

TOGETHER PCS



SPLASHING INTO SUMMER

Welcome to TogetherPCS, the district's new monthly newsletter featuring students, staff, alumni, coaches, curriculum, community partners and so much more! We look forward to not only keeping you updated with important events and reminders, but also giving you a glimpse into the day-to-day experiences of the people who help make the district shine.

In this issue, we focus on all things summer. From Summer Bridge to Summer Camps, we offer a glimpse into how PCS students and teachers are active even when school is not technically in session. We also celebrate the decades-long career of the longest-running Student Resource Officer in Pinellas County history and congratulate our Scripps National Spelling Bee winner who heads to high school in August.

If you know someone who should be featured in TogetherPCS, please click the "Nominate Here" button below. Let's do this TOGETHER!

[NOMINATE HERE](#)



Michaela Conard spent all three of her middle school summers attending the IGNITE performing arts camp. But she wanted more.

This year, she was back as a volunteer, helping younger musicians and performers perfect their craft just as she did.

"I came back because it made such an impact on me, so I wanted to impact other students," said Conard, who, as a freshman, was the first-chair trumpet player in Osceola Fundamental High School's marching band. "I've been helping with fingering, notes, rhythms, and even articulation and dynamics."

Held at the Pinellas County Center for the Arts at Gibbs High School, IGNITE is a two-week performing arts camp open to all PCS middle school students enrolled in an art elective. Beginning June 5, hundreds of band, chorus, orchestra, dance and musical theater students converged on the Gibbs campus to begin learning their repertoire for the end-of-camp performance.

[Read full article and see camp photos here](#)



Dev Shah, Scripp's National Spelling Bee winner, will attend a Pinellas County IB program in August.

DEV WINS!

Dev Shah had always envisioned winning the National Spelling Bee.

But after it actually happened, he wasn't prepared for "winning" to become secondary to so many other aspects of the competition.

"I couldn't have imagined winning would influence my life like this," Dev said from his home in Largo, where his bedroom is full of spelling-bee-related trophies and medals, most of which he humbly keeps behind closed closet doors. "It restored a lot of confidence in me."

In fact, while reflecting on the week he spent at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland for the Scripp's National Spelling Bee at the beginning of June, it is the camaraderie with his fellow competitors-turned-friends, his gratefulness for his family's support and doing ordinary things like eating at Chipotle that stand out the most. He said he and the 11 finalists have a special bond and enjoyed cheering each other on, eating meals together and even ducking out of an organized scavenger hunt to walk along the National Harbor to relax.

"The memories I made there are some of the best of my life," Dev said. "Just being with my friends."

[Read the full article](#)

BACK TO SCHOOL

Staff Returns:
August 2

First day of School (students):
August 10

Please visit our [Back to School](#) page for important reminders and dates

PCS Outpaced State in FAST Testing Results

According to the Department of Education, Pinellas County Schools outpaced the state in many areas in the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking (FAST) Progress Monitoring 3 (PM3) testing. PCS had more students scoring Level 3 or higher in:

- Grades 3,5,and 7 in FAST English Language Arts
- Grades 3,4,5,6 and 8 in FAST Math
- Algebra and Geometry EOC's
- Grade 5 Science (PCS was in the top ten highest scoring districts in the state)

"I am incredibly proud of the results of our students in this first year with new assessments. The dedication of all stakeholders working together is how we will continue our trajectory of academic excellence," said Superintendent Kevin Hendrick. "The new PM system and immediacy of the results gives students, teachers and families the roadmap to provide targeted support throughout the year. As a district, we will continue to expand experiences and programming which promotes growth for every student in Pinellas County Schools."

[Read the full article and see results](#)

SUPPORT TOGETHER

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

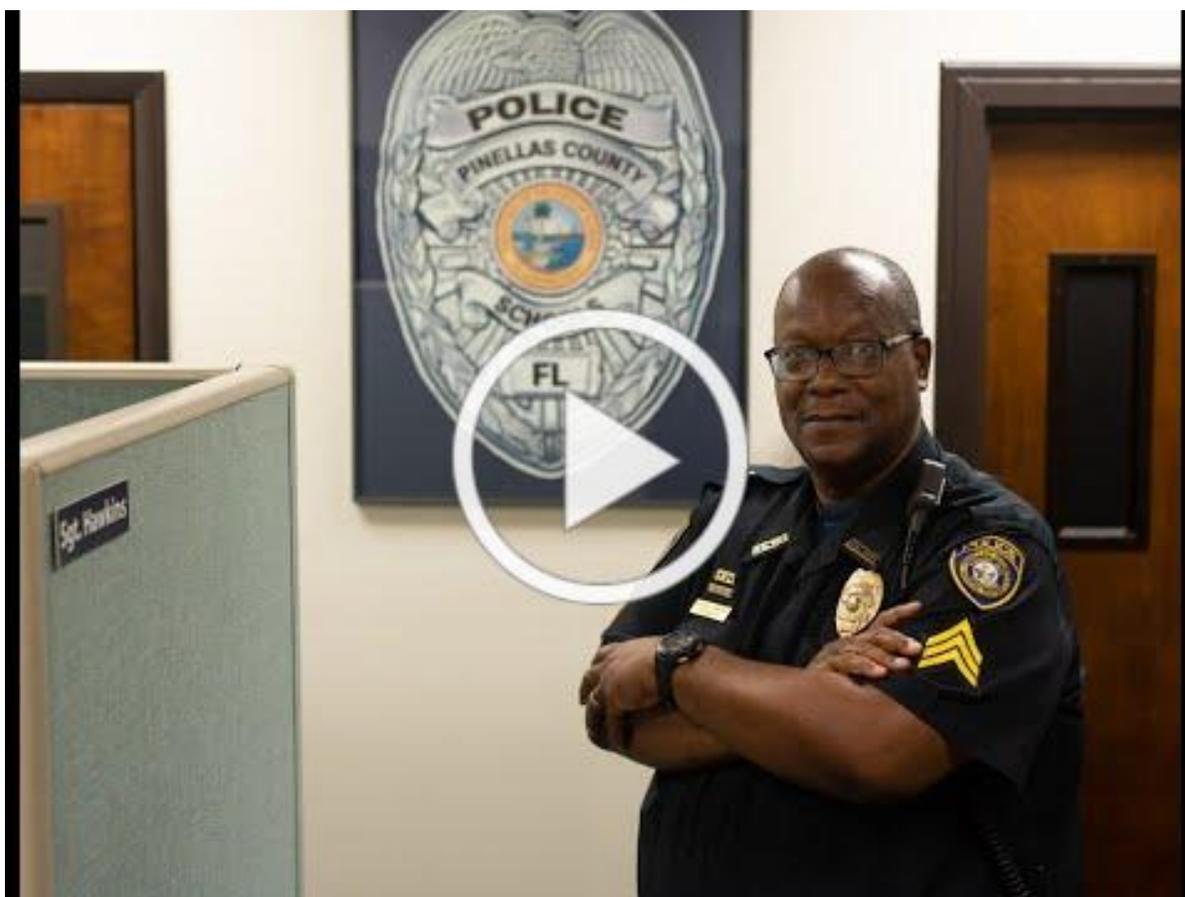


If a police officer's success is measured in relationships, then Sgt. Michael Hawkins is about 30,000 deep.

That's Pinellas County Schools Police Chief Luke Williams' best guess, anyway. And that's at Gibbs High School alone.

"He has touched so many lives and made an impact on so many – from students to faculty to those in the community," Williams said.

[Read the full article](#)





PTC composites student launches aerospace career

Hard work pays off. Right place, right time. Do hard things.

All these cliches and more apply to Kenwin Durant's fast track to a successful career in the aircraft construction industry.

Less than one year ago, Durant had no idea he would soon move to Washington state with his former Pinellas Technical College instructor, to work for a successful aerospace shop. He began the seven-month, 600-hour Advanced Composites program after shadowing the class last year. He has since learned to make everything from golf clubs and snowboards to parts for boats, cars, airplanes and helicopters.

[Read the full article](#)

STEM programs stimulate summer bridge students

According to Georgina Mayhew, her daughter Katie has always considered STEM heavy on the math and science and light on the fun. But thankfully, Katie's Summer Bridge experience has changed her perspective.

"I really like this camp because it gives me the opportunity to learn and be creative with all of the STEM products," Katie said while playing with her solar-powered cricket she constructed as part of "Solarbot" week during Summer Bridge STEM held at Perkins Elementary School.

"It's been exciting to see her shift her thinking from 'STEM is boring' to 'STEM is fun and creative,'" Mayhew said.

[Read the full article](#)

The Superintendent Says...

"Happy Summer! I am thrilled to report that Pinellas County schools are busier than ever. With Summer Bridge wrapping up and camps in full swing, we are seeing thousands of students taking advantage of PCS's summer offerings.

We can't wait to get back into the classrooms on August 10, but until then, please enjoy time with family and friends. See you soon!"



To help spread the word, please forward this newsletter to community members who are interested in public education. Sign up by clicking the button below.

[SIGN UP HERE](#)



VISION: 100% STUDENT SUCCESS
MISSION: EDUCATE AND PREPARE EACH STUDENT FOR COLLEGE, CAREER AND LIFE

PCS Compliance Statement

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