Excellence NEWS

ELIZABETH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Edition No. 1

OCTOBER 15, 2026 - NOVEMBER 23, 2026

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER SCHOOL NO. 52

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US Grow



Throughout October, our students and staff came together to show Mrs. Castellanos just how much she means to our school community. Each class created a colorful, one-of-a-kind flower to contribute to a special display titled “Thank You for Helping Our School Grow!” Together, the flowers formed a beautiful garden representing the appreciation, creativity, and love shared throughout our school.

THOMAS JEFFERSON ARTS ACADEMY

GROWING TOGETHER

THE TJAA SUSTAINABILITY AND GARDEN CLUB

Last spring, Dr. Nelson and Mr. Morales launched the TJAA Sustainability and Garden Club to give students hands-on opportunities to learn about gardening, sustainability, responsibility, and nature.

During our inaugural year, students helped grow tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, cucumbers, jalapeños, herbs, marigolds and morning glories. Students also created a potato crate tower and began a student seed bank.

This would not have been possible without the generosity of our school community and local supporters. Special thanks to Joshua Faas, owner of Paperbark Design Studio and a member of the Jeff family, for his support, Monaco family for donating plastic pots, and Groundwork Elizabeth for providing a raised bed. Special Thanks to Ms. Gaud and her family for donating tomato plants. We also thank Ms. Satterfield for donating proceeds from the previous senior fundraisers toward our planned 2027 Arboretum Memorial Project and Ms. Richa for donating hydroponic equipment to help us begin developing our own hydroponics program.

Additionally, we are grateful to our teachers, students and families who donated plants, seeds, soil, supplies, time, and encouragement. Students throughout the school have generously contributed to our growing seed bank including those who are not formal club members. Every contribution has helped make this effort possible and we are so grateful for this opportunity.



EPS TRUNK or TREAT

SCHOOL NO. 4













SCHOOL NO. 6







EPS TRUNK or TREAT

SCHOOL NO. 14









SCHOOL NO. 28









EPS TRUNK or TREAT

SCHOOL NO. 29









SCHOOL NO. 50









THANK YOU VETERANS

VETERANS WALL OF HONOR

FRANCES C. SMITH SCHOOL NO. 50

Operation Thank You: Little Hands, Big Hearts.

Ms. Vicci and Ms. Munoz's classes handmade thank you cards and created artwork for local veterans. Mr. Chacon, wore his uniform to school and visited classroosm to speak with students! Thank you, Mr. Chacon!







SCHOOL NO. 21







J. CHRISTIAN BOLLWAGE FINANCE ACADEMY

SAINT PETER'S UNIVERSITY

The Guidance Department at J. Christian Bollwage Finance Academy recently took their AVID 9th and 10th grade students on a college visit to ***Saint Peter's University*** in Jersey City, New Jersey. The trip provided students with the opportunity to explore the campus, learn about college life, and gain insight into higher education opportunities.

A highlight of the visit was being welcomed by our college student ambassador, Elian Salazar, a proud Bollwage Class of 2025 graduate. Elian shared his experiences transitioning from high school to college and encouraged students to stay focused on their academic and personal goals.



JVJ STEM ACADEMY

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

Building on an initiative that began last school year, when Student Government members visited every sophomore class at JVJ STEM Academy, Student Government Advisor Johanna Garcia continued the effort this year by bringing student leaders and senior athletes to the Annex classrooms. Across five classes, students participated in formal presentations and small-group discussions focused on academic achievement, positive behavior, college awareness, community service, and personal growth. Our seniors shared personal experiences, reflected on challenges and decisions they faced during high school, and encouraged younger students to learn from their mistakes and make positive choices. Students also discussed the importance of building relationships with teachers and staff, participating in school clubs, completing community service hours, and preparing for future college opportunities. Through this outreach, our student leaders demonstrated the importance of leadership, accountability, and service by using their own experiences to encourage and inspire others.





UNION COUNTY
COLLEGE FAIR









The New Jersey Association for College Admission Counseling (NJACAC) partnered with Elizabeth Public Schools to host a College Fair showcasing 60+ colleges and universities! Students engaged with admissions counselors from each institution to gain knowledge and insight for their post high school plans.

ELIZABETH ATHLETICS

KANSAS BOUND



Senior Brianna Concepcion will continue her academic and athletic career at the University of Kansas. On Thursday, November 12, 2026 friends, family, and classmates came together to celebrate Brianna's signing day as she commits to KU to play Division I Soccer!

SCHOOL NO. 18, 30, AND 50

FIRE PREVENTION









THOMAS JEFFERSON ARTS ACADEMY

TJAA

Theatre Ribbon Cutting









SCHOOL NO. 12

25 Year Time Capsule Reveal

2001-2026













HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH PERFORMANCE!





ALEXANDER HAMILTON PREPARATORY ACADEMY

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

a celebration of traditions

Hamilton Annex Grade 9 students celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month by sharing their cultures and traditions with their peers through a special assembly. The event celebrated diversity and promoted cultural appreciation within our school community.





THOMAS A. EDISON CAREER AND TECHNICAL ACADEMY

recycled rides











SCHOOL NO. 16

Fall Harvest







SCHOOL NO. 52

American Education Week

CELEBRATING COMMUNITY HEROES

In celebration of American Education Week, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Early Childhood Center School No. 52 welcomed members of the Elizabeth Police and Fire Departments as special guest readers! Our students enjoyed engaging read-alouds, interactive activities, and meaningful connections with our local heroes.

This special event highlighted the importance of community partnerships and the positive impact they have on early childhood education. A heartfelt thank you to our first responders for sharing their time and helping create memorable learning experiences for our youngest learners!









AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK
FAMILY LITERACY NIGHT

In celebration of American Education Week, Victor Mravlag School No. 21 brought the magic of reading to life during its annual Family Literacy Night, A Magical Night of Reading! The school was transformed into an enchanting world where students and their families explored the wonders of literacy through imagination, creativity, and hands-on fun. From brewing bubbling potions and crafting magical wands to writing letters, playing games, and enjoying stories, families experienced an unforgettable evening of learning and adventure. The event was a wonderful celebration of reading, family involvement, and the joy of learning together. At School 21, we believe the greatest magic of all is found within the pages of a good book!



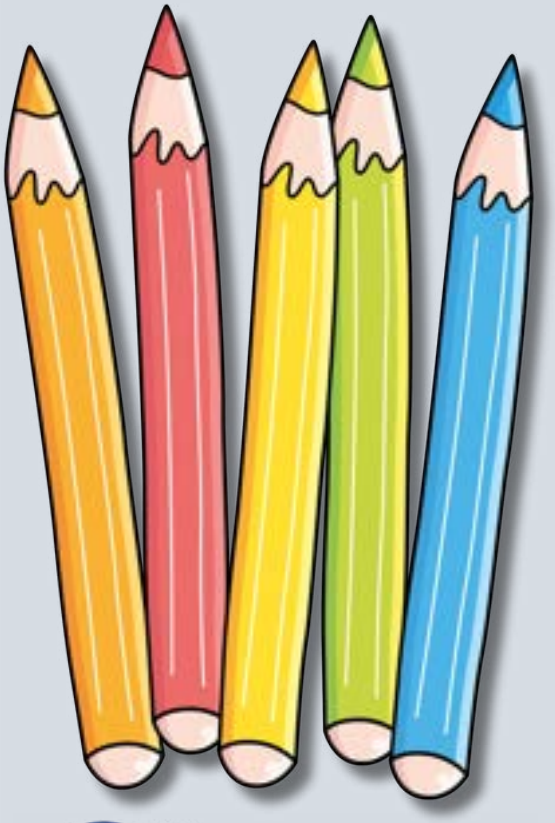


ALEXANDER HAMILTON PREPARATORY ACADEMY

American Education Week

HAMILTON ACADEMY AVID 11 STUDENTS REFINE TUTORIAL SKILLS

AVID 11 classes at Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy participated in a fun, unique, student-centered activity from the AVID Weeks at a Glance Grade 11 curriculum on Refining Tutorial Skills. Working with an elbow partner, one student described an image while the other attempted to draw it using only verbal directions and no visuals. This engaging WICOR-based activity emphasized communication, inquiry, collaboration, and organization as students practiced active listening, asking clarifying questions, and guiding one another without simply giving away the answers. Students learned that sometimes the best way to help someone find an answer is to lead by asking the right questions!







The Deserted Village

HISTORIC VILLAGE EXPLORATION FIELD TRIP

Nicholas Murray Butler School 23 Annex students had a wonderful time visiting The Deserted Village in Watchung, NJ! They enjoyed exploring the historic village, learning about its history, and discovering what life was like long ago. It was a fun and educational experience that gave students the opportunity to connect with history while enjoying the beautiful outdoors. A great day of learning and adventure!







During the Week of Respect, Madison Monroe School No. 16 students participated in a variety of engaging activities centered on this year's theme, "Respect: The Ultimate Superpower," which emphasized kindness, responsibility, courage, inclusion, and respect for others. Throughout the week, students identified their own personal "superpowers," created superhero comic strips using positive and encouraging language, designed respect-themed superhero shields, shared messages of kindness through the Path of Kindness activity, and reflected on ways to continue demonstrating respect beyond the week. Ms. Calderon, School Counselor, and Mr. Luciano, School Social Worker, visited classrooms and provided SEL lessons focused on the Character Trait of the Month: Respect, helping students understand the importance of treating themselves, others, and their school community with care, dignity, and kindness. On Friday, October 9, 2026, students attended a school-wide assembly presented by Latif Rivers of LR Basketball Academy, which featured an Anti-Bullying Program for grades K-5 and a Life Skills Program for grades 6-8. These activities and presentations reinforced the message that respect is a powerful skill that can help create a safe, inclusive, and supportive school environment for all students.





breakfast WITH books

John Marshall School No. 20 is excited to introduce a new K-4 initiative called “Breakfast with Books.” Each morning, after students finish breakfast, they are encouraged to take out their independent book bags and spend time reading before beginning the school day. The goal of this initiative is to increase students’ daily exposure to books, strengthen a love of reading, and create a calm, literacy focused start to the morning.

In a time where children are increasingly surrounded by technology, Breakfast with Books provides students with an opportunity to step away from screens and reconnect with the experience of holding, exploring, and enjoying a physical book. By building independent reading into our daily routine, John Marshall School No. 20 is working to foster lifelong reading habits while supporting literacy growth and helping close learning gaps for our youngest learners.







WALK, BIKE, AND STROLL TO SCHOOL



Juan Pablo Duarté–Jose Julián Martí School No. 28 celebrated Walk, Bike & Roll to School Day with students, families, and staff. Participants walked, biked, scooted, and rolled to school, promoting healthy habits, physical activity, and safe transportation. The event provided an opportunity to build community connections while encouraging students to make active choices that support their well-being. We were thrilled to see so many families participate and help make the day a fun and successful celebration of health, safety, and school spirit!





WEEK OF RESPECT



During the Week of Respect, our students explored kindness, respect, caring, listening, and friendship through engaging activities, including creating a Kindness Chain, helping-hand prints, self-portraits, Caring Hearts, and a Friendship Tree. They practiced using kind words, celebrating differences, helping others, and being good listeners.



NJSLA-A *Passers*

At Woodrow Wilson School, students who crushed the NJSLA were officially welcomed into the NJSLA-A Passers Club, and we made sure to celebrate in style! The school threw a fun-filled celebration filled with music, treats, and high-energy shoutouts from the administration and PTO to honor their amazing achievement. It was a day all about recognizing the hard work, determination, and brainpower that led to their success. Laughter, cheers, and proud smiles filled the room as students basked in the spotlight they earned. This exciting event marks the 2nd year of a proud new tradition at Woodrow Wilson. Congrats again to all our superstar NJSLA Passers!



Pumpkin Painting

Pumpkins became masterpieces at Joseph Battin School No. 4's Pumpkin Decorating Contest! From favorite storybook characters to clever fall designs, each creation showcased imagination, artistic talent, and school spirit. Our Battin community turned an ordinary pumpkin into something extraordinary, making this celebration of creativity a highlight of Fall!













Give Thanks





HISPA INSPIRES STUDENTS TO DREAM BIG

HISPA (Hispanics Inspiring Students' Performance and Achievement) recently visited Juan Pablo Duarte - Jose Julian Marti School No. 28 to host an informative panel for 248 middle school students. Through engaging conversations and personal stories, HISPA volunteers shared their educational and professional journeys, highlighting the importance of post-secondary education, perseverance, and believing in one's potential. The visit provided students with an opportunity to learn about diverse career paths, ask questions, and feel inspired to dream big and pursue their goals.



THE POWER OF Words

Mabel G. Holmes School No. 5 hosted an engaging assembly for our 4th and 5th grade students focused on The Power of Words. Students learned about the impact their words can have on others and the importance of choosing words that are kind, positive, and respectful. The assembly encouraged students to think before they speak, recognize the power of their words, and use language that builds others up rather than tears them down.







October and November in Review

WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO CAPTURING NEXT MONTH'S EVENTS!

FUTURE SUBMISSIONS CAN BE SENT TO ENEWS@EPSNJ.ORG