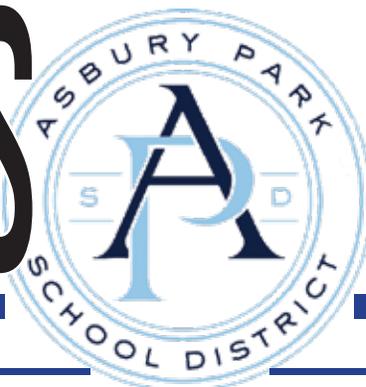


Blue Bishops Bulletin

#Performance #Passion #Purpose

Spring 2020 Issue



Message from the Superintendent's Office



In March 2019, I presented Vision 2020 -- a plan to restructure the Asbury Park School District following the announcement of a projected \$24

million loss in state aid over the next five years. Since that announcement, I have held several Stakeholders Meetings, most recently last month, to allow parents, community members and school partners to lend your voices to this critically important process. We began to R.A.C.E. (Reflect Assess, Create & Execute) because we wanted to do our part to ensure our students win. Our district could have cho-

sen to be bitter about the impending cuts, but instead we have chosen to get better.

To that end, my team and I have thoughtfully reviewed the blueprint of options and presented what we believe to be the best solution to meet the needs of our students and families. Effective September 2020, we will undergo a building realignment where all Pre-K to 3 students will attend Bradley and Thurgood Marshall Elementary Schools; the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School will house grades 4 to 6, and be reclassified as an upper elementary school; and the Asbury Park High School will be home to grades 7 to 12. The Barack Obama Elementary School will be re-purposed and re-imagined to make it a beacon for this community. Since Asbury Park is the place where music lives, I believe the district can effectively provide a space and place where community members can come to enjoy the city's legacy.

Anytime there is change, we know

there will be some form of opposition.

Please know that I hear your concerns about moving seventh- and eighth-graders to the high school. However, by doing this, we are creating career and academic pathways by providing earlier access to our high level/next level academies for six years as opposed to four years as they are too costly to replicate in the middle school. Those include our Allied Health, Engineering, Law and Public Safety and Performing Arts Academies. Additionally, our plan calls for keeping the seventh and eighth grade students contained on the second floor. They will have their own entrance, exit and stairwell access, as well as an earlier start time than the other high school students. This restructure will afford our seventh and eighth grade students their own yoga/mindfulness lounge and added support when using common areas like the gym, auditorium or cafeteria.

I am delighted by the new partnerships

we have forged, such as the Social Conscience Project. Thanks to this alliance, our students will have access to clean clothing and a food pantry at the high school if, and when, the need arises. Be sure to check out the article below.

In closing, Blue Bishop Family I encourage you to join the conversation and become part of the collective intellect as we forge ahead to improve the quality of education our students receive. I personally invite you join our re-imagining effort because we cannot do it by ourselves. Stay tuned for a 'Virtual Chew and Chat with the Superintendent' April 26, 2020 at 6:30 pm. Check our website for more details. Together, if we all share one narrative, our students will receive the brighter future they deserve.

Sancha K. Gray
Sancha K. Gray
Superintendent of Schools

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Created by Chanta L. Jackson, Central Registrar/ Communications Coordinator. If you would like to share a story idea, please contact me at jacksonc@asburypark.k12.nj.us or at (732) 776-2606, ext. 2975. Stay current with our activities by viewing our website, www.asburypark.k12.nj.us, our Facebook page, www.facebook.com/asburyparkschools, Twitter feed, @Asbury_ParkSD, and Instagram [asburyparkschools](https://www.instagram.com/asburyparkschools).

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Legacy Center Debuts at Asbury Park High School

Having clean clothes to wear to school will no longer be a barrier for students in the Asbury Park School District. Thanks to the Legacy Center, which officially opened March 10, that offers a full-service laundry, a limited selection of clothing, toiletries and other essentials right inside Asbury Park High School's Media Center. There is also a space where displaced students can freshen up before beginning their day.

The center was created in partnership with The Social Conscience Project, a Monmouth County-based nonprofit that transforms communities in need through targeted core programming and resources to help them flourish. Their motto is "Your heart can lead a movement. Your conscience can change a life."

Asbury Park is the first school district in Monmouth County and third in the state to receive support from the organization. Other sites are located in East Orange (Essex County) and Little Egg Harbor (Ocean County).

"The idea is to give all students a level playing field," said **Michael Levine**, Executive Director of The Social Conscience Project, whose organization consists of mostly volunteers.

The project also aims to transform children and their families in need by instilling core programming and the right resources within underfunded schools. The facility in the high school is furnished with washers, dryers, and laundry detergent. The clothing options, which range from brand new to gently used, include socks, pants, shirts, dresses, suits, shoes and many other items of necessity. All items are available to students and families in need at no cost, said **Sonia Irizarry**, Bilingual Community Parent Involvement Specialist.



TMES Engages in Heartwork Every Day

Thurgood Marshall Elementary School, under the leadership of **Principal Thea Jackson-Byers**, launched two initiatives to support the upcoming state assessment. They are “Heartwork Tutoring” and the “Saturday Academy.” In its third year, Heartwork Tutoring has proven to be extremely beneficial to the students. Since the program’s inception, assessment scores have increased by at least 20% for all students who participated.

Another assessment support initiative is the TMES C.O.R.E Success Express Saturday NJS-LA Preparatory Academy. The purpose of these programs is to

strengthen Math & ELA skills and test-taking strategies. “Our students gain valuable skill building to increase their scores on NJSLA as well as reinforce the work being done in their classrooms,” Jackson-Byers said. “They also gain tools to become an even more successful student.”

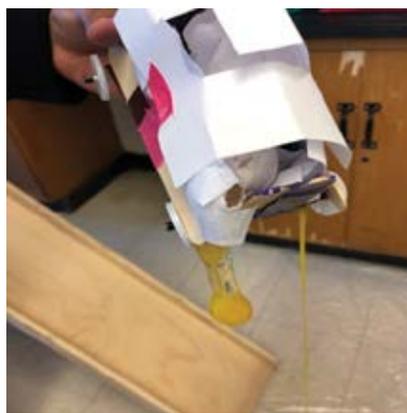
In addition, the school also hosted “TMES Has a HEART” in February, which coincided with Valentine’s Day. More than 100 parents and guardians were treated to a series of “heart-centered” activities including blood pressure screenings, mindfulness with Heart Yoga, Face Heart Painting, the Heart Escape Room and light refreshments.



It’s All About Science at DMLKMS

This year, students at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School have been focusing on STEAM-infused projects using Chemistry, Physics, and Earth Science. For example, in STEAM class, students used physics and Newton’s Laws of Motion to design and build an Egg Car that would survive a crash down a ramp without allowing their egg to break. In our Science class, students explored kinetic and potential energy by designing a chosen piece of playground equipment, which they presented to their peers explaining their engineering process.

Additionally, students in STEAM class used the engineering process to design, plan and build various projects including candy corn towers, straw bridges and telescopes. They also explored chemistry and the properties of matter by making careful observations of a chemical reaction, extracting pigment from fallen leaves and separating water molecules through electrolysis. One of the most popular projects allowed students to follow the steps of the engineering design process to research and replicate Towers around the world! In the challenge, students tested their ability to use the materials in a realistic way and learned how to build strong foundations and structures that maintain balance.



Contact Us

Asbury Park High School
Grades 9-12 Hours 7:47 a.m.-2:24 p.m.
1003 Sunset Avenue
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
(732) 776-2638

Thurgood Marshall Elementary School
Grades Pre K-5 Hours 7:55 a.m.-2:20 p.m.
600 Monroe Avenue
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
(732) 776-2660

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School
Grades 6-8 Hours 8:00 a.m.-2:18 p.m.
1200 Bangs Avenue
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
(732) 776-2559

Dorothy McNish Parent Center
300 Prospect Avenue
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
Hours of Operation 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
(732) 776-2559
Fax: (732) 502-3119

Barack Obama Elementary School
Grades Pre K-5 Hours 7:55 a.m.-2:20 p.m.
1300 Bangs Avenue
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
(732) 776-2545

Administrative Offices
910 Fourth Avenue
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
Hours of Operation 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
(732) 776-2606
Fax: (732) 774-8067

Bradley Elementary School
Grades Pre K-5 Hours 7:55 a.m.-2:20 p.m.
1100 Third Avenue
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
(732) 776-3100

COVID-19 Brings Out the Best in Asbury Park

The worst of times revealed the best of times for the Asbury Park School District and our families. When the effects of COVID-19 required district schools to close for health-related reasons on March 16, 2020, we decided to do things differently, including continuing our commitment to meet the educational and nutritional needs of our students remotely.

After thoughtful consideration and planning, the district made a variety of educational resources available. Students in all grades were given home instruction packets. High school students also received Chromebooks to supplement their instruction. In other instances, teachers provided additional resources for their students via Google Classroom and other information-sharing resources.

From a nutritional perspective, the district in partnership with Sodexo has been able to provide Grab-and-Go breakfast, lunch and snacks weekdays between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School, Thurgood Marshall and Bradley Elementary Schools. Sodexo also made fresh produce available throughout the week.

“We believe that everyone, regardless of socioeconomic status should have access to high quality food,” said Superintendent **Sancha K. Gray**, noting that food equity is tied to the district’s “heartwork.”

In addition to the partnership with Sodexo, Fulfill (formerly the FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties) provided Crisis Relief Boxes filled with shelf-stable food to families on Fridays to help meet the nutritional needs of families with the greatest needs on the weekends.

City restaurants and business owners also united to form Asbury Park Dinner Table, which made Grab-and-Go dinners available at Second Baptist Church, St. Stephen AME Zion Church, United Fellowship Baptist Church and the Boys and Girls Club of Monmouth County.

Thanks to these numerous partnerships, the Asbury Park School District has been able to reduce the negative impact COVID-19 has had on our city’s students and families during these uncertain times. All of these free services will continue as long as resources are available.

Check for updates at www.asburypark.k12.nj.us.

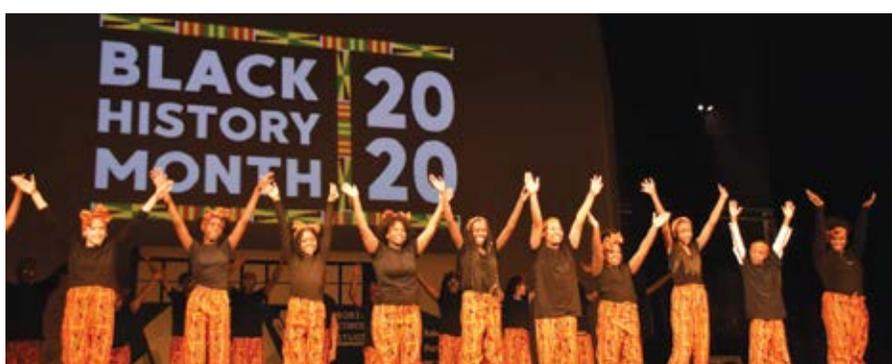


Sixth Annual Black History Extravaganza

The Asbury Park School District held its Sixth Annual Black History Extravaganza at the Paramount Theatre on Wednesday, February 26, 2020. As in past years, there were art displays and performances from each of the district’s five schools, as well as Lakehouse Voices.

In addition, this year the district presented appreciation awards to individuals who

have assisted with the success of the program over the past years, as well as those who have made significant contributions to music in the City of Asbury Park. The honorees were: **Sylvia Coleman, Floyd Gray, Jr., Genise Hughes, Alice Johnson, Tyrone Laws, Chico Rouse, Charles Trot** and Springwood Avenue Rising and Asbury Park African-American Music Project.



Celebrating Career Technical Education

Dr. Linda Eno, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner, Division of Academics & Performance, and members of the Office of Career Readiness, visited the CTE programs at the Asbury Park High School on February 29 in celebration of Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month. Career and Technical Education Month is a public awareness campaign that takes place each February to celebrate the value and achievements of such programs, many of which allow high school graduates to be career-ready upon graduation.

Currently, the Asbury Park School District has three accredited academy programs – Allied Health, under the direction of **Sarita Gogan**; Engineering, led by **Kevin Gould**, and Law and Public Safety, supervised by **Myrna Velez**. A Performing Arts Academy just launched in September.

“The world needs compassionate, talented healthcare professionals, and that

is exactly what the Allied Health Academy is designed to create”, Gogan has said, noting that there are more than 2.3 million new healthcare jobs available, earning an average of \$63,000 per year. Asbury Park enrollees enter as students and walk out as professionals. In February, all of the students in this program passed their Rutgers College Exam for Scientific Principles of Nutrition.

Gould said the goal of the program is to “expose the students to the fundamentals of Engineering Design and help them to become ‘practical problem-solvers’ while learning the discipline of the design process.” To achieve the goal, they complete hands-on projects every week, usually using high-tech equipment and tools.

Law and Public Safety Academy students will be prepared to serve in a number of criminal justice and public safety careers upon graduation.



Asbury Park Board of Education Member Recognition

Please join the Asbury Park School District in congratulating two of our Board Members for their dedication and commitment to the Asbury Park Board of Education and the betterment of our students and families.

On December 19, 2019, Board Members **Carol Jones** and **Barbara Lesinski** were recognized for earning Level 1 and Level 2 in the New Jersey School Boards Association Certification Program, respectively. Ms. Jones earned the Certified New Board Member honors, which is the first level of the NJSBA Board Member Academy certification program.

Ms. Jones had to earn at least 10 board member academy credits, attend the

Governance Orientation for New Board Members, and attend at least one state, region and county session.

Ms. Lesinski earned the Certified Board Member Award, which is the second level of the NJSBA Board Member Academy certification program. To be considered for this award, she must have earned a minimum of 20 credits in core areas including governance, have attended at least four county meetings, one statewide conference and have completed at least one full term on the local board, among other requirements.

Congratulations!



APHS Great Debaters Have a Phenomenal Season!

The Asbury Park High School Debate team has had a tremendous year. In February, the team competed at the 46rd Annual Harvard Debate Tournament in Cambridge, Mass. The event is the oldest and most prestigious high school tournament in America. This year, 431 schools in 37 states competed.

The APHS debaters won 10 rounds under the guidance of two Monmouth University debaters; **Chyna Walker**, and **William Seifert**. **Larhea Childress** and **Mayahna Murphy**, former APHS debate captains, award-winning debaters, also assisted with coaching and judging. The team is led by **Christine DeMarsico** and **Dr Joe Patton**, Professor at Monmouth University, and assisted by **Gaby Garcia**, and APHS students, **E’Niah Preston** and **Lucero Ruiz**.

The top APHS Debaters this year were **Meliza Garcia** and **Decie Vasquez**, and the top APHS speaker was **Meliza Garcia**. They were required to debate from both the affirmative and negative perspectives on the following resolution: Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially reduce Direct Commercial Sales and/or Foreign Military Sales of arms from the United States. The 2020 APHS Great Debaters who competed at Harvard were: **Meliza Garcia, Decie Vasquez, Jasmin Carter, Jaione Brit-Murray, Abigail Contreras, Jean Enelus, Jennifer Cruz-Hernandez, Angeles Lazo Garcia, Yossin Perez, Olivia Nelson, Ester Paul, Jashawn**

Louis, Regina Michel and **Luis Ramos**.

Additionally, the team placed seventh at Brooklyn Technical High School during the New York City Urban Debate League (NYCUDL), which draws monthly participation from more than 2,000 students and 140 schools. Notable wins during this contest were **E’Niah Preston’s** third-place ranking in the debating maverick category (debating alone) and achieving sixth place in the top speaker category. In addition, the team of **Christlie Lavarin** and **Lucero Ruiz** placed ninth in the advanced debate league.

The Asbury Park High School Debate Team launched 10 years ago as part of a continuing mentoring program with Monmouth University and was made possible through a grant from the TD Bank Foundation.

The 2019–2020 APHS Great Debaters are: **E’Niah Preston**, Junior Coach, Captains, **Decie Vasquez, Lucero Ruiz, Christlie Lavarin, Meliza Garcia**, Debaters; **Jasmin Carter, Jaione Britt-Murray, Oliva Nelson, Karen Carrasco, Esther Paul, Abigail Contreras, Jean Enelus, Jennifer Cruz Hernandez, Tatiana Laurore, Regina Michel, Edeja Watts, Najah Walsh, Ty’Asia Nealy, Yossmin Perez, Domonique Dawson, Jer’Shawn Louis, Angeles Lazo-Garcia** and **Luis Aparicio-Ruiz**.



Dorothy McNish Parent Center Puts Parents First

The Asbury Park School District will continue offering ESL classes on Mondays and Wednesdays mornings at 9 a.m. at the Dorothy McNish Parent Center, 300 Prospect Avenue, for Level 2 students. Additionally, the district will have computer classes on Wednesdays, specifically senior citizens.

The next P4 (Performance Passion Purpose 4 Parents) will be held on May 14 and June 11 at the Parent Center. All programs are contingent upon the re-opening of schools. For more information, contact Sonia Irizarry at 732-776-2606, ext.2477.

BOES Fine-Tunes Bobcat News Network (BNN)

Barack Obama Elementary School (BOES) students are in the second year of producing The Bobcat News Network (BNN), their online school news program. Every morning, homeroom teachers throughout the building broadcast the day's program to their class, which features student news anchors. The topics covered are the school's current events, sports and the local weather. The students undergo an audition process, which includes reading while being filmed to simulate an actual recording session. The rigorous process helps the show's producers, **Mr. Christopher Fletcher**, Technology Coach, and **Mr. Reginald Mirthil**, Principal, select its participants. Student cast members are taught the importance of establishing an on-screen presence as well as the significance of reading and technology in the field of media.

Principal Mirthil started BNN at BOES in order to alleviate the amount of interruptions and announcements made throughout the day while providing experiential learning to the students. While principal at Asbury Park High School, he implemented a similar initiative called the Breakfast Club, a similar program featuring student anchors and camera crew. Unlike the high school's show, the elementary school's recording and editing are done by the technology coach Mr. Fletcher. He films the students and edits their episodes daily. He then uploads it to the Google platform for all to access.

Last year, Mr. Mirthil conducted a districtwide production of BNN, which featured student guest hosts from every building. Students from Bradley and Thurgood Marshall Elementary Schools and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School participated in the filming and performance process while reporting on the district's Haitian Flag Day activities.

As a requirement, BOES' BNN anchor students must maintain a good social standing as well as an expected level of academic dedication to their studies and class. "The BNN student staff expressed some interest in either broadcast journalism or media. We use similar formats and vocabulary as the professional recording studios

to expose the students to real-world work environments. The students' level of focus and maturity when the camera is on never cease to amaze us", Principal Mirthil said. Working with a team has broadened the program's effectiveness. "Mr. Fletcher's quick technology solutions allow us timely productions. Teachers and students look forward to the daily episodes. It is a regular part of our daily routine."



Student Ah'moni Hayes interviews Freeholder Thomas Arnone for the school's news channel under Mr. Fletcher's guidance.



Students at the Asbury Park High School's breakfast club working behind the scenes to film the BNN news show.



BNN school news anchors Tahajah Jones, Nyzahnette Anderson and Jayanna Lunsford

TMES Launches Success Express Saturday Academy

Thurgood Marshall Elementary presents the inaugural year of the TMES C.O.R.E. Success Express Saturday NJSLA Preparatory Academy. The academy focuses on Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics and Test-Taking skills for students in grades 3-5.

The program, which launched on Feb. 29, 2020, includes one hour of math instruction and one hour of language arts coupled with technology. Students also receive breakfast to ensure they are able to focus on the information they are being taught. By participating in the academy, students will gain valuable skills that eventually will increase their scores on state assessments, as well as reinforce the work being done in their classrooms.

In addition, the program offers students incentives that are awarded to those who demonstrate focus, have perfect attendance by attending each session and those who achieve a passing score on their Linkit! Assessment. At the end of the eight-week academy, students will be invited to experience a trip out of state.

The program is the brainchild of **Principal Thea Jackson-Byers**. She desired to start a program that would give her students supplemental training to what they were learning Monday through Friday.

"The enthusiasm shown by the teachers and students alike has already bolstered the need for this academy," said **Tiffany Andrews**, program site coordinator. "We are anticipating wonderful results from the hard work of our students."



Early Childhood Updates

The Asbury Park School District's Early Childhood program spans across Preschool through 3rd Grade. The vision of our Early Childhood programming is to provide high-quality authentic learning experiences that develop the whole child in learning environments where students feel comfortable taking risks and families are always welcome.

Lauren Jackson, Supervisor of PreK to Grade 3, said enrollment for the upcoming school year is already underway for both preschool and kindergarten. While many families took advantage of the district's Early Registration events, there are still spots open for the 2020-2021 school year. Please visit the Dorothy L. McNish Parent Center from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM to register your child! Space in the district's FREE Summer and After-School STEAM Academies is offered with completed registration!

"At this point in the school year, our preschool students are continuing their hard work through hands-on learning," said Ms. Jackson noting that all preschool classrooms recently completed the Pets Study through Creative Curriculum. "During this study, students discovered different types of pets, how to care for them, and what animals would make the right pet for their home."

Additionally, in an effort to bring community involvement into the classrooms, each building hosted a pet drive for the Monmouth County SPCA. Students expressed how proud they were to be able to impact the lives of pets around them.

The district's soon-to-be kindergarten students are preparing for next school year by participating in the Next Level Kindergarten Readiness Academy. Through this program, four-year-old students visit kindergarten classroom to start acclimating with the surroundings, Jackson explained. Also, students are engaging with their peers as well as the staff in the room in order to ease the transition period next year.

Students from both preschool and kindergarten have been enjoying the process and embracing each other as partners in learning!

As the district begins approaching the end of the school year, there are still many more exciting events to look forward within the Early Childhood Department. Stay tuned for updates on Week of the Young Child activities, the Annual Bridge Crossing Ceremony and continuous Study Celebrations from all the district's Preschool classrooms!



DMLKMS PBSIS Gets off to a Great Start

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School PBSIS staff and students have been employing the PBSIS framework with the help of PBIS Rewards -- a digital tracking system. Students earn Incentives based on point values accumulated. DMLK has had a busy and exciting Winter, 2020! The school hosted a few Ramp-Up's that acknowledged the Teacher of the Month and select students for various contributions to the school.

In December, DMLKMS raffled off three iPads to students with perfect attendance; and in February, they were able to raffle two bikes to students who demonstrated academic excellence! Ramp-Up's are special and unique to the school as they are

designed to allow the entire student body and staff in be in one room. Through games and activities, they strengthen the school's climate and focus on positive behaviors.

In February, DMLKMS hosted its first Movie Day. Students who earned a total of 100 points were eligible to attend. In March, students who have earned a total of 250 points were entered into a raffle to attend Arcadia Earth in NYC! Still others will have a chance to attend a show at Count Basie Theater to see Flip Fabrique. Throughout the year on Fridays, PBSIS selects two students to win gift certificates from the Windmill and Jersey Mike's to help promote the school's perfect attendance initiative.



Information You Should Know About CENSUS 2020

In 2020, the decennial Census will occur. The principal reason for the Census is to determine how many members of the House of Representatives each state will receive in the next decade. In addition, Census data is used to distribute more than \$700 Billion in federal funds to states for roads, bridges, Title 1 School Funding, Medicaid, Medicare, SNAP benefits and more. If our communities do not complete the decennial Census, we will be underfunded and underrepresented for the next 10 years.

Census Day is April 1, 2020. Every residential unit in the United States will receive correspondence in March 2020 with instructions on how to complete the Census. The form should only take about 10 minutes to complete. There is no citizenship question on the Census. All residents – all members of the household including babies, children, teens adults and the elderly -- have until the end of July to complete the form, online, by phone, by mail or with a census taker. All responses are CONFIDENTIAL. For more information, visit www.census.gov.

MYTH	FACT
Participation in the Census is optional; and if I don't participate it won't make a big difference.	Everyone living in the US is required to respond to the Census. Every omitted resident has the potential to shape funding allocations (including education) and political representation for the next decade.
The Census is used to help the FBI, the police and ICE to find and detain people.	Title 13 of the U.S. Code protects all personal data that is included in the Census, which prevents it from being shared with departments outside of the Census Bureau. None of your individual data can be used against you in court. All information is confidential.
Only citizens of the United States should participate in the Census.	All persons residing in the US are required to participate. One does not have to be a citizen or permanent resident. Those seeking asylum, refugees and undocumented people who live here should complete the questionnaire.

Asbury Park's Thought Leaders After-school Academy Partners with Local Organizations to Bridge Generational Gaps

Asbury Park's Thought Leaders After-school Academy (TLAA) for grades 3-8 is embarking on a new journey into the kitchen! The students will have a chance to foster community engagement through cross-collaborative efforts involving representatives in the municipal, non-profit, and private sectors working in partnership with city senior residents.

Every Thursday, the students travel to the Asbury Park Senior Citizen Center to work with the residents on an experiential learning program that uses STEAM principles to foster inquisitiveness, dialogue, problem solving, critical and analytical thinking, and healthy food choices through a creative and collaborative outlet. In a nutshell, the students get to partner with the senior citizens to cook some of their favorite meals on camera.

The show will air monthly on APTV, the local public access station. The students not only get to cook with the seniors, but they are learning all of the behind-the-scenes activities that make the show come alive. They will be camera operators, editors, script writers and even on-camera talent.

The Thought Leaders After-school Academy is proud to partner with the following in this venture: Asbury Park Senior Center, Asbury Park Housing Authority, Mayor's Wellness Committee, Alliance for a Healthier Asbury Park, Interfaith Neighbors and Monmouth University.



WINTER SPORTS WRAP-UP

