

School No. 7 Ranks Among Top 25 Schools in NJ



Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 ranked among the top 25 schools in the state according to New Jersey Department of Education data obtained by New Jersey Advanced Media.

These ratings mark the first time the state has scored each of its public schools on a scale of 1-100. The ratings take into account standardized test results, chronic absenteeism, ELA and Math growth, and graduation rates for high schools.

School No. 7 was ranked No. 22 among 2,473 public schools in New Jersey and was in the top 15 among schools that serve elementary and middle school level students. The rankings include each school's score out of 100 and a percentile rating, calculated by the state, comparing the school to others with the same grade levels. School No. 7 earned a score of 92.4 which put them in the 99th percentile.

"Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 does a tremendous job of fulfilling our district's promise of providing an innovative and personalized learning environment that ensures every child achieves excellence," said Elizabeth Public Schools Superintendent Olga Hugelmeyer. "The entire learning community is passionately committed to setting high expectations, delivering rigorous instruction, and performing at the highest level."

Elizabeth Board of Education President Maria Z. Carvalho praised the efforts of the School No. 7 community in taking its place among the state's best schools.

"I would like to congratulate the team members, families, and most importantly, the students of School No. 7," said Carvalho. "The commitment on behalf of the teachers and administrators to provide a high quality education and the willingness of the students to embrace it continues to be exceptional and the proof is in the results."

The Path to Stardom: From Einstein to Broadway



As we work tirelessly to ensure that every child achieves excellence at Elizabeth Public Schools, we do so with hopes and dreams that our students rise to the top of a profession. It is not often that we encounter students who reach an elite level in a profession while still learning their letters and numbers.

Dr. Albert Einstein School No. 29 kindergarten student Elie Rapada attends school during the day and performs on New York's famed Broadway stage at night. He was one of four children selected to play the character Tam in *Miss Saigon*, a love story about a Vietnamese woman and an American G.I. set to the backdrop of the end of the Vietnam War.

Not only is Elie not the only Broadway star in Elizabeth Public Schools, but also not the only Broadway star within his own family. His sister, School No. 29 prekindergarten student Edelle Rapada, is another of The four children who were selected to play Tam.

Mr. and Mrs. Rapada, big fans of the arts, signed Elie up with a Talent agency. They received an email about an audition for the part of Tam. Elie was called back for a second round and was given the part in July 2017. Edelle would subsequently be hired to play Tam for Wednesday matinees starting in September, when Elie would be in school.



The Path to Stardom: From Einstein to Broadway (cont.)

While this was Elie's and Edelle's Broadway debut, they have played in numerous commercials and television programs as extras. They were in the Showtime program *The Affair* Season 3, Episode 2 in the playground scene.

Mrs. Rapada, who has a 2 year old at home, said that it is hard at times.

"As soon as Elie comes home from school, we have to travel into NYC to the theatre. The show ends at 10:45 p.m. and he falls asleep in the car on the way home," said Mrs. Rapada.



However, Elie and his mom both loved the experience. Whenever he would come home from school, Elie asks his mother, "Do I have Broadway today?"

Mrs. Rapada has seen a big change in both Elie and Edelle. They have developed self confidence and are able to go out and perform. They are not shy with family and friends and they both love what they are doing.

Elie's teacher, Mrs. Cierpial, is very impressed that he can be so focused and follow directions so well on stage.

"At school, Elie is already reading fluently and writing. He loves Math too! Although he can get very silly sometimes," said Cierpial.

At first, Cierpial was not even aware that Elie was in a major Broadway show.

"It's funny, but he never said anything about the theatre at all," said Cierpial.

The Path to Stardom: From Einstein to Broadway (cont.)

“Once I found out, I asked him to talk to the class about what he does on Broadway. He explained that the character Tam has a mom named Kim and gets to meet his dad, the character, Chris. He also told the kids that there are 4 Tams; that if one of them can't be in the show, he might get called to go to the theatre. He spoke like a true professional!”

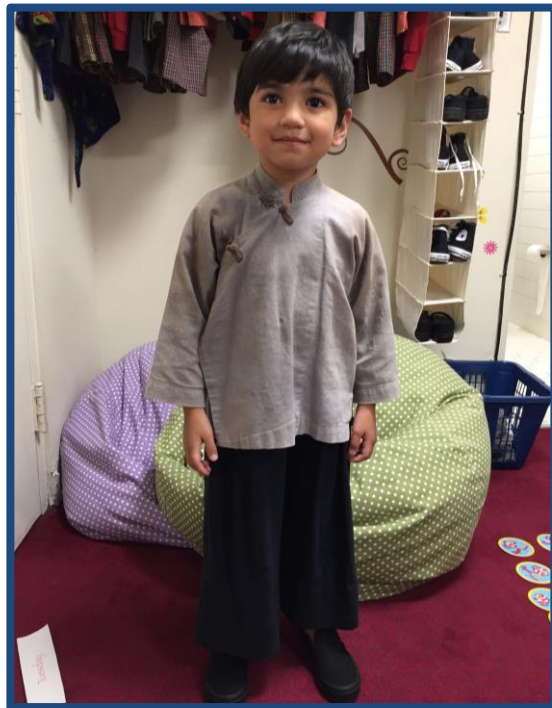
For such an amazing accomplishment at such a young age, Elie still has a great way of keeping things in perspective.

“What I find so astounding is that he still goes home and talks about what we do in school,” said Cierpial.

His dad, Emil Rapada feels that it is most important for parents to encourage their children to be engaged in productive activities such as the arts.

“Art goes beyond borders and the performing arts has the power to unite all peoples and nation to foster peace,” said Emil Rapada.

In the meantime, as Elie continues to build upon his foundation of knowledge he also is thinking of building upon his resumé. Elie thinks he would like to try acting in the movies.



EHS Alum Donates Princeton Review Courses to Current EHS Students

Patrick Hackett, an alum of Elizabeth High School, has agreed to donate funds to cover the cost of Princeton Review courses for approximately 25 to 50 Elizabeth High School – Frank J. Cicarell Academy juniors.

The Princeton Review offers test preparation for standardized tests including SAT, ACT and graduate school entrance exams. The Princeton Review also provides private tutoring and college admissions counseling.

After graduating from EHS, Hackett attended and graduated from University of Pennsylvania with a B.A. in chemistry and also holds a B.S. in economics from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. For years, he has paid for any and all expenses of any student attending the University of Pennsylvania who graduated from EHS.

Professionally, Hackett joined the private equity investing firm Warburg Pincus in 1990 and focuses on investments in the Technology, Media and Telecommunications group. Previously, he was the Vice President of Cove Capital Associates, a private merchant banking partnership, and prior to that a Partner with private equity firm, Acadia Partners. Mr. Hackett is a Director of Bridgepoint Education and Intelligent Medical Objects (IMO).

Assemblyman, UC Sherriff Among Those to Speak to Students at Hamilton



Class of 2018 AP Government and Politics students of Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy enjoyed visits from New Jersey State Assemblyman Jamel Holley, Union County Sherriff Peter Corvelli, Union County Undersherriff Amilcar Colon, and Elizabeth City Councilmen Carlos Cedeño and Manny Grova and Councilwoman Patricia Perkins-Auguste, who served as guest speakers for the class.

The students were very excited to meet Assemblyman Holley and learn about the duties and responsibilities of the 80-member General Assembly, including its role of enacting laws through introducing and voting on bills.

Corvelli and Colon shared with students how the Union County Sherrif's Office provides unique law enforcement services to the residents of Union County, including assisting the Department of Homeland Security, the Joint Terrorism Task Force, the Domestic Violence Joint Task Force, and the United States Marshal's Fugitive Task Force while also responding to all major incidents in the county.

The members of Elizabeth City Council who spoke with the students, Cedeño, Grova, and Perkins-Auguste, spoke to the students about the operations of local government and their roles in City Council. They all encouraged the students to participate in many community service opportunities that the city and county provides.

The students left these visits motivated to reach their full potential and be successful in their future endeavors.

Jefferson Arts Student Receives Athletic Scholarship to Catawba College



Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy senior MariaElena Torres, in a family like atmosphere, signed a letter of intent at a ceremony on February 7 to play women's soccer at Catawba College, located in Salisbury, NC.

Torres started playing soccer in Elizabeth at the middle school level while attending Victor Mravlag School No. 21 where she was a member of the first eighth grade class to be promoted from the new Shelley Avenue building. At the high school level, she played all four year on the girls varsity soccer team, finishing her high school career as a key contributor to the two best seasons in team history. The 2016 varsity girls soccer team ended their season at 17-5 while the 2017 team finished with a record of 15-5-2.

As an individual, Torres was the team's captain and set the career goal scoring record with 71 goals, a testament to her work ethic and desire to be the best at what she does. She received many recognitions for her outstanding performance, including All-Union County Conference First Team for two years in a row as one of the top goal scorers in Union County.

"Coaching MariaElena was always very easy because she was one of the hardest working players in the group, understood what teamwork means, and had a strong desire to win," said Varsity Girls Soccer Head Coach Antonio Almeida. "Mari could read the game and communicate well with anyone on the team. She also had the speed to handle anything that got in her way. Players had such trust in her offensive capabilities."

Among those in attendance were Almeida and Assistant Coach Anthony DePasquale, Assistant Teacher in Charge of Athletics Kelly McCracken-Villanueva, Athletics Administrative Secretary Helen Berlinski, Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy Principal Michael Ojeda, Assistant Superintendent Rafael A. Cortes Jr., and members of Torres' family.

At the ceremony, Torres gave a speech highlighting the support she has received from her teachers over the course of her educational career in Elizabeth Public Schools.

"We all want to wish her the best of luck at Catawba College," said Almeida.

Hamilton Prep Student Accepted to 3 Universities at HBCU College Fair



Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy senior Mahogany Cosme was accepted to three colleges on the spot at the Staten Island NAACP Eighth Annual Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Experience on January 27 at Curtis High School.

Over 700 students from 25 towns and all five New York City boroughs participated in the college fair which included 29 historically black colleges and universities from throughout the eastern half of the United States.

In Title III of the Higher Education Act of 1965, Congress officially defined an HBCU as a school of higher learning that was accredited and established before 1964, and whose principal mission was the education of African Americans. HBCUs offer culture, a rich history, and rigorous academic programs that prepare students for leadership and life after graduation. There are 101 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) across the nation and nine percent of all African American college students attend HBCUs.

The three postsecondary institutions that accepted Cosme were Lincoln University and Cheyney University in Pennsylvania as well as Bowie University in Maryland. Lincoln University and Bowie University both rank in the top 25 of U.S. News and World Report's 2018 Best Historically Black Colleges and Universities rankings.

EPS Tabs Jefferson Arts Principal to Lead AVID Staff Development

Elizabeth Public Schools has selected Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy Principal Michael Ojeda to serve as the Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) Staff Developer.

AVID is a research-based instructional model that encourages students to prepare for and participate in a challenging college preparatory curriculum by teaching skills and behaviors for academic success, providing intensive support with tutorials and strong student/teacher relationships, creating a positive peer group for students, and developing a sense of hope for personal achievement gained through hard work and determination.



As an AVID Staff Developer, Ojeda will be trained in methodologies for AVID implementation in grades kindergarten through 12. This includes yearly training sessions in pedagogical approaches (e.g. managing the AVID elective, literacy across the curriculum), leadership (e.g. implementation at various grade levels), and student services (e.g. guidance services for college readiness).

Moving forward, Ojeda will serve as a developer for representatives (including teachers, school leaders, and student services professionals) from school districts across the US at AVID Summer Institutes and yearly Pathways to AVID events. These yearly conferences range from 3-5 days each and provide in-depth training into AVID methodologies. In tandem with this, Ojeda will be authorized to provide AVID Pathways trainings to EPS team-members through in-district professional development events.

Elizabeth Public Schools currently has 18 elementary schools and all high schools implementing the AVID model. Jefferson Arts Academy, where Ojeda serves as principal, has the second largest AVID program in the district behind Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy, a school whose identity is aligned with college preparation and was the first in the district to implement the AVID program. Currently, 377 students participating in AVID at Jefferson Arts Academy, which represents 34% of the student population.

The training that Ojeda will receive and provide to district team members will allow Elizabeth Public Schools to expand significantly the number of schools and team-members with access to such training.

“The AVID mission aligns squarely with our professional learning community’s commitment to college preparedness, career readiness, and on-time graduation for all students,” said Ojeda.

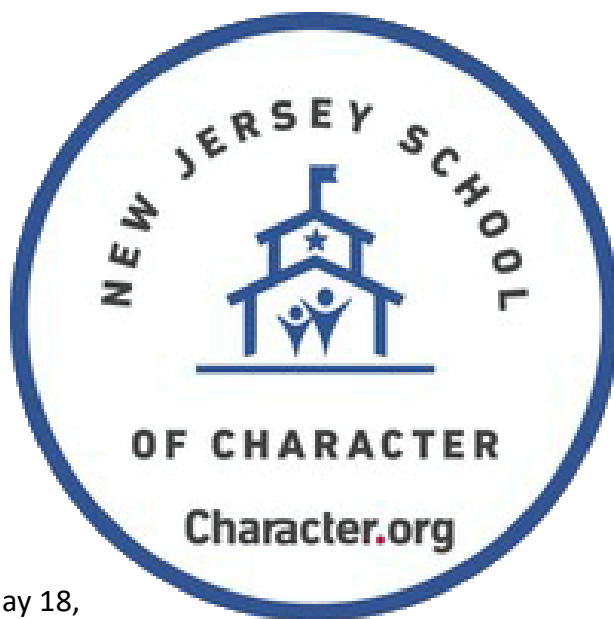
“The AVID training that we seek to share with team-members will equip schools with the pedagogical and leadership tools needed to support high levels of student learning and ensure that our graduates are well-prepared for the work of meeting their personal aspirations.”

School No. 7 Named 2018 NJ School of Character

Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 was one of 19 schools to be recognized as a 2018 New Jersey School of Character (NJSOC) by the New Jersey Alliance for Social, Emotional and Character Development (NJASECD).

Each year, Character.org and its state affiliates select schools and districts that demonstrate a dedicated focus on character development which has a true positive impact on academic achievement, student behavior, and school climate.

School No. 7, who will be honored in a recognition ceremony to start the 2018 NJASECD Conference at Rider University on May 18, joins 65 schools selected nationally as state schools of character.



The 19 schools selected as 2018 New Jersey Schools of Character have been forwarded to Character.org, a national character education advocate, and are in the national evaluation process for consideration to be 2018 National Schools of Character.

Elizabeth Public Schools can now claim four district schools that have been designated as state schools of character. Past recipients include Nicholas S. La Corte-Peterstown School No. 3 (2016); Juan Pablo Duarte – José Julián Martí School No. 28 (2015), which was also named a National School of Character; and Donald Stewart Center for Early Childhood School No. 51 (2016).

School No. 7 will retain the NJ School of Character status for a period of three years, through 2020.

“As part of creating a safe and caring environment, we strive to promote social, emotional, intellectual, and physical wellness,” said Elizabeth Public Schools Superintendent Olga Hugelmeyer.

“Not only should Terence C. Reilly School No. 7 be proud of its excellent academic performance, but also its representation of outstanding character, both of which have recently been recognized among the best in New Jersey.”

Elizabeth Board of Education President Maria Z. Carvalho believes character is a vital trait to a successful school community.

“The best type of learning community is the one that combines high quality instruction, high student engagement, and exceptional character,” said Carvalho. “School No. 7 continues to enjoy great success and receive accolades such as being named a New Jersey School of Character because of its ability to excel in all three of those areas.”

EQUITY

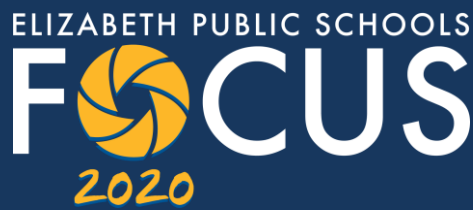
As a nation, America's Promise is that every child, regardless of race, ethnicity or social class, should receive a high quality, academically rich and rigorous public education.

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.