



THE PULSE

The Heartbeat of the District.

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 

MAY 7, 2026 | VOL. 34

SENSE-SATIONAL EXPLORATION DAY AT DALE AVENUE SCHOOL!



Students and staff of Dale Avenue School held an all-day Sensory Exploration Day on April 29 to close out Autism Awareness Month. The students engaged in a variety of activity stations that were led by Dale Avenue School staff members and administration. Students took part in ribbon dancing, face painting, bubble exploration, chia seed and slime “excavation”, and a popcorn parachute. Students also had the opportunity to make edible bracelets to wear (or eat) throughout the day. The students and staff who participated had a very fun and enriching experience.

Dale Avenue School and schools across the district recognized Autism Awareness and Acceptance Month in a variety of creative and engaging ways throughout the month of April. From sensory events to flag raisings, these events helped Paterson Public Schools increase understanding, foster acceptance, and advocate for the rights of autistic people and their families.

Greetings Paterson Public Schools Community,

As we prepare for the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA), we are proud of the progress our students have made through the year. These assessments provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate what they've learned and the skills they've developed in their classrooms. To our students: approach these tests with confidence. You have worked hard, and you are ready! The unwavering dedication and tireless effort on the part of our educators have helped prepare you for success.



To our families, your support at home is vital during this time. We can help our scholars perform their best by ensuring they rest well with a full night's sleep, start the day with a healthy breakfast, and arrive on time feeling positive and ready to succeed.

Together, we will finish this school year strong!

Sincerely,

Laurie W. Newell, PhD
Superintendent of Schools



This week, we recognize the incredible educators who make a difference in the lives of our students each and every day. Thank you to our amazing teachers — your passion and impact do not go unnoticed. Please join the district in celebrating Teacher Appreciation Week.

SCHOOL 16 YES AMBASSADORS HOST FIRST STUDENT-LED PARENT WORKSHOP

At School 16, YES (Youth Empowered Stewardship) Ambassadors facilitated the school's first student-led parent workshop focused on addressing chronic absenteeism. YES students were specifically challenged to help decrease chronic absenteeism among 7th grade students. As a result of their attendance-based project, including the student-led parent workshop, 7th grade chronic absenteeism decreased by 12%.

Students presented research-based information and led interactive discussions that engaged parents in identifying barriers and developing practical strategies to improve daily attendance. The session highlighted the impact of attendance on academic achievement and long-term outcomes, while fostering meaningful collaboration between students, families, and staff. District leadership was also present and contributed valuable insight, further elevating student voice and expanding student-led engagement within the school community. Overall, the workshop was informative, engaging, and demonstrated the effectiveness of student leadership in driving meaningful change.



ROSA L. PARKS CELEBRATES SEAL OF BILITERACY RECIPIENTS

Rosa L. Parks School of Fine & Performing Arts recently took time to celebrate the hard-working and talented students who earned the New Jersey State Seal of Biliteracy. To attain the Seal of Biliteracy, students must demonstrate proficiency in English and at least one other language by graduation. Congratulations to the following students: Nicole Berroa Ponciano, Katherine Concepcion Paulino, Carolina Cuevas, Willie Ordonez, Helen Orjuela Orozco, Dilennys Rodriguez, Genesis Rosario, Naviel Selman



JFK SENIORS LEAD YEAR TWO OF FINANCIAL LITERACY INITIATIVE

The partnership between John F. Kennedy High School and Junior Achievement High School Heroes program continues to shine in its second year. In celebration of April signifying National Financial Literacy Month, 13 seniors from JFK High School's Accounting and Education & Training Pathways recently visited 2nd and 4th grade classrooms at School 27, School 19, and Norman S. Weir School to teach a financial literacy lesson.

The High School Heroes program provides students with the experiences and skills needed to succeed in school and beyond. The initiative empowers JFK seniors to mentor younger learners while developing vital leadership and communication skills. JFK is thrilled to continue this tradition of making a meaningful impact on the Paterson community's financial literacy.



TOGETHER WE GROW: SCHOOL 2 PLANTS SEEDS OF CHANGE

This spring, School 2's Unity Crew students took on a project that connected three things close to our hearts – the environment, inclusion, and personal growth. In March, they planted seeds indoors and spent the following weeks watering them, checking on them, and learning that keeping something alive takes real patience.

For Earth Day on April 22, they brought their seedlings out to the school garden and put them in the ground – a moment that felt like a payoff after all those weeks of tending to them inside. It also fit naturally into School 2's Autism Acceptance Month theme, "Together We Grow the Seeds of Change." Watching their plants make that journey from a tiny seed to something rooted in the earth got students thinking about their own impact – how kindness, inclusion, and looking out for one another are what make School 2 feel like a community. The plants are still growing. So are they.



PPS EDUCATOR NAMED MCGRAW HILL PATHFINDER AWARD WINNER

Ms. Sonja Capers of Paterson's School 16 has been named a recipient of the 2026 McGraw Hill Pathfinder Award. Presented by McGraw Hill, a leading global provider of education solutions for preK-12, higher education and professional learning, this prestigious national recognition honors educators who challenge traditional teaching methods to deliver measurable improvements in student success.

Selected as one of only three recipients nationwide, Ms. Capers was recognized for her innovative, student-centered approach to instruction. By transforming her English Language Arts (ELA) classroom into a production-style learning environment, she has transformed her students from passive consumers of text to creators of digital books and multimedia content.

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



EASTSIDE STUDENT NAMED WINNER OF NJ HALL OF FAME ESSAY CONTEST



Ashley Gaibor, a standout member of the Esther Forero Chapter of the Spanish National Honor Society (SHH) at Eastside High School, achieved a significant milestone by being named the high school state winner of the New Jersey Hall of Fame (NJHOF) Essay Contest.

The purpose of her essay was to nominate and honor a local leader from Paterson, documenting their selfless contributions and the profound influence they had on her personal development. Under the mentorship of her advisor, Ms. Marbel Tamayo, Ashley crafted a narrative that stood out among hundreds of participants for its depth and academic excellence. The key outcome of this achievement is a university scholarship to support her higher education.

This success not only validates Ashley's talent for advocacy and writing but also serves as a source of immense pride for the Paterson community, reaffirming her role as an ambassador of Hispanic pride and academic perseverance.

SCHOOL 18 STUDENTS BECOME PUBLISHED AUTHORS

School 18 had 16 sixth grade students submit their most gruesome and chilling sagas for the 2026 Young Writers Creativity Award. All 16 pieces were selected for publication in the 2026 Spook Squad book and the students celebrated its release last week. Through hours of dedication crafting eerie and suspenseful tales, each student committed to completing a 100-word saga. Although they did not take home the trophy, they earned a lifetime recognition as young published authors — something truly terror-ific to celebrate.



READING IS FUNDAMENTAL AT SENATOR FRANK R. LAUTENBERG SCHOOL

The Reading Is Fundamental book distribution event at Senator Frank R. Lautenberg School marked a joyful celebration of literacy, choice, and student engagement. First grade students eagerly explored selected titles chosen by their teachers that matched their interests, empowering them to take ownership of their reading journeys while building their own home libraries.

To make the experience even more meaningful, we celebrated each book through engaging read-alouds, allowing students to connect with the stories, listen to fluent reading, and share in the joy of literature together. Students were excited to receive copies of these books that their teachers read and discussed with them. Dedicated first grade teachers Mrs. Turner, Ms. Riccobono, and Ms. Malone, along with reading specialist Mr. Raditch, helped make this event a memorable experience for Senator Frank R. Lautenberg School students.



SENATOR FRANK R. LAUTENBERG SCHOOL HOSTS READ ACROSS NJ ASSEMBLY

Students in 1st through 4th grades at Senator Frank R. Lautenberg School recently took part in a vibrant and engaging Read Across NJ Assembly, generously sponsored by Wellpoint. The event brought literacy to life, reminding students that reading is not just a school activity, but a powerful tool that connects to every part of their daily lives.

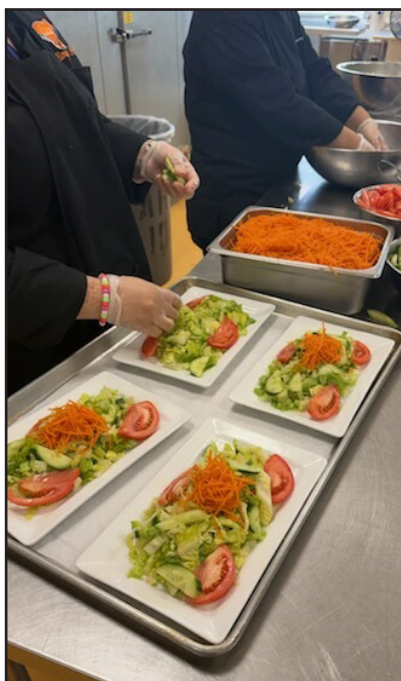
This special event was organized by Reading Specialist Mr. Raditch, with the support of the leadership team, whose collaboration helped make the day a tremendous success for all involved: Interim Principal Dr. Brackett, Vice Principal Ms. Gonzalez, and Interim Vice Principal Mr. Sisti.

A highlight of the assembly was special guest reader Latif “Jet” Rivers of the Harlem Globetrotters, who captivated students with a reading of and conversation about his book “My Home and Where I’m From”. His message encouraged students to take pride in their stories and recognize the power of their voices through reading and writing.

The excitement continued as students had the opportunity to meet and interact with mascots from the New Jersey Jackals and the Sussex County Miners, as well as players from the New York Cosmos. Adding to the fun, Batman made a special appearance with his Batmobile, creating an unforgettable moment with plenty of smiles. Students were thrilled to take photos, engage with the guests, and celebrate reading in such a dynamic and joyful environment. To further support literacy at home, each student received several books to add to their personal libraries, along with additional giveaways that made the day even more memorable.



EASTSIDE CULINARY ARTS SHOWCASES TALENT AND TECHNIQUE



Eastside High School’s Culinary Arts program recently hosted Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell and district staff for a special luncheon at The Ghost Cafe. Students showcased their talents in creating a three course event for guests to enjoy in a quiet, restaurant style setting. The hearty menu consisted of garden salad appetizer, a salmon or chicken main course, and an array of desserts that left everyone wanting more.

The Ghost Cafe is anchored by our Culinary III seniors, who take on a primary role in the running of a brigade style kitchen that services staff lunch, catering events, fundraisers, and a full service bakery. The seniors are also earning their OSHA 10 and ServSafe certifications in addition to the college credits available from Passaic County Community College (PCCC) at each level of the Culinary Arts program.

In the coming weeks, students will be preparing for a cook-off competition at PCCC against Orange High School’s Culinary Arts program.

EASTSIDE HONOR STUDENTS LEAD ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS IN PATERSON

The success story of Eastside High School's Earth Day celebration, led by advisor Mrs. Marbel Tamayo, represents a powerful fusion of academic achievement and environmental advocacy. The purpose of the initiative was to leverage the students' mastery of the Spanish language to promote sustainability through the theme "How we can keep our planet clean and free of pollution." Key outcomes included the production of persuasive essays and original artwork, as well as significant personal growth for participants; notably, 12th-grader and poster contest winner Emely Chumbiriza successfully overcame her fear of public speaking, gaining newfound confidence and a deeper appreciation for teamwork.

Supported by stakeholders such as the National Spanish Exam (NSE) winners, the Sociedad Honoraria Hispánica (SHH), and standout students like Ashley Gaibor, the program successfully demonstrated that cultural pride and global citizenship are essential tools for driving social change and protecting the natural world.



SOUND, STYLE, AND STORY: ANIME COMES TO LIFE AT EASTSIDE



A joint interdisciplinary project at Eastside High School, led by music teacher Ms. Sedycias and art teacher Ms. Gupta, demonstrated how art and music intertwine to tell engaging stories from various cultures.

During the World Music unit that focused on Japan, students examined the connection between sound and storytelling, focusing on anime and video game music. Students analyzed how composers craft themes to enhance scenes, develop characters, and evoke emotions, particularly emphasizing how opening themes set the tone for series or games. In collaboration with the art department, students visualized these ideas by creating detailed character sketches that emphasized proportion, line quality, and personal style.

This process enhanced both their technical drawing abilities and their understanding of character design. Overall, the project showcases the power of combining art and music to share cultures and stories.

RENAISSANCE OF LEARNING: NRC REIMAGINES TEST PREP

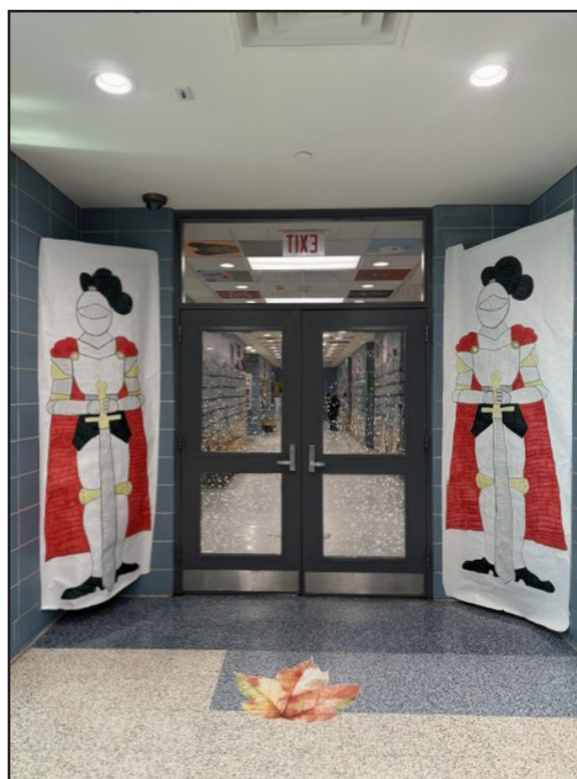
This year, New Roberto Clemente School brought together the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLs) and the Renaissance period in a way that was both purposeful and engaging, transforming test preparation into an experience that is active, interdisciplinary, and memorable for students.

The connection begins with the NJSLs, which sets clear academic expectations for students, particularly in mathematics and English Language Arts. Rather than approaching these standards through traditional drills alone, NRC has embedded them into a creative framework inspired by the Renaissance, a Grade 7 social studies theme. This period, known for innovation, exploration, and the blending of disciplines, provides a fitting model for how students can learn today.

As students entered the hallways, the transformation was immediately visible. The space reflected a Renaissance atmosphere, with Gothic-inspired stone walls, class shields, knights, horsemen, and stained-glass windows. It immersed students in the theme before they even stepped into the classroom or the gym. Competition was alive as well, as students were organized into “houses” that mirrored the spirit of Renaissance games, fostering school pride, teamwork, and a healthy sense of rivalry. During physical education classes, students participated in a series of Renaissance Fair-style games that were intentionally designed to reinforce academic skills while promoting teamwork, strategy, and critical thinking. Each activity was more than just movement, it was structured with purpose, aligning physical engagement with cognitive development.

In River Boat Races, students used mats to slide across the gym floor, requiring coordination and collaboration while also incorporating problem-solving and timing strategies. Wagon Races, using scooters, challenged students to think about speed, distance, and efficiency naturally connecting to mathematical reasoning. Team-based games elevated the complexity further. In Team Joust Noodle Tag, students worked to eliminate opposing teams, reinforcing communication skills and quick decision-making. Similarly, Capture the Flag with Noodles blended classic gameplay with tactical thinking, requiring students to analyze space, anticipate opponents’ moves, and adapt their skills directly tied to both math reasoning and ELA comprehension strategies. Creative construction came into play with Build the Castle, a cup-stacking relay that demanded precision, sequencing, and teamwork. Even smaller-scale activities like Finger Fencing sharpened focus, reaction time, and strategic thinking in a controlled, competitive setting.

What ties all of this together is intentional design. NRC is not simply adding games to the schedule; it is rethinking how preparation for the NJSLs can look. By integrating Renaissance themes, students experience learning as dynamic and interconnected, much like the historical period they are studying. They are not only reviewing content; they are applying skills in real time, in ways that require collaboration, communication, and adaptability. The result is a learning environment where rigor meets engagement. Students are physically active, pushed intellectually, and immersed in a theme that makes learning feel alive. In the spirit of the Renaissance itself, NRC is embracing innovation, proving that when creativity and standards align, preparation becomes not just effective, but inspiring.



MAY SELF-CARE CALENDAR

Hello May 2026!

“You deserve the same care you so freely give to others.”

As we step into May, we find ourselves in a season of growth, energy, and reflection. With the school year moving quickly and responsibilities continuing to build, this month invites us to pause and check in with ourselves – not just physically, but mentally and emotionally as well.















May is Mental Health Awareness Month. It is a time to recognize that our well-being matters every day! It’s a reminder that taking care of our mental health is not something extra – it’s essential. Whether it’s setting boundaries, taking a mindful pause, asking for support, or simply giving yourself grace, these small acts of care make a meaningful difference.

Just as nature is in full bloom, we are reminded that strong roots are what sustain growth. When we listen to our needs and tend to our inner well-being, we create the foundation to continue showing up with strength, compassion, and purpose.

Mantra for May:

I grow stronger when I listen to what I need. I am allowed to stop and take care of my mental health.



  MAY 2026  						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 Write down something you love about yourself	2  Watch the sunset
3  Dance to your favorite song	4 Watch a funny video to make you laugh	5 Add a new image to your vision board	6 Set your phone background to a photo that makes you happy	7 Doodle for a few minutes to relax	8  Eat your greens	9 Reconnect with an old friend
10 Make yourself some hot tea	11 Reflect on a motivational quote	12  Listen to an inspirational song	13 Journal for five minutes	14 Organize your purse or wallet	15 Write down something you are grateful for	16  Give your loved ones hugs
17 Breathe deeply for five minutes	18 Think of a happy memory	19 Do something you loved as a kid	20  Do a five minute skincare routine	21 Play a feel-good song	22 Tidy up your living room	23 Light a scented candle in the evening
24  Stargaze	25  Take a eucalyptus or lavender shower	26 Take a selfie of yourself smiling	27 Apply some hand cream	28 Write down your worries on a piece of paper and toss it	29  Stretch for five minutes	30 Buy yourself a gift
31 Write down three good things that happened this month					This information is provided to you by:  PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS Department of Student Support Services Social and Emotional Learning 90 Calverton Avenue, Paterson, NJ 07653 Office: (973) 225-0394 sls@paterson.k12.nj.us	

  MAYO 2026  						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 Escribe algo que ames de ti mismo.	2  Mira el atardecer.
3  Baila tu canción favorita.	4 Mira un video divertido para hacerte reír.	5 Añade una nueva imagen a tu tablero de visión.	6 Pon una foto que te haga feliz como fondo de pantalla de tu celular.	7 Garbatea durante unos minutos para relajarte.	8  Come tus verduras.	9 Volver a conectar con una vieja amistad
10 Prepárate un té caliente.	11 Reflexiona sobre una cita motivadora.	12  Escucha una canción inspiradora.	13 Escribe en tu diario durante cinco minutos.	14 Organiza tu bolso o cartera.	15 Escribe algo por lo que estés agradecido.	16  Dale abrazos a tus seres queridos.
17 Respira profundamente por cinco minutos.	18 Piensa en un recuerdo feliz.	19 Haz algo que amabas de muchachito	20  Haz una rutina de cuidado de la piel de cinco minutos.	21 Pon una canción alegre.	22 Poner en orden tu sala de habitación.	23 Enciende una vela aromática por la tarde.
24  Contemplar las estrellas	25  Toma una ducha de eucalipto o lavanda.	26 Tómate una selfie sonriendo.	27 Aplicate un poco de crema de manos.	28 Escribe tus preocupaciones en un pedazo de papel y tíralo.	29  Estírate durante cinco minutos	30 Cómprate un regalo.
31 Anota tres cosas buenas que sucedieron este mes.					This information is provided to you by:  PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS Department of Student Support Services Social and Emotional Learning 90 Calverton Avenue, Paterson, NJ 07653 Office: (973) 225-0394 sls@paterson.k12.nj.us	

SCHOOL 27 HOSTS PRE-K AND KINDERGARTEN STEAM NIGHT

School 27 held a STEAM Night for students in grades pre-K and kindergarten. The event was planned and organized by preschool teacher, Nashonda Pearson. There were five different stations, and parents and students worked collaboratively to complete the tasks. The entire evening was filled with fun, positive energy, food, and collaboration.

“The goal of the event was to provide the opportunity for our youngest students to participate in hands-on science, technology, engineering, art, and math activities,” said Principal Kelli A. White.



PPS IN THE NEWS

[Paterson Students Showcase STEAM Projects at Annual Symposium at William Paterson University](#)

TAPinto Paterson | May 6, 2026

[Introducing the 2026 McGraw Hill Pathfinder Award Winners](#)

McGraw Hill | May 6, 2026

[Introducing the 2026 McGraw Hill Pathfinder Award Winners](#)

Businesswire | May 6, 2026

[Introducing the 2026 McGraw Hill Pathfinder Award Winners](#)

Yahoo.com | May 6, 2026

[Paterson Schools to Host Community Forum on Facilities Plan, Middle School Changes](#)

TAPinto Paterson | May 3, 2026

PRESS RELEASES

[Paterson Public Schools Educator Named 2026 McGraw Hill Pathfinder Award Winner](#)

May 7, 2026

[Paterson Public Schools Students Take Center Stage at Annual STEAM Symposium](#)

May 4, 2026

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

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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