



# CONNECTIONS

**Classical High School** graduates Monday night at the Veterans Memorial Auditorium. Congratulations Graduates!

## SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

JUNE 14, 2023

With less than two weeks left to complete the school year, I want to share how proud I am of each of our students who made it to the finish line. The last weeks of school are filled with end of the year field trips, celebrations and graduation ceremonies. It is always exciting to see the joy in our students' eyes as they get ready for summer.

To all of our high school graduates, congratulations! There are many paths and life is about the choices you make. Have faith, believe in yourself, think wisely, get that support group around you, and always ask yourself 'what if?' [See a message for all of you here from my spring address](#) to students at Brown Day.

We are excited to launch our **Summer Learning Program** on July 10! The Summer Learning programs will run July 10 - August 17. There is still space in the exciting middle school program that is filled with great opportunities including the SeaPerch Summer Program with a STEM robotics curriculum that will culminate in a boat design competition. There is also an E-sports, Electronic Sports, program where students will use multiplayer video games to create an inclusive and equitable environment where all learners can thrive. [Register here](#) if you are interested.

Many high school students have received a letter recommending that they join us for the summer learning program. The program will utilize the Edgenuity online platform and mix online learning with teacher instruction, group work and projects. This high school program is a remedial program working to help students meet their graduation requirements. We also have an exciting high school CTE summer program.

We have over 1,200 students registered for the Summer Stars Learning Academy. We are still taking names for the waitlist in this kindergarten through grade 5 program. This summer program will combine literacy and math curriculum with an exciting social emotional component.

If you or someone you know misses any of our newsletters, you can find past editions on the [District's website in multiple languages](#).



**DR. JAVIER MONTAÑEZ**  
SUPERINTENDENT

# DISTRICT UPDATES



## RI STATE OF EDUCATION ADDRESS

Recently, during her [State of Education speech](#) at Rhode Island School for the Deaf, **Commissioner Angélica Infante-Green** highlighted numerous improvements in Surveyworks results for parents, students, and teachers satisfaction.

“Through the intervention, we are tearing down old expectations and building new ones, brick by brick!” said Infante-Green. Surveyworks data shows that students are talking more about college and careers. Students are using more individual learning plans and think that it is useful. Additionally, the surveys show that teachers are pleased with the curriculum and there is a more positive view of District leadership and safety response. We saw increases of 5-9% in these areas. And finally, for **family engagement** responses, Surveyworks showed a **9% increase in favorability which is 5% higher than the state average.**

Great job by all of our staff, families and students. Thank you for taking the time to do the survey. We are excited with the results.

## SCHOLASTIC BOOK INITIATIVE

On Friday, **Asa Messer Elementary School** will host book day to celebrate the accomplishments of their students and to help kick-start summer reading efforts. At the event, 60 second and third grade students will participate in field day activities and receive age-appropriate Scholastic book packs to add to their home library.

Research shows that one measure that consistently and significantly correlates with reading scores is the number of books in the home. The event’s book distribution is the culmination of a larger K-5 district-wide program to build home libraries. In the coming two weeks, the Providence

Public School District will distribute 90,000 age-appropriate books with all K-5 students receiving 10 books and a Providence Schools backpack. According to the Scholastic Teacher & Principal School Report, the vast majority (96%) of teachers, principals and school librarians say that providing year-round access to books at home is important to enhancing student achievement.

“This initiative is designed to help our children gain the necessary skills to flourish in and out of school, while simultaneously fostering an environment in which all students in the Providence Public School District have a love and passion for reading,” explained **Commissioner Angélica Infante-Green & Superintendent Javier Montañez** in a letter to families about the **“My Books Summer” initiative.**

## PCTA COMPLETES DIPLOMAS FOR DISTRICT



Students and staff at **Providence Career and Technical Academy** worked with administration and school staff to create diplomas for all of the high school graduates. Kudos to PCTA’s **Graham Walker** and his students for crossing the finish line this week as they reprinted a few last minute certificates. This is the third year

that students and staff have worked together to complete these internally. In the past, diplomas were printed by an external vendor. It is a great learning experience for the students before they graduate.



## MOUNT PLEASANT BEAUTIFICATION DAY

Students and staff at **Mount Pleasant High School** worked hard this past Saturday morning to help beautify the school grounds by planting flowers in front of the school. Special thanks to Mount Pleasant Principal Wobberson Torchon for helping to organize this wonderful day for our students and staff.



## EQUITY AND BELONGING

The Office of Equity and Belonging recognizes the month of June as the month of reflection, freedom, respect, equity, belonging and love. Whether you celebrate Juneteenth or PRIDE or both, we ask that you remember all who have made sacrifices to ensure that we can continue to advocate fiercely, for the freedom and space to fight for liberation, justice, and the right to be our authentic selves.

### **RESPECT Leadership Academy**

**Monday, August 14, 2023 - Friday, August 25, 2023**

**Location:** Brown University

**Audience:** PPSD Middle & High School Students

Free to students who have been active participants in the RESPECT. Breakfast, lunch and snacks will be provided. Students will receive a stipend. [Register here.](#)

### **emPOWER Meet Up for Educators of Color**

Do not forget to register for this month's emPOWER meet up being hosted on June 20, 2023 at 4:30pm at Bom Bom Nutrition (375 Washington St. Providence, RI 02903). [Register here!](#) We hope to see you there! If you have any questions please contact us at [equity@ppsd.org](mailto:equity@ppsd.org). All PPSD educators are welcome to attend.

### **Central Office Lunch & Learn: Learning about the Context & History of Juneteenth**

This year, the theme for Juneteenth is "Wave of Freedom". On Thursday June 15, 2023 from 12:00-1:15pm come learn with the Office of Equity & Belonging about the context and history of Juneteenth. Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. Juneteenth commemorates a legacy of freedom and resistance for descendants of African people and those previously enslaved. If you would like to learn and discuss more about this remarkable history please join us in the school board room with your lunch and colleagues! Check out these activities for [work](#), [home](#) and [school](#).

### **Juneteenth and Pride Month Creative Space Celebration**

In honor of LGBTQ+ pride month and Juneteenth, our office is hosting a creative space to celebrate youth and our youth serving organizations! This evening will include food, music and arts and crafts. This event will be held on June 15th, 2023, from 5pm-7pm at 797 Westminster St in the PD Tech Room (Ground floor). The theme of the event is centered around cultivating community connections and supporting artistic expression. Whether you are preparing for a [pride-related event](#), [Juneteenth event](#), or would simply like to decompress by making a bracelet, we are providing the space and means to do so.

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- [JUNETEENTH \(NO SCHOOL\)](#)  
Monday, June 19
- [LAST DAY OF SCHOOL](#)  
Friday, June 23
- [SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM](#)  
Monday, June 10 -  
Thursday, August 17

## JUNE SCHOOL MENU



# CELEBRATING STUDENTS

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



## CENTRAL STUDENT DESIGNS NEW MLL LOGO

Congratulations to **Central High School** student Rosalinda who received an award for her design work on PPSD's new MLL (Multilingual Learner) logo! Thank you to everyone who submitted a design for the new logo, we received impressive designs to choose from. Congratulations on your hard work, Rosalinda!



## PPSD VALEDICTORIANS AND SALUTATORIANS

Congratulations to all of our graduating seniors, but a special shout out to our 2023 **PPSD Valedictorians and Salutatorians!** These students had the opportunity to meet with **Mayor Brett Smiley**, as well as members from Providence City Council, to help celebrate their achievements. We look forward to seeing all of our graduates during our ceremonies!



## CTE SIGNING DAY

Congratulations to the 84 PPSD students who have obtained careers in apprenticeships/unions, and full-time industry positions. They were celebrated last week during Signing Day at **Providence Career & Technical Academy (PCTA)**. Fourteen companies and industries joined the event where students "signed" on with their future employers which included Electric Boat, Building Futures, LiUNA, RI Women in the Trades, Navarrete Tire Shop, Bristol Toyota, 401 Automotive, Carpenters Union, Jutras Woodworking, JD Cementworks, Providence Parks & Recreation, Lucia's Mexican Restaurant and Waterman Grille Restaurant.



## BAILEY STUDENTS SHINE

Students from **Robert Bailey Elementary School** performed a piece from Disney's "The Jungle Book Kids" during a performance at Providence Performing Arts Center (PPAC) this past week! Bailey Elementary was one of four Rhode Island Schools who performed in the Disney Musical in Schools' "It All Starts with a Dream." Great job by all!



## MOCK APPEAL

Students from **Nathan Bishop Middle School** participated in a Mock Appeal at the Providence Federal Courthouse. Discovering Justice partnered with Nathan Bishop to help students learn more about law and justice. Thank you to all of the Honorable Magistrates for volunteering their time to speak with the students!



## RHODE ISLAND CIVICS DAY

Congratulations to all of our PPSD students who presented at Rhode Island Civics Day at City Hall and the State House! Special shout out to **E-Cubed Academy** students for winning the Action Award, a **360 High School** student for winning the Student Change Maker Award, and **Hope High School** students who won the Collaboration & Diversity Award!

# IT'S GOOD NEWS: PPSD IN THE PRESS

- [These students were failing during the pandemic. Then a guidance counselor threw them a lifeline](#)  
Providence Journal, June 7, 2023
- [Patriots alumni visit Providence school to reward students for improving attendance](#)  
WJAR, June 1, 2023



# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Get to know our amazing senior students in the District!



<p><b>Jonas Genao</b>  <i>Senior, Alvarez High School</i>          ES: Dominican Republic          MS: Roger Williams</p>	<p><b>Ismerai Nunez</b>  <i>Senior, Alvarez High School</i>          ES + MS:          Union City, NJ</p>
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### What are your plans after high school?

**IN:** I plan to go to a 4 year college-URI. I chose URI because, financially, it was my best option. I was interested in their criminal justice and psychology program. At a young age, I had a violent experience with someone very close to me. I was there when there was an incident. After that, I didn't want anyone to go through that experience. I don't know the specific job I want to do but I want to help people and help prevent incidents like this.

I applied to URI through the Talent Development Program. Talent Development recruits and serves Rhode Island high school graduates with college potential who come from historically disadvantaged backgrounds, a majority of whom are Scholars of color. The goal of the program is access, opportunity, affordability, and completion.

**“I would say the professors that I’ve had pushed me to do my best and try my best. I like to be challenged.”**

**JG:** Next year, I am going to go to URI and pursue a major in computer science. I had to debate between two schools and thought that URI's Talent Development program would be good. I also looked at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and Clark University. I will live at URI the first year as required by the program. Also, the school is not far from home, from my family.

I love the creativity you can implement into computer science. I love math. Anything you can incorporate math into, I love. You can create many things with computer science. Necessary things as well as fun. It has a wide range of creativity in it.

### Why did you choose Alvarez?

**IN:** I was unaware that there were school choices when I first started. I came during COVID. I took a test and they placed me here. I have met good people. I've had really good professors.

I would say the professors that I've had pushed me to do my best and try my best. I like to be challenged. I don't like to take the easy way.

**JG:** I chose Alvarez because of the distance. I was new to the country. I came here in 8th grade from the Dominican Republic. It was closest to my house so I chose Alvarez. My experience has had its ups and downs. Obviously being new to the country everything was different. My first year was good but then COVID hit and things started to get messy. I have not been involved in that many extracurricular activities. But I have been involved in career development classes like computer science and done many AP classes. Also outside of school, I did a leader development program, HOBEBY. I did an Artificial Intelligence boot camp with Mark Cuban. It was virtual.

### Is there a teacher who has made a big impact on you?

**IN:** Mr. Chandley, I see him all the time here. He is a computer science professor. I am not really great at computers but he made the class fun. He made it possible for my senior year to take another class with him. He helped me. We had a good time.

**JG:** Mr. Chandley, my computer science teacher. He has been my mentor in Computer Science. We started learning and we discussed a lot of topics in computer science as well as outside topics like books and such. He has kind of been my best friend while I have been here.

### Most memorable experience?

**IN:** Prom last year and this year. I am going this year with a group of CCRI students. I am technically done with high school and am doing the rest of the year with the Alvarez

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and CCRI students. The whole program made us have a really great relationship.

The first semester at CCRI, I did my high school core classes that I needed to graduate. My second semester, I did classes towards my major. So I took criminal procedure, criminology and general psychology. I also took a fourth class online. If I pass the classes, I get full college credits. So when I start URI I will start with 24 credits. I will probably need 3 years to graduate now. Since I want to get a masters, it will probably be more years.

**JG:** I got a 3 on my AP Computer Science test. And that day, I was not feeling well and I was so prepared but then felt terrible. And then I saw the results and got a passing score.

**What are you nervous or excited about after graduation?**

**IN:** Right now, I am nervous for graduation because I am Valedictorian and I have to make a speech. I am not the type of person who talks a lot in public. But if I have to do it, I have to do it. It is my responsibility. After graduation, I am nervous for life. I will be living on campus and I know that I have my parents here who will help me and support me. But I want to try to do things my way and see what I am capable of doing. I am nervous and excited for what is ahead of me.

**JG:** I am really excited to start university. I want to meet more people. I am excited to start my professional life. I have no fears. I feel calm and excited.

## AROUND THE DISTRICT



### **YEAW NAMED LIBRARIAN OF THE YEAR**

Applause to **Providence Career and Technical Academy's Kimberly Yeaw** who was named School Librarian of the Year by the School Librarians of Rhode Island! Here are some reason why Ms. Yeaw extraordinary:

1. She comes in early every day so students have a quiet space in the morning to relax.
2. She opens her library during lunch so students can eat lunch in a comfortable setting.
3. She stays current with reading trends and stocks her library to reflect that.
4. She always has her office door open for students who need space to process and think. (Teachers too!)
5. As a former PAR coach, Kim is always available to read a teacher's SLO, or help calculate the data.
6. Kim has reorganized her space to give PCTA a tech help center.
7. She works with our school's Dell Tech Crew and helps students take control of their learning
8. Kim is the first to volunteer for student events, or to help organize school wide initiatives.



### **COMMUNITY LEADERS GATHERING**

Over 40 community partners joined Carina Pinto de Chacon, Chief of **Family and Community Engagement**, recently for a Community Leaders Gathering at United Way of Rhode Island in Providence. The team discussed the importance of attendance and FAFSA completion for our students as well as the upcoming summer learning program. Thanks to all who joined us!



## SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS TOUR HIGH SCHOOLS

Seventh grade students from **PPSD Esek Hopkins Middle School** were introduced to the District high schools over the last weeks. District middle school students had the opportunity to tour schools, meet teachers and help determine their preferences before going into the school choice process next year.



## MARTA APARICIO VISITS CENTRAL

Students at **Central High School** welcomed Hope High School 2010 Valedictorian Department of State Diplomat **Marta Aparicio**, along with Providence Mayor Brett Smiley, to learn about her exciting international diplomacy career. The students were inspired by her amazing story. Thank you for visiting, Marta!



## SPECIAL OLYMPICS BOUND

Congratulations to Rhode Island resident Brian Johnson who will be representing the Ocean State in the Special Olympics playing bocce! Brian's brother, Dan Johnson, is a teacher at **A-Venture**, and they had a send-off celebration for Brian! Good luck to Brian and the rest of the USA Special Olympics team!



## DUAL LANGUAGE & BILINGUAL SHOWCASE

Education leaders joined us during Providence Public Schools **Dual Language & Bilingual Education Showcase** to view the program in action as well as speak with students and teachers about their experience. The team toured classrooms at **Alfred Lima, Leviton Dual Language** and **Lillian Feinstein at Sackett Street Elementary Schools**. Special thanks to Engage2Learn (e2L) for helping facilitate the event. In partnership with e2L, District leaders and stakeholders have been working to create a coaching and growth plan designed to equip educators to equitably support ELLs.