



Office of Communications & Community Engagement

2024

Strategic Plan Report



Q2



BLUEPRINT
FOR MARYLAND'S FUTURE

Dear PGCPS Community,

It is with great pleasure that we present to you our report for the second quarter of the 2023-2024 school year, encompassing the period from March 1 to June 1. This report captures the diligent efforts and significant milestones achieved by the Prince George's County Public Schools Office of Communications and Community Engagement over the past several months.

At PGCPs, we remain steadfast in our commitment to fostering open communication, building strong community partnerships, and ensuring equitable access to information for all stakeholders. This quarter has been marked by several exciting firsts and initiatives that underscore our dedication to inclusivity, support, and service excellence.

This past quarter, we launched several initiatives that celebrated the rich diversity within our community and marked important firsts for PGCPs. From introducing our district's first web virtual assistant to hosting our inaugural PRIDE Summit, our efforts have been focused on creating an inclusive environment where every student and staff member feels valued and supported.

We also took significant steps to recognize and celebrate the contributions of our Asian-American Pacific Islander community and highlighted the importance of religious observances such as Ramadan. Our commitment to linguistic diversity was showcased through our World Language Month celebration, and we amplified events like Decision Day and Graduation Season, honoring the achievements of students.

Teacher Appreciation Week was another highlight, as we connected with families and staff in innovative ways to celebrate the incredible work of our educators. The positive media coverage and community engagement during this time were a testament to the strong bonds within our PGCPs family.

As we look forward to the next quarter, we are excited to announce the launch of a new website in July. We heard your feedback and are working diligently to ensure that your experience on the PGCPs website is both easy and meaningful.

Though the school year is wrapping up, we are already planning for the first day of school. Be on the lookout for back-to-school messages detailing what you can expect as we prepare to welcome you back.

We hope you have a wonderful summer and look forward to seeing you in the fall!

Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to the success of our students, families, staff, and broader community.

Warm regards,



Tejal K Patel
Chief of Communications and Community Engagement
Prince George's County Public Schools



View this report online!

What Guides Our Work?

The Office of Communications and Community Engagement leverages a variety of tools, platforms and activities to support and amplify the collective work of the district as aligned with PGCPs strategic goals and those outlined in the Blueprint for Maryland's Future. We strive to provide PGCPs students, families, staff and the broader community with relevant information to enhance their experience. We are managers and protectors of the PGCPs brand, narrators of the district's successes and unique strengths, and connectors of information — with the goal of engaging and empowering all stakeholders through a lens of equity and inclusivity.

Our Office encompasses:

- Public Information
- Multimedia
- Family and Community Engagement
- Interpreting and Translation

For the 2023-24 school year, PGCPs focus areas under the Transformation 2026 Strategic Plan include:

Focus Area 1: Accelerating Achievement in Mathematics

Focus Area 2: Enhancing Social Emotional Learning & Mental Health

Focus Area 3: Improving Culture & Climate

The Blueprint for Maryland's Future encompasses five focus areas including:

Pillar 1: Early Childhood Education

Pillar 2: High Quality and Diverse Teachers and Leaders

Pillar 3: College and Career Readiness

Pillar 4: More Resources for all Students to be Successful

Pillar 5: Governance and Accountability

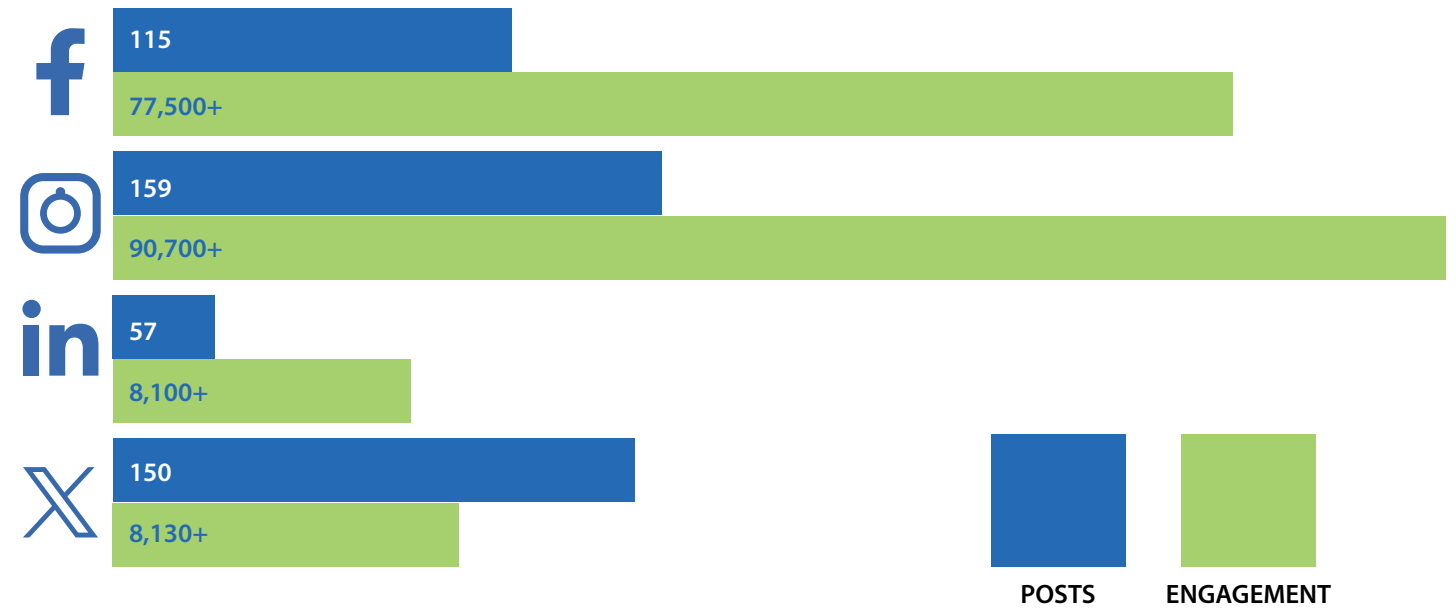
Our second quarter report outlines key communications and engagement activities completed between March 1 and June 1, 2024.





Q2 '24 BY THE NUMBERS

Total Cross-Channel Social Media Posts & Engagement



Public Information & Multimedia

- 28 Media Advisories, News Releases and Blogs
- 42 video reels
- 24 videos produced and published to YouTube
- 481 social media posts across channels
- 185K post engagements (+248%)
- 22+ School Messenger emails, text messages and newsletters to more than 128,000 parent/ guardian contacts and 22,000 staff.



Office of Interpreting and Translation (OIT)

- 162 students and family members hosted for International Family Day at Camp Schmidt
- 6,082 systemic and school-based meetings and events for which live or virtual interpreting services were provided
- 258,548 telephonic interpreting minutes with parents and caregivers
- 1,288 translation projects in Spanish, French, Pashto, Dari, Arabic, Haitian Creole, Mandarin and more
- 100% of public Board of Education meetings with Spanish simultaneous interpretation and ASL



Web Statistics

- 4.5M page views per month with an average engagement time of 1 minute 54 seconds (+ 14% over last year)
- 435 tickets for website assistance with 99% satisfaction rating
- 22 blog posts



Department of Family and Community Partnerships

- 9 Transportation Information Sessions
- 1st Annual Virtual Pride Summit for 500 registrants
- 6 Family Institute sessions reaching 270 families
- 103 MOU and partnerships + 209 School Formally Adopted by Business and Community Partners



Focus Area 1 Accelerating Achievement in Mathematics

High School STEM Program Earns National Acclaim

Marking the 10-year anniversary of its Aerospace Engineering & Aviation Technology Program (AEAT), we highlighted how DuVal High School students and staff continue to make their mark as a leading high school STEM program in the district and region. During Q2, we promoted the program's National School Boards Association MAGNA Award and spotlighted how students were gearing up to compete in the DC Electric Vehicle Grand Prix.

STEM: Solar Eclipse Brings Science to Life

When a rare partial solar eclipse happens, we seize the moment to educate and engage! To ensure safe viewing of the Great American Eclipse of April 8, 2024, we shared a blog and social media series with tips from Howard B. Owens Science Center Planetarium Operator Patricia Seaton. We also produced a reel featuring Highland Park Elementary School teacher Ingrid Carter who shared the joy of teaching students about the eclipse!

Financial Literacy in Focus

We highlighted PGCPs financial education and empowerment coordinator Susan Boudoin Bistransin, who received a statewide top honor in high school financial education and played an integral role in establishing Financial Literacy as a PGCPs graduation requirement. Additionally, we [produced a video](#) offering a peek inside Junior Achievement Finance Park, where all PGCPs 7th graders officially begin their financial literacy journey.



Focus Area 2 Social Emotional Learning & Mental Health

PBIS in PGCPs

[Produced a video](#) highlighting how the district leverages Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), an evidence-based, tiered framework for supporting students' behavioral, academic, social, emotional, and mental health, for student success.

Wellness Wednesday Podcast

Produced third quarter Wellness Wednesday podcast featuring a discussion between school psychologists and a student on stigmas surrounding young men's mental health and practical tips. Additionally, [published a blog](#) offering an overview of the series, which aims to encourage open conversations and make mental health education and resources accessible to students, staff, families and the community. a versatile tool for teaching and practicing social and emotional skills.



Focus Area 3 Improving Culture and Climate

Districtwide Transportation Improvements Campaign

To ensure clear and effective communication around major districtwide changes to school bus transportation service, a multi-platform campaign to inform families was initiated to continue through the start of 2024-25 school year and beyond.

Transportation audit findings and recommendations were tailored to make technical jargon more understandable for the public. To support the education around improvements, we developed informational presentations for community information sessions and various stakeholder groups.

A toolkit for school principals, staff, partners, and board members was prepared, and school principals were briefed on available resources. The toolkit includes: fliers for backpacks, posters and other signage for schools, scripts for front office staff, FAQs, standard sample social media posts for school-level profiles, a community letter template for families, a list of community info sessions, tutorials on how to use the StopFinder App, and a call-to-action to register for the new parent information system.

An informational web portal at pgcps.org/bus, features FAQs, blogs, a video message from the Superintendent, and resources for employees on the district's Staff Portal.

Graphic assets were adapted as posters, fliers, web graphics, and social media icons optimized for all platforms. A paid/boosted social media campaign will supplement regular organic posts to ensure effective targeting and reach of the audience with these critical messages.

Our email and text campaign included tailored messages from the Superintendent to staff and the community, internal and external newsletters, with email communication to families directly impacted, planned. We also engaged local news media to help underline the changes through issuing of a news release and integration of key messages into monthly media appearances. A systemwide mailer to all households is planned for summer 2024.

Transportation Community Information Sessions

Nine community information sessions were convened, planned, scripted, and co-hosted in each Board of Education district to share details and solicit feedback on districtwide transportation improvements.



Equity for All: Inaugural PRIDE Summit!

More than 500 students, staff and community members registered to attend the district's inaugural PRIDE summit, featuring sessions for students, staff, allies and families. Workshops spanned topics including resources for LGBTQIA+ youth, strategies for empowerment and advocacy, and fostering inclusivity and allyship within the PGCPs community. Event promotion included a web portal, social media and email marketing campaigns, printed collateral distributed to all PGCPs schools, and promotion in internal and external newsletters.

"Every member of our community deserves to feel seen, valued, respected and safe, and this summit represents a milestone in our ongoing work to foster a culture of acceptance and equity across the district." -Superintendent Millard House II

The summit is part of ongoing district wide efforts to create an inclusive and equitable educational environment for all sets the groundwork for a continued Pride Month celebration in June.

f **WHAT WE'RE HEARING**
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"This is making me want to put in an application. I miss my students."
Chaunetta Anderson, Educator via LinkedIn

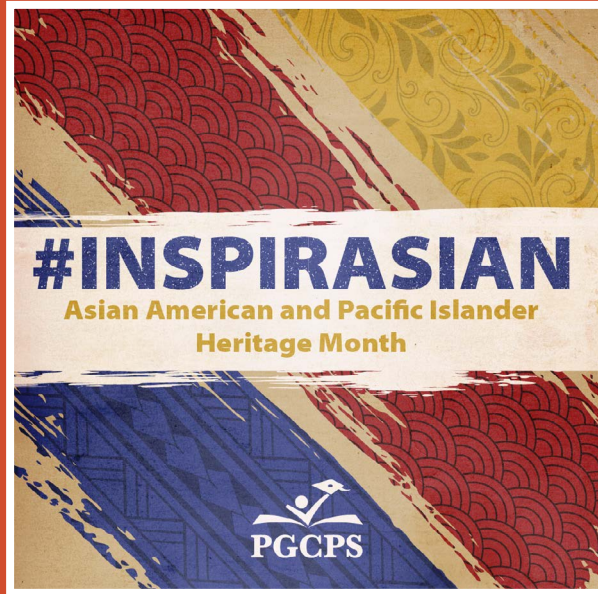
"Love this! We hope you will come to a convening of Prince George's County government communications leaders, hosted by the County Executive's Office and present on this (social media engagement) initiative!"
Allyson Finch Wilson, Prince George's County Communications Director via LinkedIn

"Thank you PGCPs! This has been the most supportive school system to their students during Ramadan. Much appreciated."
Safia Omar Carter via Facebook

"Thank you! Chag Sameach to all who observe!"
Marcie Frank Sun, Educator via Facebook

"I saw your post and felt proud that someone finally recognized our heritage. While I have seen celebrations for Hispanic Heritage Month and Black History Month in our school system, I had never seen similar recognition for Asian heritage in the school system."
Bhumija Gupta, Educator via LinkedIn

"Excited to attend the Inaugural Pride in PGCPs Virtual Summit! As an instructional leader, I'm committed to ensuring that every LGBTQIA student feels supported in a safe and welcoming environment at my school where they can thrive and succeed. Huge thanks to @pgcps... for this incredible opportunity to provide resources, information, and support for all PGCPs LGBTQIA students. Together, we can make a difference!" #PrideinPGCPs
Dr. Tito P. Villosillo Jr., Assistant Principal via X



Harnessing Diversity for District Success

Showcasing lesser known stories and voices across our district and educating around diverse holidays and recognitions is more than a mere 'to-do' — it is producing significant benefits and return on investment, internally, externally and in recruitment. By embracing diversity, we not only enrich our educational environment but also create a thriving, inclusive community that benefits everyone.

- **Recruitment Tool:** Attracts talent who value inclusive environments, ensuring we draw in passionate and diverse educators.
- **Internal Communication:** Strengthens employee communication and cultivates community by ensuring all staff feel seen, appreciated and included.
- **Enhanced External Reputation:** bolsters our standing in the community, demonstrating a commitment to inclusivity and excellence.

During Q2, we highlighted Women's History Month with a rendition of Amanda Gorman's poem "We Rise" delivered by students, teachers, and district leaders. We also, for the first time, developed a campaign honoring Asian American and Pacific Islander Month through educator spotlights, a blog and an infographic. Additionally, we recognized Passover and Ramadan, including a video on how schools support practicing Muslim students during the holy holiday and more.

New Web Virtual Assistant: Leveraging AI to Improve Customer Service

Following completion of an audit of the district's website to improve customer service and usability, the Web Services team launched an AI Chatbot on the pgcps.org homepage and all 200 school websites.

Powered by IBM Watson AI, the virtual assistant serves as a companion to the pgcps.org search and utilizes PGCPs data (calendars, procedures, web pages and more) to answer questions. Additionally, the assistant supports non-English speakers: users can ask questions and receive responses in their native language.

Virtual Assistant Highlights

- 3,500 web pages and documents provide information to the AI chatbot to provide answers
- Average of 5,500 users and 7,500 questions asked per month
- Popular topics include calendars, courses, retirement, contact information, benefits, registration, and technology assistance

Recognizing the Impact of #TeamPGCPs

"Of Course I'm an Assistant Principal"

For Assistant Principals Week, we produced a [social media reel](#) capitalizing on the popular "of course" TikTok sound. The viral trend offers a unique lens through which individuals, especially professionals, humorously highlight relatable common perceptions associated with their roles. For our assistant principals, the common theme was juggling multiple tasks to ensure schools run smoothly.



The reel was extremely popular, earning more than 180,000 plays across platforms. It was shared on Instagram nearly 1,700 times and received high engagement of more than 10,000 interactions across platforms, as well as a reach of 75,000 Instagram accounts including 80% non-followers/ new audience. The reel was also mentioned in a May 2024 NBC4 news story which praised PGCPs' social media presence for its role engaging stakeholders and recruiting new teachers and staff to the district.

National Nurses Week

To recognize School Nurse Day, we interviewed and published a [blog Q&A](#) featuring 27-year veteran school nurse Cynthia Norris, who is serving students at Patuxent Elementary School where her own children once attended school!

Administrative Professionals Week

To honor administrative staff, we produced a 'thank you' social media reel recognizing them as the foundation of PGCPs schools and offices.

Driving Action for District Priorities

Support and promotion to amplify key district initiatives and drive action in the form of registrations, enrollment, event attendance (e.g. town halls, college fairs), completion of surveys and more is ongoing. Multi-channel marketing includes targeted email and text, e-newsletters, web content, social media, educational toolkits for school leadership, printed collateral, events and news media awareness.

#PGCPsGreen: Amplifying Sustainability Across PGCPs

Promotion of PGCPs' standing as a nationally-recognized leader in K-12 climate action continues. During Q2, we earned media coverage for maintaining status of having the the most 'green schools' in Maryland; for our nationally-recognized Climate Change Action Plan that guides the district's work to reduce carbon footprint, improve energy efficiency and build a culture of environmental stewardship; and around new LEED-certified schools that have come online through the Blueprint Schools program. Additionally, we designed new recycling signage for schools and promoted two events: an Climate-Ready Leadership Summit and an annual Student Environmental Alliance Summit featuring a keynote by U.S. Deputy Commerce Secretary Don Graves.

Student Voices: Culture & Climate

The 2023 Climate & Culture Survey yielded record-breaking participation of 28,000 responses. A video was produced to highlight student perspectives and share feedback from the survey.

[Watch the video here!](#)



Blueprint Pillar 1: Early Childhood Education

Talented and Gifted Education Video Series

To highlight schools who earned 2023 Maryland Excellence in Gifted and Talented Education (EGATE) Schools status, produced videos exploring the awarded schools' approach to learning, academic rigor and culture.

Showcasing Innovative Approaches to Literacy:

Write-A-Book

The communications team covered an awards ceremony honoring top young authors and illustrators for the 47th annual Write-A-Book event, which promotes innovative approaches to literacy and fosters writing skills in hundreds of students aligned with Common Core and MSDE standards.

Blueprint Pillar 2: High Quality, Diverse Teachers & Leaders

#TeachWithUs: 2024 Hiring Season Launch

To support the district's prime season for recruitment of educators, staff and bus drivers, our team partnered with Human Resources to develop extensive promotional collateral including graphics, printed assets, video and a social media campaign. Support in advertising and media buys and media outreach is ongoing.

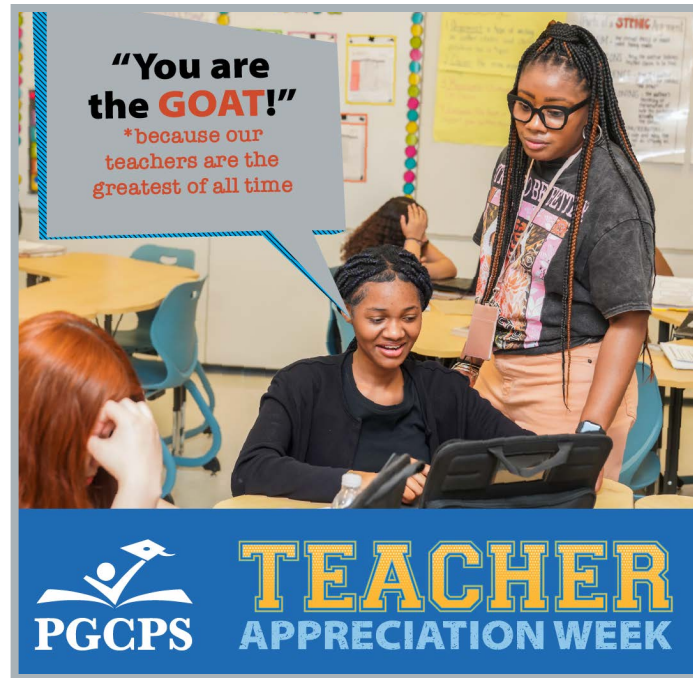
InspirAsian: Asian American and Pacific Islanders in PGCPs

For Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month, we highlighted AAPI students, families and educators within the district through a series of social media vignettes featuring educators and staff. We also worked with the International Student Admissions and Enrollment office to develop an infographic and blog that tells the story of trends in the district and the significant number of AAPI educators in PGCPs.

Beyond the Lesson Plan: Teacher Appreciation Week

To celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week, we engaged local and national business partners to offer educators an opportunity to win prizes from The American College of Education, Educational Systems Federal Credit Union, Wegmans, Kaiser Permanente, The Hotel at the University of Maryland, Mall at Prince George's and more. Nearly 6,000 entries were received and winners were randomly selected.

The Multimedia team produced a series of social media video vignettes offering a glimpse inside of the classroom and day-to-day teacher experience as well as capturing several educators who were honored by PGCPs. The social media series and educator giveaways earned media coverage across all major local broadcast outlets.



2024 Teacher of the Year Announced

A media advisory and news release secured extensive media coverage of the announcement and surprise car delivery for 26-year PGCPs educator Kathy Russell, who was named 2024 Prince George's County Teacher of the Year! Media coverage included NBC4, ABC7, WTOP, CTV and WUSA9.

Best in Class: National Board Certified Teachers

Our Multimedia team captured the excitement of the 2024 National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT) Induction, producing a compelling news package to both highlight the accomplishments of educators and attract prospective teachers. PGCPs consistently leads the state with among the highest number of NBCTs — a testament to the district's investment in professional development and a point for recruitment of top-tier talent.



Blueprint Pillar 3: College and Career Readiness

2024 College & Career Decision Day

The communications team played a pivotal role kicking off the 2024 graduation season on May 2 with a districtwide College and Career Decision Day, which celebrated graduates as they announced their post-high school commitments. The event brought together more than 3,000 seniors from high schools across the district and featured representatives from colleges and careers, community vendors, military exhibits, photo opportunities, giveaways and entertainment.

The public information, graphics, web and multimedia teams worked together to ensure the event's success, developing promotional materials and a pgcps.org web portal, working with program staff to plan run-of-show, creating engaging onsite activations, an internal and external email engagement campaign, and the securing of partnerships and media coverage.

The team also orchestrated a robust social media campaign that leveraged user-generated content technology, resulting in hundreds of photo and video submissions from students, staff, and families. Media coverage included ABC7, DCNewsNow, 93.9 WKYS.

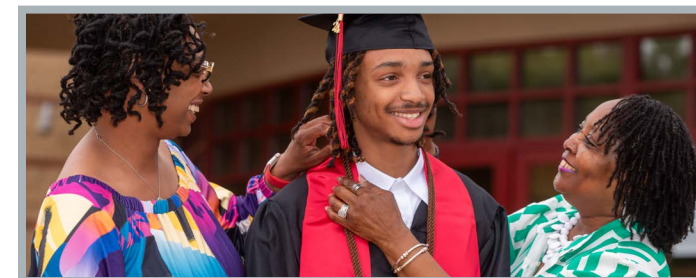
Graduation Season Coverage

The communications team supported graduation season for thousands of seniors across more than two dozen high school commencement ceremonies. Our web portal featured news and stories on notable Class of 2024 graduates, alongside photo galleries. We provided graduation dates and livestreams for all ceremonies, ensuring accessible coverage for the community.



A news release and media pitching secured positive news coverage of graduates with notable achievements and those who overcame difficult circumstances to complete high school. WTOP produced a multimedia piece highlighting several grads who overcame adversity to earn their diplomas

Social media recaps highlighted all ceremonies, capturing memorable moments and celebrating student achievements.



Spotlight on Career & Technical Education

We continue to promote ways PGCPs' award-winning Career and Technical Education programs are preparing thousands of students for high demand and high paying jobs right out of school. Top stories from Q2:

Friendly High School NJROTC Cadets #1 in Nation on Academic Exam

Issued news release and promoted students in the Friendly High School Navy Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (NJROTC) who earned both first and third place nationwide on the 2024 National Academic Exam, which is taken by more than 1,500 teams nationwide!

Homegrown Heroes in the Making: Produced a [video news story](#) on seniors who [were honored](#) for completing the demanding, two-year Fire Science Cadet Program. In the cadet program, students engage in a blend of classroom instruction and hands-on learning that prepares them for opportunities in Firefighting and Emergency Medical Service (EMS).

High Schools Among "Nation's Best"

Issued news release and social media promotion around 11 high schools earning rankings in the top 40% nationally according to a U.S. News and World Report "Best High Schools" list, as well as five high schools ranked in the top 50 of Maryland's 255 public high schools.

PGCPs World Languages Create Global Citizens

For National World Language Month in March we highlighted some of the twelve languages offered in PGCPs and underlined the benefits of learning a second language in high school. Through a [series of five video reels](#) we heard from educators and students on their experiences in the classroom teaching and learning Chinese, Korean, Latin, Russian and American Sign Language!





Blueprint Pillar 4: More Resources for Students to be Successful

Blueprint's Pillar 4 focuses on resources for students and schools in most need, including academic, social services, health supports and more.

PGCPS Hosts National Language Access Conference

More than 150 attendees from 21 states convened at PGCPS for The American Association of Interpreters and Translators in Education second annual conference. PGCPS Supervisor of Language Access & Engagement Dr. Jennifer Love gave the keynote, highlighting the role of interpreters and translators in building bridges that connect families and educators!

New Pathways for Students & Ensuring Equity

The Office of Interpretation and Translation and World Languages teams joined forces to develop a Foundations of Interpreting and Translation Course for high school students. The course at Parkdale High School prepares students for opportunities in interpreting and/or translation after graduation! [Watch the video here!](#)

International Family Day at Camp Schmidt

The Office of Interpretation and Translation, in collaboration with the English Language Development Office hosted more than 160 students and families of English learners at the William S. Schmidt Outdoor Education Center for a day of learning about science curriculum, team-building and more for future 5th graders.

Leveraging Technology for Student Creativity

Produced a [news package](#) showcasing the Department of Creative and Performing Arts' 'Project Creativity,' which earned an Apple Distinguished Schools Award for innovative use of Apple products in high schools!



Blueprint Pillar 5: Governance and Accountability

SMOB Election Coverage

To mark the first time all students in grades 6-12 had the opportunity to vote for Student Member of the Board (SMOB), we built a comprehensive educational and awareness campaign. The campaign included an educational web portal featuring information on 2024-25 SMOB candidates, videos of candidate platforms, support for hosting and livestreaming a candidate forum, an email campaign targeting students in grades 6-12, and active social media engagement. Additionally, we published a blog highlighting the SMOB elect, Frederick Douglass High School student Jamal J. Jongo.

Maximizing the pgcps.org Website

A refresh of pgcps.org is underway to enhance user experience, modernize the design and improve functionality. Anticipated delivery of the refreshed website is in summer 2024.

Q2 2024 Highlight PGCPS Social Media On the Rise, Makes Headlines!

During Q2, PGCPS social media platforms saw significant increases in engagement and new followers.

Social Media Strategy In the News

NBC4 Washington aired a news package on May 9, 2024 that highlighted PGCPS' creative and effective use of social media to engage audiences and recruit new teachers and staff to the district.

"PGCPS is using Instagram to draw your attention to the good things in their school community," said reporter Molette Green, describing content as well-produced. "It's part of a larger strategy to use social media to engage with the community."

The news story featured an interview with PGCPS social media manager Justin Coley, who discussed the team's implementation of current social media trends to connect with stakeholders.

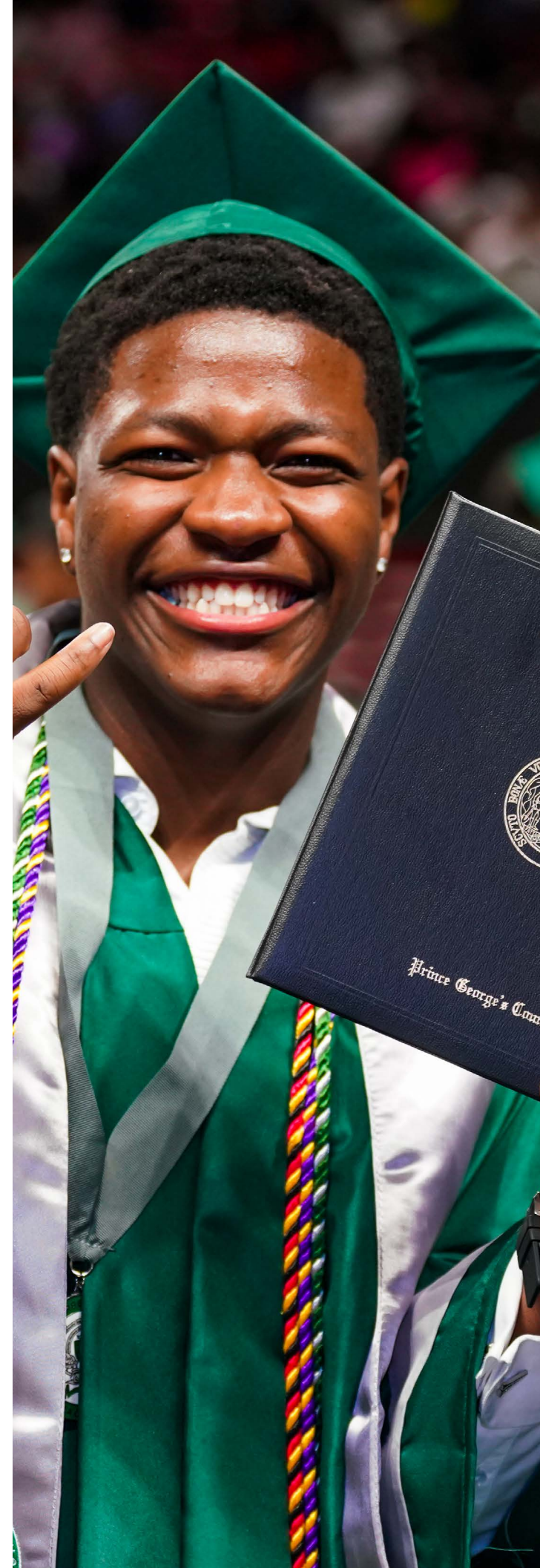
Past 90 days

Facebook: Post reach is up 37%, 3-sec views up 116%, 1-minute views up 258%

Instagram: In past 90 days 3,080 new followers, shared 74 posts (increase of 204%) 267 stories, an increase of 50%, post reach up 65%,

LinkedIn: Comments up 83%, 1,058 new followers, 5,600 page views +16%

X: 16K video views, up 4%



WHAT TO EXPECT 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR TRANSPORTATION

School start & end times and bus assignments will look different next school year as we work to get students to and from school safely, efficiently and on time.

Learn more about what's ahead at an upcoming information session.

On Deck for Q3 2024!

The third quarter of 2024 promises continued work in alignment with PGCPS focus areas, Blueprint pillars, and the district's vision and mission of providing a transformative educational experience, fostering equity, and building empowered communities.

Notable initiatives to look out for include:

- pgcps.org website refresh
- Rollout of new Synergy student information system
- Ongoing communication around transportation improvements
- Additional transportation town halls
- Back to school campaign
- Teacher and staff recruitment campaigns
- Monthly recurring media appearances with Superintendent House to proactively share key information and updates with stakeholders

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