

**For Immediate Release**

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**Eastside High School JROTC Impresses in Competition and in the Community**

*Paterson Public Schools students won five team trophies before helping distribute turkeys to families in need*

**Paterson, NJ** (December 2, 2025) – Eastside High School’s Mighty Ghost Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (JROTC) Battalion excelled in competition and in service on November 22nd. The Paterson Public Schools students had a stellar performance during their first Championship Drill competition of the year at Union High School, before spending the afternoon distributing turkeys to families in the community later that day.

“The Mighty Ghost JROTC Battalion continues to represent the best of Eastside High School and Paterson Public Schools,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell. “Major Barraza and his team are helping these cadets build leadership, discipline, and confidence – skills that show up on the drill floor and in the classroom. We are incredibly proud of their accomplishments.”

The cadets competed against 21 high-level JROTC programs from the tri-state area, winning five trophies and one individual achievement medal.

- 1st Place Unarmed Color Guard
- 1st Place Unarmed Drill Platoon
- 2nd Place LET1 Squad Drill
- 3rd Place Armed Academic Inspection
- 3rd Place Open Drill Squad
- 5th Place Knockout (Cadet Genesis Cabrera)

“The Mighty Ghost Battalion Cadets and our instructors did an outstanding job this past weekend,” said Eastside JROTC Department Chair Major Luis Eduardo Barraza. “Their preparation, teamwork, and resilience were on full display. I am incredibly proud of what they achieved and am grateful for their commitment.”

Later that day, the cadets assisted at a community service event where they were instrumental in helping Paterson Mayor Andre Sayegh and Mantilla Services distribute food and turkeys. The students helped provide more than 1,000 turkeys and food boxes to roughly 300 low-resource families in need throughout the Paterson community.

For more information visit our website at [www.paterson.k12.nj.us](http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us)

**About Paterson Public Schools**

Paterson Public Schools serves over 22,000 students from pre-K to 12th grade in New Jersey's third-largest city. About 71% of the student population is Hispanic, 16% are Black, 6% are Asian, and 5.0% are Caucasian. Recognizing its proud traditions, diverse community, and strong partnerships, the mission of Paterson Public Schools is to provide an academically rigorous, safe, and nurturing educational environment that meets the social, emotional, and academic needs of all students. The district is committed to preparing students for post-secondary education and careers. Despite the Paterson community being classified as low-income, many of its students achieve high academic success. A growing number of elementary school students are reading at or above grade level, and more high school students are earning college credits through Advanced Placement exams and enrolling in college-level courses before graduation. Paterson Public Schools is distinguished as one of only 17 school districts in New Jersey to offer the competitive International Baccalaureate program and is among just four districts with a P-TECH high school. In collaboration with IBM and Passaic County Community College, the P-TECH program allows students to graduate with an associate degree in applied science and valuable tech sector experience. For more information, visit [www.paterson.k12.nj.us](http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us)

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