Welcome to TogetherPCS, the district's monthly newsletter featuring students, staff, alumni, coaches, curriculum, community partners and so much more!

In this issue, we get to know the Desai sisters - one, a pediatrician in New York, and one, a doctor who joined her mother's oncology practice right here in St. Pete after both graduated from St. Petersburg High School's IB Program. We also feature two long-serving members of the district leadership team who have recently retired. And we celebrate SUMMER! Our campuses are bustling with activity - from enrichment camps to SAT prep to Driver's Ed to the new Jump Start program for incoming sixth graders - there's no summer slowdown at PCS.

Do you know someone who should be featured in TogetherPCS? Please click the "Nominate Here" button below.
August 2
First day of School (students):
August 12

Please visit our Back-to-School page for important reminders and dates.

Tamara McKinney is one of almost 30 current PCS employees participating in the Teacher Apprenticeship Program.

PCS partners with SPC on new teacher apprenticeship program

Tamara McKinney has a number of excuses not to go back to school – she can’t afford it, she is a mom to a special-needs son, she is comfortable in her role, she doesn’t have time.

WHAT’S INSIDE

PCS Continues to Elevate Academic Excellence

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:

- Pinellas County Schools is first among the large districts in ELA proficiency and ranked 15th in the state across all school districts.
- Pinellas County Schools is first among the large districts in Mathematics proficiency and ranked 17th in the state across all school districts.
- Among the large districts in Grade 5 science proficiency, the district is first and ranked 7th in the state among school
But all those excuses came to a screeching halt when Principal Jacque Cassidy recommended her for the Teacher Apprenticeship Program.

“You think about elevating yourself, but life gets in the way, so you just put things off and put things off,” said McKinney, who has been a paraprofessional and sign language interpreter at Nina Harris Exceptional Student Education Center for more than 10 years. “I wanted to do it and I knew I could do it, but I didn’t have that push. So, when the opportunity was presented, I pounced on it.”

On Monday, McKinney and 28 other Pinellas County Schools classroom support employees met on the Clearwater campus of St. Petersburg College to officially register for fall classes. As part of the program – a collaboration between PCS and SPC’s College of Education – apprentices will obtain a bachelor’s degree in Exceptional Student Education, Elementary Education or Primary Pre-K tuition-free.

Pooja and Poorvi Desai may have worked their way through years’ worth of school to become successful doctors, but their biggest source of inspiration came from one person: their mom.

Pratibha Desai, who started Comprehensive Hematology/Oncology, her private practice, when the girls were little, says she didn’t just choose to tell her daughters they were capable of anything, she wanted to show them.

And she kept her word.

“I think the girls saw it was a juggling act between raising them and running the practice, but that I still enjoyed it,” Desai said. “And I think they decided to become physicians because of it.”
Dan Evans fully admits to seeing life in metaphors. After all, he is and always has been a writer, so the double meanings work for him.

“When I was a kid, I had to do chores every Saturday, including dusting the house,” said Evans, who spent his last two years in his 30-year career with Pinellas County Schools as the Chief Academic Officer. “My dad wanted me to do things the right way and taught me to never dust around the vase on the table. I had to pick it up and dust underneath.”

From the moment Lewis Brinson walked into the classroom five decades ago, he knew it.

“It was instant. It was automatic. I mean, it was meant to be,” said Dr. Brinson, a smile spreading over his face. “I've always had a passion to be a teacher, always had a passion to work with younger people and to give them opportunities, more opportunities than I had.”

Two weeks ago, Brinson ended his 50-year career in education.

He was hired to steward Pinellas County Schools' plan
“So, I try never to dust around the vase in anything I do. I never cut corners.”

The Superintendent Says...

"Happy Summer! I am thrilled to report that Pinellas County schools are busier than ever. With Summer Bridge wrapped 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 12, but until then, please continue to 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