

# EXCELLENCE NEWS

EVERY CHILD, ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE

## 2025 Women's History Month Celebration

The talents of Elizabeth Public Schools students from several district schools were featured at the 2025 Women's History Month celebration event hosted by the Elizabeth Board of Education at Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson STEM Academy on March 13. EBOE President Stanley J. Neron welcomed everyone to the evening event and introduced Board Member Rosa Moreno Ortega who is sponsoring the district's Women's History Month activities and events this month. Moreno Ortega gave remarks about the Women's History Month initiative and introduced some of the schools who were performing for the evening's festivities.

The performances for the evening included "Sister Act", performed by students of Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy, "Beauty & Beast", performed by students of William F. Halloran School No. 22, "Faces of EPS: Women Shaping Education", performed by students of Joseph Battin School No. 4, and "Fast Car" (Tracey Chapman), performed by students of Chessie Dentley Roberts Academy School No. 30, as well as various performances recognizing EPS Schools Named After Distinguished Women, which were performed by students of Frances C. Smith Early Childhood Center School No. 50, Mabel G. Holmes School No. 5, Sonia Sotomayor School No. 25, Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27, Chessie Dentley Roberts Academy School No. 30, and Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan, Mary Jackson STEM Academy.

The Board recognized the women team members of Elizabeth Public Schools who have dedicated 40 plus years of service to the district by presenting them each with a Board resolution.

The Board also presented a resolution to former Dr. Linda Caldwell Epps, born and raised in Elizabeth, for her dedication to a lifetime of public and community service through a career in education at Bloomfield College and her extensive work in preserving the history of communities throughout the State of New Jersey while serving as President and CEO of the New Jersey Historical Society and as President and CEO of 1804 Consultants, an organization dedicated to the advancement of educational and cultural organizations.

### EPS HIGHLIGHTS

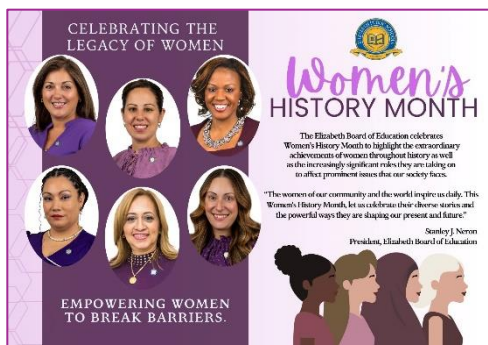
**Women's History Month**  
**Black History Month**  
**Read Across America**  
**SEL Day**  
**PK-8**  
**High School**  
**Mark Your Calendar**

#### Important Dates:

**April 2**  
World Autism Acceptance Day  
**April 7-11**  
National Principals Week  
**April 20-26**  
National Volunteer Week  
**April 22**  
Earth Day  
**April 23**  
Administrative Professionals Day  
**April 25**  
Arbor Day

#### School Closings for April

**March 31-** Schools and District Closed – Observance of Eid al-Fitr  
**April 18 & 21-** Schools and District Closed – Easter Recess  
**April 22** Schools Closed – Easter Recess  
**April 23-** Schools Closed – Easter Recess  
**April 24-** Schools Closed – Easter Recess  
**April 25-** Schools Closed – Easter Recess



For more photos, please visit  
[www.epsnj.org](http://www.epsnj.org)



# WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION





# WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

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



Students welcomed guest speaker, Allison Mendoza, to share her life experiences with the Newcomers Club. Ms. Mendoza is first generation Peruvian American. She first had a career in finance on Wall Street amongst mostly men and then evolved into Vice President of Design for Victoria's Secret. Her message to the *Newcomers Club* was empowering- don't give up on your dreams! The students learned a firsthand experience from a Latina American woman about resilience, overcoming fear of change, and being a leader.

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

Halsey students have been actively celebrating Women's History Month! They have enjoyed creating decorative displays honoring influential women and their achievements. In their English Language Arts classes, students have explored the contributions of women in history, science, politics, and the arts, expressing their inspiration through research projects, essays, and poetry.



# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

## 2025 Black History Month Celebration

Students from Elizabeth Public Schools from several district schools were prominently featured at the 2025 Black History Month Celebrating Black Excellence event hosted by the Elizabeth Board of Education at Dr. Albert Einstein Academy School No. 29 on February 13. EBOE President Stanley J. Neron welcomed everyone to the evening event and introduced Director of Equity and Inclusion Sam Etienne, who helped organize the event, to say a few words. Neron also introduced Board Members Charlene Bathelus and Jerry Jacobs who are sponsoring the district's Black History Month activities and events this month. Bathelus and Jacobs acted as the emcee of the event, introducing representatives from each of the participating schools to come forward to describe their students' acts.

The performances for the evening included the Black National Anthem, performed by students from George Washington Academy of Science & Engineering School No. 1 and their music teacher Kerry Stubbs, "Xango", performed by students from Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. Health & Public Safety Academy, "Freedom", performed by students from Nicholas Butler School No. 23, Black Excellence in Music & Dance, performed by students from Dr. Antonia Pantoja School No. 27, Harriet Tubman: Wade to Freedom, performed by students from Benjamin Franklin School No. 13, "Stand by Me" and "Freedom", performed by students from iPrep Academy School No. 8, and "Sisi Ni Moja (We Are One)", performed by students from Dr. Albert Einstein Academy School No. 29.

The Board also recognized the achievements of NAACP Elizabeth Chapter President Shawn McClain and retired Elizabeth Police Department Detective Darin Williamson by presenting them each with a Board resolution. Both McClain and Williamson were recently honored with the Presidential Gold Award for their outstanding service to their respective communities.

For more photos, please visit [www.epsnj.org](http://www.epsnj.org)





# BLACK HISTORY MONTH





# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

## Elmora School No. 12

In honor of Black History Month, School No. 12 proudly celebrated by hosting a Living Museum, an interactive exhibit where students highlighted African Americans who have shaped history. Two students from each homeroom, spanning grades pre-k through eighth, participated in this special event. Each student selected and researched an influential African American, bringing their stories of perseverance, innovation, and impact to life. As part of the celebration, our eighth-grade drama students performed a powerful skit about Ruby Bridges, the school band delivered a moving rendition of "Wade in the Water," and our 4th-grade chorus beautifully sang "What If" by India Arie.

A heartfelt appreciation to all our talented performers for their incredible work, as well as to the dedicated committee members: Mr. Fritcher, Ms. Noel, Mrs. Dabrowski, Ms. Esteves, Mr. Horner, and Mr. Marotta, for making this event a success!



## Chessie Dentley Roberts Academy No. 30

Students participated in a dynamic Black History Month Wax Museum, where they researched notable historical figures, created tri-fold presentations, and memorized brief biographies to share with the audience. To further enrich the experience, our jazz band and choir performed blues and civil rights selections, setting the tone and honoring the legacy of these influential individuals.

The museum was open to students, teachers, and parents, providing an engaging opportunity to celebrate and learn about the profound impact of Black history.





# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

## Terence C. Reilly School No. 7



On February 20, Terence C. Reilly's Black History Month performance celebrated the deep connections between West African history and American culture. The fourth through eighth grade students worked hard to showcase the significance of hair, orators, and music in shaping our cultural identities. The energy in the room was electric, reflecting our school's excitement and excellence. Special thanks to Ms. Coachman, Mrs. Torres, Mrs. Camuccio, and Ms. Figueiredo for their guidance. School No. 7 is grateful to the Montclair State University West African Drumming, Singing, and Dancing ensemble for sharing their talents. Their performance brought history to life and deepened the understanding of these traditions.

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

The Black History Committee hosted the school's annual Black History Month program. The event highlighted performances of singing, dancing, spoken word, poetry, and African drumming. The Leaders of Technique and First Ladies also participated in the celebration of Black Excellence. This year's program proved to be the perfect combination of information, entertainment, and professionalism as singer/songwriter/motivational speaker Akua Taylor (sister of JDA 9's PE Teacher Kwao Taylor) closed out the show with her own motivational message of *Reaching Higher*.





# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

## William F. Halloran School No. 22



On February 24, the middle school and pre-k huskies collaborated to create a “Live Wax Museum” for Black History Month. The project was designed to honor influential figures in African American history. It fostered teamwork, research, and presentation skills. This interactive experience allowed all students to learn about Black History in an engaging and memorable way.

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

Throughout the month of February, there were engaging lessons, performances and activities that highlighted the rich contributions of African American leaders, innovators and changemakers. The celebration culminated in a school-wide *Living Museum* and show, where students transformed into historical and contemporary African American figures, bringing their stories to life through research, costumes, and presentations. Guests toured the interactive exhibits, gaining insight into the remarkable impact of these individuals.





# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

## A Special Visit

Board Member Jerry Jacobs visited **Woodrow Wilson School No. 19** to share stories and read about impactful Black Americans who have made significant contributions to history.

During his visit, he engaged with students, highlighting the achievements and legacies of influential figures from various fields. His visit aimed to not only educate but also empower students to appreciate the diversity of experiences that have shaped our nation's past and continue to influence its future.



## J. Christian Bollwage Finance Academy

In honor of Black History Month, scholars participated in a presentation, round table discussion, and light breakfast with the Elizabeth Director of Health and Human Services Krishna Garlic and Elizabeth Public Schools Board of Education Commissioner Mr. Stanley Neron. The presentation focused on providing scholars with an overview of fundamental rights, civic responsibilities and duties, and civic engagement. Scholars engaged in a conversation focused on current issues facing our community and the global community. Scholars were also provided with information on pathways for community service opportunities and advocacy opportunities.





## Elizabeth Public Schools Celebrate Read Across America

In support of Read Across America's mission to encourage reading among all children, Elizabeth Public Schools held events on March 3. Board of Education members, administrators, community members, and elected officials visited schools throughout the district to read to students, celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday and the joy of reading.









# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL DAY (SEL) DAY

## John Marshall School No. 20

School No. 20 celebrated SEL Day with the Kimberly Anne Wilson Foundation. Language Arts teacher John Dysart lead a yoga class guiding students through movement and holding space for relaxation. President, Marianne Wilson spoke with students about emotions, the impact of bullying, self-care and supporting each other through challenging times. Students created positive affirmation bracelets, writing kind words about their peers on a bracelet which they wore throughout the day to remind themselves how amazing other people think they are every day.



## Juan Pablo Duarte-Jose Julian Marti School No. 28

SEL day was celebrated by hosting a Character Superpower Parade. Students created superpower headbands and posters to highlight what their superpower is. They paraded around the school in their superhero capes proud to share what their superpower is. To continue the SEL celebration, students read and learned about acceptance and friendship.





## PK-8 SCHOOL NEWS



### Christopher Columbus School No. 15

Award-winning author John Schu visited School No. 15. He gave out autographed copies of his book *Louder than Hunger*. In addition, he passed out other books, encouraging students to explore the joy of reading. His visit left an impression, inspiring young readers to connect with stories in meaningful ways.

### Donald Stewart ECC School No. 51

During Read Across America, students and staff members participated in numerous school-wide events and activities that were designed to promote literacy among young children. In honor of this event, the students commemorated some of Dr. Seuss' wonderful books by creating birthday cards for the author and wearing silly hats and socks, among other activities. On Friday, March 7, students and staff wore pajamas to school for Reading Under the Stars and listened to lullabies sung by their music teacher Mr. Kukla. Parents were invited to read books to their child using flashlights as shooting stars flew overhead. This event was an opportunity to gather the parents, students, and teachers in an environment which fosters a love of reading.



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



Students participated in the American Heart Association Kids Heart Challenge. During this challenge, the School 6 community comes together, making a difference through physical fitness and raising money to spread awareness and the important message of healthy lifestyles - and how our efforts can save lives. The goal is to not only raise money for the American Heart Association, but also to develop healthy and happy students prepared to physically and emotionally achieve in the school and beyond. Physical and mental well-being shows up as our students' best selves! Students pictured took part in our fitness contests and spread the message for The American Heart Association.



## PK-8 SCHOOL NEWS

### Frances C. Smith ECC School No. 50



Students celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> day of school by dressing as a person who is 100 years old.

### Madison-Monroe School No. 16

Students participated in The Great Kindness Challenge. This initiative aims to enhance the school climate and boost student engagement. Throughout the week, students were reminded of the importance of kindness towards themselves and others. School social worker Mr. Luciano assigned a kindness challenge for each homeroom to complete by week's end. Students also enjoyed various themed days, including "Kindness Moves," "Kindness is in the Heart of a Hero," "Too Bright to be Unkind," "Kindness Begins with Me," and "Kindness Moves Mountains." Additionally, students could engage in activities and pick up giveaways from the kindness station tables.





## PK-8 SCHOOL NEWS

### John Marshall School No. 20



Students began the new year with a phenomenal program titled "Self Expression through Art". The Kimberly Anne Wilson Foundation and their President, Marianne Wilson, sponsored our students. Megan Tuttle, an art therapist, provided students with an opportunity to create tapestries as an expression of their thoughts about changes they want to see happen within their community and within themselves. Students benefited from expressing their thoughts and feelings in a nonjudgmental atmosphere and created beautiful artwork they were proud to share.

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

School No. 26 celebrated Lunar New Year with a variety of in-class activities, immersing students in the history and traditions of this vibrant holiday.

A special thank you to the Mandarin teachers, Mrs. Hou-Liang and Mrs. Danitz, for organizing meaningful learning experiences for our students. Pictured are second-grade students from Ms. Infante's class proudly showcasing the dragon puppets they created in honor of the celebration.





## HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

### John E. Dwyer Technology Academy

Students from the National Art Honor Society are creating a stunning mosaic style mural featuring the American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*), New Jersey's official state bird. This project is more than just an artistic endeavor. It is part of an immersive learning experience that connects students to nature through birdwatching, conservation, and citizen science. As they bring the mural to life, students have been using the Merlin Bird ID and eBird apps to deepen their understanding of local and global bird species while actively participating in citizen science. By recording their bird sightings, they are contributing valuable data to scientists studying bird populations and migration patterns. While they have not yet spotted a Goldfinch, they have observed a variety of other birds in the area, including cardinals, sparrows, starlings, crows, hawks, and Canada geese, to name a few. These sightings have given them a greater appreciation for the diversity of birdlife around them and have inspired their artistic process.



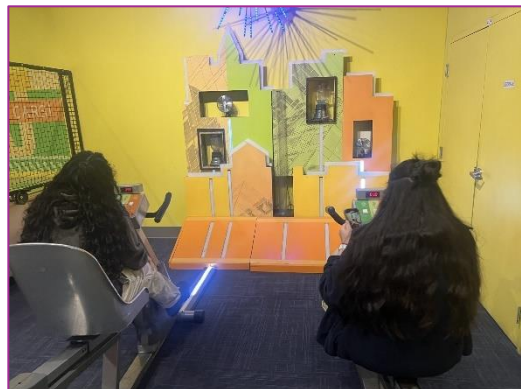
Though it is still a work in progress, the mural is already an eye-catching addition to the school. The final elements, including the title and bird's name, will complete this tribute to New Jersey's rich birdlife. Beyond its visual impact, the project serves as a lasting reminder of the importance of art, nature, and community engagement. Special acknowledgement to Mr. Braulio Batista for helping with consulting and providing supplies and for his support and expertise!

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

The JROTC students recently showcased their dedication and skills in a Physical Fitness competition. Our Girls ROTC Team placed fourth out of fourteen teams, while our Boys ROTC Team secured tenth place out of twenty-five teams—an incredible achievement!

This month, the Music Club students are also participating in the annual Teen Arts Festival. This event highlights the talents of Union County teen artists, recognizing their creative efforts in visual arts, creative writing, dance, music, and theatre. Our students will have the opportunity to showcase their talents alongside peers from other schools, celebrating artistic expression and achievement.

Additionally, the ninth graders had an exciting and educational experience during their recent trip to the Liberty Science Center. They explored interactive exhibits, engaged in hands-on learning, and deepened their understanding of science and technology in a fun and immersive environment.





# HIGH SCHOOLS NEWS

**REGISTRATION IS OPEN!!**

  
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**PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION**  
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Register February 19, 2025 - March 21, 2025  
Inscripciones abiertas del 19 de febrero al 21 de marzo del 2025  
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