

New Jersey Shines at 2019 National Forum of Character.org *EPS among districts leading the way in character education*



New Jersey is the most recognized state in the nation in the area of character education, based on the many recognitions New Jersey schools received at the 2019 National Forum of Character.org held October 24-27 in Washington, D.C.

Character.org, the national umbrella organization for character education, designated 27 New Jersey schools as National Schools of Character, the highest number recognized in any state. New Jersey schools also received 75 Promising Practices certifications for innovative and replicable character practices, also the highest number recorded by any state.

Elizabeth Public Schools has been among the districts that are leading the way for character education for New Jersey with seven district schools that have been designated as state schools of character, six of which received national school of character honors as well.

Nicholas S. LaCorte – Peterstown School No. 3, Dr. Albert Einstein Academy School No. 29, and Frances C. Smith Early Childhood Center School No. 50 all earned state recognition before being named National Schools of Character in 2019. Jerome Dunn Academy of Mathematics, Technology, and the Arts School No. 9 was recognized as a New Jersey School of Character this year.

EPS among districts leading the way in character education (cont.)

Elizabeth schools that have been recognized with New Jersey and National School of Character honors prior to 2019 include Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 (2018), Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood School No. 51 (2016), and Juan Pablo Duarte – José Julián Martí School No. 28 (2015), which received.

Elizabeth Public School is also home to five schools that were recognized by Character. Org for having Promising Practices. The schools receiving that honor include School No. 7 for “Christmas at Grams,” School No. 9 for “First Ladies,” School No. 28 for “Parrot Pride Buddy Program,” School No. 51 for “Super Hero Powers Rally,” and John E. Dwyer Technology Academy for “JEDTA Unity Day.”

“Christmas at Grams” as described by School No. 7

The school community at Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 in Elizabeth, NJ had the opportunity to work with the non profit organization, One Kind Step. As explained in their mission statement, One Kind Step was developed in order to promote positive change through creative projects. We strive to encourage and connect all members of society with the sole purpose of helping and uplifting one another." During the month of December, Terence C. Reilly joined forces with One Kind Step to promote a schoolwide fundraiser called 'Christmas At Gram's.' This event pays tribute to the founder's grandmother for whom the organization was created.

The task was to collect 250 toys to distribute to children in the Iron Bound section of Newark, New Jersey and Flint, Michigan during Christmastime. A video was presented to the School Senate spotlighting the organization's event and the students were immediately motivated. They saw communities in need and instantly had a desire to help. There was a group of 4-5 eighth grade students that were the delegates of the fundraiser. They decided that the Terence C. Reilly school community was committed to collecting 100 gifts for those in need. The School Senate created posters, made daily announcements, and encouraged the whole school community to come together to make a difference.

As a result of all of the school community's dedication, self-motivation and goodwill, Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 not only reached the goal of 100 gifts, but surpassed it. As a culminating activity, the students volunteered their lunch time to wrap and pack all of the gifts. One Kind Step could not have reached their goal without Terence C. Reilly School No. 7's motivation, character, and community involvement. The display of selflessness, hard work and generosity was far and above what anyone could have imagined. Terence C. Reilly's motto is "Together We Can". Through this joint venture, we proved we do!

“First Ladies” as described by School No. 9

The First Ladies of Jerome Dunn Academy School No. 9 was established in October of 2015. Ms. Jasmine Lee, Professional School Counselor at School No. 9, facilitates the program. The overall goal of the program is to increase self-esteem and character by exploring identity based around five factors (ie: creative self, coping self, physical self, social self and essential self. Our scholars engage in-group activities, discussions, and community learning projects to strengthen self-perception and leadership characteristics in our school and community.

EPS among districts leading the way in character education (cont.)

The First Ladies have impacted the community in many ways. We completed a service learning project and cleaned the local park across the street from the school. In addition, we hosted a car wash fundraiser and the proceeds were donated to Girls on the Run, a program that inspires girls to be joyful, healthy, and confident using a fun, experience-based curriculum that creatively integrates running. The other half of the proceeds were donated to a local organization in Elizabeth called Someone's Daughter, which is a program to promote self awareness and confidence.

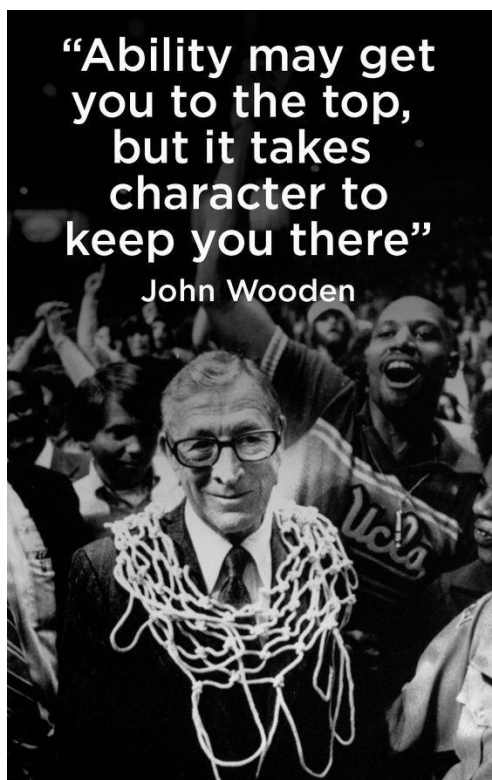
"Parrot Pride Buddy Program" as described by School No. 28

Duarte-Martí's Parrot Pride Buddy Program has been a staple at our school for the past five years. The concept and initial goal of the program was to pair "at-risk" students with an older, mentor-type student in order to give them someone to look up to and emulate themselves after. Our Kindergarten students were selected as the "at-risk" students after reviewing our school's attendance data and realizing these students with poor attendance also lacked structure and stability at home resulting in poor character decisions. The Eighth grade students interested in the program are required to fill out an application, obtain a teacher recommendation, and their grades and behavior are reviewed. Our Eighth grade students were selected to fill the role of mentor due to their maturity level and status in the school.

Once the Eighth grade buddies are selected, the Kindergarten teachers are given a list of their students with the poorest attendance rates and asked to select the students they feel would benefit the most from a buddy in the way of character development and support.

After the buddies are selected, an initial meet and greet is planned. On that first meeting the Eighth grade and Kindergarten students eat lunch together while mingling and getting to know one another. Buddies are formed organically so as to ensure all participants feel comfortable with one another in order to foster their bond. The kindergarten teachers are then informed of who their student's buddy is and given a copy of their schedule. If any problems or concerns arise throughout the day the teacher will call upon the buddy to help facilitate a resolution. The Eighth graders will also visit their buddies multiple times throughout the week to support them and act as a source of stability in their lives.

The program as a whole meets once a month to participate in a group activity. The Eighth grade students are responsible for planning and implementing all of these activities. In the past they've organized an Easter egg hunt, a clean-up of the school grounds, decorating kindness rocks for our school garden, and making picture frame keepsakes to display a picture of the buddies. The Eighth graders and Kindergarten students end the year by attending each others graduation and celebrating their accomplishments. The data shows that the Kindergarten students attendance increased over the course of the school year, and Kindergarten behavior referral forms decreased across the board.



**"Ability may get
you to the top,
but it takes
character to
keep you there"**

John Wooden

EPS among districts leading the way in character education (cont.)

“Super Hero Powers Rally” as described by School No. 51

During the annual Week of The Young Child celebration our school implemented various activities that are focused on the school’s initiative to instill mindfulness and character education in our children through kind actions and friendship. Various activities were planned for this week which began with reading character education books such as “Character Kids Save The Day.” Through this book the students learned what kindness means, the value of teamwork, coping with fears, and how to be responsible and honest. Through the “Kindness Word of The Day” activity, students were taught a new vocabulary word and how its meaning promotes kindness in the community.

The week’s celebration culminated with a “Super Hero Parade” where students wore colorful capes and paraded throughout the school. Student’s were encouraged to talk about their superpower and how they used their superpowers to help their friends, family, and community members. Student’s wore signs portraying their superpower word such as: Caring, Helpful, Caring, Responsibility, Honesty, Brave, and Cooperative. The school’s PTO participated in this initiative by providing the colorful fabric and staff members crafted the capes for each student to wear.



**People grow through experience if they
meet life honestly and courageously.
This is how character is built.**

- Eleanor Roosevelt

“JEDTA Unity Day” as described by Dwyer Technology Academy

John E. Dwyer Technology Academy’s motto is “We are JEDTA STRONG.” We focus on our Character Education initiatives from the pillars of Respect, Responsibility, and Integrity. Our school community is diverse and we host the Port of Entry Program for the entire district. Therefore, we have students from all over the world with different cultures, beliefs, religions, and educational backgrounds, and eighty-two percent of our students are bilingual.

We celebrate National Unity Day by having all teachers, team members, and students wear orange. On this day, all teachers and support staff have a Unity Breakfast. Administration shows appreciations by allowing teachers and staff an additional hour for the breakfast in order to allow them to come together and get to know each other. This activity builds respect and understanding of the challenges they all have within their different job responsibilities. While the breakfast is taking place, all students gather in the gym with the school administrators. During this time, all three administrators and the class presidents present a Character Education Lesson on one of our pillars, respect. We discuss tolerance and respect for each other’s differences. The assembly ends with team building activities and games which students truly enjoy.

EBOE Member Selected to State Urban Boards Committee Earns NBM, CBM Certifications from NJSBA Board Member Academy

Elizabeth Board of Education member Rosa Moreno Ortega was recognized for being selected to serve as a member of the NJSBA Urban Boards Committee and for obtaining two New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) certifications at the Union County Board Association meeting on November 14 in Garwood, New Jersey.

Moreno Ortega was selected to the Urban Boards Committee, which consists of a board member from each school district that qualifies as an urban district as determined by the State of New Jersey. The Urban Boards Committee studies issues concerning education in the state's urban school districts.

Moreno Ortega was also awarded the New Board Member Boardmanship Certification (NBM) and the Certified Board Member (CBM) certification from the NJSBA. The certifications are offered to School Board members as part of the NJSBA's Board Member Academy.



The Board Member Academy is a unique certification program that delivers top-quality training in all areas of school governance responsibility. Courses cover a range of topics, including general boardmanship, governance, school law, labor relations, policy and leadership.

The NBM is the first level of the NJSBA Board Member Academy certification program. Areas of study are designed to give new members a firm foundation in the initial governance skills needed to carry out their responsibilities. The CBM is the second level of the NJSBA Board Member Academy certification program, designed to enhance essential governance skills related to school board member obligations and duties.

"From the time she was elected to the Elizabeth Board of Education, Ms. Moreno Ortega has shown a tremendous commitment to serving the students and families of Elizabeth Public Schools," stated Elizabeth Public Schools Superintendent Olga Hugelmeyer. "Her strong work ethic has been a valued asset to the Board and to our school district and these certifications she has earned through sacrificing her own time to serve our community is a reflection of her dedication."

"We are all proud of Rosa and admire her determination to better herself by seeking any opportunity to further her skills and knowledge," said Elizabeth Board of Education President Stephanie G. Pestana. "She has been a wonderful colleague on the Board since she has arrived and I look forward to continuing our work together to assist our administrators, teachers, and support staff with taking education in Elizabeth to a higher level."

Elizabeth Marching Band Earns US Bands State Title

The Elizabeth High School Marching Band won the US Bands Group V Open State Championship on October 30 in Hillsborough, New Jersey.

Elizabeth, with a score of 93.300, outscored the competition of Hillsborough High School (92.450), Edison High School (91.950), and Passaic High School (91.200) in earning their title.

The Elizabeth Marching Band, consisting of 130 students under the direction of Mr. Ben Schwartz and assisted by Rebecca Ingeri, performed their 2019 production "The Heist". The production emulates a jewel thief stealing a valuable diamond in a museum. The show features music from the movie National Treasure, as well as the Karl Jenkins composition "Palladio," which was featured in DeBeers diamond ring commercials in the 1990's.

In addition to winning first place in its division, the band also won trophies for "Best Color Guard," "Best Percussion," and "Best Overall Effect."



Elizabeth Boys Soccer Wins Group 4, North 2 State Sectional Title

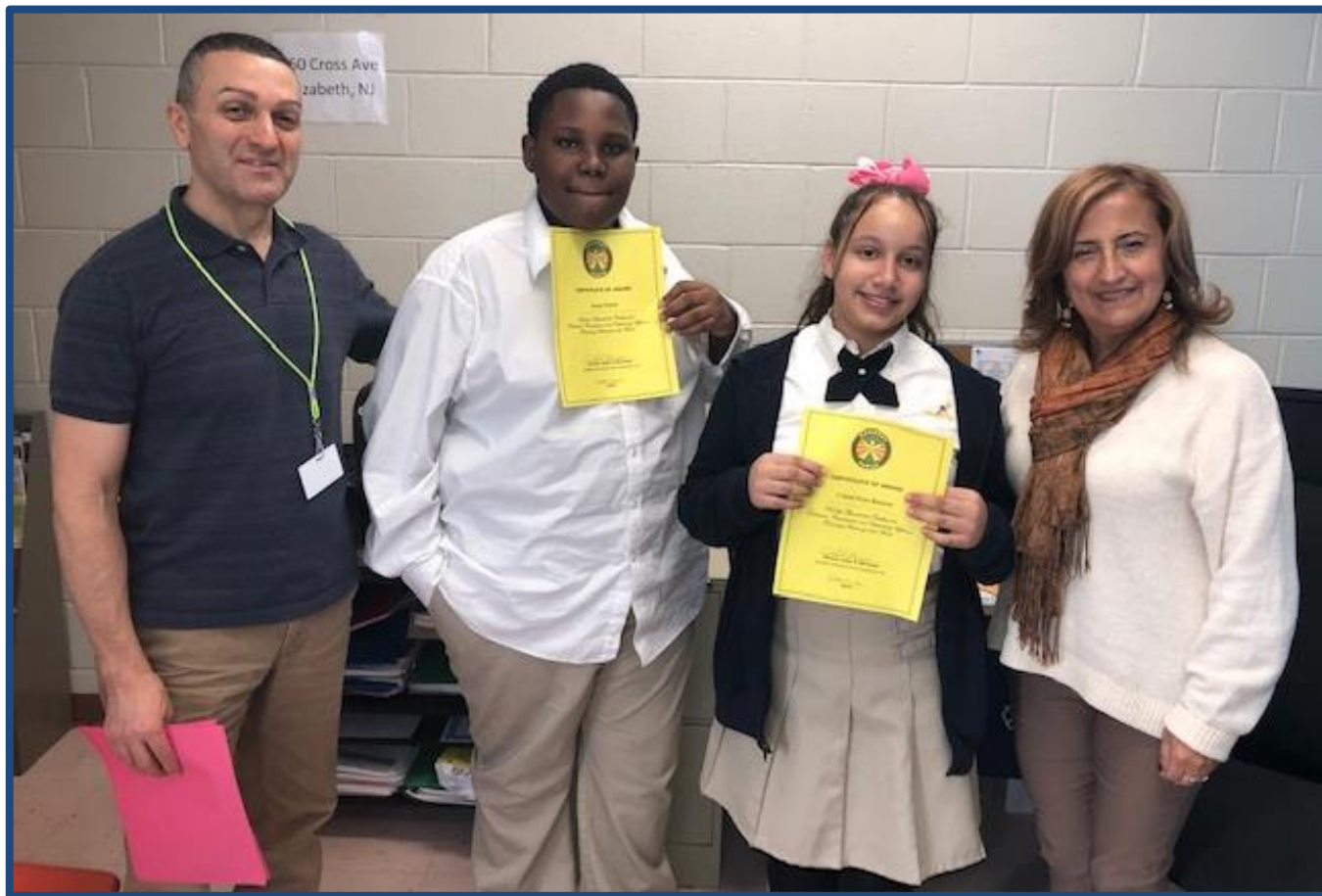


Top-seeded Elizabeth, who was ranked No. 3 in the NJ.com Top 20, defeated second-seeded Scotch Plains-Fanwood in the finals of the North Jersey, Section 2, Group 4 tournament at Williams Field in Elizabeth.

Emiliano Caballero scored in the 23rd minute on penalty kick, providing Elizabeth with an early lead that they would not relinquish. The lone goal held up thanks to a defense that has allowed less than a goal a game for the entire season. The defensive efforts were led by goalkeeper Stephen Valencia, who made several standout plays to preserve the victory which was their fourth against Scotch Plains-Fanwood in 2019.

Elizabeth finished the season at 21-1-4, losing its next game in heartbreaking fashion (3-2 in double overtime) to undefeated No. 1 and Group 4 Champion Clifton in the Group 4 State Semifinals.

EPS Students, Team Members Recognized with Harmony Power Awards



Elizabeth Public Schools students and team members from various schools throughout the district were recipients of Harmony Power Awards during the month of November as part of its character and anti-bullying education programs.

Harmony Power Awards are presented by the Harmony Power Foundation, whose mission is standing up to bullying and standing for human equality.

Sensei John Mirrione, founder of the Harmony Power Foundation, visited several school to participate in the awards ceremonies. The awards initiative kicked off at all 36 district schools during the Week of Respect in October with activities promoting harmony, kindness, and respect such as anti-bullying class lessons, art projects and contests, community service projects, and music and dance instruction. Students and staff received Harmony Power Awards as a result of their efforts during these activities.

Elizabeth Public Schools became the first school district in the nation to mandate the Harmony Power Awards. The successful and inspiring message of Harmony Power has led it to become part of an anti-bullying assembly bill (A1983) pertaining to the Week of Respect, sponsored by New Jersey District 35 Assemblywoman Shavonda E. Sumter, which has been introduced and referred to the Assembly Education Committee.

EPS Students, Team Members Recognized with Harmony Power Awards



At Abraham Lincoln School No. 14, joining students and team members at their first Harmony Power Awards ceremony was famous Holocaust survivor and Human Rights Advocate, Sami Steigmann. Steigmann was born in Czernovitz, Bukovina, Romania. From 1941 through 1944, as a young child he was with his parents in the Ukraine at Mogilev-Podolsky, a labor camp in an area called Transnistria. He was a victim of horrific Nazi "medical experiments" and faced life challenges as a survivor. He would eventually emigrate to Israel, where he served as part of the Israeli Air Force, before eventually moving to the United States and settling in New York City. He travels the country to share life lessons based on his personal experiences and to promote tolerance to make the world better for current and future generations.

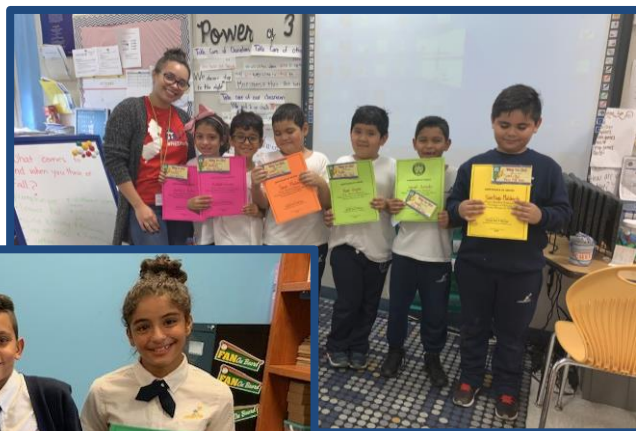


Terence C. Reilly's students participated in several Harmony Power related activities including a choreographed step routine, drama skits, and a song related to respect and unity; reading "The Hundred Dresses" by Eleanor Estes and having classroom discussions about themes from the story including the nature of friendship, the ethics of being a bystander in a bullying situation, and question what moral behaviors we owe to others; writing acts of kindness that were performed by students on paper hearts; writing messages about being respectful on the playground using sidewalk chalk; passing out anti-bullying stickers and tattoos; and writing RESPECT acrostic poems.

EPS Students, Team Members Recognized with Harmony Power Awards



Sensei John Mirrione stopped in at Robert Morris School No. 18, joining students and team members at their Harmony Power Awards ceremony. Various students and team members were rewarded for their efforts to promote kindness, respect, and harmony within the School No. 18 learning community.



EPS Students, Team Members Recognized with Harmony Power Awards



Mabel G. Holmes School No. 5 rewarded its scholars with Harmony Power Awards for performing and participating in an anti-bullying themed talent show. Students recited poems, danced, role-played skits, led an anti-bully pledge, and presented to fellow students and team members on ways in which they could contribute to decreasing violence in their school. Each scholar worked hard to present their talents to the entire school. Students in the lower grade levels created anti-bullying themed art pieces that displayed picture to display in the front of our school.



Elizabeth Celebrates 50-Year Sister City Partnership with Kitami, Japan



Thomas A. Edison Career and Technical Academy hosted the City of Elizabeth's Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of its Sister City Partnership with Kitami, Japan. Chef Ayako Tsuji and ten students from the Commercial Foods Culinary Arts Program prepared Japanese cuisine and presented guests with bento boxes. Chef Tsuji was greeted by Principal Fatimah Bey and Vice Principals Mona Monahan and Wilnes Jilus and was presented with gifts from the Edison Career and Technical Academy Student Government Association. Edison Career and Technical Academy was honored to have Elizabeth Board of Education member Stanley Neron, Elizabeth Public Schools Superintendent Olga Hugelmeyer, Assistant Superintendents Rafael A. Cortes, Jr. and Judy Finch-Johnson, School Business Administrator Harold E. Kennedy, Jr. and other city officials attend this event. After the meal, students were dressed in Japanese Yakata, a Japanese garment made of cotton fabric.



Principal Arlene Campbell and Vice Principal Robyn Azriel also opened the doors of School No. 30 to connect the two cities from across international borders. The guests were presented with a colorful mural that highlighted the beautiful city of Kitami; entertained by the award-winning School No. 30 band, directed by Meredith Foreman and chorus director Ryan Jaccoi; and treated to a variety of multi-cultural desserts to celebrating the gathering. In attendance were City of Elizabeth Mayor J. Christian Bollwage and Kitami, Japan mayor Naotaka Tsuji, who were welcomed by Elizabeth Public Schools Superintendent Olga Hugelmeyer and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Cedeno. Also, in attendance, was Director of Elementary and Secondary Education Dr. Daphne Marchetti. As attendees departed, they were given a festive pumpkin as a token of appreciation by School No. 30 Pre-Kindergarten classes.

School No. 28 Welcomes Real Madrid, Ducatus Foundations



Juan Pablo Duarte – José Julián Martí School No. 28 welcomed the the Real Madrid and Ducatus Foundations to its building on November 21, 2019 to celebrate and showcase the program developed through their partnership, the Real Madrid Academy of Social and Athletic Education.

Among the guests at the showcase event were legendary Real Madrid player Emilio Bustragueno, who shared his knowledge and love for soccer with School No. 28 students, and Richard M. Boudria, Jr., Chairman and President of the Decatus Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that seeks to fund and provide additional support to other exempt 501(c)(3) organizations for the development and integration of educational programs into local sports programs, and address the growing issues of obesity, hypertension, diabetes, depression, and anxiety among adolescents.

The Real Madrid Foundation is the instrument by which Real Madrid is present in society and develops its social and cultural awareness programs. Its main objective is to promote, both in Spain as well as abroad, the values inherent in sport, and the latter's role as an educational tool capable of contributing to the comprehensive development of the personality of those who practice it. In addition, as a means of social integration of those who find themselves suffering from any form of marginalization, as well as to promote and disseminate all the cultural aspects linked to sport.

This partnership is not only giving School No. 28 students the opportunity to play a sport they love, but also to learn about the Real Madrid teaching values that are embraced by School No. 28 as a National School of Character. They will be learning important core values through soccer, including respect, autonomy, motivation, equality, self-esteem, health, and team spirit.

The full gallery of pictures from this event can be found on the EPS website and social media platforms.

Hamilton Prep Alumna Making Her Mark at MSU

Point Du Jour Highlighted in President's Opening Day Address

Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy Class of 2019 graduate Elisabeth Point Du Jour made her presence known early in her educational career at Montclair State University, earning an acknowledgement from university president Dr. Susan Cole in her opening day address to the university community at the start of the Fall 2019 semester.



In her opening day address, as is customary each year, Dr. Cole highlighted promising incoming freshman. Point Du Jour was among seven from the entire class she mentioned, stating:

***“Elisabeth Point Du Jour** is entering as a Chemistry major, through the Health Careers program, with a goal of becoming a transplant surgeon. She graduated in the top 2% of her class at Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy with a 3.7 GPA. Elisabeth came to the U.S. from Haiti at a young age and took full advantage of the academic opportunities available to her. She served as the vice president of the Student Government, was a Chemistry tutor, and a member of the School Improvement Panel, meeting with members of the Board of Education to discuss proposals for academic improvement. Additionally, Elisabeth was part of the Union County Student Training and Enrichment Program, where she participated in hands-on activities focused on leadership, personal growth and civic engagement.”*

Dr. Cole's entire address to the MSU community can be seen at

<https://www.montclair.edu/president/2019/09/03/presidents-address-to-the-university-september-3-2019/>

Serena Smith, a recruiter for the MSU Health Careers Program, also shared that she performed exceptionally well during MSU's Six-Week Summer Program.

In May 2019, the Honorable J. Christian Bollwage, Mayor of the City of Elizabeth, presented the "Youth of the Year" honor to Point Du Jour for demonstrating responsible leadership in school organizations and community service at the 53rd annual presentation of the mayor's award. She also participated in the April 8 Elizabeth Board of Education meeting, at which she recited the district's Pledge of Ethics and presented along with her fellow Hamilton Preparatory Academy classmates about their community service project, WE Walk for Water, as well as the WE Have Character Club.



EQUITY

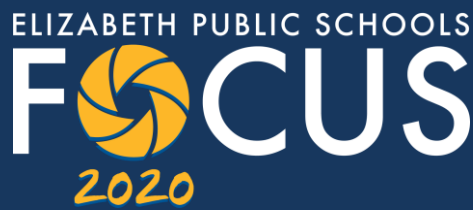
As a nation, America's Promise is that every child, regardless of race, ethnicity or social class, should receive a high quality, academically rich and rigorous public education.

EXPECTATIONS

The concept of high expectations is premised on the philosophical and pedagogical belief that a failure to hold all students to high expectations effectively denies them access to a high quality education, since the educational achievement of students tends to rise or fall in direct relation to the expectations placed upon them.

EXCELLENCE

Educational Excellence is defined as students performing at high levels or where students are making significant gains in academic achievement helping to prepare every child for global competitiveness.



Student

We believe ALL students can learn and achieve at high levels regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, neighborhood, household income or home language.

ALL Means ALL. We will narrow the achievement gaps of students by providing a high quality education to ensure that ALL of our students are college and career ready.

Teacher

We believe teachers make a positive difference in student achievement. Teachers will prepare ALL students for success in college, career, and our technological global society.

We believe that teachers are central in a child's life. Having an effective teacher is the single most important factor in student success.

Leader

We believe that effective leaders demonstrate unwavering commitment to high levels of achievement for ALL students.

Leaders will exemplify and support practices that promote high levels of achievement for ALL students.

Family

We believe that parents and caregivers are both valued partners and active participants in their children's learning. A shared sense of mutual responsibility for learning is the foundation for family involvement to ensure student success.

We are committed to engaging parents and caregivers in their children's education. We will develop a coordinated strategy that enables parents and caregivers to play an active role in building and sustaining family support for their children's learning and academic success.

Team

We believe that every member of the Elizabeth Public Schools Team has a responsibility in producing and supporting high levels of achievement for ALL students.

Every member of the Elizabeth Public Schools team will make a measurable contribution to the success and achievement for ALL students by ensuring equitable distribution of resources throughout the organization.