



marion p thomas
CHARTER SCHOOL

Voice of the Village

Moving the Village Forward

BY SUPERINTENDENT A. ROBERT GREGORY

We enter the month of April on the heels of a historic month in the Village; one that provides a glimpse into the future of Marion P. Thomas Charter School. During the month of March, we announced the relocation of SELECT Academy to PAC Academy for the 19-20 SY. PAC Academy, located at 28 Burnet St, is in the heart of Newark’s business, cultural, and higher education community. This move ensures all scholars in the Village have greater access to vast resources prevalent in the city of Newark, more importantly, a hospitable educational environment with more space and resources that foster our scholar’s physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional growth and development.

During March we also launched and deployed our first Literacy Army, a village-wide effort in Language Arts-Literacy from grades 3 to 11, to implement rigorous, coherent, standards-based units of study from the Achieve the Core Institute. I want to thank the teachers who joined this taskforce for their willingness to explore a drastically different, yet proven, researched-based approach to teaching Literacy. Our scholars will remain at the core of all decisions we make as we, Move the Village Forward.

We ended the month of March hosting our inaugural State of the School Address, a series of speeches where I outlined the current state of all schools in the Village (continued on page 2)

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Moving the Village Forward

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and our 5 Strategic Priorities created to catapult us into a successful future. I look forward to bringing this message to parents and the greater Newark community on May 2, 2019. Our 5 Strategic Priorities are outlined below:

1-**Reorganize** school-based and central office teams to ensure our scholars and educators have greater resources and support to address their immediate needs.

2-**Implement** rigorous, coherent, culturally relevant curriculum while offering more visual-performing arts and career-technical education, curricular and co-curricular opportunities.

3-**Create** school-wide data driven and responsive Student Support Teams and Adult Advocate Networks where scholars develop the socio-emotional skills needed to prosper in the future.

4-**Leverage** vast resources prevalent in Newark's Educational Eco-system and that of the Village to create strategic partnerships that enhance and improve our scholar's educational experience.

5-**Revise** and create policies and board governance structures to ensure they are efficient and support the acceleration of scholar achievement.

As the great motivational speaker Wayne Dyer states, "If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change."

We must remain committed to reimagining our schools to ensure they meet the needs of our scholars and provide multiple pathways to higher education, a vital demand of the 21st Century workforce.

Our mission will continue to drive our work; it truly takes a village. We kicked off the month of April hosting EdCamp Newark at PAC Academy. EdCamp is a conference where educators across New Jersey come together to learn practices being implemented by their colleagues in classrooms throughout the state. Thank you to Dean Benjamin and Principal Hamilton for hosting this extraordinary event.

Last week I had the pleasure of participating in a music program with our Pre-K scholars at PAC Academy through a partnership we have with NJPAC. As I hit the drum with them, discovering the power of sound, I was reminded of their brilliance and how important it is to listen to them; love, nurture, and raise them in schools that awakens the genius that lives in all of them.

We join the nation in raising awareness about Autism during the month of April while celebrating Earth Day, National Poetry Month, and the Week of the Young Child. I look forward to our continued work, as we Move the Village Forward, and hope everyone enjoys their Spring Break.





IMPORTANT DATES

Upcoming events & activities

April 8th-12th
Charter Awareness Week

April 11th
12:30 PM dismissal for all scholars; Parent-Teacher conferences 1:30-4:00 PM

April 12th
Parent-Teacher Conferences: 1:30-4:00 PM

April 19th - 26th
Spring Break - All schools closed

April 18th
Scholars vs Staff Basketball Game: Who will win?
MPTCHS Gym
4:00-6:00 PM

May 23rd
Village Awards
Salute to our Staff, Parents & Scholars
MPTCHS
6:30-9:00 PM

CHARTER AWARENESS WEEK

It's Charter Awareness Week! For ONE week in April (April 8-12), we need your help to raise awareness and support for public charter schools in New Jersey.

A Couple Things You Can Do!

Follow Marion P. Thomas Charter School, New Jersey Charter Schools Association and CharterStrong NJ on social media to see and share what is happening during Charter Awareness Week!

Write a post about why you support MPTCS and why it deserves fair funding.

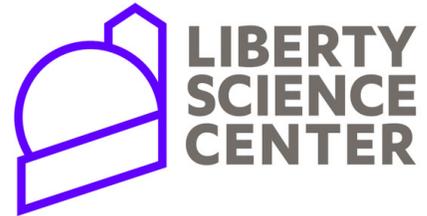
Thank you so much for your support in ensuring our kids are being represented and treated fairly!



A special thanks to Rutgers Newark students who helped with PAC Beautification. In cooperation with Rutgers' University Community Engagement Day, RU students painted over graffiti and helped the PAC staff unbox and organize materials currently stored in the auditorium.

It Takes a Whole Village: Superintendent Gregory Announces New Partnerships

During the Spring Break, scholars in Grades 6-8 will participate in a 2 day Forensic Science Camp at Liberty Science Center. This opportunity is a result of a recent partnership between MPTCS and Liberty Science Center. Science Camp at LSC will provide 50 selected students with an enriching STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) learning experience. Students will participate in Science Camp Monday and Tuesday April 22 and 23, 2019 from 9am to 4pm. Selected students will receive busing to and from our high school. Our scholars received scholarships to this two day science extravaganza and will have the opportunity to participate in Liberty Science Center's Summer Camp in addition to other opportunities our partnership yields.



50 sophomores recently signed up to attend Rutgers University's College Pathway Initiative sponsored by the Newark City of Learning Collaborative (NCLC). This is a result of a recent partnership between Rutgers University Newark and MPTCS. NCLC's College Pathway Initiative launched in January of 2017 as a multi-year demonstration project to support Newark students through three critical developmental phases: high school graduation, the transition to college, and ultimately college completion. The College Pathway Initiative takes a holistic approach to college readiness by providing both academic and social emotional supports through two innovative program models. Next school year, scholars from MPTCS High School will be able to take dual enrollment courses on campus through our early college initiative established with our partnership.



In conjunction with MPTCS' partnership with NJPAC, the Arts Education program will be offering day time performance experiences for our scholars while hosting In-School Residencies for scholars participating in MPTCS' Visual and Performing Arts Programs. NJPAC will be bringing the joy of dance, music, and theater directly into our classrooms with In-School Programs. Teaching Artist create stimulating performing arts experiences that engage student's imaginations and encourage their creative self-expression. Participating in Residencies strengthens our scholars cooperative skills, develops discipline, and builds self-confidence.

