



# THE PULSE

*The Heartbeat of the District.*

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 

MARCH 19, 2026 | VOL. 28

## PATERSON STUDENTS' CUSTOM RACE CAR SELECTED TO BE SHOWCASED AT NEW YORK AUTO SHOW

A student-created 1974 Ford Capri replica race car restored by this year's Paterson Public Schools' Youth Empowered Stewardship (YES) Program cohort has been selected to be featured at the Rides + Rigs Expo (R2XPO) as part of the upcoming New York International Auto Show. The exhibition, held at the Javits Center in New York City from April 3 to 12, marks a major milestone for the YES Program and its innovative hands-on learning initiatives.

To read the press release, please visit our [website](#).



## PATERSON P-TECH SOARS TO VICTORY AT SILK CITY DRONE COMPETITION

Paterson P-Tech was crowned the overall champion of the inaugural Silk City Drone Competition on Saturday, March 14, at Joseph A. Taub School, where nine teams from across the district came together for a high-stakes display of aeronautical skill and technical precision. Teams from Joseph A. Taub School and John F. Kennedy High School also took home trophies for their stellar performances.

To read the press release, please visit our [website](#).



Greetings Paterson Public Schools Community,

Last Saturday, March 14, marked International Mathematics Day, also known as Pi Day. The day serves as a powerful reminder that math extends far beyond the classroom. Mathematics is a universal language – one that shapes our world and provides a vital foundation for our children’s success.

As we recognize the importance of mathematics, I want to thank our dedicated educators who inspire a love for math discovery in our classrooms every day. I also encourage our families to find “math moments” at home, whether you are measuring ingredients for a meal, budgeting for a trip, or playing a strategy game together.



On March 26, Paterson Public Schools and the Paterson Education Fund will host a screening of the powerful documentary *Counted Out*, which examines the decline in numeric literacy and math proficiency in this country. Everyone in our school community is invited to attend this informative film. Click [here](#) to register.

By investing in our students’ mathematical growth today, we are helping ensure they develop the confidence and resilience needed to build a brighter future.

### **Celebrating Our Students’ Hard Work During NJGPA Week**

This week marked an important milestone for our high school students as they completed the New Jersey Graduation Proficiency Assessment (NJGPA). I commend our students for the focus, resilience, and hard work that they displayed throughout the testing window.

I also want to extend my deepest gratitude to our school leaders, teachers, and support staff. Your tireless efforts in preparing our students and ensuring a smooth testing environment do not go unnoticed. To our parents and guardians, thank you for your continued partnership and for encouraging your children to give their very best every single day.

As we move forward, we remain committed to using data to guide instruction and ensuring every child has the supportive environment they need to succeed.

Sincerely,

Laurie W. Newell, PhD  
Superintendent of Schools

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## **FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!**



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## SCHOOL 5 STUDENTS PRESENT RAIN GARDEN RESEARCH AT RAMAPO COLLEGE



Fifth grade students from School 5 recently represented their school community and Paterson Public Schools at the Climate Change Learning Collaborative Culminating Event held at Ramapo College. During this prestigious gathering, which was attended by Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell and School 5 fifth grade teacher Ms. Grace Farana, the students presented their comprehensive research and strategic plans for the School 5 Rain Garden Project. Their work was focused on understanding storm water runoff and its impact on the local environment. School 5 student Jolanie Morales was presented with a certificate of recognition for her leadership and collaboration while working on the project.

## AHA HOSTS NJSLA PEP RALLY AND GROWTH CELEBRATION



The Alexander Hamilton Academy recently held a high-energy assembly for its third through eighth graders to kick off the NJSLA season with a focus on a growth mindset. The event celebrated persistence by honoring students who met or exceeded expectations on the LinkIt! Form B assessment, as well as those who advanced one or more full proficiency level since their last benchmark. By recognizing both high achievement and significant personal progress, AHA reinforced the message that intelligence grows with effort. The district is proud of these students' hard work and it looks forward to their continued success on the upcoming state assessments in May.

## EMPOWER A GIRL, EMPOWER THE WORLD AT SCHOOL 27

School 27 recently hosted its first Pretty Brown Girl Empowerment Seminar for 25 fourth and fifth grade students. Dedicated to instilling self-confidence, leadership, and resilience in young women, the event featured social emotional learning and team building activities led by Principal Kelli A. White and six staff members.

Participants engaged in reflective activities, including recording memories in journals, decorating dream jars, and sharing their future aspirations. A highlight of the seminar was a visit from Assistant Superintendent Dr. Cicely Warren, who encouraged the girls to pursue their goals immediately, noting that “big dreams can happen at any age.”



## EHS STUDENT EARNS RECOGNITION IN BEABLE WINTER POWER UP CONTEST

Eastside High School proudly celebrated sophomore Ainara Belalcazar for her exceptional performance in the Beable Winter Power Up Contest. Competing against more than 100,000 students globally, Ainara earned second place worldwide in the February round.

This achievement marks Ainara’s second consecutive success in the contest series, following a first-place finish in January. Her consistent performance highlights a deep commitment to academic excellence and personal growth.

The Beable Winter Power Up Contest challenges students to improve their literacy skills by completing rigorous lessons to increase their Lexile levels. Participants earn leaderboard points based on the quality of their work and their success in “Power Up” challenges.



## DISTRICT STAFF MEMBER FEATURED ON WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH PANEL

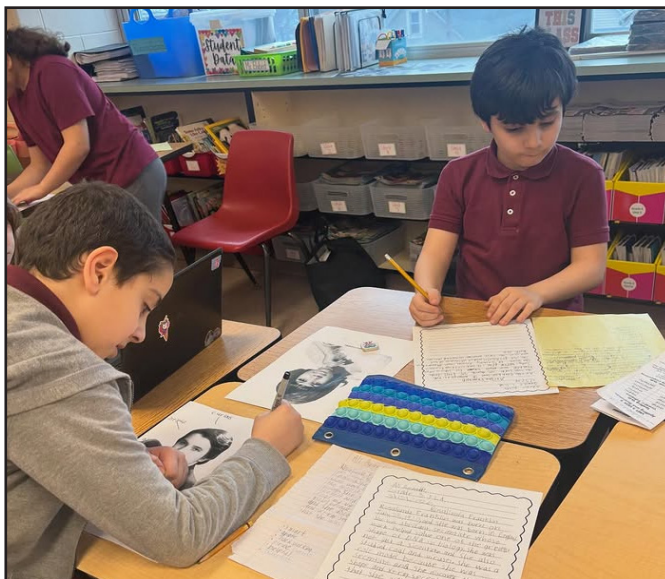
As part of Essex County College's Women's History Month celebration, Paterson Public Schools' Supervisor of World Languages Kayla Khaled served as a featured speaker on a panel highlighting women in leadership and education. The event aimed to inspire students from diverse backgrounds to pursue careers in education by illustrating the profound impact educators have on their communities.

During the presentation, Ms. Khaled shared her personal and professional journey as a Latina educator and leader. She addressed the barriers she faced and emphasized the critical importance of representation, cultural identity, and perseverance in the field. By highlighting the transformative role of teachers, she encouraged future generations to view education as a powerful vehicle for community service.



### CHARLES J. RILEY SCHOOL/SCHOOL 9 CELEBRATES WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Students in Ms. Maha Ammar's classes researched inspiring women who have made a difference in the world as part of their celebration of Women's History Month. Each student selected an important woman in history who serves as a role model and explored her life, achievements, and impact. The students proudly shared what they learned through beautiful final projects.



### JFK STUDENT PRESENTS SOCIAL MEDIA RESEARCH AT PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

John F. Kennedy High School student Viannella Cruz presented her research poster at the 16th Annual Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Integrated STEM Education Conference on March 14 at Princeton University. Her poster explored why social media is computer science by using her own experience with a video going viral and analyzing what fueled that success.



## STEAM, STARS/TIES LAUNCHES UNIFIED FLAG FOOTBALL PROGRAM



Students from Paterson STEAM High School and STARS Academy/STARS TIES Program celebrated a milestone on March 18 at the New York Jets' Training Center in Florham Park, NJ as they attended the official launch event for the Jets' New Jersey Unified Flag Football League.

Spearheaded by the dedicated efforts of school leadership, Principal Dr. Nellista Bess and Vice Principal Mr. Christopher Awad, Wednesday marked the debut of the district's first Unified Flag Football team. The program was made possible through a premier partnership with the New York Jets, who provided a \$5,000 donation along with essential equipment, including practice and game-day jerseys, belts, and footballs. Furthering this commitment to inclusive athletics, Special Olympics New Jersey awarded STEAM High School a grant of up to \$10,000.

The team will compete in the UFF East Conference against Bloomfield, Lakeland, Pequannock, Union City, and West Orange High Schools. The team is also proud to announce home games at the historic Hinchliffe Stadium, providing a local stage for the Paterson community to cheer on their students.

## PATERSON P-TECH COUNSELOR NOMINATED FOR COUNSELOR OF THE COUNTY

Paterson P-Tech school counselor Ms. Vernita Bostick has been nominated for the prestigious Counselor of the County award. This recognition highlights her exceptional dedication to student achievement, data-driven leadership, and the advancement of college and career readiness within the district.

Ms. Bostick has become a cornerstone of the P-Tech community by utilizing comprehensive data to spearhead school improvement initiatives. Her strategic development and monitoring of SMART goals have been instrumental in tracking student progress and aligning graduation requirements with both district priorities and individual student needs.

A tireless advocate for postsecondary access, Ms. Bostick has transformed the college-going culture at P-Tech. Her efforts include coordinating extensive college tours, career fairs, and financial aid workshops. Notably, her intentional outreach has led to near-universal family participation in FAFSA and financial aid presentations, ensuring that families are empowered to navigate the complexities of higher education funding. As the National Honor Society advisor, she organizes vital student volunteer opportunities, including partnerships with local food banks.



## PPS IN THE NEWS

[Eastside High School Teacher Inducted into New Jersey Hall of Fame as 'Everyday Hero'](#)  
March 13, 2026

[Paterson Schools Seek Up to \\$400K State Grant to Expand Literacy Tutoring for Elementary Students](#)  
March 13, 2026

[Paterson Cheer Squads Win Championships at State Tournament](#)  
March 13, 2026

[Paterson STEAM High School Expands Unified Sports Programs Through Jets, Special Olympics Partnerships](#)  
March 14, 2026

[Paterson Students Honored at 22nd Annual Black History Art and Essay Contest Awards Ceremony](#)  
March 15, 2026

## PRESS RELEASES

[Champions x2! Eastside, JFK Cheer Teams Crowned NJCDCA State Champions](#)  
March 13, 2026

[Paterson P-Tech Soars to Victory at Inaugural Silk City Drone Competition](#)  
March 18, 2026

[Paterson Students' Custom Race Car Selected to be Showcased at New York Auto Show](#)  
March 19, 2026

## STAFF REMINDER

### YOUR ONE-STOP SHOP FOR SUCCESS: EXPLORE THE PPS STAFF HOMEPAGE

Stay organized and empowered by visiting the Paterson Public Schools [Staff homepage](#), your central hub for everything you need to succeed during the school year. Whether you are looking for instructional support or administrative tools, the homepage is designed to streamline daily tasks for PPS staff.



## PARENT REMINDER

### EXPLORE RESOURCES DEDICATED TO HELPING PATERSON PARENTS

Paterson Public Schools families have a dedicated resource center in the [Parents homepage](#) on [paterson.k12.nj.us](http://paterson.k12.nj.us). There you will find essential links for Central Registration, the Infinite Campus Parent Portal, and family engagement tools designed to support your child's education. Explore the resources available on this page to stay connected and informed throughout the school year and beyond.



## MONTHLY CALENDAR REMINDERS

March 20 . . . . . Eid Al Fitr (Observed) - District Closed

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

## BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

The **Board of Education Workshop Meeting** will be held on Wednesday, April 1st, 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, April 15th. 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](https://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](http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us)

**Questions?** Email us at [ppscommunications@paterson.k12.nj.us](mailto:ppscommunications@paterson.k12.nj.us)

Aida E. Rosario, MBA | Director of Communications  
Peter Long | Supervisor of Special Projects and Communications  
Aidan Solano | Graphics & Content Coordinator  
Jeni Perez | Confidential Communications Assistant