



For Immediate Release

Contact: Aida E. Rosario

aerosario@paterson.k12.nj.us

Senator Frank R. Lautenberg School Celebrates Literacy During Read Across NJ Assembly

Athletes, mascots, and special guests inspire students through an engaging celebration of reading

Paterson, NJ (May 12, 2026) – Students in grades 1 through 4 at Senator Frank R. Lautenberg School (SFLS) recently participated in a vibrant and engaging Read Across NJ Assembly that brought literacy to life and reinforced the importance of reading both inside and outside the classroom. Generously sponsored by Wellpoint, the event transformed reading into an interactive experience, reminding students that reading is not just a school activity, but a powerful tool that connects to every part of their daily lives.

“Congratulations to the staff at Senator Frank R. Lautenberg School and our community partners for hosting this dynamic assembly for our students,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie W. Newell. “Experiences like this help students develop a love of reading while showing them that literacy can open doors to lifelong success.”

The assembly featured a live DJ, athletes, and mascots from local professional sports teams. A highlight of the event was special guest reader Latif “Jet” Rivers of the Harlem Globetrotters, who captivated students during a reading and discussion of 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.

Students also 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 soccer team. Adding to the fun, Batman made a special appearance with his Batmobile, creating an unforgettable moment with plenty of smiles. 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.

The event was organized by SFLS Reading Specialist Mr. Jonathan Raditch with support from the school’s leadership team, including Interim Principal Dr. Sherri Brackett, Vice Principal Ms. Sandralis Gonzalez, and Interim Vice Principal Mr. Valentino Sisti. Board of Education President Joel D. Ramírez, Vice President Della McCall, and Assistant Superintendent Ms. Nahed Badawy also supported and participated in the celebration, which inspired hundreds of students to embrace reading and literacy.

This special opportunity was made possible through the school's participation in the "Read Across the Bases" program with the New Jersey Jackals, a professional baseball team based in Paterson.

For more information about Paterson Public Schools, visit: 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

###