

# inside eps



Elizabeth Public Schools, Elizabeth, NJ  
December 11, 2014

## EPS TEACHER EARNS MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARD

Elizabeth Public Schools science teacher Tracy Espiritu was awarded the prestigious \$25,000 Milken Educator Award during a special ceremony held at Dr. Albert Einstein Academy School No. 29.

Milken Family Foundation Co-Founder Mike Milken, together with First Lady of New Jersey Mary Pat Christie and New Jersey Acting Education Commissioner David C. Hespe, made the announcement before School No. 29 students, team members, and local dignitaries. No one was more surprised about the announcement of the award than Espiritu herself, who thought she was attending a presentation on college and career readiness.

Tracy Espiritu is one of up to 40 recipients across the country chosen to receive this honor during the 2014–15 school year. Tracy is the sole recipient in New Jersey. EPS salutes this exemplary teacher.

*The Milken Award recognizes exemplary elementary and secondary school teachers, principals and specialists who are furthering excellence in education.*



# EPS TEACHER EARNS MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARD



# POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS (PBSIS)

The goal of PBSIS is to build capacity within schools to support the social-behavioral needs of all students. Implemented well, PBSIS can reduce behavior incidents that interfere with learning and ultimately reduce the need for referral to special education. As part of New Jersey's PBSIS initiative, schools make a two-year commitment to participate in training and technical assistance on current, research-validated practices to create environments that encourage and support pro-social student behavior at the school-wide, classroom, and individual student levels.

## The PBSIS model utilizes a three-tiered support model which includes:

**Tier 1:** *Universal Interventions* that promote a positive school climate by teaching and reinforcing a consistent set of behavioral expectations for all students, staff, and settings school-wide;

**Tier 2:** *Secondary Interventions* that provide function-based interventions through small group and individually tailored strategies for students with repeated behavior problems; and

**Tier 3:** *Tertiary Interventions* that use a function-based problem solving process to conduct assessments and design individualized support plans for students with disabilities and the most intensive needs.

This year, PBSIS has been used in priority and focus schools to support the work of the Department of Education's Regional Achievement Centers (RACs). Research has demonstrated that schools with a positive school climate have fewer incidences of conduct problems and better student performance. The rate of referrals to the office for behavior; suspensions; climate data; placement and academic achievement data will be used in the priority and focus schools to measure the impact of the initiative. With a positive, proactive approach toward behavior, it is anticipated that schools will be better equipped to support students with disabilities in general education learning environments and foster positive post school outcomes.

The NJDOE recently met with the District's Steering Committee to discuss the progress made by our schools. We are proud to announce that Thomas Edison Career and Technical Academy, William F. Halsey Leadership Academy and the Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy have been recognized for having built capacity among school personnel to create proactive and positive school systems.

Both the principals and their respective planning teams have done an outstanding job in increasing available instructional time; encouraging and supporting pro-social student behavior; using a continuum of function-based problem solving to address behavior and conduct issues; and creating environments conducive to including students with disabilities and behavior support needs.

*Research has demonstrated that schools with a positive school climate have fewer incidences of conduct problems and better student performance.*

New Jersey

Positive Behavior  
Support in Schools



New directions in school success

# THE TRAVELING GUITAR FOUNDATION GIVES BACK TO EPS

Rock/Metal guitarist Damon Marks and his not-for-profit Traveling Guitar Foundation along with sponsors Schecter Guitars, Mogami Cable, Guitar Center, EMG Pickups and Mesa Boogie donated 25 electric guitars and bass guitars, instrument cables and various percussion instruments to various schools located in Elizabeth, NJ

The Traveling Guitar Foundation (TGF) returned to Elizabeth, New Jersey, the hometown of guitarist and founder Damon Marks, to inspire students through music education and make generous donations of brand new Schecter guitars, percussion instruments provided by Guitar Center, Vic Firth and Conn-Selmer and Mogami instrument cables to four music programs at Elizabeth Public Schools. Marks developed his love of music while a student in our district.

The special events, including a performance workshop and the donation of musical supplies, held at Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy, John E. Dwyer Technology Academy, Elizabeth High School, and Jerome Dunn Academy School No. 9.



# Technology In Our Classrooms

*Here are some of the applications taking place all around the district*



*"In my 8th grade social studies classes at School 7, I have developed a student-centered project focusing on Genocide Awareness. Last year, using the MacBook Air laptops, students were able to utilize the technology to create interactive websites, iMovies, iBooks, and musical compositions to promote awareness and action in support of genocide prevention. Students then published their work to the internet, our school, and specific classes." Beverly Jones – Terence Reilly School No. 7*

Here is a link to a website created by a student, Gianna White, which includes several student-created videos and other projects: <http://giannas.wix.com/actsandreactions#!portfolio/cwv>

## Admiral William F. Halsey Leadership Academy

*"I have done a digital media project. My project included pictures, short videos about my students conducting research and animation about the inquiry based learning. Please check out my website." Rosa Aghekyan*  
<http://eden.rutgers.edu/~aghekyan/Final/overview.html>

## iPrep Academy

Teachers create online 'Do Now' and 'Exit Slips' in which the students complete in class and teachers can pull up in real time to access their students skill set and understanding of the content.

## Alexander Hamilton Academy

*We use technology in many ways. As teaching tool- e.g. power points, to research for papers, projects and for teacher-student communication" Alicia Parker, Social Studies*

## Blackboard Implementation District-wide

Teachers can post lesson plans, class content, and homework onto Blackboard. Students in turn complete classwork, homework and assessments online.

# Technology In Our Classrooms

*Here are some of the applications taking place all around the district*

The Science Supervisor of Elizabeth Public Schools, Ms. Linda-Lee Kelly, encourages Science Teachers to use probe ware connected to graphing calculators, in the classroom. The probe ware can also be connected to computers, to generate real time data or data sets, which enables the students to see patterns in the data or make connections between different concepts. These are called Computer based Labs or CBL's that my students also perform.

## Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy

*"In my AVID classes we have made quizlets. Students use these quizlets to practice for upcoming tests and quizzes in their major subject areas."* Galina Brodsky

## Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy

*"Our creative arts strands have collaborated in music, visual arts, dance, media arts, and music technology to create videos that highlight our work. Both of these videos were featured at the TI:ME Music Technology Expo at Rowan University. One of the videos received the Gold Prize and Best in Show Award."* - Steven Sabet

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RMSpy8GyVt8>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJ1ELbKaUhk>

## George Washington Academy School

*"Using our Mindstorms Robotics in conjunction with the students' new laptops, the kids have come up with some creative programming, from basic movement of the robot to making a 21st century Etch-A-Sketch!"*

Andrea Pereira, Science Teacher

## Nicholas Murray Butler

*"In the beginning of the year we were piloting a program for Social Studies about Inventions/Inventors. Students had to use their laptops to research a New Jersey Inventor. After finding their information, they had to create a power point about their inventor to present to the class."* Michele Zuber 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher

## Terence C. Reilly

*"As a way to differentiate a lesson with technology in a 5th grade classroom at Terence C. Reilly School, the students in Social Studies class are creating an iMovie trailer to introduce Slavery and our theme about freedom. Students are using the following applications in order to finally create their trailers on the Mac computers: Pages, keynote, Quicktime video, and Imovie. Students gather their information and insert it into charts using Pages and keynote. In order to help speed up the process, students share their information with one another through Airdrop. Once they compile their information in Pages, they transfer it to iMovie with an option to video and/or audio record themselves in order to input narration to their trailers."* Joseph Collins

# Technology In Our Classrooms

*Here are some of the applications taking place all around the district*

## EdConnect Implementation District-wide

The district creates student benchmarks on the EdConnect system. Teachers create assessments while students take assessments on the system.

## Nicholas Murray Butler

*"I created my own class website to help the kids and parents stay informed. It has a message board as well as all the homework and done class work. It even has email to reach out to me or others in the class."*

Carol Litchfield

## Admiral William F. Halsey Leadership Academy

*"it's never easy to keep students quiet once they finish a test and others are still testing. That's where QUIZLET comes in. Students google what they want to learn, for example, quizlet root words, quizlet figurative language, quizlet literary terms, quizlet SAT words, quizlet Grapes of Wrath, etc. There are two games, scatter and space race that students enjoy. I challenge students to beat my score. It's also the thrill of beating the teacher!"* Rose Hubbard, English LAL

## iPrep Academy

The Teach To One Math Program is an adoptive learning program that is geared toward every students individual needs. Other innovative strategies such as 3D Printing and Razz Kids, which is used to help struggling students in ELA

## Mabel G. Holmes

*"I use my starboard all the time. For morning message, taking attendance, music and videos to enhance my lessons. During work time in my class I leave it on and the children interact with it."* Jean Balchunas Pre-k Teacher

## Alexander Hamilton Academy

*"I tend to present current scientific videos, illustrating important scientific concepts to students, so that students grasp of the concept becomes more firm. In my Forensic Science classes, I connect the students with crimes that are featured on reputable websites, to initiate class discussions as to how the concepts we studied in class, can be applied to real-life situations.*

*Most of my classes involve active research by student groups on topics which can be presented to the class. This involves large-scale and active use of technological resources by the students. The students' research papers have to use the AMA style of citation. This ups the rigor in the science classroom, by introducing the students to a format which they can use in college also, depending upon their choice of subjects in college."* Ayisha Ali

## Technology In Our Classrooms

### Dwyer Technology Academy

*“At JEDTA, we have used technology to create, transmit, share, interact, store, and learn differently. Students have become the centerpiece of learning, and they facilitate lessons that are both engaging and meaningful to their future. By empowering students with technology, we have also equipped them with the tools necessary to compete and succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global community. Teachers are continually challenging our students to find new and innovative ways to learn, and to bring practical, hands-on experience to lessons through technology, which has and will continue to help students become college and career ready.” – Chris Van Vliet*

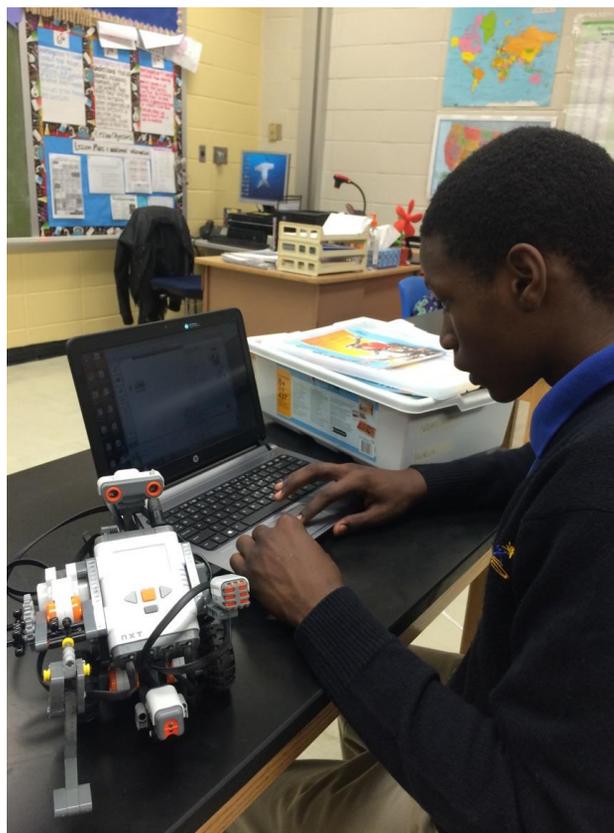
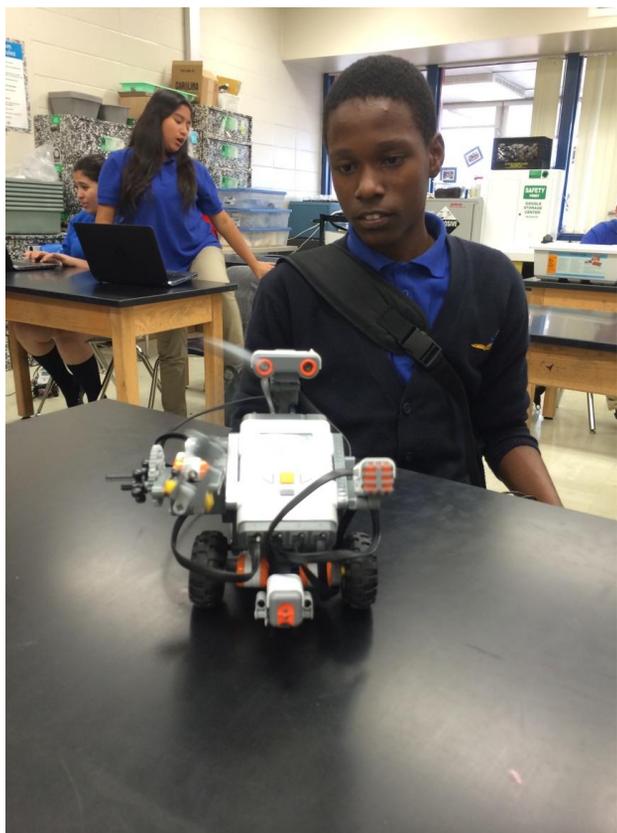
### Edison Career and Technical Academy

*“My English classes use MyAccess to write their essays and receive feedback. AVID classes take virtual tours of colleges that we are unable to visit. They also complete practice SAT practice tests on collegeboard.com and students in all classes conduct research to complete research projects. Students have made Public Service Announcements on apps such as iMovie to persuade people about the harmful effects of bullying, texting and driving and domestic violence.” – Marisa Tota, Language Arts Teacher*

### John Marshall School

*“I recently concluded a 4 week project with my 8th grade classes that allowed them to compose/arrange their own musical composition without having a musical background. The attachment will provide all the details, but they basically went to [www.soundation.com](http://www.soundation.com) and created 4 audio tracks featuring 2 rhythm, one pad, and one melodic track. They were all engaged, excited, and enjoyed the creative and critique processes involved.”*

Jake Kulik, Vocal Music Teacher



# Technology In Our Classrooms

## *Here are some of the applications taking place in performing arts*

Silver Burdett Making Music – helps to provide developmentally appropriate music learning activities for students in grades pre-kindergarten through eight. This sequential curriculum builds students' knowledge and skills within and across grade levels and engages all students in the music making process.

QuaverMusic - Quaver takes kids on an exciting journey through his imaginative music shop, inspiring them to discover and love music! With the help of a music laboratory, live recording studio, time-traveling phone box, and cast of hilarious characters, Quaver is an energetic teaching-assistant, helping teachers engage young people in the marvelous world of music like never before.

GarageBand - GarageBand is a streamlined digital audio workstation (DAW) and music sequencer that can record and play back multiple tracks of audio. Built-in audio filters that use the AU (audio unit) standard allow the user to enhance the audio track with various effects, including reverb, echo, and distortion amongst others.

ProTools - Pro Tools is a digital audio workstation for Microsoft Windows and OS X widely used by professionals throughout the audio industries for recording and editing in music production, film scoring, film and television post production, musical notation and MIDI sequencing.

SmartMusic - SmartMusic is the award winning software used by music educators around the world to enhance their programs and provides a way to dramatically improve their students' skills. Student practice is focused because they receive immediate feedback while listening to their performance and seeing the correct and incorrect rhythms and pitches onscreen.

Soundation - a powerful online music studio with recording, effects, virtual instruments

Noteflight - Noteflight is a powerful full-featured application to edit, display and play back music

Stage Write – Stage Write makes it simple to accurately document the staging, choreography and spacing for any theatrical production or special event.

Virtual Stage Manager - offers an easy and interactive website that combines the common performing arts necessities of show management, artist and designer networking and connectivity, and more in a single online application.

San Francisco Symphony – sfskids.org - This is the premier online destination for kids to learn about music and the symphony orchestra. Geared for ages 8-13, SFSKids.org is suitable not only for kids, but also for parents, families, and schools.



*Equity • Expectations • Excellence*

## **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.



*Equity • Expectations • Excellence*

### **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.*