- Filtering capabilities to identify trends (e.g., student absences and performance; Form A to Form B)

Campus Cont... (1) Current Grade IEP? Spring 2025 Level Spring 2024 Level Link It Form A 25-26 Name Enter a value

Absences 25-26 SY 61

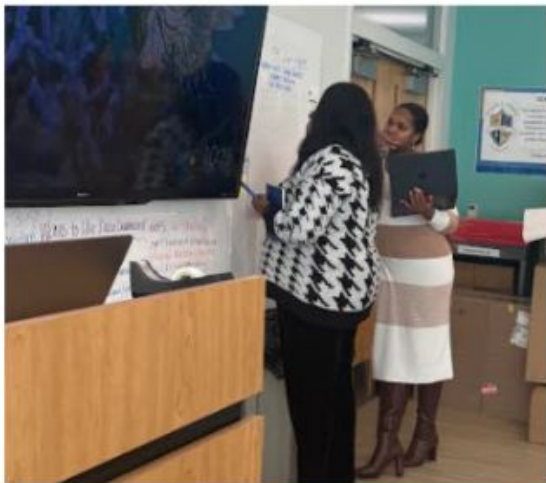
Spring 2025 Writing... Overall Placement-IR Phonics Placement-IR Comprehension-IR Vocabulary-IR Rush Flag- IR

Record Count: 692

	Name	Current Grade	Campus	Spring 2025 Scale Score	Spring 2025 Level	Spring 2025 Writing Scale Score	Link It Form A 25-26	Spring 2024 Level	Absences 25-26 SY	Overall Placement-IR
1.	██████████	9	PAC	734	Approached Expectations	31	Partially Meeting	Partially Met Expectations	1	Grade 4 / 3 or More Grade Levels Below
2.	██████████	8	STEAM	778	Met Expectations	41	Approaching	Met Expectations	0	Grade 7 / 1 Grade Level Below
3.	██████████	10	HS	761	Met Expectations	36	Approaching	Met Expectations	0	Grade 9 / 1 Grade Level Below
4.	██████████	6	STEAM	791	Met Expectations	43	Meeting	Met Expectations	0	Early 6 / Early On Grade Level
5.	██████████	10	HS	738	Approached Expectations	33	Approaching	Partially Met Expectations	2	Grade 7 / 3 or More Grade Levels Below

Marion P. Thomas Charter School
Principal's Meeting

*Catching our leaders in action
during our weekly Principal's PLC*



Reimagining the Village...

LIFELONG LEARNERS IN ACTION!



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

On February 18th, elementary principals and central office leaders attended the Leading Early Literacy Instruction, Intervention, and Assessment Summit hosted by the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association (NJPSA).

The session featured literacy experts from:
New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE)
University of Florida Literacy Institute
Rutgers University Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology
Rutgers Center for Literacy Development
The Reading League

Key Areas of Focus:

Analyze first-year early literacy screening data
Identify gaps and plan targeted interventions
Select high-quality instructional materials
Strengthen evidence-based literacy practices rooted in the
Science of Reading





Literacy 2025-2026

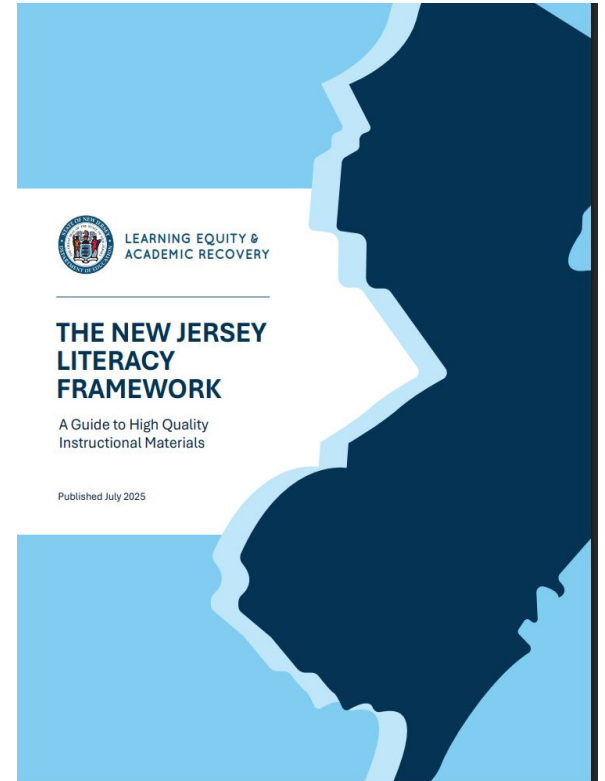


Literacy Initiative for Families and Thriving Communities (LIFT Grant)

- Promotes early literacy development for children birth to age 3 through strengthened school, family, and community partnerships
- Expands family engagement and access to literacy resources by partnering with trusted local organizations
- Equips caregivers with engaging literacy activities, high-quality books, and practical strategies to support early language and reading skills
- Marion P. Thomas is eligible for \$40,000 in grant funding

Literacy Leadership Team K-2 (LLT)

- Ensures consistent, high-quality K-2 literacy instruction aligned to the New Jersey Literacy Framework (NJLF)
- Team: five teachers across three PK-8 campuses, one principal, one vice principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent
- Guides curriculum decisions, uses data to inform instruction, and supports professional learning in foundational reading skills
- At the January 9 meeting, the team reviewed NJLF strategies, evaluated current materials using a state-aligned rubric, analyzed instructional strengths and gaps, and participated in a Curriculum Associates vendor presentation



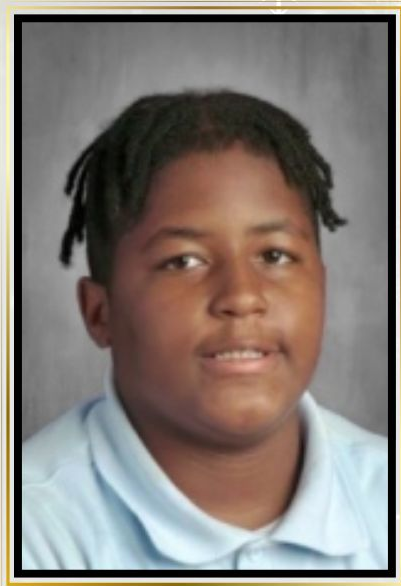
Congratulations

AmazingWork!

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

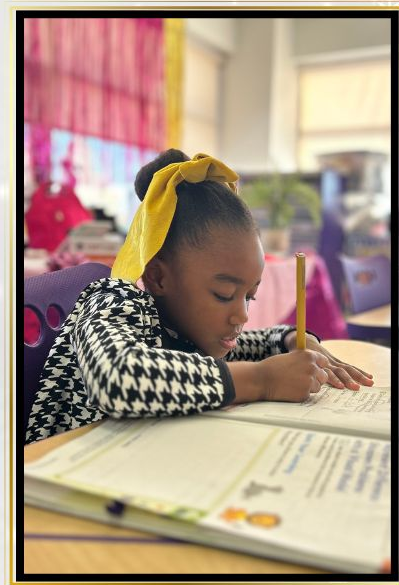


High School
10th Grade



PAC Academy
8th Grade

Sankofa Academy
1st Grade



STEAM Academy
5th Grade

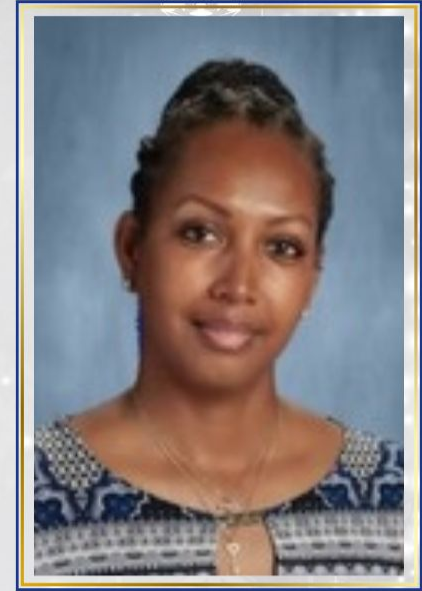
DECEMBER STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Elideth Charco-Reyes
Technical Coordinator
High School



Shantal Watson
Pre-K 3 Teacher Assistant
PAC Academy

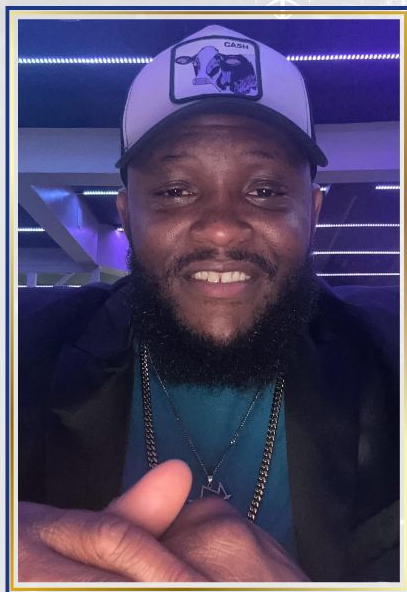
Ayoh Julu
1st Grade Teacher
Sankofa Academy



Jeeny Loiseau
5th Grade Teacher
STEAM Academy

DECEMBER EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Kamal McBride
High School



Danzell Ebron
PAC Academy

Carla Wynter-Darius
Sankofa Academy



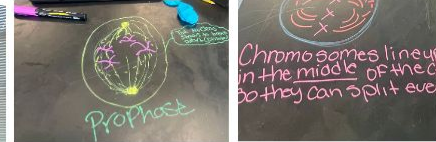
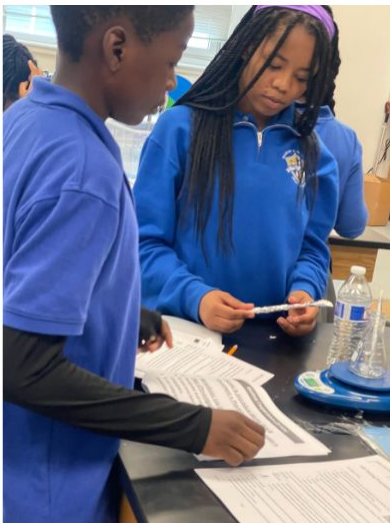
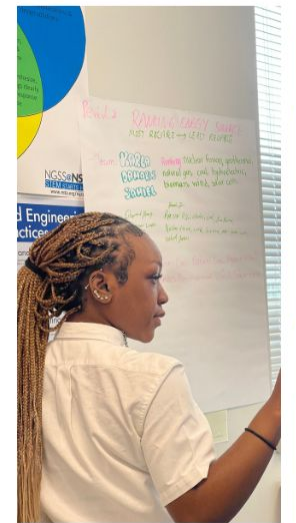
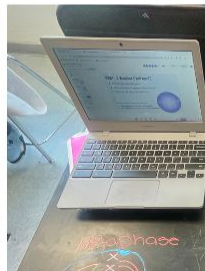
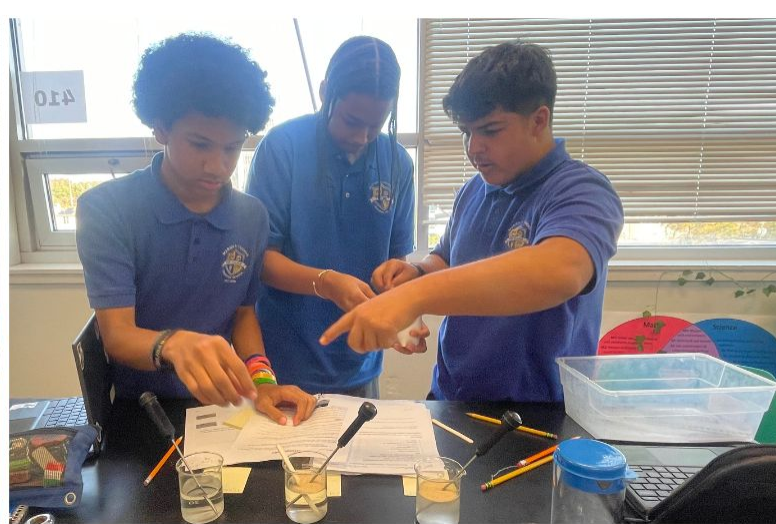
Anita Ramsey
STEAM Academy

DECEMBER PARENT SPOTLIGHT



Our 4th-grade scholars were highly engaged in an inquiry-based activity with Ms. Roy.

Our 5th-grade students explored owl pellets, examining skulls and bones to determine which animal was the owl's tasty treat.



Here are our high school students hard at work in science class!



The Donna Avery Foundation was created to honor the life and legacy of Donna Avery, a woman whose compassion and generosity left a lasting impact on children in need. Inspired by Donna's yearly involvement with Operation Scholar at MPTCS from 2015 until her passing in 2019, the foundation continues to support MPTCS students each year by spreading holiday cheer and fulfilling wishes during the holiday season.

What began with a single envelope of wishes has grown into a lasting tradition of service, touching the lives of hundreds of children over the past ten years. Through the continued dedication of her family and friends, the Donna Avery Foundation carries forward Donna's belief that kindness, dignity, and giving back can truly change lives.

Her spirit lives on in every child helped and in every act of compassion shared.



McCloud Cares Holiday Celebration

Our K–3rd grade scholars from McCloud Cares STEAM and Sankofa Academy enjoyed a magical holiday experience at American Dream Mall, where they wrote letters to Santa and received gifts from their wish lists.

Our students also had the honor of presenting awards to community honorees who faithfully support the McCloud Cares organization. We are proud to partner with Robert McCloud, whose generosity continues to make a meaningful impact on our scholars each year. The celebration was made even more special with exciting performances by Paw Patrol characters, creating lasting memories for all in attendance.



Thank you McCloud Cares!





Sankofa Snowflake Social



The Sankofa Snowflake Social brought teachers, families, and scholars together to celebrate the holiday with fun games, food, and family time before winter break. Parents volunteered alongside staff to run activity stations, making it a true community event



2025 Winter Leadership Institute

The Winter Leadership Institute brought school leaders together on 12/19 and 12/22 for collaborative workshops focused on standards-based reporting and the NJSLA-Adaptive assessment. The institute concluded with leadership awards and team-building activities, celebrating growth, collaboration, and shared commitment to excellence.



Rev. Vincent Rouse

Title: Board Chair, Voting Member

Email:
vrouse@mptcs.org



Briana Gilchrist

Title: Vice Chair, Voting Member

Email:
bgilchrist@mptcs.org



Allan Boomer

Title: Board Member, Treasurer, Voting Member

Email:
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MaLiyah Griffiths

Title: Board Secretary, Non-Voting Member

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Toni Ince

Title: Board Member, Parent Representative, Voting Member

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Dr. Princess Towe

Title: Board Member, Voting Member

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Julio Valdivieso

Title: Board Member, Voting Member

Email:
jvaldivieso@mptcs.org



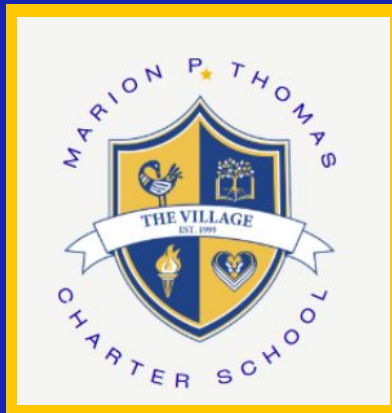
*New Member
Mr. Daryl
Stuart
(not pictured)*

Welcome!

*Happy Belated School
Board Appreciation
Month!*

PROFESSIONAL TEACHER PRACTICE

*Strategies To Enhance
Reading Instruction*



*Mr. Stevenson - PAC
Ms. Ollivierre - STEAM*

BLENDING & TACTILE ACTIVITY



We are so excited to finally launch our MPTCS Parent Council! The first meeting was amazing I'm looking forward to working with them.

new PARENT ACADEMY!



February 18, 2026





Saturday - February 21st
MPTCS All Schools Fair
in the Village
Thank you to our amazing staff, students, & everyone else who took the time to join us!



Keeping Current

CharterLaw

UPDATES 2026





New Charter Legislation



Governor Phil Murphy's Post



Governor Phil Murphy  · [Follow](#)

January 16 · 



Today, I signed legislation creating new oversight and establishing new transparency requirements for charter schools.

Together, we are setting a higher standard for charter schools and giving the [New Jersey Department of Education](#) greater authority to hold them accountable to taxpayers and communities.



New Charter Legislation



Married N.J. school leaders making nearly \$600K actually live in Florida

The couple are among the highest paid educators in New Jersey

517 days ago [Matthew Stanmyre](#)



Top lawmakers demand hearings on charter schools after NJ.com report

Sen. Vin Gopal said he plans to initiate the review in Trenton.

531 days ago [Matthew Stanmyre](#)



N.J. charter schools are feasting on taxpayer dollars. See the monster salaries.

Officials at several charter schools are making salaries that far outpace peers

533 days ago [Matthew Stanmyre](#)



New scandal at controversial N.J. school: Family business cashed in on uniforms at taxpayers' expense

The school paid thousands to a business run by relative, disgraced ex-coach

608 days ago [Matthew Stanmyre](#)



New super team crushed the competition in title game. Not everyone was cheering.

The new charter school destroyed its postseason opponents by an average of 39 points.

717 days ago [Matthew Stanmyre](#)

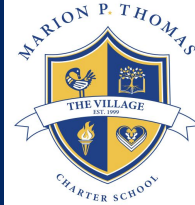


NEW JERSEY
OFFICE OF THE STATE
COMPTROLLER

EDUCATION OVERSIGHT
UNIT REPORT

A Preliminary Investigation into
 and its Charter Management
Organization

Posted on - 01/12/2026



New Charter Legislation

The Legislation at a Glance: Stability for Accountability

This legislation introduces a trade-off: Increased operational flexibility and stability in exchange for heightened transparency and stricter governance.

THE WINS (Stability)

- ✓ **10-Year Renewals:** High-performing schools gain a decade of stability.
- ✓ **Consolidation:** Expanded rights to merge within contiguous districts.
- ✓ **Staff Preference:** Immediate enrollment preference for children of staff.

THE OBLIGATIONS (Transparency)

- 📋 **Transparency:** Budgets must now mirror district formatting.
- 📋 **Governance:** Stricter residency requirements for Boards.
- 📋 **Noticing:** Mandatory 30-day public notices for contract renegotiations.



New Charter Legislation



Strengthening Governance & Transparency



Residency Requirements: Future members must live in NJ. 33% of the board must live/work in the district/region (min 1 must live in the district). *Note: Current out-of-state members are grandfathered.*

IMMEDIATE



Physical Meetings: All board meetings must be held in a physical location within the district (except during declared emergencies).

JULY 2026



Website Transparency: Homepage must feature Annual Reports, Meeting Notices, Budgets, Trustee Lists, and Facility Lists.

JULY 2026



Training: NJSBA must consult with NJPCSA on governance best practices.

JULY 2026

New Charter Legislation

Securing Long-Term Stability

High Performance
(Framework Score)
No Probationary Status

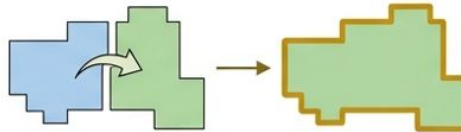


10-Year Renewal Term



Probation Post-Renewal = Term
amended to 5 Years

Consolidation Rights (Effective Fall 2027)



Expansion of rights to merge within contiguous public school districts that demonstrate a need to consolidate.



New Charter Legislation

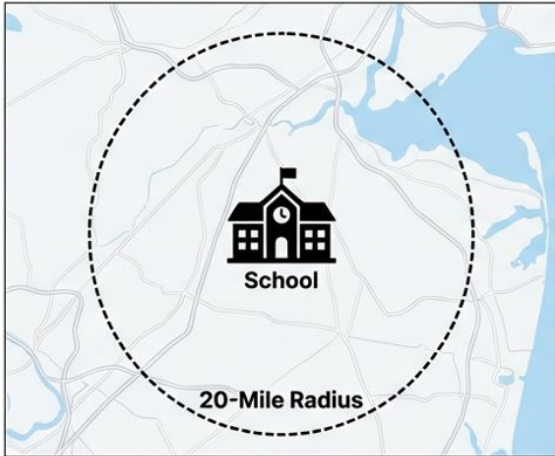


Student Life: Admissions & Athletics



Admissions (Effective Immediately)

Staff Preference: Schools may now preference children of teaching staff members regardless of residence.



NJSIAA Sports Participation

(Effective July 2026)

- ✓ **Geography:** Non-resident students must live within this 20-mile radius to play.
- ✓ **Transfers:** 1-year ineligibility for new 11th-grade non-resident transfers.
- ✓ **Seniors:** New non-resident 12th graders are ineligible (unless waiver applies).
- ✓ **Protection:** All current students are grandfathered.



New Charter Legislation



New Role: The Student Placement Liaison

Effective July 2026

Job Description

Position: Student Placement Liaison

Core Responsibilities

- Transition In:** Coordinate with prior schools and parents for successful new student intake.
- Transition Out:** Coordinate with subsequent placements (including alternative ed) for exiting students.
- Data Tracking:** Maintain enrollment data to ensure accurate State aid.
- Exit Interviews:** Conduct interviews for non-graduate exits to identify reasons for leaving.

New Charter Legislation

Personnel Protections & Prohibitions

Effective Immediately

NDA Ban



Schools cannot require NDAs or restrictive covenants for employment or severance. (Non-disparagement agreements are still permitted).

No Virtual Schools



Primarily online “virtual” charter schools are explicitly prohibited.

No For-Profit Management



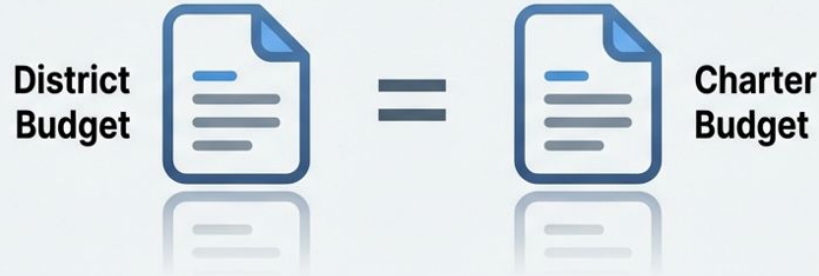
Ban on contracting with for-profit EMOs (Existing contracts are grandfathered).

New Charter Legislation

Financial Transparency: The “User Friendly” Budget

Effective
Jan 2027

Mirroring District Requirements



• Appropriations by item type	• Shared service agreements
• Revenues by major category	• Salaries of Lead Person & Business Admin
• Available surplus & unusual revenues	

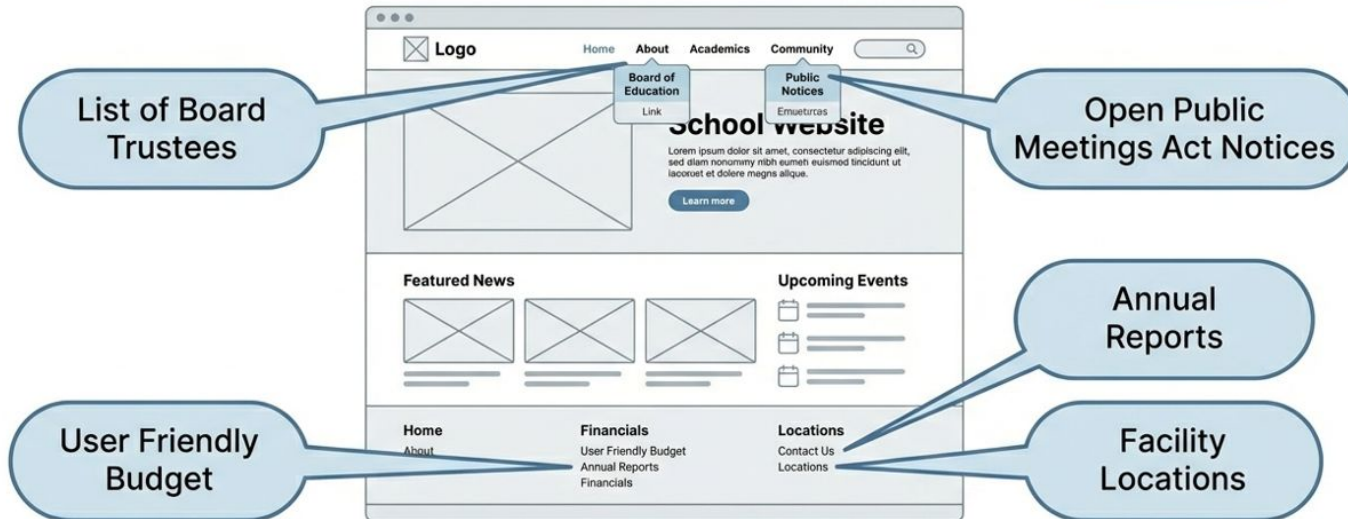


Public Hearing: Must notice 3 times (30 days prior) and notify sending districts 4+ days in advance.

New Charter Legislation

Digital Transparency: Website Requirements

Effective
July 2026

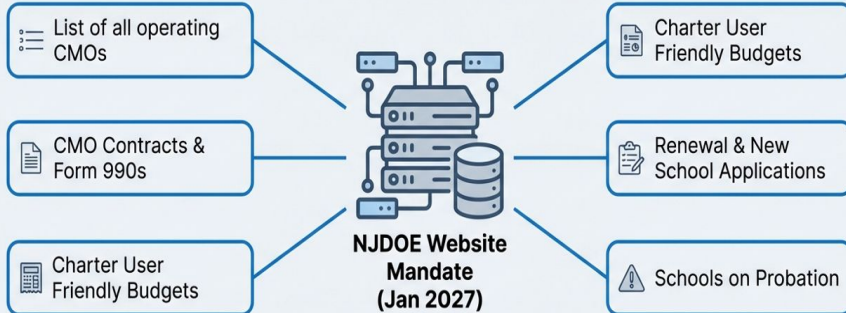



Reference the website requirements list.

New Charter Legislation

Accountability for the Authorizer: NJDOE Obligations

Effective
Jan 2027



 **State of the Sector:** NJDOE must produce a comprehensive report on charter schools every 5 years.

NJDOE Obligations: Applications & Impact



Public Process

- **Postings:** NJDOE must post new/renewal apps online with public comment links.
- **Notices:** NJDOE must publish notices in counties (30-day comment period).



Assessments (Fall 2027)

- **Financial Impact:** Commissioner must assess impact on the district for new schools.
- **Comp Studies:** Commissioner must consider compensation studies during renewal decisions.



THANK YOU

FOR LISTENING!