

TOGETHER PCS



KEEPING PACE WITH PINELLAS COUNTY SCHOOLS

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

In this issue, we celebrate the start of Major League Baseball season with our alumni feature on the 'Voice of Petco Park,' Alex Miniak, a proud graduate of the Lakewood High School Center for Advanced Technologies (CAT) Program. We also feature 12 teams from Dunedin High School who competed in an architecture competition to redesign the school's auditorium. And we celebrate our CLASS OF 2024 SENIORS, who are graduating this month and are ready to take the next steps in their educational journeys.

Do you know someone who should be featured in TogetherPCS? Please click the "Nominate Here" button below.

[NOMINATE HERE](#)

**WE ♥ OUR
TEACHERS!**

May 6-10 is **Teacher Appreciation Week!**

Make sure to show the teachers in your life how much they mean to you. Follow along on our social channels for teacher spotlights each day next week. Thank you, teachers, for all you do all year long!

WHAT'S INSIDE



**MARK YOUR
CALENDAR**

Assessments:

End-of-year assessments will be taking place throughout the month of May.

Elementary assessment dates

Middle school assessment dates

High school assessment dates

Graduation Dates:

High school graduations will be held on May 16-18, 20 and 21 for traditional high schools, May 24, 28 and 29 for Educational Alternative Services and Pinellas Virtual and May 22 and 23 for Exceptional Student Education. Please visit our [Graduation Page](#) for specific dates and times by school.

Last Day of School - Early Release

May 29 (All students will be released two hours early.)

Summer Bridge

Begins June 3 and runs through June 27. Visit our [Summer Bridge](#) page for more information, including registration and transportation.

Summer Camps

Looking for a fun and fulfilling way to spend your summer? Camp registrations are filling up. Visit the [Summer Camps](#) page for a full list of options.

2024-2025

Mark your calendars for the first day of school: August 12, 2024.



Architecture students to become part of Dunedin High history

When Sram Muhqueed and Andrew Markowski first decided to compete in the Dunedin High School auditorium entrance redesign contest, they were excited, but not overly optimistic.

“We didn’t take it super seriously at first,” said Sram. “I thought it would be fun, but I thought we’d get fourth, maybe third place.”

But the professional architects who judged the competition couldn’t have been more impressed with the duo, who called themselves the Fountain Falconeers because of their incorporation of a fountain into their design.

“I was very inspired by their curiosity and level of creativity,” said Jason Jensen with Wannemacher Jensen Architects. “For me, it was the thoughtfulness with which they approached this project – they thought of things we wouldn’t necessarily consider because they are the ones moving through the campus.”

The final presentations, held April 25 and April 30, were the culmination of months of planning. Twelve groups, who are all part of Dunedin’s Academy of Architecture, Robotics and Construction Technologies, participated in redesigning the school’s front entrance and auditorium areas with the understanding that one element from the winning design would be incorporated into the actual plan.

[Watch the video](#)
[Read the full article](#)

ACHIEVE TOGETHER

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Alex Miniak is a 1995 graduate of the Lakewood High School CAT Program and is now the 'Voice of Petco Park' for the San Diego Padres.

It's been nearly 30 years since Alex Miniak graduated from the Center for Advanced Technologies and Communications (CATCOM) at Lakewood High School, but he still credits the program for providing a foundation for his broadcast success.

Miniak just began his 11th season as the "Voice of Petco Park" as the ballpark announcer for the San Diego Padres. He also "plays himself" as the announcer for all 30 Major League Baseball stadiums in the hit video game MLB The Show.

"When we did Fast Forward, that was truly the first thing that was on the air that I did," Miniak said during an interview from the lobby of his alma mater. "CATCOM really set me on my path."

After graduating from the University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications, where he was an assistant program director for the on-campus radio station, Miniak took a position with a company now known as iHeartRadio. While there, he built morning shows and developed programs for radio stations all over the country.

[Read the full article](#)



PCS in the NFL



Congratulations to Micah Abraham of East Lake High School and T.J. Tampa of Lakewood High School for being selected in the 2024 NFL draft.

CONGRATS CLASS OF 2024



Shy'Yonna Parris | SPHS

Shy'Yonna was one of 243 seniors honored at the Take Stock in Children senior celebration in April.

As a Take Stock scholarship recipient, Shy'Yonna met regularly with a mentor and pledged to fulfill a contractual obligation to attend school regularly, maintain at least a "C" in all classes, complete homework assignments and remain crime and drug free.

Shy'Yonna exceeded the requirements of the program, all while working two jobs, maintaining her own apartment and oftentimes caring for her two younger siblings.

She will attend St. Petersburg College this fall.



Kayla Toohey | PHUHS

As a QuestBridge Scholar, Palm Harbor University High School valedictorian Kayla Toohey will be attending Princeton University in the fall on a full scholarship.

QuestBridge provides high achieving, low-income students with the opportunity to rank their top colleges and be "matched" with a school at the top of their list.

Kayla attended the College Prep Scholars program her junior year and followed up by applying to National College Match the summer before her senior year.

Kayla plans to study architecture and engineering but remains open to all opportunities at Princeton.



Graci Tubbs | Seminole HS

Graci has spent the better part of her time at Pinellas County Schools rallying friends and family to join in her passion of supporting military personnel overseas.

Graci started the non-profit "Operation Military Matters" as a fourth-grade gifted project, but it has since grown into a passion. She gathers a group each month to help assemble and pack boxes containing toiletries, games, snacks, and personal notes and cards to send to military men and women. She has delivered more than 10,000 packages.

Graci has also played varsity softball, is senior class president and plans to attend Florida Atlantic University and major in sports broadcasting this fall.



St. Petersburg College offers two-year 'Promise' Scholarship

Between her academic achievements and her athleticism, Tarpon Springs High School graduate Kaylin Kwapil had options when it came to deciding where to go to college.

But for her, being financially responsible superseded those options.

Like several hundred other 2023 Pinellas County Schools graduates, Kaytlin is finishing up her first year of college at St. Petersburg College tuition-free through the Promise Scholarship program. The Promise Scholarship started with last year's graduating class and offers graduates of eight Pinellas County high schools – Boca Ciega, Clearwater, Gibbs, Hollins, Lakewood, Northeast, Pinellas Park and Tarpon Springs – the opportunity to receive their associate's degree at no charge as long as they maintain a 2.0 grade point average.

[Read the full article](#)



Center for Journalism and Multimedia (CJAM) students at Lakewood High School visited John Hopkins Middle School last month.

Journalism students along with their teacher Christopher Mosher participated in the trip, which helped to showcase the journalism program at Lakewood for the middle schoolers. John Hopkins Middle School is one of three Pinellas County schools with journalism programs.

[Read the student feature](#)



The 516 Gears of Fire robotics team from Palm Harbor University High School competed in the FIRST World Championship in Houston.

FIRST® is a global nonprofit organization that prepares young people for the future through youth robotics programs that build skills, confidence, and resilience. The championship is an international event and an annual celebration of science, technology, engineering, and math.

[Watch the video story](#)



The Superintendent Says...

"Congratulations class of 2024 graduates! I am so proud of your hard-earned accomplishments and feel honored to have witnessed a small portion of your journey. Please keep in touch and let us know where you go from here. We know you will continue to achieve amazing things!"

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](#)



VISION: 100% STUDENT SUCCESS
MISSION: EDUCATE AND PREPARE EACH STUDENT FOR COLLEGE, CAREER AND LIFE

PCS Compliance Statement

Pinellas County Schools | 301 Fourth St. SW, Largo, FL 33779



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