



OCTOBER 26, 2015 | VOLUME 19 | ISSUE 1

DR. MARCIA V. LYLES, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
THE JERSEY CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Jersey City Public Schools off to a great start!

District sees significant academic gains ***Graduation rates up, Achievement Gap down***

Superintendent, Dr. Marcia V. Lyles announced a nearly six point gain in the District's graduation rate at the Board of Education's October 15th meeting. The graduation rate had hovered at around 67% for the last few years but in 2015 it soared to 73%. She also announced that the number of students taking and passing AP exams has greatly increased while the number of drop outs and suspensions has significantly declined.



Dickinson High School's class of 2015 as they take their seats for graduation. The class of 2015 posted the highest graduation rate in years.

Additionally, she noted that the Achievement Gap between African American and Hispanic males and the District as a whole is closing. While the district saw a 5.8% increase in its overall graduation rates, the graduation rate of African American males increased by 12.4% and that of Hispanic males by 8.2%.

"We are very pleased to see these significant increases in student achievement and district effectiveness," Dr. Lyles said at the start of her data-driven presentation to the Board and members of the public. "It is our continued dedication to equity and excellence which has driven us forward. This success is also a product of the wonderful work our teachers and staff do everyday," she added. Despite these gains, Lyles noted, "we still have miles to go before we sleep. We must continue to push until every student, regardless of race, gender, creed or zip code gets an outstanding education and is well prepared for college and career."

Some of the gains reported:

- District graduation rate up 5.8% to 73%, all high schools made gains.
- Dropouts declined by 66% since 2012
- Suspension rates have dropped by 38% since 2012.
- Advanced Placement participation up by 10%

JCPS moves closer to Local Control

"An affirmation of the work we have done..." Dr. Marcia V. Lyles

On October 7, 2015, the New Jersey State Board of Education unanimously approved Commissioner David Hespe's recommendation to return control over Personnel and Operations to the Jersey City Board of Education. While the state will still maintain partial control over Instruction and Program, the District will have control over all other facets of school district management.

Superintendent, Dr. Marcia Lyles, said, "Today's decision is an affirmation of the work we have done over the last few years to increase excellence and equity across the district. It is also the result of the Board and the District working together with a focus on student growth." Board President, Vidya Gangadin, said, "This is a significant accomplishment for our district and something this Board has worked very hard to achieve." Mayor Steven Fulop noted in a statement today that "Jersey City was the first city to lose control of its public schools...Today, we are a step away from becoming the first city to get that authority back." Dr. Lyles noted that the push for local control was a concerted effort of the Board, parents, our elected officials and our teachers, administrators and staff and thanked the Mayor, "for his continued support of the District."



The state assesses districts in five areas-Instruction, Governance, Finance, Personnel and Operations. The Jersey City Board of Education had previously been given control over finance and governance, which allowed it to appoint Dr. Lyles as its Superintendent in 2012. The Board will now also have control over Operations (which includes facilities) and Personnel. The District will work with the state to develop a plan to improve Curriculum and Instruction and to transition to full local control. "We look forward to working with the Mayor's office, the City Council, the community and parents to continue to strengthen the District and ensure equity and excellence to prepare every student for college and career," Dr. Lyles added.

We pledge, WE ARE READY. Now let's make some memories together.

ALL SMILES AT THE BACK-TO-SCHOOL FESTIVAL

The weather was perfect at Liberty State Park on Saturday, September 19, as our district kicked off its third annual "I Love Jersey City Public Schools" Back-to-School Festival. The event celebrated the beginning of an exciting school year by showcasing the rich programs available at all of our schools and providing opportunities for parents and community members to connect with their schools, learn more about them, and meet some of the parents and staff. We thank all of those who came out and volunteered their time to support the event benefitting students and families!



Matthew Vilardo of the JC Youth Foundation and Brainstorm Creative Lab gives a PS 14 student a brand new backpack at the Liberty State Park Back-to-School Festival.



It was a great weather day for the festival.

In addition to the great weather, students and parents enjoyed face painting, exhibits by all of our schools, bounce castles and obstacle courses, exhibits by the police and fire departments and performances by students from several of our schools. The Festival also showcased many of the district's departments and teams. School exhibits highlighted the many great people, programs and accomplishments of our schools, and many also provided games and activities to entertain as well. The district's Food Service Department grilled great-tasting burgers and hot dogs and fed all children for free. The Transportation Department provided free buses throughout the city, our

facilities and office services set up all the tents and structures, kept water stations full and the site clean throughout the event, and our security guards kept the event safe and fun as well. The Festival brings the district together to welcome our students and parents and get everyone excited for a great school year.

PS 12 REMEMBERS 9/11/01 ANNIVERSARY

All schools, like Julia A. Barnes PS 12 pictured here, remembered the anniversary of September 11, 2001, with a special tribute on September 11, 2015. Future 2016 graduates led the program with a patriotic flag display. Mrs. Glenna Rosenthal, guidance counselor, presented the audience with a brief history of the 9/11 tragedy.



PS 12 students hold a symbolic flag remembering 9/11.

Integrating a similar theme, an anti-bullying message was woven into the program. Students defined and explored examples of harassment,

intimidation, and bullying. They learned preventive steps to take to combat bullying. Supportive poetry and an anti-bullying pledge were recited. An audience of parents, staff, and students recognized the day that changed the world and learned about bullying and the serious harm it brings.

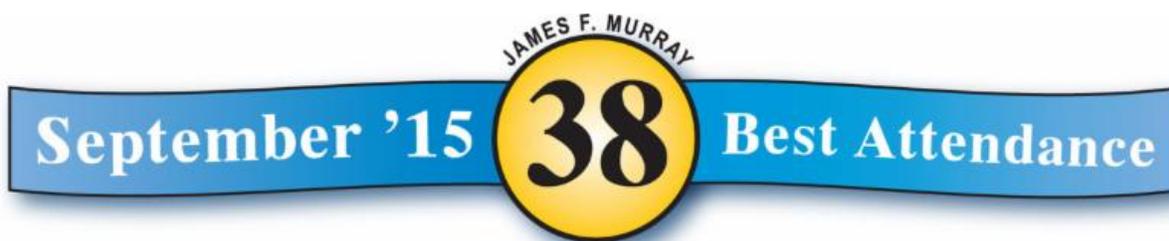
PS 16 PARTICIPATES IN HOBOKEN CITY CHALLENGE

Congratulations to Cornelia F. Bradford PS 16's "Brawling Bears" and those that went out to support them as they participated in the Hoboken City Challenge on Saturday, September 19, at Sinatra Park. Participants had to complete various obstacle courses. The team showed their fortitude and fitness as they climbed monkey bars and 8 ft. walls to get to the finish line! The event was brought to the school's attention by Ms.

Octavia Thomas, the physical education teacher who rallied the troops to sign up. Hats off to these individuals who pushed beyond their limits to recognize that you can conquer any challenge life throws at you.



The "Brawling Bears" of PS 16 pose after completing the Hoboken City physical fitness challenge.



Congratulations to James F. Murray PS 38 for starting off the 2015-16 school year with the best attendance for the opening month of school, September 2015, with a 97.8% rate!

IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES

- **11/3** - Election Day, District closed
- **11/5-11/6** - NJEA Convention, schools closed, CO open
- **11/11** - Veterans Day, District closed
- **11/17** - Board of Education Caucus, CO 6 PM
- **11/17** - High School Parent Conf. Night (except Snyder and Innovation), 6:30-8:00
- **11/18** - Middle School Parent Conference Night, 6:30-8:00
- **11/19** - Snyder, JC Arts, Innov, Parent Conf. Night, 6:30-8:00
- **11/19** - Board of Education Monthly Meeting, PS 11, 6 PM
- **11/24** - Elementary School Parent Conference Night, 6:30-8:00

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STAY CONNECTED

