



# CONNECTIONS

APRIL 29, 2022

## SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

Hello PPSD family, and welcome to the latest edition of our bi-weekly newsletter! If you or someone you know misses one of these newsletters, you can [find past editions on the PPSD website](#) in multiple languages.

A key part of our community's [Turnaround Action Plan](#) for Providence Schools is to increase our percentage of fully staffed classrooms at the beginning of each school year. And with good reason – as a former PPSD teacher, assistant principal, and principal, I can tell you from experience that educators in a well-staffed school are more effective. And that helps our students thrive.

So I have pushed my team to take an aggressive approach on hiring for next school year. We have several new incentives to offer candidates, and we posted positions on March 7, which is well over a month earlier than normal.

And what a difference a month makes! As of today, we have already hired for 206 PTU positions next year. Here is a breakdown of those hires:

- 102 are educators who were previously displaced
- 53 are external hires and new to PPSD
- 47 are educators moving to a new role or who were promoted
- 11 are substitutes who will be joining us full-time

We also currently have another 15 offers out to candidates. In short, we are miles ahead of where we were last year – because last year at this time we had barely started this process.

I fully understand that we are not done here. Staffing is a challenge in districts across the country, and it is a challenge that we must, and will, address. But we are making significant progress towards making sure our buildings are filled with high quality educators ready to help our students succeed.



DR. JAVIER MONTAÑEZ  
Superintendent

## DISTRICT UPDATES

### SUMMER LEARNING

Registration for PPSD's Summer Learning program is open! Summer Learning is free of charge for all PPSD students. This year, the expanded program will add several more hours of coverage each day for elementary students. To continue its increased support of multilingual learners, PPSD has also arranged for all Summer Learning 2022 courses to be fully integrated for multilingual students. Also new this year, high school students will have access to Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs during Summer Learning. Summer Learning will once again include accelerated student learning in addition to offering credit recovery. Opportunities are also available for free breakfast and lunch for students of all ages. [Learn more about program dates, times, and details here.](#)

### TEACHER APPRECIATION WEEK

May 2nd through the 6th is Teacher Appreciation Week! Make sure you take time to thank and recognize our incredibly hardworking and dedicated educators. The past several years have been extremely difficult for us all, but teaching has been one of the hardest hit professions by the pandemic. Through it all, our PPSD teachers continue to engage our students and help them thrive. Here are a few suggestions for ways you can let a teacher know they're appreciated:

- Wear red on National Teacher Day (May 3, 2022)
- Have your student write a letter to a current or past teacher
- If your student is younger, have them draw a picture for their teacher

- Reach out to an educator who had an impact on your own life
- Donate books to your teacher's classroom library
- Find out your teacher's favorite snack and surprise them with it
- Get creative - there's no wrong way to show your appreciation!

### ONE OF THE NATION'S BEST

Congratulations to our hardworking staff and students at Classical High School for once again being named one of the [best public high schools in the country](#) by U.S. News and World Report! Classical was rated Rhode Island's best public high school and came in 91st out of nearly 18,000 schools across the entire country. The rankings were based on these measures: college readiness, college curriculum breadth, state assessment performance, state assessment proficiency, reading and math proficiency, reading and math performance, underserved student performance, and graduation rates.

### HEALTHY RETURN TO SCHOOL

Providence Public Schools continue to closely monitor COVID-19 cases across the District. Masks became optional for students and staff earlier this month, and all students returned from April vacation on April 25. Attendance during the week of return from April break has been slightly higher than the average attendance for the entire school year so far.

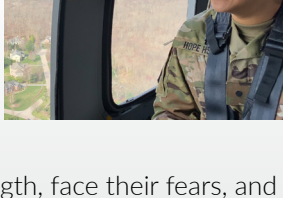
## CELEBRATING STUDENTS

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



### JROTC ADVENTURES

Hope High School JROTC program had field day at the **Air National Guard base at Quonset**, on Thursday, April 14. Students from the program got to experience different facets of the military, finding opportunities to test their strength, face their fears, and participate in team building activities. During the day, the students flew in a Black Hawk helicopter, repelled a 40ft wall, and learned about career opportunities! See a video about the JROTC program here: <https://youtu.be/6f6kDwrQp4>



### PRE-K LEARNERS SHINE

Pre-Kindergarten students and their families took part in a Pre-K Make and Take Night at **Pleasant View Elementary School** on Monday, April 11. The Early Childhood Program also hosted a Pre-K Open House at **Young Woods Elementary School** on Tuesday, April 5, providing students the opportunity to show their classrooms and work to their families. [Learn more about our Early Childhood Program here.](#)



### TAKE THE MIC POETRY SLAM

Providence Public School High School Librarians and Community Libraries of Providence hosted **Take the Mic**, a teen poetry slam, at Knight Memorial Library in Providence on Wednesday, April 27. Teachers and students shared their poetry. They showed there is power in words!



## STAFF SPOTLIGHT

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

### Kyisha "Ms. Kyi" Threats

7th and 8th grade English Language Development Teacher  
6th grade Success 101 and MLL Teacher Leader

Located in: DelSesto Middle School  
Joined PPSD in: 1995

### How do you describe your job to people who don't work in education?

When I sit with people and they ask me about the challenges of being a teacher, I remind them that these kids are my community and they're our community. That's why I love what I do and love being in front of a class every day, even if there are challenges. I always remember my "why," which is my students. They have hard times just like adults and they need role models and they need people who care about them in school. So even if I reach just one student, I know I've done my job.

Education is the key – once you have it, no one can take it away from you.

### What's the best part of your job?

It's the kids. It's rewarding because I've been in some situations that my students are in now. I'm a product of PPSD, born and raised. I let them know that I'm here today because I persevered through similar things they may be going through. That helps us talk, and

I can direct them to the activities or resources they need. My favorite thing to tell students is that education is the key – once you have it, no one can take it away from you.

### What do you wish more people knew about your job or PPSD in general?

I would tell people – don't believe everything you hear on TV. Come into the schools and get to know the kids. We have great students and great teachers in PPSD. The negativity is so sad. I wish people in the community understood what the day-to-day is like in the schools and how rewarding it is being in a classroom, in a school.

### What's an obstacle your students overcame this year that you're proud of?

I would say how they communicate with each other. It was a real challenge after distance learning and with masks. Now I see them form groups where they're working together, playing together, talking with each other and just being happy, being kids. And when they're in that mindset they can connect with teachers easier and we can talk about something – that's so important.

## IT'S GOOD NEWS: PPSD IN THE PRESS

- [Providence Schools students are shadowing prospective employers – and getting paid to do it](#)  
Boston Globe, April 11, 2022
- [Mayor Elorza, Community Partners And City Officials Announce 2022 Eat, Play, Learn PVD Summer Opportunities](#)  
Public Now, April 19, 2022
- [Providence School Board calls for support for Superintendent Javier Montañez](#)  
Boston Globe, April 13, 2022
- [Elorza, education officials to break ground on new learning center in Providence](#)  
ABC 6, April 13, 2022
- [College Day at Brown gives Providence high schoolers a glimpse of academic and campus life](#)  
Brown News, April 14, 2022

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- **EID AL-FITR - NO SCHOOL**  
Tuesday, May 3, 2022
- **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY**  
Wednesday, May 11, 2022
- **MEMORIAL DAY - NO SCHOOL**  
Monday, May 30, 2022
- **SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM REGISTRATION DEADLINE**  
Wednesday, May 4, 2022
- **PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
Monday, May 16, 2022  
6:00 p.m.
- **PPSD Career Fair**  
Thursday, May 5, 2022  
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
- **SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**  
Wednesday, May 18, 2022  
6:30 p.m.

## SPREAD THE WORD

**CAREER FAIR**

Come network with current School Leaders and the Providence Talent Team and learn about open teaching opportunities for 07-23.22. The application and hiring process, bonuses for new hires in hard-to-fill roles areas, educators of color loan forgiveness opportunities, and more!

Date: **Thursday, May 5, 2022**  
Location: **DelSesto Middle School**  
152 Springfield Street, Providence, RI 02909  
Time: **5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.**  
Register: <https://tinyurl.com/ppsdcair>

**EAT PLAY LEARN**

**Providence Schools**  
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM

**CAREER FAIR**

PPSD will be holding a second spring career fair at DelSesto Middle School on May 5th from 5-7:00 p.m. Internal staff who are still seeking positions in the district are welcome and encouraged to attend. Please [register here](#) and contact [jacqueline.duarte@ppsd.org](mailto:jacqueline.duarte@ppsd.org) with any questions.

**YOUTH JOBS**

Applications for youth job opportunities with the City's Parks and Recreation Departments are now open → learn more: <http://pvdsummerjobs.com>

**PPSD PRE-K**

The 2022-2023 Integrated Pre-K and the RI Pre-K program lottery have opened. These programs provide free, high-quality Pre-K education to eligible 3, 4, and 5-year-old children in Providence. [Find more information here >](#)

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](mailto:communications@ppsd.org).