



# THE PULSE

*The Heartbeat of the District.*

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 

MAY 14, 2026 | VOL. 35

## PPS STUDENTS AWARDED LIFE-CHANGING FIDELITY SCHOLARSHIPS

### Fidelity Scholars Recipients



**Kyla Abdat**  
International High School



**Kailin Camilo**  
Eastside High School



**Ashley Clara**  
Paterson P-Tech High School



**Adrian Cruz Ayala**  
Paterson P-Tech High School



**Eliezer Echevarria**  
Paterson STEAM High School



**Jamill Esparza**  
Eastside High School



**Isaiah Harrison**  
Paterson P-Tech High School



**Casey Johnson**  
Paterson STEAM High School



**Marquan Lewis**  
Paterson P-Tech High School



**Zahir Marte Vasquez**  
Paterson STEAM High School



**Aman Rifat**  
John F. Kennedy High School



**Jaden Rosario**  
Paterson STEAM High School

PATERSON PUBLIC SCHOOLS   
*Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow*

Paterson Public Schools proudly celebrates the outstanding achievement of 12 students who have been selected to the prestigious Fidelity Scholars Program for the 2026–2027 academic year. Chosen from more than 4,000 applicants across 13 regions and states, these scholars demonstrated exceptional academic performance, perseverance, and leadership.

The Fidelity Scholars Program is a comprehensive college success initiative that provides renewable scholarship funding to attend a four-year college or university, along with mentoring and college persistence counseling. Beyond financial support, students will receive wraparound resources designed to promote academic success, personal growth, and career readiness throughout their four-year college journey. The district also extends its sincere appreciation to the dedicated school counselors who guided and supported students throughout the rigorous application process. Their commitment to college access, mentorship, and student advocacy continues to create meaningful opportunities that empower our scholars to thrive.

Greetings Paterson Public Schools Community,

This time of year is marked by many unforgettable milestones, including our high school proms. For our students, prom is more than just a dance; it is a celebration of the friendships, personal growth, and the experiences shared throughout their years in Paterson Public Schools. It is a night for them to step away from the classroom, celebrate their journey, and create memories that will last a lifetime. After a year of hard work and dedication, our students have truly earned this special moment.



As everyone prepares to celebrate, I want to remind our students that your safety remains our top priority. Please continue to make smart, responsible choices, look out for one another, and stay focused on your goals. We want these celebrations to remain joyful, memorable, and safe for everyone involved. Your future is bright and we want to see every one of you reach your destination safely.

We are also entering an exciting season of academic recognition. Very soon, we will announce the Valedictorians and Salutatorians for the Class of 2026. These students represent the pinnacle of academic excellence and we are looking forward to honoring this special group for their extraordinary perseverance and leadership.

To our seniors: enjoy these moments, stay safe, and finish strong. We are so proud of all you have accomplished and we look forward to celebrating you in the weeks ahead.

Sincerely,

Laurie W. Newell, PhD  
Superintendent of Schools



**MIDDLE SCHOOL MODEL**

**COMMUNITY FORUM**

**Tuesday, May 19 | 5:30 PM | School 18**

Paterson Public Schools, in partnership with the Paterson Education Fund (PEF), invites families, staff, and community members to participate in an upcoming Community Forum/Information Session focused on the district's Long-Range Facilities Plan, including the continued implementation of the Middle School Cohorts.

The district encourages all interested community members to attend and in-person participants will have the opportunity to ask questions. To join virtually, please visit the [Parents page](#) on the district's website for more information.

## PATERSON STEAM AND PACIRA BIOSCIENCES BUILD FUTURE LEADERS

Paterson STEAM High School recently partnered with Pacira BioSciences on a year-long collaboration that highlighted how diversity and representation strengthen the development of safe and effective healthcare treatments, while also helping STEAM students see themselves in healthcare spaces and recognize their own potential.

A pharmaceutical company on the forefront of transforming pain management, Pacira and STEAM's partnership started by developing a one-time Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) focused idea. It later evolved into a full Clinical Trials Career Day for students in STEAM's Medical Arts pathway. Through Pacira's DEI Council and cross-functional teams, students engaged directly with professionals across clinical operations, data management, regulatory affairs, and more.

Facilitated by Pacira staff, including Ms. Julissa Disla, alongside STEAM science teachers Mrs. Meri Todhe, Mr. Louis Sayad, and Principal Dr. Nellista Bess, the day was thoughtfully designed and included several key highlights. Following a welcome session and icebreaker led by Pacira leadership, a session called "From Product Development to Clinical Trials" connected science learning to real-world patient care. Students were then led on a deep dive into the role of Clinical Trial Managers, including study design, coordination, and timelines.

Before lunch, students learned how technology, digital tools, and data drive clinical trials, and attended a data management session emphasizing accuracy and patient safety.

STEAM students then experienced a powerful session on diversity in clinical trials, where they learned about how representation impacts drug safety and effectiveness, including differences in drug metabolism, side effects, and treatment outcomes. This session was followed by a career pathways panel that featured professionals from clinical operations, compliance, legal, and biostatistics.

Student response to the event was overwhelmingly positive. They were highly engaged and appreciated the opportunity to interact with industry professionals and see tangible pathways connected to their studies. This event was especially significant as it reflects a commitment to diversity that began with a Latina leader in the medical field seeking to give back, and continues to do so, through a company that remains dedicated to these efforts.



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## EHS CADETS HONORED BY THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

On Thursday, May 7th, two senior cadets from the Eastside High School Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) program were honored by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Yhanderli Rodriguez Arias and Cadet Major Sherley Mambro De La Cruz were honored for their achievements in the JROTC for academics, leadership, and community outreach. Both cadets will be graduating in June and have chosen to continue their service with enlistment into the United States Army. This summer, they will be departing for Basic Training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri with a commitment to the Engineer Branch as 12 Bravos (MOS).

Founded in 1890 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., DAR is dedicated to promoting patriotism, preserving American history, and securing America's future through better education for children. DAR members volunteer millions of service hours annually in their local communities, including supporting active duty military personnel, assisting veteran patients, and awarding thousands of dollars in scholarships and financial aid each year to students and supporting schools.



## JFK SENIOR EARNS 3RD PLACE IN CONGRESSIONAL ART COMPETITION

Rana Khedr, a senior at John F. Kennedy High School, was honored with the third place award at the Annual 9th Congressional District Art Competition, sponsored by Congresswoman Nellie Pou. The announcement of this achievement took place during the reception for the 9th District Congressional High School Art Competition held at the Clifton Arts Center on Friday, May 9th.

Three Paterson high schools - JFK, Rosa L. Parks School of Fine & Performing Arts, and Paterson STEAM High School - participated in the Congressional competition that showed off their artistic talents. Art instructor Ms. Monica Aramayo from Rosa Parks, art instructor Ms. Jaymie Stein and Principal Dr. Nellista Bess from STEAM High School attended the reception in support of the district students who participated in this Congressional Art Competition. JFK art teacher Ms. Lym was also present at the reception and accepted a certificate on behalf of JFK for its participation in the competition.



## PATERSON STEAM STUDENTS EARN NJ SEAL OF BILITERACY

Paterson STEAM High School is proud to congratulate its scholars who have earned their New Jersey Seal of Biliteracy in Spanish and Arabic. Their hard work, dedication, and love for language learning have truly paid off. They have set themselves apart as global citizens, ready to communicate, connect, and succeed in our multicultural world.

The New Jersey Seal of Biliteracy is a prestigious recognition awarded to high school students who have demonstrated proficiency in two or more languages by the time they graduate. Established by the New Jersey Department of Education, this distinction highlights the importance of multilingualism in today's global society and honors students for their dedication to developing strong communication skills across cultures.



### SCHOOL 27 ACCEPTED INTO DISNEY MUSICALS STAGE CONNECT PROGRAM

School 27 has been selected to participate in the prestigious Disney Musicals in Schools: Stage Connect program, offering students and staff free resources, training, and performance rights to a Disney KIDS musical.

The program, which runs from November 2026 to June 2027, will involve a Disney KIDS musical production for student in grades 3-5 and establishes a lasting theatre education initiative. The program also presents a special opportunity to introduce the collaborative art of musical theatre, strengthen arts programming in schools, and develop partnerships among students, faculty, staff, and the greater community.



### BREAKING THE CYCLE VISITS SCHOOL 10 FOR POWERFUL ASSEMBLY

Breaking the Cycle visited School 10 to provide students with meaningful conversations and resources focused on making positive choices, building healthy relationships, and overcoming challenges. Breaking the Cycle presents award-winning assemblies that feature personal stories of overcoming conflict through forgiveness.

Their visit encouraged students to reflect on their future, strengthen their decision-making skills, and understand the importance of breaking negative cycles within their communities. Students were engaged through interactive discussions that promoted growth, resilience, and empowerment. Thank you to Student Support Services for scheduling this for our students.



## SCHOOL 7'S PETS RALLY STUDENTS FOR NJSLA SUCCESS!

The School 7 Pets are on a mission to help every student shine during state testing season! With positive attitudes, encouraging words, and lots of school spirit, they are reminding students to believe in themselves, stay focused, and always do their best. From motivational messages to classroom cheers, the School 7 Pets are spreading confidence throughout the school and helping students remember that hard work pays off. Enjoy [this video](#) from the School 7 Pets!



## DHA SCHOOL LEADERS CHEER ON STUDENTS FOR NJSLA TESTING

School leadership at Dr. Hani Awadallah School recently created a fun video for their school community that encouraged their students for upcoming NJSLA testing. Principal Mrs. Bridget Naveira, Vice Principal Mrs. Mazuza Matari, and Vice Principal Mrs. Alexis Bermudez came together to promote good habits and tips that will help their students prepare for testing. Enjoy [this video](#) from the school leadership at Dr. Hani Awadallah School.



### PPS IN THE NEWS

[Paterson Students Celebrate Reading During Interactive Read Across NJ Assembly](#)  
May 14, 2026

### PRESS RELEASES

[School 16 Students Lead Parent Workshop to Support Student Attendance](#)  
May 13, 2026

[Senator Frank R. Lautenberg School Celebrates Literacy During Read Across NJ Assembly](#)  
May 12, 2026

## GOOD LUCK TO STEAM, STARS/T.I.E.S. UNIFIED FLAG FOOTBALL!

The Paterson STEAM High School and STARS Academy/T.I.E.S. Program Unified Flag Football team has advanced to the Unified Special Olympics Flag Football Championships at the Atlantic Health Jets Training Center on Friday, May 15 at 11:00 a.m. The Unified team, made up of STEAM and STARS students, truly represents inclusion, perseverance, and school pride. Congratulations to the student-athletes and staff on a successful season and good luck on Friday!



## MONTHLY CALENDAR REMINDERS

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 **Board of Education Workshop Meeting** will take place virtually on Wednesday, June 10th. Those wishing to provide public comments are required to register for the meeting. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6 PM.

The **Board of Education Regular Meeting** will be held on Wednesday, June 17th at John F. Kennedy High School. 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.

**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).

**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.

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This form can be found on the Communications Hub 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)

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