



Superintendent, Anibal Soler, Jr.

Message from Superintendent Soler

Dear Yonkers Public Schools Family,

As we close out the second-to-last week of the school year, I want to begin this week's message by recognizing that our district community continues to grieve the tragic loss of one of our students.

Last week, we lost Jacob Medina, a 12-year-old student from the Justice Sonia Sotomayor Community School. This week, I had the privilege of attending



Basketball legend and Hall of Famer Walt Frazier and Superintendent Anibal Soler, Jr. at YMA Celebration Hosted by Stew Leonard's

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Jacob's wake services alongside hundreds of family members, friends, classmates, educators, and community members who came together to honor his life and support his loved ones. It was a powerful reminder of the strength of our Yonkers community and the impact that one young person can have on so many lives.

I want to thank the staff, students, and leadership at Justice Sonia Sotomayor Community School for the compassion and care they have shown one another during this difficult time. As we approach the end of the school year, I ask that we continue to keep Jacob's family, friends, classmates, and the entire school community in our thoughts and prayers.

Even in times of sorrow, our schools continue to serve as places of hope, opportunity, and celebration. This week was filled with many memorable events across the district as we prepare to close another successful school year.

One of the highlights of the week was recognizing our [Yonkers Montessori Academy Lady Eagles](#), the New York State Girls Basketball Champions, at a special celebration hosted by Stew Leonard's. Our student-athletes were joined by some incredible guests, including New York Knicks Hall of Famer Walt Frazier and Olympic silver medalist Gail Marquis.

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Message from Superintendent Soler (Continued)

It was an unforgettable event celebrating a truly historic accomplishment. A special thank you to Stew Leonard's for hosting the event and generously purchasing championship rings for our Lady Eagles. Your support helped create a lasting memory for these remarkable young women.

I also had the opportunity this week to join acclaimed actor, producer, and humanitarian Don Cheadle during his visit to our newest innovative high school, the Robert Halmi Sr. Academy of Film and Television. Don shared his journey and encouraged our students to pursue their passions, embrace their creativity, and never stop believing in their potential. His visit served as a powerful reminder that dreams can become reality through hard work, perseverance, and dedication.

At this week's Board of Education meeting, the Board [adopted our final 2026-2027 budget](#). Despite a challenging fiscal year, we were able to develop a budget that protects the important work occurring in our classrooms while addressing some of the financial realities facing our district. The process required difficult decisions, and I want to thank our Board of Education, staff, labor partners, families, and community members for their engagement throughout this process.

As we move into the fall, we will continue important conversations about the future of Yonkers Public Schools. While we are grateful for the support we received this year, we continue to operate within a Foundation Aid formula that does not fully recognize the unique needs of a district like Yonkers. This creates ongoing structural challenges that require thoughtful planning and long-term solutions. Together, we will continue advocating for the resources our students deserve.

I also had the honor of joining Mayor Spano at our annual [My Brother's Keeper Senior Send-Off](#). This event is always one of the most meaningful celebrations of the year. It provides an opportunity to recognize our graduating MBK seniors and celebrate their accomplishments as they prepare for the next chapter of their lives.

During the event, we reminded our students that success is not only about reaching your own goals but also about helping others along the way. We challenged each graduate to reach back and lift up one person behind them as they continue to rise. These young men have helped make Yonkers stronger, and while we are excited for their futures, we also hope they remember that Yonkers will always be home.

Message from Superintendent Soler (Continued)

On June 19, our nation also observes Juneteenth, an important day in American history that commemorates the end of slavery in the United States and celebrates freedom, resilience, and progress. It is an opportunity for reflection, learning, and appreciation of the contributions that have helped shape our nation.

As we head into the final days of the school year, let us continue to support one another, celebrate our students, and recognize the many accomplishments happening throughout our district. Despite challenges, the spirit of Yonkers remains strong. Every day, I see examples of what we proudly call Yonkers Magic. It is in our classrooms, on our stages, on our athletic fields, and in the achievements of our students and staff.

The final Week In Review of the school year will be dedicated entirely to our moving-up ceremonies and graduation celebrations as we honor the accomplishments of the Class of 2026 and students across our district.

Sunday is Father's Day. For the men who are dad, papa, popi, abbu, abba, père, god father, uncle, big brother, father figure, super hero in our hearts and in our memories: Happy Father's Day!

In closing, thank you for your continued partnership, trust, and support. We are stronger together. We are better together.

With gratitude,



Anibal Soler, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools

What They Found Under Their Seats Changed Everything



Students filed into the Charles E. Gorton High School auditorium on June 1st expecting to learn more about the newly launched Yonkers Promise college consortium. Instead, Superintendent of Schools Aníbal Soler, Jr. encouraged them to look under their seats.

What they found wasn't the loose change, forgotten papers, or even the chewing gum generations of students might have expected. Waiting for them were letters of acceptance from the six participating colleges and universities. In an instant, uncertainty gave way to possibility.

The Yonkers Promise, a new college consortium designed to create clear, direct admission pathways from high school to higher education for Yonkers students.

At its core, the Yonkers Promise establishes direct admissions pipelines between Yonkers Public Schools and participating colleges. Eligible students will receive admission offers based on agreed-upon criteria, eliminating many of the traditional barriers and complexities of the application process. The initiative is designed to:

- Increase college-going rates among Yonkers students
- Simplify the college application process
- Promote equity in access to higher education opportunities

The launch of the Yonkers Promise follows a series of convenings with college and university leaders to align on a shared vision and framework. Participating institutions will formalize their commitment through memoranda of understanding outlining admissions criteria, data-sharing practices, and student support expectations.

The first cohort of Yonkers Promise students is expected to begin accessing direct admission opportunities in Fall 2026.

Knicks Legend Walt Frazier Salutes YMA State Champions



The New York Knicks aren't the only champions being celebrated. The Yonkers Montessori Academy Girls Varsity Basketball Team is the pride of the city. **Stew Leonard Jr. saluted the New York State Champions** with an all-star celebration at his Yonkers grocery store.

Walt "Clyde" Frazier, who led the Knicks to two NBA Championships in the 1970's, presented the Lady Eagles with giant gold medal replicas inscribed, "From one legend to another- Walt Frazier." Gold was the color of the day.

The YMA champs wore gold shirts, and Frazier donned a gold outfit from head to toe, including his shoes. The NBA Hall of Famer told the team, "Don't let anyone take away your pride, your confidence... All you have to do is use common sense, and I assure you, nothing can deny you."

Olympic silver medalist, former basketball player Gail Marquis praised the young women and said, "Be Proud! You will always be known as the first." This is the first state title for any girls' high school sports team in Yonkers. It is the first basketball state championship for the city since the Yonkers High School boys team captured the title in 1932.

Fans waved red and blue pom poms. The state champs entered under a triumphal arch of blue and white balloons. Students gobbled up free cake and ice cream. Yonkers Public Schools Superintendent Aníbal Soler Jr. thanked Stew Leonard for the joyous celebration and for ordering championship rings, which the team will receive in a few weeks.

Frazier wrapped up by saying, "Hopefully, Thursday, I see you all at the Knicks parade."

Actor Don Cheadle Visits Robert Halmi Sr. Academy of Film & Television



It was an unscripted surprise when actor and Academy Award nominee, Don Cheadle tiptoed onto a darkened set at Robert Halmi Sr. Academy of Film and Television. Students were recreating a scene from Ocean's Thirteen between Cheadle and Al Pacino. Cheadle declared, "Nailed It," then asked if he could take a shot at the scene.

The veteran actor proceeded to deliver a master class in professionalism as he quickly ran his lines, took a few deep breaths, shook off his nerves and hit his mark. Students roared their approval.

Four Schools Named Part of Digital Promise



Great News! Free iPads are on the way to School 5, Robert C. Dodson School, Yonkers Montessori Academy and Yonkers Middle High School.

Students and teachers at these four schools will soon have brand new, internet-ready devices in hand to use for instruction, over the next four years. Verizon has partnered with the nonprofit organization **Digital Promise** to help close the digital learning gap and increase access to technology.

The iPads will have cellular connectivity and 30GB of monthly data, ensuring access to learning anytime and anywhere, even at home. The initiative also provides resources for teachers.

Technology can open a whole new world of educational opportunities. An iPad is a portal through which a curious young mind can explore. Thanks to these new iPads, learning will extend beyond the classroom.

We Have a W-I-N-N-E-R!



1st Place Aliza Jamil
Rosemarie Ann Siragusa School



2nd Place Salis Ibrahim
School 30



3rd Place Lily Usher
Las Hermanas Mirabal
Community School

If you ask Siragusa School 5th Grader Aliza Jamil to spell “SUCCESS” don’t be surprised to hear the letters C-O-N-S-C-I-E-N-T-I-O-U-S, which she pronounced in the correct order to win the 60th annual 5th Grade Spelling Bee last week.

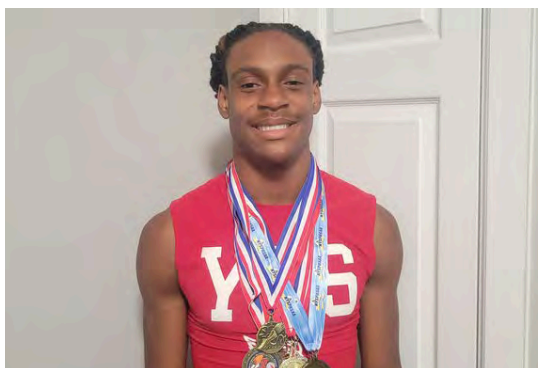
Points of Pride: Scholar Athletes



Congratulations to Yonkers Middle High School student-athlete, Nathaniel DeJesus who has committed to run for NCAA Division I Colgate University.

The Track and Field standout excels in the 100-meter and 200-meter events. DeJesus thanked God, his family, and his coaches.

Nathaniel has competed alongside fellow standout sprinter Mikah Sparkman.



At last month's Section 1 Class AA Championships, Mikah won Gold in the 100-meter dash, while Nathaniel earned Silver. In the 200-meter race, Mikah set a new Yonkers Public Schools record, taking Silver, with Nathaniel finishing third and earning Bronze.

Pathways to Success Celebrates Adult Students



Kudos to the Yonkers residents who recently completed their studies through the Pathways to Success Adult Education Program. The District honored their achievements at the annual Awards Ceremony held at Saunders Trades and Technical High School. NYS Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins joined the celebration and saluted the adults for continuing their education.

MBK Yonkers Annual Senior Sendoff



It was a proud moment as members of Yonkers My Brother's Keeper gathered to sendoff seniors. Members past and present celebrated the accomplishments of the last year and rededicated themselves to the mission moving forward. Superintendent of Yonkers Public Schools Anibal Soler, Jr. told the members, "Life will get harder. Stay grounded. You are a positive statistic. Be proud. Stay humble. Stay hungry."

Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano congratulated the young men as they head off to college, but reminded them, "Be willing to come back and make a difference in Yonkers." This Fall will mark ten years since Yonkers accepted President Barak Obama's call to create supportive communities that mentor and guide young men of color.

In a ritual steeped in symbolism, during a libation ceremony, MBK fellows poured water into a potted plant as a gesture of remembrance, gratitude and spiritual connection.

The Week Ahead



[Summer Reading](#)



- Juneteenth Schools & Central Office Closed: June 19
- Half Day for Elementary Students: June 25
- Final Day of School: Half Day for Elementary Students & Hourly Staff, Full Day for Staff: June 26

Students Bring Mirabal Legacy to Life



At Las Hermanas Mirabal Community School, students unveiled the new “Las Mariposas” mural, a schoolwide tribute to the legacy of the Mirabal sisters.

Created one brushstroke at a time by students from Pre-K through Grade 8, the mural reflects the values of courage, justice, and freedom championed by the Mirabal sisters.

During the celebration, students portrayed the Mirabal sisters and shared their stories, while Principal Dr. Robert Vicuña, Assistant Principal Ms. Abate, and Artist-in-Residence Alvaro Garcia-Ordonez recognized the students’ work. Dance performances and a parade added to a joyful day of learning, reflection, and celebration.

District Digest

Photos from Across the District



Olympic Medalist Gail Marquis & NY Knicks Legend Walt Frazier



Hudson River Museum Graduating Junior Docents Headed to College



Lincoln High School Coats to Commencement Ceremony



Board of Education Student Trustees Conclude Their Service.



Roosevelt High School Food Service Staff



Paideia School 24 Career Fair

YPS STUDENT ARTWORK



Jhossue Delgado Guillen, School 17, Gr. 1



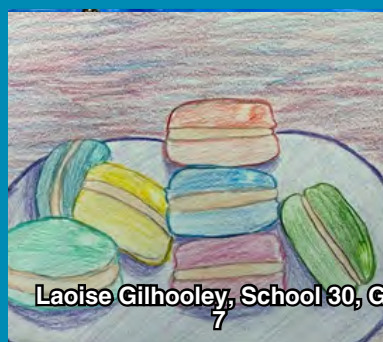
Cristian Lopez Echeverria,
Lincoln, Gr. 10



Aimee Orozco, Dodson, Gr. 7



Mia Marrero Svelti, School 30,
Gr. 7



Laoise Gilhooly, School 30, Gr.
7



Havona Foye, School 23, Gr. 8



Julianna Salcedo, Rosemarie Ann Siragusa School, Gr. 6