

# EXCELLENCE NEWS

EVERY CHILD, ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

## 2023 Winter Wonderland



The front entrance of the James P. Mitchell Building has been transformed into a Winter Wonderland thanks to the extraordinary creativity of the students and team members of Elizabeth Public Schools. Students and team members from each district school and administrative department were invited to create a decorative piece that would be relevant to the winter and holiday season and a wonderful representation of the good will, thoughtfulness, and holiday spirit of the Elizabeth Public Schools' during this special time of year. Many contributions, of varying sizes, mediums, and themes were submitted

from throughout the Elizabeth Public Schools learning community to produce a truly festive atmosphere. The display is a magnificent representation of the imagination, inspiration, and passion that fills the classrooms and offices of Elizabeth Public Schools on a daily basis.



### DECEMBER'S HIGHLIGHTS

- Holiday Cheer
- Early Childhood
- Elementary
- High School
- Upcoming Events

### Important Dates:

December 25 - 29  
Christmas Recess  
Schools & District Closed

January 1  
New Year's Day  
Schools & District Closed

January 2  
Schools Reopen

### Quick Links:

[School District Website](#)



[District Social Media](#)



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## Toussaint L'Ouverture-Marquis de Lafayette School No. 6

The eighth-grade students from Ms. Tubbs' English Language Arts class received a mysterious delivery from *The North Pole LLC* on December 4.

Opening the mysterious box was a moment filled with anticipation for the eighth graders as the shiny black box tied with a red and a green bungee cord was covered in warning labels for the eighth graders to beware of the elf inside the box. There was no need to worry about the elf's welfare since there were substantial breathing holes built into the box. However, anticipation grew when the ominous black box secured with bungee cords was placed on a student desk, and as Ms. Tubbs was about to open the box, it began to shake violently! Eighth graders debated about opening the box at all.



A few students wondered out loud if they should close the door and windows to ensure the elf didn't run when the box was opened. Before opening the box, it occurred to the classroom student leader (who had been mailed an invitation to lead the class in teaching Mateo, the elf, how to behave) that it might be better to tell Mateo their mission to help him learn how to behave so he can go back to The North Pole and participate in North Pole Christmas preparations and all the North Pole Christmas festivities. Students explained to Mateo their mission to help him and all the great prizes he can earn from them if he behaves. Included in those prizes were pizza parties, toys, candy, a special trip, and they even said they would help him find a girlfriend elf! Since the class wasn't sure what language preference Mateo had, this plan for helping Mateo become a well-behaved elf was shared with Mateo in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. Mateo, the Eighth Grade Classroom Elf, now appears to be happy and motivated to strive to be a well-behaved elf and earn an invitation from The North Pole LLC to work in their workshop and join in on The North Pole Christmas festivities. Eighth graders believe Mateo, The Classroom Elf, can do it and can't wait to catch Mateo being awesome so they can report his good behavior to The North Pole!



## Elmora School No. 12



Students in grades six through eight decorated the AVID Christmas tree with festive décor representing the endless possibilities towards their future. They adorned the tree with ornaments to ugly sweaters and even their very own AVID mascots. Students focused on their future while learning what it takes to become successful.



## Robert Morris School No. 18



Fifth Grade Chorus performed during the first Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony at the Newark Liberty International Airport. The fifth-grade chorus was the only vocal ensemble invited to perform at this event. It was a great honor to represent the school and district. Students performed beautifully in front of the Mayor of Elizabeth, CEO of Terminal A, and many distinguished guests. At the end of the event, students also had the honor to meet Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus.



## William F. Halloran School No. 22

On December 9, over 740 students and families came together for School No. 22's *Winter Wonderland 2023*. Families enjoyed breakfast, made holiday crafts, and took family pictures with Santa and Ms. Claus.





## iPrep Academy School No. 8

Holiday celebrations have begun at School No. 8. Throughout the month, there are several activities, such as a *Holiday Concert*, *Ugly Sweater Day*, *Grinch Day With Hot Chocolate*, and many more. Students and team members are excited to spread some cheer during this holiday season.



## Terence C. Reilly School No. 7



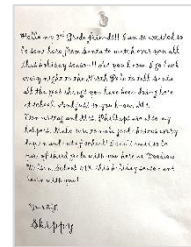
The fifth-grade dance troupe, under the direction of TCR's dance teacher Ms. Miller, performed at the City of Elizabeth's Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony at Union Square.

Students presented a spectacular dance to *Feliz Navidad* that lit up the night and helped to ring in the festivities of the holiday season with families and fellow students from the school district. In addition, they have been invited back to perform again, alongside TCR middle school choir soloists, at this month's tree lighting event in front of City Hall hosted by Mayor J. Christian Bollwage.



# HOLIDAY CHEER

# Woodrow Wilson School No. 19



Holiday Magic is clearly in the air and themed learning and spirit are evident everywhere you turn. Students are beyond thrilled to meet their magical elf friends for the first time. Woodrow Wilson Warriors collaborative team efforts are amplified even more this time of year. For instance, the dynamic third grade team created a fun incentive for all team members to share. Every morning for the entire month of December, team members are encouraged to listen to the beginning of a holiday song (played over the intercom). Once the song stops, team members are asked to dial the office extension and provide the correct song title. The team member with the correct song title wins a prize. School No. 19 is looking forward to joyous holiday season and a happy and healthy new year.



# Madison Monroe School No. 16



Mr. Luciano, School Social Worker kicked off the holiday season by reading the children's book *Spookley and the Christmas Kittens* by Joe Troiano to various homerooms from grades Kindergarten through third grade during the last week of November and the beginning of the month of December. Students enjoyed hearing about how Spookley the Square Pumpkin helped a special green cat, and three kittens find a home and taught us that it's never wrong to do the right thing.

Mr. Luciano also used this opportunity to check in with students and remind them of the importance of embracing differences, being kind, and the importance of friendships and family. Students were also reminded and encouraged to take the time to read.



## HOLIDAY CHEER

### Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy



Under the direction of Kelly Cubias, students from Dance and Choir performed at the Elizabeth Tree Lighting Ceremony by City Hall and at Kean University's Winter Concert.



### Dr. Orlando Edreira Academy School No. 26 @ 31

It marked the 26th Annual Winter Concert, on December 7, with a spectacular showcase of musical talent. The event featured a diverse lineup, including performances by the Jazz Ensemble, Advanced Band, Beginning Band, Beginning Strings, Sax Ensemble, Voices of Harmony, and Bell Choir, all uniting to bring the spirit of the holidays to life through enchanting music. With over 400 guests in attendance, the stage came alive with over 250 musicians, creating a harmonious celebration of the power of music and the joy it brings during the festive season.





## JVJ STEM Academy



On December 9, students participated in the Citywide Toy Giveaway & Movie Screening. Over 60 student volunteers participated in this event organized by the Elizabeth Board of Education Student Representatives Jeremiah La'Porte, Vincent Zeferino, and Ingrid Osorio, Councilwoman-at-large, Patricia Perkins-Auguste, The City of Elizabeth Office of Youth Services, and more. Volunteers worked to give over 800 young children gifts, which filled over three movie theatres. Young children were able to watch movies in between the gift giving! It was an amazing night for the community and the Elizabeth Public Schools.

## Abraham Lincoln School No. 14

School No. 14 participated in creating a *Winter Wonderland* for the school community to enjoy. Students were able to walk through two hallways of winter and holiday themed decor, take pictures, and enjoy the cheer of the season. The entire project was created by students and team members. On December 7, students began their walk through the *Winter Wonderland* with pictures with Santa. It was a wonderful night for the school community.





## Frances C. Smith ECC School No. 50



Students in Mrs. Vicci and Mrs. Munoz's classes collected donations of personal care items and snacks to create *Caring is Sharing* bags. The students created drawings to be placed in each bag. Bags were delivered to the Elizabeth Police Department and will be given out to Code Blue shelters throughout the city.

## Donald Stewart ECC School No. 51

School No. 51, united as a school family, participated in their annual *Panda Pride Parade*. They danced and sang their way to the multipurpose room while music played over the loudspeaker. Upon arriving, students and team members were recognized with a Harmony Award for their *Dedication, Commitment, and Outstanding Efforts in Promoting Harmony in the World*. The parade was an example of how they embody their cherished school motto: *Friends Care, Friends Share*. Everyone was invited to wear their school shirts in solidarity.





## Nicholas Murray Butler School No. 23

School No. 23 organized a heartwarming farewell for Harold Usman, a recently retired custodian. Students and team members showed their appreciation with a clap-out ceremony, students presented him with letters, and bid him a fond farewell to commemorate his dedication and contribution to the school.



## Victor Mravlag School No. 21

School No. 21 held their very first student council elections. There were seven eighth grade candidates for School President, six seventh grade students who ran for Vice President and two eighth grade students who ran for Secretary. Students had one week to campaign, and they were encouraged to be creative. Posters were displayed throughout the school.

On December 6, nominees had to prepare a speech and dress the part to share their platform with their peers. The whole school was abuzz. Students and staff had the opportunity to vote and select the candidate they believed would best serve the school. It was a great experience for all and one they hope to continue for years to come.





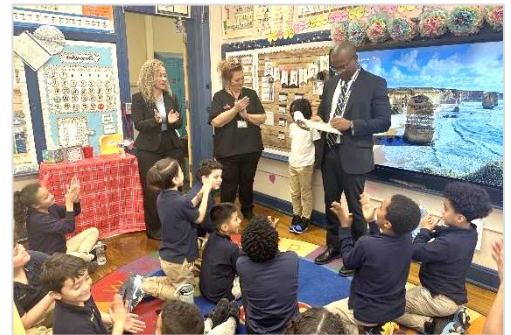
## George Washington Academy of Science & Engineering School No. 1



School No. 1 welcomed its parents into their building to help create *GWA Gingerbread Community*. Parents and GWA scholars got started with holiday festivities while creating gingerbread houses. Parents and students decorated their gingerbread houses while caroling to holiday music. The joy filled the room as holiday memories were made. All gingerbread houses were collected and placed in the *GWA Community*, where students and teachers were able to come and tour the gingerbread community.

## Mabel G. Holmes School No. 5

Ms. Wagner's third-grade Social Studies class took their unit on communities one step further. The class worked together to write a bill, elect a class representative, and advocate for the change they wanted to see in their school community. It was with the support of Principal Colomb Thomas-Petit and Vice Principal Melissa Rabess that the children's goals came to fruition.





## Joseph Battin School No. 4



The students attended the Safe Routes assembly on pedestrian and biking safety.

The program encouraged the students to create a poster about what they learned, but one second grade student in Ms. Hernandez's class, Matheus Da Costa De Andrade, took it to a higher level. He created a 3D project showing what he had learned.

## Benjamin Franklin School No. 13

On December 5, over 160 students were celebrated for earning *First Marking Period Honors!* These dedicated individuals have demonstrated exceptional academic performance, a strong commitment to learning, and consistent effort throughout the first quarter. These students have set a remarkable example for their peers and commend them for their dedication and hard work.



## Jerome Dunn Academy of Mathematics, Technology, and the Arts School No. 9



On Thanksgiving morning, the Leaders Of Technique (L.O.T.) program gave back to the less fortunate population of the Elizabeth community. Under the direction of teachers Xavier Ysabel and Victor Filipe, L.O.T. members from Madison-Monroe School No. 16 and Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27 assisted Elizabeth Board Member Maria Carvalho and Councilman-At-Large Manny Grova and the Portuguese Lions Club prepare food and feed Elizabeth residents at the Steve Sampson Center. L.O.T. members from School Nos. 1 and 9. They also assisted Councilman Carlos Cedeño and Christ Fellowship Church prepare gift bags and serve a hot meal to residents under the guidance of teachers Kwao Taylor and Kristian Cortizo, and Social Worker Judith Lantigua. One of the program's core values is CITIZENSHIP, and the Leaders organization put this belief into action.

*Thanks to the school leaders for being part of this amazing day. #CommUNITYConnect*



## Sonia Sotomayor School No. 25

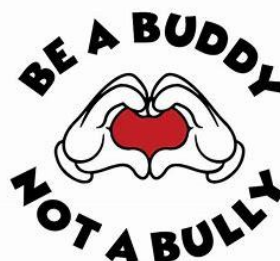


Ms. Cascante and the PTO ran a successful *Scholastic Book Fair* to promote reading at school. Mrs. Hernandez, Mrs. Rodriguez, and Mrs. Solis were three parents that volunteered their time to help run the book which the students, parents, and staff were excited to visit.



## Christopher Columbus School No. 15

School No. 15 held *Bullies to Buddies* assembly for the fourth and fifth grade students. Students enjoyed being actively engaged in learning what causes verbal aggression or bullying and identifying and roleplaying strategies from the *Golden Rule Toolbox*. Students are actively practicing the strategies that help all students treat others the way they want to be treated, making school safe and supportive for all students.





## Dr. Albert Einstein Academy School No. 29

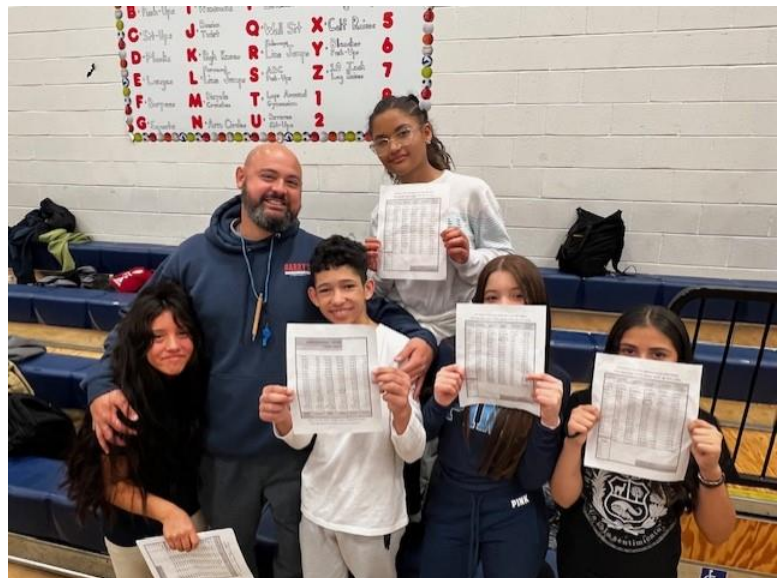


Students received a visit from Tizoc Caballos. Tizoc is a Mariachi musician who helps facilitate programs through the Save the Music Foundation. This foundation has provided the school with a grant for various Mariachi instruments. Under the direction of Mr. Glennon, Mrs. DiFonzo, and Ms. Cappuccia, select band members were chosen to create the school's very own Mariachi band. Students were excited to showcase the work they have done so far in this genre. Mr. Caballos spent his time here teaching students the history of Mariachi, as well as shared techniques to improve future performances. The students look forward to continuing the Mariachi program throughout the year.

## Juan Pablo Duarte-José Julián Martí School No. 28

On Dec 7, a team from the NJ State Police allowed 50 of the top performing students throughout the district to compete in NJ State Trooper Top Physical Challenge. This featured various fitness activities such as push-ups, sit-ups, shuttle-run, pull-ups, and the standing broad jump.

Carmelo Quinones, Janiya Melo, Eileen Munoz, Nevaeh Burgos, and Jeimy Hernandez were all selected to represent School No. 28 and performed extremely well.





## John E. Dwyer Technology Academy

Dwyer Senior Derell Eddings showcased a stellar performance in the NJ State Trooper Top Physical Challenge. Derell represented Dwyer with pride.

Derell was 1 of 70 students to compete in the district wide competition hosted at William F. Halloran School No. 22 by PE Supervisor Joseph Przytula and the New Jersey State Police. Derell was one of four students to receive an award. Derell competed side by side with the most athletic students from the district. A special congratulations and showing casing JEDTA pride!



## Admiral William F. Halsey Health & Public Safety Academy

Halsey students have had a festive month of December so far, from university visits to decorating for the season. The multicultural club did a wonderful job decorating the entrance of the school representing different cultures and holidays. Students also enjoyed their first dance this school year and a presentation from Prevention Links on underage drinking and drugs.





## Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy

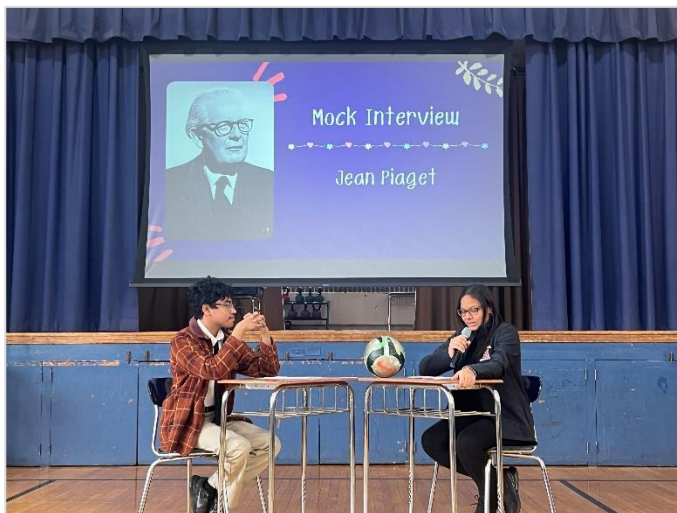


Mean Girls the Musical directed by Mary Rivera was a success! Students and team members performed two matinee sessions for students throughout the district, and three nights for the community.

*Special Thanks for Showing Excellence in the Arts!*

## Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy Annex

Hamilton Annex held an assembly for students during which students presented famous educators and individuals that made a major impact in education such as Booker T. Washington, Jamie Escalante, Jean Piaget and many more. Guest speaker John Byrne, Principal at J. Christian Bollwage Academy of Finance, shared his journey in education. Students took a moment to express their sincerest gratitude to honor teachers and educational support staff members.





## J. Christian Bollwage Finance Academy



In real estate, "location, location, location" is key! At Bollwage Academy, "connection, connection, connection" is key! The school's goal of increasing engagement is best reflected by the *Bollwage Beans & Bakery*. Under the guidance of two amazing special education teachers, Mr. Todd Lecher & Ms. Jennifer Schiffel, the autism program students were invited to cater a staff appreciation day for William F. Halloran School No. 22. The event was a success! As Mr. Lecher gushed, "my student, Jesse Rivera was amazing! He took over, described the directions well and was completely engaged in appropriate conversations. He literally could get a job as a barista or a host at a restaurant." And THAT is the magic of connection!

## Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy



The STEM Club students, with science teacher Ms. Ayesha Ali as the advisor, participated in the construction of tabletop tripods.

Students learned that tripods stabilize a variety of objects like the camera, laboratory beakers, stargazing telescopes, and act as surveyors' tool to measure distances and angles across land, etc. They brainstormed the benefits of a tripod over the monopod, bipod and a quadripod. The engineering design behind the tripod was revealed during its construction by the students.

This activity proved to be another excellent learning experience for the STEM Club members!



## Elizabeth Marching Band Alumni Perform in Macy's Parade

Six former Elizabeth Marching band members had the opportunity of participating with Rutgers University Scarlet Knights Marching Band, the only New Jersey Band and first-time performance, at the 97th Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City.

Below are a few alumni from Elizabeth High School Marching Band who participated at Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade 2023.

- Gabriel Montas, 2 years EHSMB  
3rd Year MSK, 1st Year Captain  
(Color Guard)
- Nuriel Santo, 3 years EHSMB  
2nd Year MSK (Color Guard)
- Teresa Kiarir, 3 years EHSMB  
2nd Year MSK (Color Guard)
- Nicole Aviles, 2 years EHSMB  
1st Year MSK (Color Guard)
- Fabrizio Ramos, 2 years EHSMB  
1st Year MSK (Trumpet)
- Ariana Moreno, 5 years EHSMB (Flute)  
1st Year MSK (Piccolo)



Gabriel, Nicole, Nuriel, Teresa

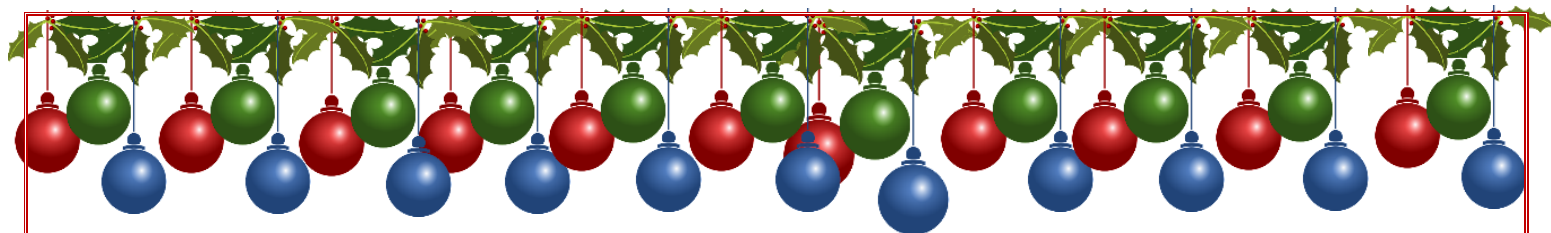


Fabrizio



Ariana





ELIZABETH PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
*Every child, achieving Excellence*

*Stuff-A-Bus*  
**Blanket Drive**



*Donate Warmth!*



Help bring warmth to members of our community this holiday season. Donations will go to patients of Brother Bonaventure Care Center in Elizabeth.

Items that are being collected are new blankets and self-care items like shampoo, conditioner, soap, body wash, razors, lotion etc.

**December 5th to December 15th**  
Drop-off Locations:  
**Schools Nos 7, 12, 14, 16 & 18**  
Items will be picked up on  
December 19th between 8:30-10:30 am.

ELIZABETH PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
*Every child, achieving Excellence*

*wishing you*  
**Happy Holidays**  
*in the month of*  
**December**



***You are empowered to achieve excellence!***  
Send us excellent news on the great things happening in your school to Delilah Sousa email: **[enews@epsnj.org](mailto:enews@epsnj.org)**

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