



Governor McKee, Commissioner Infante-Green, Mayor Smiley, and School Board President Rogel join Superintendent Montañez at the bus yard on the first day of school welcoming staff back!

CONNECTIONS

SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

SEPTEMBER 20, 2023

Welcome back to the new school year! I want to acknowledge the hard work of our teachers, staff, and administrators in preparing for this school year. It is always a challenge and we are proud of the work they've done to make sure our schools and facilities were ready.

We've achieved a milestone - we opened not one but three new schools for the first time in over a decade. I'd like to express my gratitude to **Governor McKee, Commissioner Infante-Green, Mayor Smiley,** and our **school board** for their invaluable support and joining us on the first day of school tours. Just two weeks ago, I had the privilege of cutting the ribbon at the **Narducci Learning Center**, which is now serving as a swing space for **Pleasant View Elementary** during their renovations. This achievement wouldn't have been possible without our dedicated partners; thank you for making it happen. We're excited to welcome students and staff to the new **William D'Abate School Elementary** and **Frank D Spaziano Elementary**, marking three new 21st Century Learning schools opened this year in PPSD. Our commitment to providing quality education and new facilities continues to grow stronger as we continue to meet the goals of the TAP. Our new schools are equipped with modern facilities and technologies to enhance the learning experience and continuing our plans to serve the students of Providence and invest in the District.

We've had a strong start, and I'm looking forward to a successful academic year. Parental involvement and community support are vital to our students' success, and I encourage your active participation. Your help is essential to ensure your child has a great year. Please remember that attendance is crucial for academic success and we want our students to become Attendance Heroes. We've provided Attendance Hero packets to our schools, including tracking magnets and attendance contracts. Stay informed about upcoming events, parent-teacher meetings, and important dates for the school year. As always, please reach out to us during the year if you have any questions and comments. Onwards and upwards!



DR. JAVIER MONTAÑEZ
SUPERINTENDENT



DISTRICT UPDATES

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

The first day of the 2023-2024 academic year kicked off on Wednesday, September 6. It was great to see our students back for a new school year. Special thanks to **Governor Dan McKee, Mayor Brett Smiley, and RIDE Commissioner Angélica Infante-Green** for visiting some of the schools during drop off.

BE AN ATTENDANCE HERO

In order to ensure that we start the academic year off strong, PPSD is launching an **Attendance Hero** campaign to help focus on the attendance policy during the school year. In order to assist with that, PPSD Central Office has provided schools with Attendance Hero contracts, Attendance magnets, and dry erase markers so students can track their attendance throughout the year. We encourage parents to take time to do this with their child so they can understand the importance of attendance and being in school each day. Absences add up fast, and students could be at risk for going to summer school if too many days are missed during the school year. Let's all work together to be Attendance Heroes this school year!

WILLIAM D'ABATE AND FRANK D. SPAZIANO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OPEN

We are excited to open the doors of two of our brand-new, renovated schools: **Frank D. Spaziano Elementary School** and **William D'Abate Elementary School!** Frank D. Spaziano Elementary School will have a whole new campus while the Pre-K through Grade 5 building opened up to students on Monday, September 11. The newly renovated William D'Abate Elementary School also opened its doors to students on



September 11. Students, staff, and families were excited to walk into the new school buildings to begin their academic journey. Special thanks to **Governor Dan McKee, Mayor Brett Smiley, The Rhode Island Department of Education, and the Providence City Council** for their support in both of these projects.

PPSD FLU CLINICS

PPSD will be holding schoolwide/community flu clinics starting in October. All clinics will be held from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. and will be at the following locations:

- **Nathanael Greene Middle School**
721 Chalkstone Avenue (02908)
Tuesday, October 10, 2023 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- **JSEC**
182 Thurbers Avenue (02905)
Tuesday, October 24, 2023 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- **DelSesto Middle School**
152 Springfield Street (02909)
Thursday, November 9, 2023 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.



EQUITY AND BELONGING

The Office of Equity & Belonging wishes everyone a healthy and peaceful start of school.

September 15-October 15 is **National Hispanic Heritage Month!** From the Library of Congress, “The day of September 15 is significant because it is the anniversary of independence for Latin American countries Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively.” Please share any related projects and festivities happening in classrooms and schools with equity@ppsd.org.

In August, twenty-seven students representing **Bishop, Delsesto, Esek, Greene, Roger Williams, Stuart, Alvarez, Central, Classical, E-Cubed, Hope, PCTA, 360, and Leviton Dual Language Elementary School** came together at Brown University for the Office of Equity & Belonging’s inaugural **Summer Equity Student Leadership Academy (SESLA)**. Students engaged in literacy activities through rap with Rhymes with Reason, explored cultural identities and historical context with Alliance of Rhode Island Southeast Asians for Education (ARISE), and learned nonviolence practices with the Nonviolence Institute of Rhode Island (NSRI). In addition, students collaborated with local artist, MJ Robinson, to conceptualize a PPSD Portrait of a Graduate that represents the realness of student experiences and futures full of possibility. This Portrait will be viewable later this Fall. SESLA participants, along with additional student leaders, will come together again for this school year’s RESPECT program, beginning in October.

Also in August, twenty-one teachers and staff convened as the first cohort of **PPSD Equity Leadership Team (ELT)** Ambassadors, representing **Bailey, Fogarty, Lima, Kennedy, Kizirian, Pleasant View, Veazie, Webster, West, Greene,**

Hopkins, Stuart, Central, Hope, and Newcomer. The Ambassadors will participate in trainings throughout this school year with the Equity Office and **Dr. Mark Gooden**, author of *Five Practices for Equity-Focused Leadership*, in order to build foundations for school-based ELTs launching SY 2024-25.

The Providence School Board will recognize SESLA student participants and parent volunteer/PAC Co-Chair, **Aubrey Johnson**, as well as the ELT Ambassadors at the September 20th School Board meeting for their dedication to equity and courageous leadership in Providence Schools.

The Office of Equity & Belonging will be hosting three additional cohorts this Fall: Bloomboard Equity Micro-Credentialing, Gentlemen’s Academy Ambassadors, and Teaching for Black Lives. Teachers, please find full descriptions and application information on the [Calendar and Upcoming Opportunities](#) section of our website, as well as additional resources and event announcements within and beyond PPSD.



Equity Boost Grants are still available and are intended to enable students and educators to test creative new ideas and innovations that support exemplary teaching and learning, while advancing cultural understanding and appreciation, anti-racism commitments, and understanding of civic engagement and democracy. Equity Boost Grants will fund school-based projects between \$500 and \$4900. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis.

[Check our calendar for professional learning opportunities](#) that will be taking place throughout September, October and November. Staff can view more information and register on Frontline.

CELEBRATING STUDENTS

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



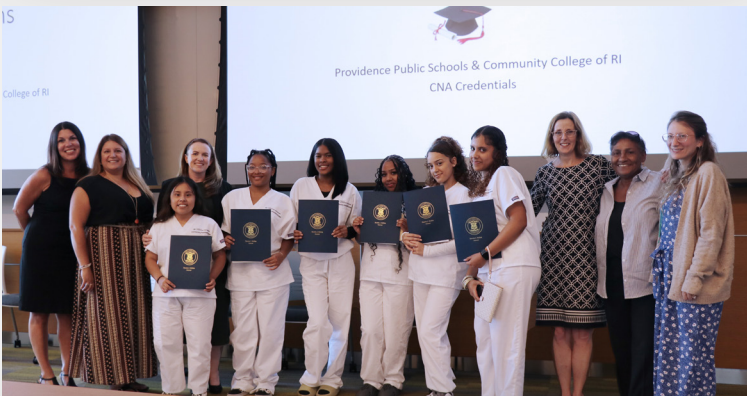
A-VENTURE ACADEMY PARTICIPATES IN 9/11 MEMORIAL

Students from **A-Venture Academy** participated in a September 11th memorial held at the Rhode Island State House on Monday. The students did an outstanding job representing their school. Check out the photos shared by A-Venture Academy Executive Director John Gallo!



PC ATHLETES WELCOME PPSD STUDENTS BACK TO SCHOOL

Providence College student athletes came to **Nathanael Greene Middle School** on the first day of school and formed a clap-in line as students entered the school. Athletes were stationed at different entrances to the building as the students came to start their day. Thank you to Providence College for helping us welcome our students back for another great year!



CTE CNA SUMMER PROGRAM GRADUATION

Students from **Alvarez** and **Central** high schools participated in a CNA program over the summer. The program was taught by professors from CCRI at the **Rhode Island Nursing Education Center (RINEC)**. This was the program's first year, and it was a great opportunity for students to get real life, hands-on experience in the nursing field. Thank you to CCRI and RINEC for your support in this initiative.



FUTURE GEN SCHOLARS

Students from **Classical**, **Central**, and **JSEC** high schools experienced the **Future Gen Cancer Scholars** program this summer, which aims to inspire BIPOC students to enter medicine. Congrats to all the scholars who completed their first year in the program. Special thanks to Lifespan and the Papitto Foundation for their support.

AROUND THE DISTRICT



RIBBON CUTTING AT NARDUCCI LEARNING CENTER

About two weeks ago, we cut the ribbon at the **Narducci PreK-8 Learning Center**! The newly renovated building will serve as a swing space for the District, and is home to Pleasant View Elementary School students and staff this year, while their school gets renovated. Special thanks to Governor Dan McKee, Mayor Brett Smiley, The Rhode Island Department of Education, and former Councilman Nick Narducci and family for all of their support on this project.



NATIONAL ARTS IN EDUCATION WEEK 2023

Last week was National Arts in Education Week. To celebrate, we highlighted some of the amazing works our students have done over the past year, including **Bailey Elementary School** students performing a piece from Disney's *The Jungle Book Kids!* last spring, and the **Mount Pleasant High School Marching Kilties** performing in Washington, D.C. during the National Memorial Day parade.

IT'S GOOD NEWS: PPSD IN THE PRESS

- [Providence opens the Narducci PreK-8 Learning Center](#)
ABC6, September 5, 2023
- [Brown commits to contributing nearly \\$175 million in direct voluntary payments to Providence Brown University](#), September 5, 2023
- [ABM Industries Partners with Providence Public School District to Optimize Operations Across City](#)
Benzinga, September 5, 2023
- [RIPTA welcomes back Providence high school students with outreach efforts](#)
WJAR, September 5, 2023
- [Providence students welcomed back on the first day of school](#)
ABC6, September 6, 2023
- [Students head back to school at 2 Providence elementary schools](#)
WJAR, September 11, 2023

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- **YOM KIPPUR (NO SCHOOL)**
Monday, September 25, 2023
- **SCHOOL BUILDING COMMITTEE MEETING**
Tuesday, September 26, 2023
5:30 p.m.
797 Westminster Street
- **INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY (NO SCHOOL)**
Monday, October 9, 2023
- **WARD 12 COMMUNITY MEETING**
Kizirian planning updates
Wednesday, September 27, 2023
6:00 p.m.
Rogers Rec Center, 60 Camden Ave.
- **HIGH SCHOOL EXPO** for 8th graders
Thursday, October 12
5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
PCTA, 41 Fricker St.
- **WARD 5 COMMUNITY MEETING**
Mount Pleasant & Pleasant View updates
Monday, October 2, 2023
6:30 p.m.
Mt Pleasant Community Library, 315 Academy Ave

HIGH SCHOOL EXPO

For the first time, PPSD will be hosting a High School Expo (for 8th Graders) to explore high school opportunities including PPSD's exam school, application schools, and school choice schools. It will also introduce students and families to the five redesign high schools.

Thursday, October 12, 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m., PCTA

SEPTEMBER SCHOOL MENU



EQUITY AND BELONGING DEVELOPMENT CALENDAR

Date	Work Session	Audience	Time	Venue
9-19	Understanding Gender Equity Policies at PPSD	Principals & APs ONLY	4:00-5:00	Virtual
9-20	Understanding Gender Equity Policies at PPSD	Principals & APs ONLY	4:00-5:00	Virtual
9-21	Understanding Gender Equity Policies at PPSD	Principals & APs ONLY	4:00-5:00	Virtual
9-21	Monthly Lunch and Learns	All Central Office Staff	12:00-1:00	In Person
9-26	Unconscious Bias Part 1	All PPSD Staff	4:15-5:30	In Person
10-12	Understanding Gender Equity Policies at PPSD	All Staff	4:00-4:45	Virtual
10-19	Monthly Lunch and Learns	All Central Office Staff	12:00-1:00	In Person
10-24	RESPECT Student Equity Leadership Conference Fall	Student Leaders	8:15-2:45	In Person
10-30	Unconscious Bias Part 2	All PPSD Staff	4:15-5:30	In Person
11-2	School-Based Supports to Affirm Student Gender Identity	Counselors ONLY	3:00-4:00	Virtual
11-9	Understanding Gender Equity Policies at PPSD	All PPSD Staff	4:00-4:45	Virtual
11-16	Monthly Lunch and Learns	All Central Office Staff	12:00-1:00	In Person
11-30	Unconscious Bias Part 3	All PPSD Staff	4:15-5:30	In Person