



Nathanael Greene Middle School

CONNECTIONS

AUGUST 19, 2022

SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

Welcome to the latest edition of the Providence Public School District (PPSD) bi-weekly newsletter! If you or someone you know misses any of our newsletters, you can find past editions on the [District's website](#) in multiple languages.

It's hard to believe that our students return to school in a little more than a week! I want to say a big, heartfelt thank you to all of our Providence Public Schools community members who put in time and effort this summer to help make sure we start the 2022-23 school year strong. We put in some serious work over the past few months to keep closing the achievement gap and help our students thrive.

We had several thousand students take part in Summer Learning in grades K-12. That includes Math, ELA, Science, and STEM classes for our younger students. And it includes credit recovery and CTE programming for our high school students.

Our educators also spent the last several weeks improving and growing their skills, taking advantage of hundreds of hours of professional development at every level. That includes all of our principals, new leaders at the District level, coaches, new teachers, and teachers who participated in over 100 different paid professional development courses.

That kind of buy-in shows our students and educators understand that building the school district our community deserves is a year-round job. I can't wait for the school year to start so we can see that hard work pay off!



DR. JAVIER MONTANEZ
Superintendent

DISTRICT UPDATES

Back to School Central

The start of a new school year brings plenty of questions – what time does the bell ring? What school supplies does my student need? What resources are available to help my student with academics or attendance? We've got you covered!

Visit our [Back to School hub](#) for all of these answers and more. You'll also find important information on what's new this year, like monthly early dismissals for staff professional development.

A Safe Return to School

Providence Public Schools will have several **COVID-19 safety guidelines and mitigation strategies** in place to help ensure a healthy return to school. [Click here](#) to read full updated guidance for the 2022-23 school year, including asymptomatic testing, air purification, masking recommendations, and additional cleaning. Parents should also note that students who provided consent forms for COVID testing last year do not need to provide another consent this year. If parents wish to remove testing consent for their student, they can contact their school nurse.

No RIPTA Passes Needed through October 1

Due to a production/supply issue, the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) will not have WAVE cards available for students in time for the start of school. As a result, RIPTA has agreed to allow all **Providence high school students** to ride without a pass from 8/29 through 9/30. Providence Public Schools will contact families in the near future with information on loading passes from last year and how to request a new pass prior to October 1st. Families should also look for flyers from RIPTA in each school with RIPTA routes to and from the building.

School Security

Student and staff safety comes first in Providence Public Schools. This summer, the District worked with Providence Police, the Providence Fire Department, and the Rhode Island Emergency Management Agency to revise and update our School Emergency Preparedness Plan. This plan outlines the responsibilities of school staff during dozens of emergency situations. [Click here](#) to learn more, along with the messages families should expect to receive when there is a safety drill or an emergency at their child's school.

CELEBRATING STUDENTS

Our hardworking, talented students are doing amazing things every day. Here are just a few examples.



FIREFIGHTING 101

This amazing group of rising seniors from **Central High School** made [the front page of the Providence Journal](#) as they took part in the District's first student fire academy! The program started this summer with 150 hours of paid training, and continues throughout the school year for a total of 450 hours of training! After graduation, these students will have a chance to enter the Providence Fire Department Fire Academy!



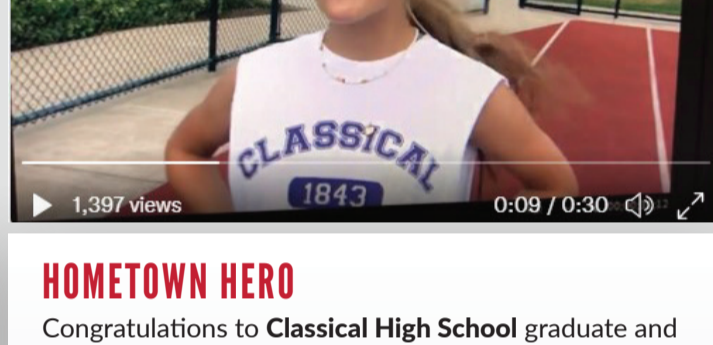
SUMMER LEARNING GRADUATES

Congratulations to the Class of 2022! These amazing students earned their diplomas in our Summer Learning program and graduated in a ceremony earlier this month at PCTA. Graduates came from across the District and included students from **360, Alvarez, Central, Classical, E-Cubed, Hope, JSEC, and Mount Pleasant High School**.



SWIMMING SUCCESS

This month marked the annual City Championship Swim Meet in Providence, where students representing the recreation center in their community compete against each other. Lifeguards from each community compete as well, with medals given to the top 3 finishers. This year, two **Mount Pleasant High School** students, and first-time lifeguards, took home top 3 honors. Promise Seales came in 3rd place against the other female lifeguards, and Bryant Agramont took home 1st place for the male lifeguard division.



HOMETOWN HERO

Congratulations to **Classical High School** graduate and all-state soccer star Michaela White, who was recently featured in WPRI's Hometown Hero segment. This fall Michaela will take her talents to the University of Minnesota Duluth where she will participate in both soccer and track! Best of luck, Michaela!

See the video: <https://www.wpri.com/sports/hometown-hero-michaela-white-classical/>

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

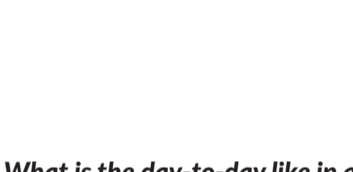
Get to know the amazing people who work with our students every day!

Sandra Grenga

Secretary to the Assistant Principal

Located in: Nathanael Greene Middle School

Joined PPSD in: 2000



What is the day-to-day like in a school office?

I'm here at 6:15 a.m. for kids that get dropped off before breakfast starts, and we're off and running from there! We interact with families and students all day, and every day there are new challenges to overcome. A student forget their lunch, someone has a difficult situation at home, you name it, we're here to help make that day better. I think office staff are kind of the glue of the building – we help hold a lot of things together. School is like a second family for the people who work here and for the students. I've been here 21 years so I know how much it means to build those connections with people.

"This is so much more than a school. We're a family. We're all here working to keep things moving and keep our kids safe and learning."

What's something you're most proud of?

I like the fact that kids know they can come see me no matter what, even if they just need a five-minute break. They know me as Ms. Sandra. In middle school that safe space is very important. There are a lot of changes and it can be a big adjustment for kids. Not everyone has a perfect home life. So for the kids, knowing they're safe and that they have someone they can talk to if they have a fight with a friend or something happened at home, that makes a big difference. I'm proud to be part of that.

What do you wish more people knew about your job?

I don't know if people realize how much we do in a school office. It's so much more than answering the phone. There are times we're super busy, and we might need a second to finish one thing before moving on to the next. But for everyone in this building, it is absolutely "kids first." This is so much more than a school. We're a family. We're all here working to keep things moving and keep our kids safe and learning. I understand that there's frustration sometimes because parents care so much about their kids. I raised a daughter and I sympathize. But I hope they know we're here to help, and these kids mean the world to us.

What are you looking forward to next year?

We have orientation this week and I love seeing all these cute faces! They're so eager to come back to school. In the beginning of the year, unless you've been in a middle school, it's hard to explain. Sixth graders have a lot to process, and we make sure we're here for them. We build that connection. Kids sit with us and have lunch, and it helps let them know they're going to be ok. And after the first few weeks we fall into our routine. They have some jitters to start, but the kids feel really good once they settle in. That's such a great thing to see.

IT'S GOOD NEWS: PPSD IN THE PRESS

- [D'Abate Elementary School in Providence getting long-overdue renovations](#)
Providence Journal, August 11
- [Providence Public Schools recognized for sustainable electronics efforts](#)
Providence Business News, August 9
- [Brown's Pre-College Programs welcome increasing share of students from Providence](#)
Brown University, August 8
- [Providence fire academy offers students a shot at a career](#)
Providence Journal, August 4
- [Middle school collects, donates hundreds of stuffed animals to Uvalde students](#)
WJAR, July 26

AROUND THE DISTRICT



SUMMER SUCCESS

This summer, nearly 3,000 Providence Public School students took part in **summer learning** in grades K-12! Students up to grade 8 took part in classes focuses on English Language Arts, Math, Science, and STEM skills. High School students were able to engage in credit recovery and Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways. Thank you to the hundreds of staff and educators who helped us continue to close the achievement gap and serve our students year-round.



STEPPING UP PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This summer was also a time for PPSD educators to gather and learn new ways to help students achieve success. Within the past several weeks, the District hosted a **New Leaders Academy** for Assistant Superintendents and Executive Directors, a two-week Principals Academy, a Coach Academy, a two-week New Teacher Academy, and a Teacher Academy with over 100 professional development sessions.



MADE IN THE SHADE

A big thank you to longtime **Aramark** consultant Bob Struck, who recently paid to have [brand new shades](#) installed on the first floor of **Robert F. Kennedy Elementary School**! A bright sun glare was becoming a problem in this area of the building. So Bob, whose mother was a teacher at Kennedy Elementary and whose four daughters all attended the school, paid for new shades himself and had them installed!



BREAKING NEW GROUND

This month, construction began on the **\$21 million renovation of William D'Abate Elementary school**. This complete overhaul will result in a modern, 21st century learning environment that will cultivate academic success and social-emotional growth for students. Construction will run throughout the 2022-23 school year, with D'Abate students and staff temporarily located at nearby Lauro Elementary.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- **STAFF RETURN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**
Monday, August 22, 2022
- **FIRST DAY OF CLASSES**
Monday, August 29, 2022
- **LABOR DAY (NO SCHOOL)**
Monday, September 5, 2022
- **PRIMARY ELECTION DAY (NO SCHOOL)**
Tuesday, September 13, 2022
- **2-HOUR EARLY DISMISSAL**
Wednesday, September 21, 2022
- **ROSH HASHANAH (NO SCHOOL)**
September 26 & 27, 2022



FREE BACKPACKS & SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Saturday, August 27
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Drive-By Event

Multiple Locations including:

- Providence Community Health Center, 31 Atwood St.
- West End Community Center, 109 Bucklin St.
- Providence Information & Student Registration, 325 Ocean St.
- Nathanael Greene Middle School, 721 Chalkstone Ave.



MT. PLEASANT BEAUTIFICATION DAY

Saturday, August 20
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Join us this Saturday, August 20, for a Beautification Day at Mount Pleasant High School! The day will begin with school tours from 9 to 10 a.m. After that will be prize giveaways and community talks, followed by garden work to beautify the school grounds. All community members are welcome to attend for some or all of the day!

STAFF PERKS!

DSW Discount for PPSD Employees

Attention PPSD employees – use [the attached offer](#) from DSW (Designer Shoe Warehouse) from August 26 to 28 and receive 20% of regular priced items and an additional 10% off clearance items! Make sure to have this flyer on and your staff ID at checkout to receive the discount.

Bom Bom Nutrition Discount for PPSD Employees

PPSD employees can also receive special discounts from Bom Bom Nutrition at 375 Washington Street through the end of August. See [the attached image](#) for daily deals, and make sure to have your Providence Public Schools ID with you at checkout.

Terrific things are happening across the District, and we want to get the word out! If you have a program, event, staff member, or student with an amazing story that you'd like to highlight, please email communications@ppsd.org.