



THE PULSE

The Heartbeat of the District.

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 

MAY 1, 2026 | VOL. 33

Greetings Paterson Public Schools Community,

I want to take a moment to recognize and reflect on a wonderful district event that took place this week. The Paterson Public Schools STEAM Symposium, which was held at William Paterson University on April 29, was a powerful demonstration of what happens when we provide our students the opportunity to lead, create, and innovate.

A highlight of this year's symposium was our students' ability to take high-level, complex scientific and technical concepts and turn them into projects that were not only rigorous, but also consumable and engaging for every participant. Our students did more than just present projects – they translated their passion for discovery into a shared work that was appreciated by everyone in the room. Congratulations to our students on an outstanding showcase!



Happy National School Principals Day!

May 1st marks National School Principals Day, and we are proud to recognize the dedicated leaders who guide our schools every day. Our principals are the foundation of our district. By fostering safe, encouraging spaces, they provide the essential environment students need to excel. These leaders do more than just manage – they use insightful data to drive results, inspire students to reach their full potential, and support our staff with genuine passion and purpose.

Thank you to our incredible principals for your leadership, resilience, and your unwavering commitment to the students and families of Paterson Public Schools! Please join the district in celebrating National School Principals Day.

Sincerely,

Laurie W. Newell, PhD
Superintendent of Schools



BRING YOUR CHILD TO WORK DAY AT PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS!

Paterson Public Schools proudly celebrated Bring Your Child to Work Day on Thursday, April 23. Across the district, staff members welcomed their children into schools and offices, providing them with a firsthand look at the dedication and teamwork required to support the success of Paterson students every day. The special day turned workspaces into classrooms for future leaders of tomorrow, sparking curiosity and career exploration. Thank you to everyone who participated!

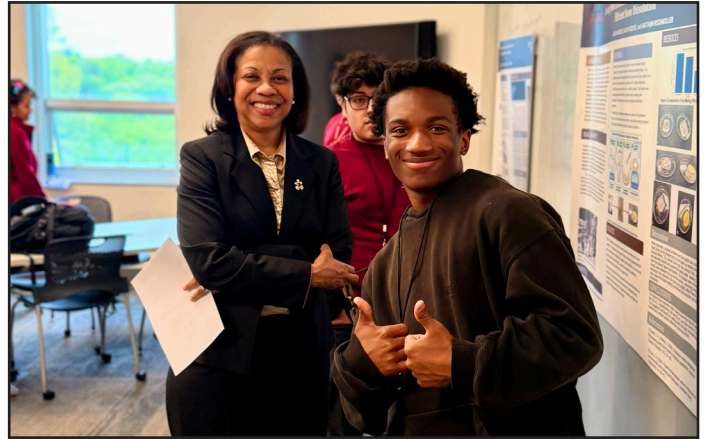




PPS' BRIGHTEST MINDS GATHER FOR ANNUAL STEAM SYMPOSIUM

The knowledge and innovation of Paterson Public Schools' students were on full display at the annual Paterson STEAM Symposium held at William Paterson University on April 29. The event served as a powerful demonstration of student leadership, creativity, and technical expertise, bringing together young scholars from across the district to showcase their work in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM).

An empowering and unique experience for Paterson students, the annual symposium challenged students to conduct interdisciplinary research and deliver professional-level presentations in a collegiate environment. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell, Deputy Superintendent Dr. Rodney A. Henderson, and cabinet members attended the symposium to join the students in a day dedicated to academic exploration.



SCHOOL 2 WRAPS UP AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH WITH SENSORY DAY

To culminate Autism Awareness Month, School 2 hosted an exciting and inclusive Sensory Day celebration that provided students with meaningful opportunities to explore, engage, and celebrate neurodiversity. Organized by grade bands — K-2, 3-5, and 6-8 — the event featured a wide variety of age-appropriate sensory activities designed to meet the interests and needs of all learners. Students participated in hands-on experiences such as shaving cream play, slime making, face painting, Play-Doh creations, bubbles, dancing, and many other interactive sensory stations that encouraged creativity, movement, and exploration.

Sensory Day also served as a valuable opportunity to expose students to new experiences and activities they might normally shy away from, helping them build confidence, curiosity, and comfort in a supportive environment. It was inspiring to see all students actively participate with enthusiasm, joy, and excitement throughout the day. In addition to the activities, students enjoyed popcorn, cotton candy, and lemonade, allowing them to explore salty, sweet, and sour tastes as part of the celebration. This memorable event was a joyful culmination of Autism Awareness Month and reflected School 2's strong commitment to inclusion, acceptance, and creating positive experiences where every student feels supported, celebrated, and empowered.



EVERY DAY COUNTS: PPS HOSTS ATTENDANCE WORKSHOP FOR SFLS FAMILIES



The Department of Student Attendance Department recently facilitated a parent workshop at Senator Frank R. Lautenberg School called "Every Day Counts: Unlocking Your Child's Academic Success Through Attendance."

The workshop emphasized the critical connection between consistent school attendance and student academic achievement. The session provided families with comprehensive information on the importance of daily attendance, while also offering individualized support through one-on-one engagement with at least 50 parents. These conversations allowed staff to better understand and address common barriers to attendance, including transportation challenges, health-related concerns, and difficulties with establishing consistent routines.

The district acknowledges the leadership of Principal Dr. Sherri Brackett, whose implementation of positive attendance incentives continues to strengthen school culture and promote student engagement. Paterson Public Schools remains committed to supporting families and ensuring that all students are present, engaged, and prepared for success.

CREATIVITY IN BLOOM: DISTRICT ART EXHIBIT NOW OPEN

More than 100 staff, parents, and students attended the opening reception of the annual District Art Exhibit at the Paterson Museum on April 17. Featuring 150 works of art done by students in kindergarten through 12th grade, the exhibit's opening night was filled with pride as student artists led their families through the gallery, explaining the inspiration and techniques behind their favorite pieces. The exhibit, which will be on display at Paterson Museum until Wednesday, May 6, showcases the students' hard work, highlighting their critical thinking and creativity that has developed through the fine and performing arts curriculum. Everyone is invited to visit the exhibit.



SCHOOL 10 PARTICIPATES IN BRING YOUR CHILD TO WORK DAY

School 10 was filled with extra energy and excitement as the school community celebrated Bring Your Child to Work Day. A total of 17 children participated, spending the day shadowing their parents and getting a firsthand look at what a school day is like behind the scenes. One of the highlights was when our young visitors took over the morning announcements, confidently sharing messages with the entire school.

It was a wonderful experience for all, creating lasting memories and giving students a deeper appreciation for the important work their parents do each day.



STUDENTS CONNECT WITH COLLEGES, CAREERS AT H.S. TRANSITION FAIR

Paterson Public Schools' Department of Special Education hosted its High School Transition Resource Fair last week at John F. Kennedy High School. More than 30 agencies attended the event to speak to students with special needs about postgraduation opportunities in the workforce and higher education. It was an important event that gave Paterson's students more information about life after graduating high school.



SCHOOL 18 POETRY SLAM AMPLIFIES STUDENT VOICES

School 18 hosted a powerful and engaging Poetry Slam on April 22 in its auditorium, bringing together students, staff, and special guests for a celebration of expression and creativity.

Featuring 23 student performers, the event showcased the courage, creativity, and voice of the school community's young poets. Students took the stage to share original pieces exploring themes such as love, grief, self-discovery, and current events, offering honest and thoughtful reflections on their experiences and perspectives. Each performance was met with enthusiastic snaps from the audience, creating an atmosphere of respect, encouragement, and appreciation. The event also included performances from staff members Ms. Delia Barrientos, Ms. Ashley Reyna, Ms. Tanisha Tuck, and Mrs. Melissa De Block, as well as special guest Dr. Miguel Pagan, whose participation added to the sense of community and shared expression. The presence of the Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell further underscored the importance of uplifting student voices.

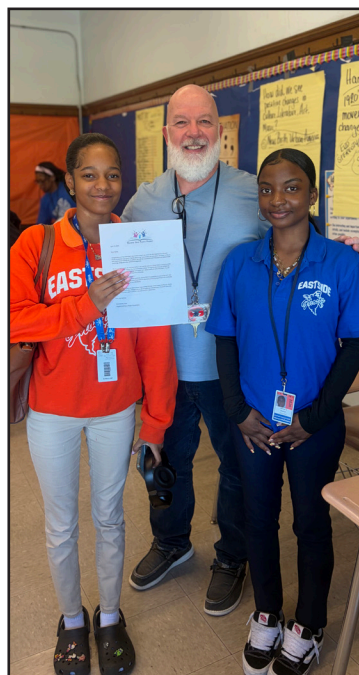


EASTSIDE STUDENTS EARN TOP HONORS IN PCCC POETRY CONTEST

Students from Eastside High School secured top honors in the annual poetry contest sponsored by Passaic County Community College (PCCC). The students' creativity, dedication, and powerful voices truly stood out, reflecting both their individual artistry and the strength of their collective effort.

The winners represented every grade level at Eastside. Here are the winners: Grade 12 - Sarah Dupuy, Natalie Roman; Grade 11 - Ismailyn Figueroa De La Cruz, Ashly Gaibor Gonzalez; Grade 10 - Ma'atiah Braxton; Grade 9 - Treverys Luna Merino

This accomplishment is also a testament to the guidance and commitment of teachers Mr. Jeffrey Gutt and Mr. Greg Westly, whose thoughtful organization of the lesson helped inspire and shape the remarkable poems that earned this recognition. Between the two classrooms, Eastside had six winners placing in categories of first place, second place, and honorable mention. Students will receive a published anthology celebrating their poem, cash prizes, and a reception to be held at the college in June.



EASTSIDE, STEAM STUDENTS UNITE FOR TRIP OF A LIFETIME

Over Spring Break, students experienced a remarkable international experience, traveling across Italy and France with EF Tours. What began as a shared trip quickly became a meaningful collaboration, as students built connections while exploring some of Europe's most iconic cities: Florence, Rome, and Paris.

The journey blended academic enrichment with cultural immersion. In Florence, students walked through the heart of the Renaissance, viewing world-renowned works of art. The experience brought classroom learning to life, as students stood face-to-face with masterpieces they had previously only seen in textbooks. In Rome, history unfolded before their eyes. From the grandeur of the Colosseum to the ancient streets that once formed the center of a vast empire, students experienced the depth and scale of history in a way no lesson could fully replicate. The trip also emphasized hands-on learning. Students experienced Arts Integration, as they participated in an art class, allowing them to tap into their own creativity while surrounded by inspiration. They also explored chemistry through the creation of their own perfumes, blending science with sensory experience. Culinary traditions came alive as students learned to make pasta and tiramisu, gaining insight into Italian culture through its cuisine. Last but not least, they learned basic Italian and French.

The final leg of the journey brought the group to Paris, where history, art, and modern culture intersect. Students explored the Louvre, and stood beneath the Eiffel Tower, taking in one of the world's most recognizable landmarks. On the last day, the students went to Disneyland Paris, blending cultural exploration with fun. This shared experience served as a powerful reminder that education extends far beyond the classroom. The trip fostered not only new friendships, but collaboration, independence, and cultural awareness. Students returned not only with lasting memories, but as emerging global citizens better equipped to understand, appreciate, and engage with the world around them.



SCHOOL 13 GUEST SPEAKER PROMOTES POSITIVE SOCIAL SUPPORT

School 13 welcomed guest speaker Matt Bellace, PhD to its school community last week where he empowered middle school students to seek out positive social support, express their feelings in productive ways, and pursue healthy natural highs. Expressions such as music, writing, and physical movement can invoke powerful feelings in a more productive way. The funny yet age-appropriate presentation focused on natural highs, substance abuse prevention, and mental health. It served as the perfect combination of stand-up comedy, interactive demonstrations, and inspirational stories.



SCHOOL 10 CELEBRATES ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS DAY

Last week, School 10 proudly recognized and celebrated our incredible school secretaries, Ms. Cooper and Mrs. Ortiz-Piedrabuena. They keep our buildings running smoothly every single day. Often the first friendly face you see and the reassuring voice on the phone, our secretaries are the heart of School 10. On this Administrative Professionals Day, we extend our sincere gratitude for all that you do.



EARTH DAY READ-ALoud TAKES PLACE AT SENATOR FRANK R. LAUTENBERG SCHOOL

At Senator Frank R. Lautenberg School, the Full-Service Community School program visited grades K-2 for a special Earth Day read-aloud. After the story, students participated in a coloring and writing activity where they shared ways they can help take care of the Earth. From simple actions like cleaning up and showing kindness to nature, students learned that making a difference starts with them. Most importantly, they were reminded that Earth Day isn't just one day, it's every day.



NATURE AS THE CLASSROOM: SCHOOL 12 TAKES ON THE GREAT OUTDOORS

School 12 teachers Ms. Albritton, Mrs. Conyers, and Mr. Anderson, along with 28 5th through 8th grade students and nine parents traveled to The New Jersey School of Conservation (NJSOC) in Sandyston, NJ on March 25-26. The NJSOC provided the students with engaging educational and life experiences that helped them to better understand nature, forests and climate change.

The students participated in six different climate-related activities during the two-day event. In the Action Socialization Experiences, students worked cooperatively in different teams using communication skills to solve different challenges. An interpretive hike gave the groups the opportunity to experience Stokes State Forest and all that nature has to offer; participants tasted natural hemlock, and some even descended into a bear cave. Students put on boots and gloves to locate and identify macrovertebrates in Big Flatbrook, which was part of the water ecology class. The web of life program was an exciting game of predator and prey during which students participated as herbivores, omnivores, or carnivores, showcasing how survival depends on "The Four Laws of Ecology." The climate change makers class included discussions about climate and climate change. The students' culminating project saw them create an art piece using just objects in nature before writing poems about their art. Students learned that this type of art is called ephemeral art. The classes were cross curricular and were held predominantly outside.

The NJSOC experience provided the students with a newfound appreciation for nature and the need to care for our Earth. As one student noted, "This trip helped me grow by learning about nature and science while doing fun activities outdoors."



SFLS CELEBRATES LITERACY WITH APRIL AUTHOR VISITS



Senator Frank R. Lautenberg School (SFLS) closed out the month of April with three impactful author visits that inspired students and strengthened the culture of literacy in the K-3, autism and SLD classes. Organized by Reading Specialist Mr. Raditch, each visit provided a unique and engaging experience, allowing students to connect directly with authors and see themselves as readers and writers.

Poet Michelle Koubek visited and shared her book "The Troll Who Holds Up the Sky", guiding students through an interactive poetry experience where they helped create their own imaginative pieces. Six-time Amazon best-selling author Zollyann Howell energized students with a read-aloud of "My Mama's Glasses", along with writing activities that sparked creativity and student engagement. SEL author Dr. Ibn Sharif Shakoor, who shared his book, "The Day I Found My Pause", helping students reflect on mindfulness, self-awareness, and the importance of managing emotions. These visits not only brought stories to life, but also empowered students to think critically, express themselves, and develop a deeper love for reading and writing.

JATS STUDENTS TAKE THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS COLLEGE SUCCESS

Joseph A. Taub School students participating in the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Program visited William Paterson University on April 22 to learn more about the campus and the institution. They were greeted by Margaret Renn, Program Director of Professional Development & School-Community Partnerships, who provided general information about the university and an overview of the plan for the day.

The students then were treated to a campus tour led by tour guide Diamond Okafor, visiting points of interest, including the library, a dining hall, a dorm, the science hall, and the student center where they had lunch. After lunch, the students heard from Stephen Quinn, Associate Vice President for University Admissions, who answered the many excellent questions that AVID students had about attending college in general and William Paterson in particular.

The students were then given a presentation by a panel made up of four William Paterson students, all of whom had attended Paterson Public Schools. The college students spoke about what made them succeed in college, and what middle school students need to be working on currently to ensure future success. The day culminated in a group picture in front of the iconic “WP” sculpture. For many students, this experience transformed college from a distant idea into an achievable goal.

“Our AVID students made the choice to wake up early each day and invest in their future. This opportunity is not just a trip—it is a reward for their hard work, discipline, and commitment to excellence,” said Dr. Jorge Ventura. AVID coordinator Ms. Gaines added: “AVID is about preparing students for college readiness and success. Opportunities like this bring that mission to life by giving students a real-world vision of what they are working toward every day.”



SCHOOL 1 AND SCHOOL 26 REMINDS US THAT “READING IS FUNDAMENTAL”

School 1 and School 26 proudly hosted a reading event last week with the national nonprofit Reading is Fundamental (RIF), the nation’s leading children’s literacy nonprofit. RIF focuses on disrupting the U.S. literacy crisis by bringing the joy of reading to children to create skilled readers. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell and Assistant Superintendent Ms. Nahed Badawy joined the School 1 and School 26 communities at this special event that emphasized the importance of literacy.



A GREENER WELCOME: SCHOOL 13 STUDENTS REVITALIZE FRONT PLANTERS

The Green Team at School 13 is actively enhancing the school's front planters by planting vibrant greenery.

Volunteers have dedicated their time to carefully selecting plants that will thrive in our local climate, ensuring a lively display throughout the seasons. In addition to planting, the team is implementing sustainable practices, such as using mulch to retain moisture and reduce weeds.

This initiative not only beautifies our school environment, but it also encourages students to appreciate nature. Together, we are transforming the planters into a welcoming and inspiring space for everyone.



PPS IN THE NEWS

Breaking the silence around money:
Here's what to know

CNBC | April 28, 2026

Note: features Financial Foundations event at John F. Kennedy High School

Kennedy High School to Launch Senior Project Pilot Program for Graduating Students

TAPinto Paterson | April 23, 2026

PARENT REMINDERS

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR UPCOMING NJSLA TESTING

New Jersey State Learning Assessment (NJSLA) is set to begin on May 11 for Paterson Public Schools students in grades 3-8, 9th grade, and 11th grade. Please contact your child's school for more information.

NJSLA Testing Dates

High School

Grade 9: May 11-15, English Language Arts & Mathematics
Grade 11: May 11-15, Science

Elementary & Middle School

Grades 3-8: May 11-20, English Language Arts & Mathematics
Grades 5 & 8: May 11-20, Science



Contact your child's school for more information!

visit paterson.k12.nj.us

MONTHLY CALENDAR REMINDERS

May 8 1:00 PM Student Dismissal/Staff PD
May 22. 1:00 PM Students & PEA Staff Dismissal
May 25. Memorial Day - District Closed

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

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETINGS

A **Special Public Meeting** will be held on Monday, May 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.

A **Board of Education Workshop Meeting** will be held on Wednesday, May 6th, 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, May 13th. 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.

Paterson Board of Education: President Joel D. Ramirez, Vice President Della McCall, Commissioner Valerie Freeman, Commissioner Alex Mendez, Jr., Commissioner Hector L. Nieves, Jr., Commissioner Mohammed H. Rashid, Commissioner Kenneth Rosado, Commissioner Kenneth L. Simmons, Commissioner Corey L. Teague

The Pulse 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 the Communications Hub at www.paterson.k12.nj.us

Questions? Email us at ppscommunications@paterson.k12.nj.us

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