



*Superintendent, Anibal Soler, Jr.*

## IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the Superintendent .....	1-2
District Digest.....	3-7
Superintendent Soler's Week in Review	
Photos.....	8
Photos from Schools This Week.....	9
YPS Student	
Artwork.....	10

## Message from Superintendent Soler

Dear Yonkers Public Schools Community,

This week, as we reflected on the enduring legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we were reminded of the power of his vision for equality, and justice for all. In partnership with Mayor Mike Spano, we launched the Martin Luther King Jr. Poem & Essay Contest to encourage our students to explore these themes and express their creativity.



*Superintendent Soler Congratulates Student at PEACE Program Recognition Ceremony*

I encourage all students to participate and share their thoughts on how Dr. King's legacy continues to inspire us today.

This week also showcased the incredible accomplishments of our students and schools. I am thrilled to announce that a team of students from PEARLS Hawthorne School has been selected as one of the 60 winning teams in NASA's TechRise Student Challenge! Congratulations to these future engineers and explorers and their teacher, Dr. Alecia Redway, for this remarkable achievement.

A highlight of the week was celebrating the incredible accomplishments of five graduates from the PEACE Program. This innovative program, offers a flexible and individualized approach to support students on their unique paths to success. Congratulations to Abigail Cruz, Brallant Vazquez, Tyler Wood-Wilder, Yulisa De'Leon De'Leon, and Jahshua Thompson on this amazing milestone. Your resilience and determination inspire us all. A heartfelt thank you to the dedicated educators and administrators who make programs like PEACE possible, reminding us of the transformative power of education.

We also had the pleasure of welcoming Superintendent Roger Leon of Newark Public Schools to visit Robert Halmi Sr. Film & TV Academy. This Academy represents a significant step forward in preparing students for careers in media and entertainment, solidifying Yonkers as Hollywood on the Hudson.

## *Message from Superintendent Soler (Continued)*

Our My Sister's Keeper students from Lincoln High School had an extraordinary opportunity this week to attend a panel discussion with Sundance filmmakers. Serving as greeters at the event, these students not only engaged with industry professionals but also gained unique insights into the world of filmmaking. Opportunities like this inspire our students to dream big and envision a future filled with possibilities.

Congratulations are also in order for the Obama Lightning basketball team, who claimed their third tournament championship of the season! Special recognition goes to Tournament MVP Seediya Jabbi for her outstanding performance. We are so proud of the team's hard work and determination!

Lastly, a quick reminder that all schools will be closed on Wednesday, January 29, 2025, in observance of Lunar New Year. Classes will resume on Thursday, January 30.

Thank you for your continued trust and partnership. Together, we will continue to inspire, support, and celebrate the Yonkers Magic that defines our schools.



**Anibal Soler, Jr.**  
Superintendent of Schools



*(L:R) Newark Superintendent of Schools Roger Leon & Yonkers Superintendent of Schools Anibal Soler, Jr.*

Get a front-row seat to what Superintendent Soler has been up to and what Yonkers Public Schools is celebrating this week. From his key moments to exciting activities across our schools, it's all right here!

### **PEACE Program Recognition Ceremony: A Celebration of Resilience and Achievement**



#### **Honoring Five Remarkable Students**

We had the privilege of celebrating the incredible accomplishments of five graduates from the Program for Extended Academic & Civic Engagement (PEACE) Program. The PEACE Program embodies innovation and care, offering a flexible, individualized approach that equips students with the tools they need to succeed.

##### **Congratulations to this year's graduates:**

- Abigail Cruz (Yonkers Montessori Academy)
- Brallant Vazquez (Yonkers Montessori Academy)
- Tyler Wood-Wilder (Yonkers Montessori Academy)
- Yulisa De'Leon De'Leon (Yonkers Middle High School)
- Jahshua Thompson (Lincoln High School)

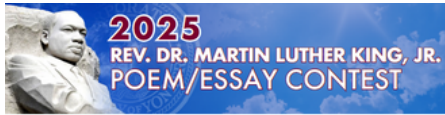


# DISTRICT

## Digest

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## Launching Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Poem & Essay Contest



**2025**  
**REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**  
**POEM/ESSAY CONTEST**

**AFRICAN AMERICANS AND LABOR**

**Poem Entry (Grades 1-4)**  
Write a poem about how Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. helped people. Think about his work for fairness, kindness, and making the world a better place. Your poem should be between 10 to 20 lines.

**Poem Entry (Grades 5-8)**  
Write a poem about how Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. worked to ensure fair treatment and economic justice for workers. Think about his efforts to support labor rights and equality. Your poem should be between 15 to 30 lines. Make sure it's detailed yet engaging.

**Essay Entry (Grades 9-12)**  
Write an essay that explores the evolution of labor among African Americans from slavery to the present day. Discuss changes in roles and opportunities, the impact on communities and society, and highlight significant contributions by African American professionals. Reflect on Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy in championing labor dignity and economic justice. Essays should be between 800-1,200 words. Ensure your essay is comprehensive yet concise.

**GENERAL INFORMATION:**

**Format:**

- Use a clear, readable font such as Times New Roman or Arial, size 12.
- Double-space your poem/essay.
- Include a title at the top of your poem/essay.

**Originality:** Make sure your poem/essay is your own work. Plagiarism will result in disqualification.

**Language:** Use words that are kind and respectful.

Poems and essay submissions are due **Friday, February 14, 2025** and may be emailed to [contest@yonkersny.gov](mailto:contest@yonkersny.gov) or sent by mail to **Mayor's Office (Attention: Dwanita Crosby)**, Yonkers City Hall, 2nd Floor, 40 South Broadway, Yonkers, NY 10701. Winners will be selected by the Mayor's African American Advisory Board and will be notified on **Friday, February 21st**. For questions regarding the poem/essay contest email [Dwanita.Crosby@yonkersny.gov](mailto:Dwanita.Crosby@yonkersny.gov).

Mayor Spano will select one poem from grades 1-4, one poem from grades 5-8 and one essay from grades 9-12. The winning poems and essay will be displayed at Yonkers City Hall and online for Yonkers residents to enjoy. Winners will be presented a certificate from Mayor Spano and will be asked to present their work at the **City's Annual Black History Month Celebration at Yonkers City Hall on Friday, February 28, 2025 at 6:00 pm.**

## Students Are Encouraged to Participate!

In partnership with Mayor Mike Spano, Yonkers Public Schools has launched the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Poem and Essay Contest to honor Dr. King's vision. This year's theme focuses on the dignity of labor and the fight for economic justice.

Submissions are due Friday, February 14, 2025, and may be emailed to [contest@yonkersny.gov](mailto:contest@yonkersny.gov).

[Click here](#) for more information

## NASA TechRise Winners At PEARLS Hawthorne School



## Congratulations PEARLS Students!

Their project, the "Halogen to Ozone Proportionality Experiment (Hope)," earned them \$1,500 to build their payload and the opportunity to launch their experiment on a NASA-supported test flight. Guided by their teacher, Dr. Alecia Redway, these students represent the next generation of explorers and innovators. Congratulations!



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### ***Creating Partnerships with Newark Public Schools!***



#### ***Newark Superintendent Visits “Hollywood on the Hudson”***

After visiting Newark Public Schools this week, we welcomed Superintendent Roger Leon to tour the Robert Halmi Sr. Film & TV Academy. The newest school prepares students for careers in media and entertainment, showcasing Yonkers as a hub for creativity and opportunity. Thank you, Superintendent Leon, for visiting!

### ***MSK Students Meet Sundance Filmmakers***



#### ***Students Meet Industry Professionals***

*Students from My Sister's Keeper (MSK) program attended a special panel featuring Sundance filmmakers. As greeters for the event, the students had the chance to meet and interact with panelists, gaining valuable insights into the world of filmmaking. Events like these inspire our students to dream big and explore their potential.*

## Nominate a Teacher: 2026 NYS Teacher of the Year



**NOMINATE A TEACHER  
FOR THE NEW YORK STATE  
TEACHER OF THE YEAR PROGRAM**

**APPLICATION DEADLINE FEBRUARY 7, 2025**

The Teacher of the Year program recognizes exemplary educators. Every year, a New York State Teacher of the Year is chosen to serve as an ambassador for New York State teachers and New York State's nominee for the National Teacher of the Year.

Additional information including how to nominate a teacher and/or submit an application may be found on the NYSED Teacher of the Year website.

Questions may be directed to the OFFICE OF STANDARDS & INSTRUCTION at **518-474-5922** or **P12StandardsInstruction@nysed.gov**.



New York State  
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity



**YONKERS  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

### Celebrate Yonkers Educators Who Make a Difference

*Do you know a teacher who has made a lasting impact on students and families?*

*Nominate them for the 2026 New York State Teacher of the Year Award!*

*Nominations are open through Friday, February 7, 2025. Let's make sure Yonkers Public Schools educators get the recognition they deserve.*

[Learn More and Nominate](#)

## Obama Lightning Wins Third Tournament of the Season



### Champions of the Tournament!

*The Obama Lightning basketball team continues to dominate their tournament and claim their third championship this season. Special congratulations to Tournament MVP Seediya Jabbi, who averaged an impressive 15 points, 11 rebounds, and 2.5 blocks per game.*

*Great job, team – keep shining!*



## Keep Everyone Safe and Healthy



### ATTENTION PARENTS/GUARDIANS FLU SEASON

#### DON'T SEND YOUR CHILDREN TO SCHOOL WHEN THEY ARE SICK!

A child who is sick will not be able to perform well in school and is likely to spread the illness to other children and staff. We suggest making a plan for childcare ahead of time to prepare for a comforting place if your child is ill.

#### DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL IF HE OR SHE HAS:

- FEVER IN THE PAST 24 HOURS
- VOMITING IN THE PAST 24 HOURS
- DIARRHEA IN THE PAST 24 HOURS
- CHILLS
- SORE THROAT
- STREP THROAT - THE CHILD MUST HAVE BEEN TAKING AN ANTIBIOTIC FOR AT LEAST 24 HOURS BEFORE RETURNING TO SCHOOL
- EARACHE
- PERSISTENT HEADACHE
- BAD COLD, WITH A VERY RUNNY NOSE OR BAD COUGH, ESPECIALLY IF IT HAS KEPT THE CHILD AWAKE AT NIGHT
- DRAINAGE FROM EYES WITH CRUSTING ON EYELIDS

If your child becomes ill at school and the school nurse feels the child is too sick to benefit from school or is contagious to other children and staff, you will be called to come and take the child home from school. It is essential that your child's school has up to date phone numbers where you can be contacted during the day and emergency numbers in the event you cannot be reached. Please be sure that arrangements can be made to transport your child home from school and that childcare is available in case of illness. If your daytime or emergency phone number changes during the year, please immediately notify your child's school.

If your child is absent for 3 or more days, medical justification is required for return to school. Please call your child's school Health Office if you have any questions or concerns or call the Medical and Nursing Services at 914-376-8226.



### ATENCIÓN PADRES/TUTORES TEMPORADA DE INFLUENZA

#### NO MANDEN A SUS HIJOS A LA ESCUELA CUANDO ESTÉN ENFERMOS!

Un niño enfermo no podrá desempeñarse bien en la escuela y es probable que contagie la enfermedad a otros niños y al personal. Sugierimos hacer un plan de cuidado infantil con anticipación para preparar un lugar reconfortante si su hijo se enferma.

#### NO ENVÍE A SU HIJO A LA ESCUELA SI TIENE:

- FIEBRE EN LAS ÚLTIMAS 24 HORAS
- VÓMITOS EN LAS ÚLTIMAS 24 HORAS
- DIARREA EN LAS ÚLTIMAS 24 HORAS
- ESCALOFRÍOS
- DOLOR DE GARGANTA
- FARINGITIS ESTREPTOCÓCICA: EL NIÑO DEBE HABER ESTADO TOMANDO UN ANTIBIÓTICO DURANTE AL MENOS 24 HORAS ANTES DE REGRESAR A LA ESCUELA.
- DOLOR DE OÍDOS
- DOLOR DE CABEZA PERSISTENTE
- RESFRIADO FUERTE, CON MUCHA SECRECIÓN MÁS O MAL SUEÑO, ESPECIALMENTE SI HA MANTENIDO AL NIÑO DESPIERTO DURANTE LA NOCHE.
- SUPURACIÓN DE LOS OJOS CON COSTRAS EN PÁPADOS

Si su hijo se enferma en la escuela y la enfermera de la escuela considera que el niño está demasiado enfermo para beneficiarse de la escuela o es contagioso para otros niños y el personal, se le llamará para que venga y lleve al niño a casa desde la escuela. Es esencial que la escuela de su hijo tenga números de teléfono actualizados donde se le pueda contactar durante el día y números de emergencia en caso de que no se pueda localizarle. Por favor, asegúrese de que se pueda organizar el transporte de su hijo a casa desde la escuela y de que hay guardería disponible en caso de enfermedad. Si su número de teléfono durante el día o de emergencia cambia durante el año, notifique de inmediato a la escuela de su hijo.

Si su hijo está ausente durante 3 o más días, se requiere una justificación médica para regresar a la escuela. Llame a la Oficina de Salud de la escuela de su hijo si tiene alguna pregunta o inquietud o llame al Servicios médicos y de enfermería al 914-376-8226.

## Stay Healthy This Flu Season

*Flu season is here! If your child is feeling unwell, please do not send them to school.  
For any questions or concerns, reach out to your school nurse in the morning.*

## Stay connected with Yonkers Public Schools!

Follow us for the latest news, events,  
and school highlights.

Be part of the #YonkersMagic!



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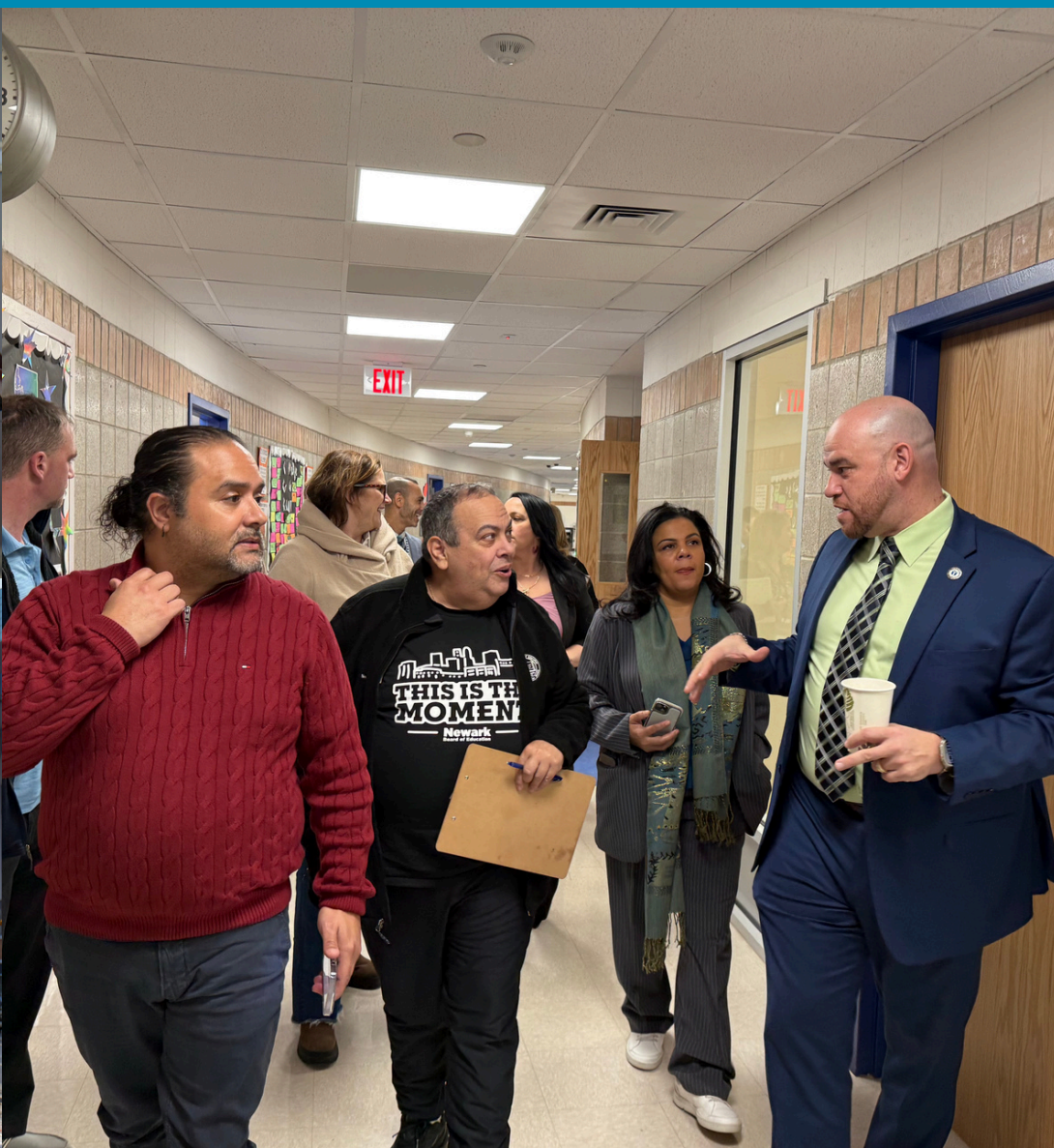
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# District Digest

## Superintendent Soler's Week in Review Photos





# District Digest

## Photos From Across The District



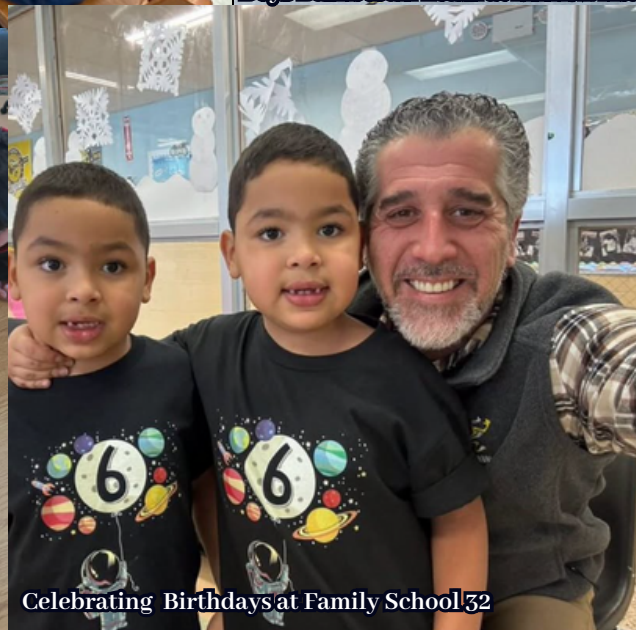
Mental Health Assembly at PEARLS



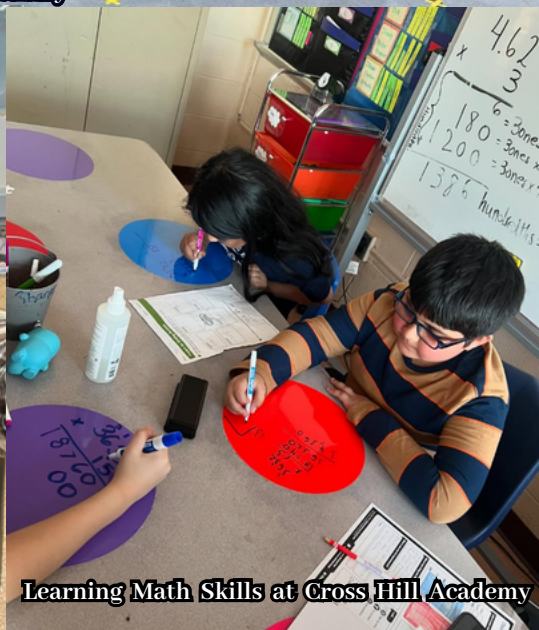
Boys Basketball Team at MLK Jr. Academy



Learning Math Skills at Cross Hill Academy



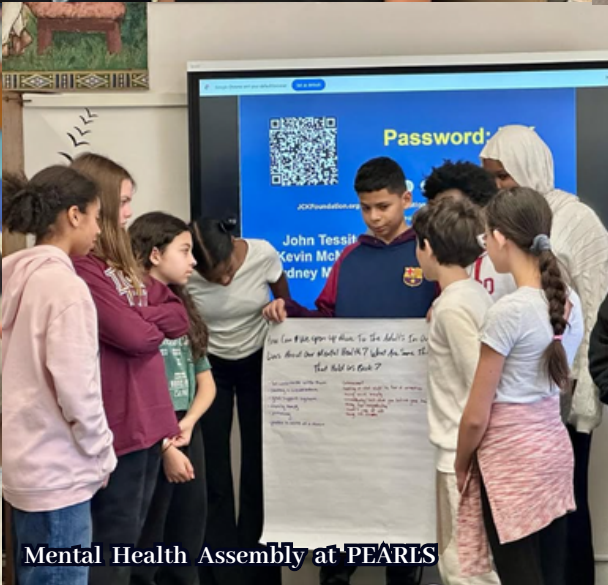
Celebrating Birthdays at Family School 32



Learning Math Skills at Cross Hill Academy



Celebration for Students Who Mastered ELA IXL skills at School 22



Mental Health Assembly at PEARLS



Celebration for Students Who mastered ELA IXL skills at School 22



# YPS STUDENT ARTWORK



Zamar Watt, Riverside High School, Gr.9



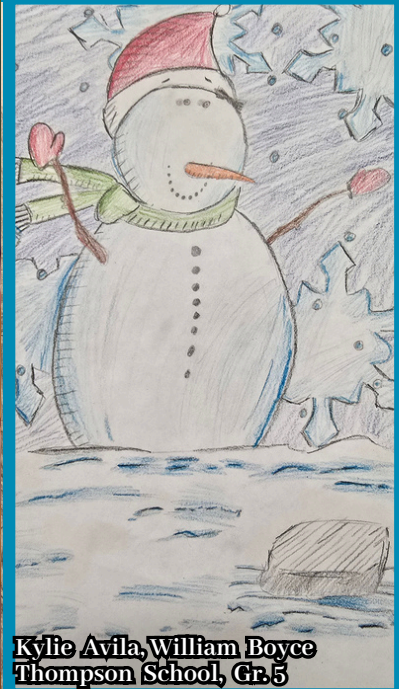
Zahjanna Infante Cruz,  
School 23, Gr.7



Guillermo Gonzalez-Flores,  
Cesar Chavez School, Gr. 6



Daniela Oviedo Zarate,  
J.S.M., Gr. Kindergarden



Kylie Avila, William Boyce  
Thompson School, Gr.5



Mia Guitierrez, Yonkers Montessori Academy, Gr.