



# TERRIER TIMES

VOLUME 8 ISSUE 2  
JANUARY 2024

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Happy New Year, Terriers!

In the wise words of author Jonathan Hui, "Celebrate endings—for they precede new beginnings." As we enter 2024, I want to thank our students, faculty, staff, and Terrier families alike for not only a smooth, but an extremely successful Semester 1.

With that said, I would like to highlight just a few of the many PCMS student accomplishments during Quarters 1 and 2:

- Congratulations to all students who received straight "A" honor roll during Quarter 1. This astounding number was the highest performing Quarter that PCMS has seen in 10 years! Keep up the great work!
- After School involvement has also been at an all-time high with students participating in tutoring, clubs, intramurals and sports. Late buses will continue to be available Monday through Thursday to accommodate our students who wish to participate in tutoring or after school activities for the remainder of the school year. Continue to stay involved for continued success in Semester 2.
- On Tuesday, November 28th, the long-awaited Suspension Free 3v3 Basketball Tournament took place right here at PCMS. Over 340 students were in attendance to cheer on the 36 teams that signed up to play! Thanks to our sponsors, we were able to award over \$1,000 in prizes ranging from gift cards, candy baskets, wireless speakers, Air pods, and even an Xbox. The night was a huge success with the help and support of our administration, faculty, and staff.

As always, communication and building positive relationships between home and school remain at the forefront of our mission and are crucial to academic success and student engagement. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the school directly if there is anything that we can do to help make the second semester a more positive and successful experience for your student.

Thank you for being a part of the Terrier Family!

Mr. Matthew Kunder  
Principal

## ADMINISTRATION

Principal

**Matthew Kunder**

Assistant Principals

**Tara Whisenant**

**Zachary Wheeler**

Dean

**Gabrielle Thompson**

**Chris Stephenson**

Guidance Counselors

**Eric Grzechowiak**

**Alesha Jewett**

ESE Liaison

**Marjorie Stevens**

Social Worker

**Kearstin Pineda**

School Resource Officer

**Deputy Anderson**

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Port Charlotte FL 33952

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**Fax:** 941-255-7469

**Attendance Line:** 941-255-7467

**Office Hours:** 8:00 - 4:30





*Jiovanny Cruz, Quest Perez, Chantel Wilson*



*Taegan Biskupiak-Johnson, Autumn Millington, Naleyia Epting*



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## 2023-2024 PCMS TEACHER OF THE YEAR: RAMONA ROBINSON



*James Hamilton and Principal Kunder*

## 2023-2024 PCMS SUPPORT STAFF OF THE YEAR: JAMES HAMILTON

## OCTOBER STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

6th Grade: Brian Perez Hernandez & Aubrey Carey, McKenzie Dillion  
7th Grade: Abigail Watt & Dillon Ramirez  
8th Grade: Calvin Pratt & Ayla Gumabong



## NOVEMBER STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

6th Grade - Zoey Clarke & Sean Sainvil  
7th Grade - Madison Day & William Quintero Labrada  
8th Grade - Adin Berto & Cesia Oliva



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# 3

## NEW PCMS DEAN: CHRIS STEPHENSON

Chris was born in De Ridder, Louisiana, and quickly transitioned to Charlotte County. He has always had an attachment to Charlotte County. After graduating from Charlotte High School, he went on to attend The University of North Carolina-Asheville where he racked up quite a few accolades, including a B.S. in Health and Science Education. Shortly after graduation, Chris went on to play professionally overseas (Lithuania, Iceland). At the completion of his basketball career, he began a new chapter which was teaching.



Chris has been in education for 7 years now. He has taught a variety of topics; however, he leans on his leadership skills and discipline acquired through sports to help get through to the kids. In his spare time, Chris enjoys teaching basketball to the kids involved in his Make It Count Sports Basketball organization, of which he is a co-owner. Chris also holds a USA Gold Coaching Certification from College Clearinghouse.

## NEW PCMS SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER: KEARSTIN PINEDA

Hello Terrier Family,

My name is Kearstin Pineda, and I am the school social worker here at Port Charlotte Middle School. I am excited for this school year and am honored to be a Terrier. My role as a school social worker is to provide support and interventions to the students and their families. I work with community partners to assist in resources that can be beneficial to our students and families. I am responsible for addressing any attendance concerns, providing individual counseling and group counseling, making referrals to outside agencies when needed, managing the food pantry, school supplies, and backpacks donated to the school, completing risk assessments and threat assessments when needed, as well as providing support and crisis interventions. In addition, I am the Check & Connect Coordinator. Check & Connect is an evidence-based intervention used for K-12 students who show warning signs for disengagement that provides mentorship. I look forward to working with you and supporting the students to ensure student success. If you have any questions or concerns about your child, while here at Port Charlotte Middle School, please don't hesitate to reach out to me for support. I am here to help and will do whatever I can do to assist you and your children.



## PM2 FAST TEST DATES TO REMEMBER

- Wednesday, January 17, 2024 – ELA FAST Test PM 2
- Thursday, January 18, 2024 – MATH FAST Test PM 2

## KIND KID AWARD



**November:** Ryan Rosario (6th grade) and Tessa Joy (7th grade)



**December:** Quinton Booker, Katrina Fuentes, Cesia Zaldivar Oliva

## OUT OF FIELD

The following teachers are currently teaching Out of Field:

- |                       |      |
|-----------------------|------|
| • Melanie Barolak     | Math |
| • Madeline De La Rosa | ESOL |
| • Cherstin Haga       | ESOL |
| • Brittany Lynch      | ESOL |

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## STEM UPDATE

The STEM classes have been very busy during quarter two. Their biggest accomplishment is the saltwater aquarium! Thanks to the hard work of the 1st period STEM class, the aquarium was able to be set up, cycled, and ready for the addition of organisms quite quickly! The students were responsible for performing daily tests to ensure that the nitrate, nitrite, and ammonia levels were consistently in range. Now that the tank is fully cycled and we have added in hermit crabs, snails, a pistol shrimp, and a variety of fish, it is imperative that the aquarium stays within certain parameters so that all the organisms can thrive. Each week a new group of students takes turns maintaining the aquarium. There is a checklist that breaks down what needs to be done daily and weekly, and the students are responsible for performing all of the tasks on that list. All of the data collected by the students is entered into a spreadsheet and the hope is that one day we can have the data displayed on the school website for all to see! All of our fish have been added to the aquarium and now the hope is to add coral next!

## NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY

The National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) is an organization that recognizes not only academic achievement but other characteristics essential to citizens in a democracy. At Port Charlotte Middle School any 7th or 8th grade student can become eligible for membership into the Honor Society. Students are expected to complete community service hours and be active volunteers at PCMS.

One requirement for membership is scholastic eligibility. A cumulative GPA of 3.6 is required to be considered for NJHS. Although you may be on the honor roll, this does not guarantee acceptance into NJHS.

The second requirement for possible induction into NJHS is an evaluation by teachers on the student's leadership, service, character, and citizenship. Students are encouraged through various opportunities to develop these traits. This allows them to demonstrate the concept of honor for other students while learning about the commitments necessary to be a true leader.

Congratulations to the 2023-2024 NJHS members: Ethan Beudreaux, Bryce Blondun, Jaylynn Dannel, Emily Garcia, Julie Gedeon, Ayla Gumabong, Jadelynn Herd, Sophia Liedel, Anthony Martinez, Farooq Memon, Rosalie Miller, Stella Promsemai, Vincent Ritta, and Jayden Zapien.



Thank you to Bluewater Media, Sonshine Baptist Church, New Day Christian Church, and Toys for Tots for generously donating items to PCMS families in need during the holiday season.

Thank you to Trinity Anglican Church for donating money for our benevolence fund, which helped us supply 10 Thanksgiving meals for PCMS families in need.

Thank you to the Rock Cavalry Chapel for providing Christmas boxes for our PCMS staff.

## We need spots filled...



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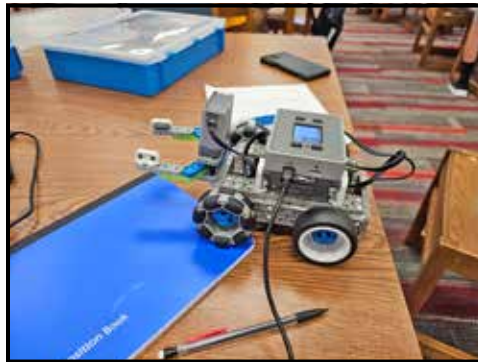


## ROBOTICS CLUB STARTS AGAIN IN JANUARY!

Port Charlotte Middle School offers an after-school Robotics Club in the Fall and Spring for all interested 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students. The second session of this school year will run after school on Mondays from 4:10 p.m. until 5:10 p.m., from January 22, 2024 until April 29, 2024.

Robotics Club is for PCMS students who are interested in learning how to build and program robots. Students will use Vex IQ Robotics kits to compete in STEM challenges against their classmates. VEX IQ kits utilize pieces that snap together like LEGO bricks to build fully functional robots. No prior experience is necessary to get started! You may contact Ms. Salvatore at [toni.salvatore@yourcharlotteschools.net](mailto:toni.salvatore@yourcharlotteschools.net) for more information, or check out the Media Center website at <https://sites.google.com/yourcharlotteschools.net/pcms-media-center> for photos and VEX digital resources.

A signed parent permission form is required to participate, and a bus is provided for students after school on Mondays. Students who facilitate their own transportation home from after-school events must be picked up by 5:15 p.m. Students may walk or ride their bike home with parent permission. Robotics Club is limited to 30 participants per session. If students participated in the Fall session, they may not join the Spring session. All Student Code of Conduct rules apply. Failure to follow all Student Code of Conduct policies, including the 5:15 p.m. pick up time, may result in dismissal from the program.



Left to right: Kensey Bettencourt, Ava Conlon and Jack Conlon



Left to right: JadeLynn Herd, Vincent Son, and Gabriel Rogers



SGA students after their outside clean-up day

## STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Student Government had a busy 2nd quarter. We ran 4 concession stands, started working on the Farewell Dance, and did an outside clean-up day at parent pickup and the front of the school. We sold BOO grams to raise money for future events and worked on following directions and team building while tying ourselves in knots!

SGA has also adopted Rescue Garage as our service project and will be collecting items to replenish their supplies after the holiday. Small blankets, towels, dog food, treats, and toys will be accepted in Late January. Look for an announcement with their wish list coming soon.

Future SGA events are "Movie on the Lawn night" in January and the Valentine's dance in February.

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Joseph C. Bender, D.M.D.  
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Timothy L. Palmer, D.D.S.  
Ashley N. Reynolds, D.M.D.  
Neil B. Seaver, D.M.D.

WE WELCOME NEW SMILES!





## 2023 SCIENCE FAIR

November 14th PCMS held its annual Science Fair. 7th and 8th grade honors science students completed 74 projects. Here are the top projects in each category.

### Animal Sciences:

- 1st Place : Rosalie Miller
- 2nd Place: Farooq Memon
- 3rd Place : Delaney Nelson

### Chemistry:

- 1st Place: James Sterbutzel
- 2nd Place: Austin Phillips
- 3rd Place: Maya Robling
- Honorable Mentions: Alexandra Hernandez and Caden Phillips

### Earth & Environmental Science:

- 1st Place: Evan Legried
- 2nd Place: Curtis Clark
- 3rd Place: John Do

### Energy & Transportation:

- 1st Place: Atreyu Socci
- 2nd Place: Vincent Son
- 3rd Place: Jaden Le & Stella Promseemai

### Engineering:

- 1st Place: Logan Carey & Wyatt Helton

### Medicine & Health:

- 1st Place: Sophia Schwint
- 2nd Place: Laniya Hardrick-Derby
- 3rd Place: Savanna Ricker
- Honorable Mention: Peyton Howard

### Physics:

- 1st Place: Sean Thame



## PE NEWS

Students in our PE classes have been participating in an Olympics unit which has allowed them to practice teamwork, sportsmanship, and grit (sticking with it). The unit has included activities such as dance routine. Students were allowed in the beginning to choose their teams but were advised to choose wisely based on how well they felt a teammate would be supportive and participate, be present, and cooperate as a team mate. Once their teams were chosen, they were not allowed to drop a team mate and

had to figure out how to become leaders and work together to be successful. The kids have been awarded gold, silver, and bronze status: each carrying a point value. In the end, points will be tallied based on how many medal standings a team received to determine the overall winners. We are very proud of the teamwork, hard work, and perseverance the students have shown throughout this unit!

## 7TH AND 8TH GRADE CHORUS CONCERT



*7th and 8th grade Boys Chorus*



*7th and 8th grade Girls Chorus*

## COMPUTER CERTIFICATIONS

On October 26, 2023, three of Mrs. McGee's 8th grade students took an Industry Certification Exam for MOS Applications and passed. They are the first ones for the 2023-2024 school year!

- Vincent Son - Word
- JadeLynn Herd - Word
- Bryce Blundon - PowerPoint

Valerie Magallanes and Juliet Wolff passed their Word certification in November.

The following students passed their Cyber Security certification in December: Aubrey Carey, Stephany Diaz-Sanchez, Madisynn Ellis, Giada Howard, Isabella Johnston, Weech Louis, Juliette Schneller, Adam Baradith, Riley Bryant, Dylan Etienne, Nicko Jones, Jackson Moudy, Naliyah Ortiz-Soto, Michael Rodriguez, Noah Shrock, Hunter Clay, Andrew Cruz-Garcia, Aaron Hall, Ava Haney, Amiyah Morrison, Ella Nichols, Brian Perez-Hernandez, Malia Reyes, Kira Riley, Katelyn Zullo, Forrest Ormandy, Oliver Pelon, Isabella Torres, Courtney Baker, Liam Fee, Enzo Franko, Blake Murray, Reagan Reynolds, Dante Valentino, Quinton Washburn, Charleigh Coddington, Azariah Combs, Melody Lopez-Vizarreta, Salvatore Meeker, Evan Wendzel, Sean Sainvil, Chase LeFleur, and Summit Tower.





*Leadership students with their waterproof fish tanks*

## LEADERSHIP CLASSES

Leadership Classes made ornaments and cards for our local senior citizens who are spending the holidays in assisted living homes. They also volunteered at Neil Armstrong, Kingsway, and Peace River elementary schools for their winter festivals.



A group of 10 leadership students volunteered for an event on a Saturday, hosted by Pampering Rose, at Neil Armstrong that donated the money raised to St. Jude.

We also had a great time creating waterproof fishponds out of paper while working on our team-building skills and encouraging others.

## 9TH ANNUAL POSTER CONTEST

**Theme:** How can you leave it better than you found it?

**Best in Show** - Eduardo Pacheco, 8th Grade

**Administrator's Choice** - Sophia Bishop, 8th Grade

**People's Choice** - Azariah Combs, 6th Grade

**8th Grade**

- 1st Place: Clara Marshall
- Honorable Mention: Julie Gedeon

**7th Grade**

- 1st Place: Naleya Epting
- Honorable Mention: Abigail Lin

**6th Grade**

- 1st Place: Remi Tavarez
- Honorable Mention: Ava Haney



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## LATE BUS

This year, Port Charlotte Middle School has decided to utilize the services of a late bus for PCMS-zoned students on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays after school. We hope this will allow more students the opportunity to be part of our extracurricular activities and tutoring services. A parent or guardian must sign the Late Bus Permission Slip before a student can ride the late bus. Permission slips were sent home at the beginning of September.

### A few things to remember:

- The stops made by the late bus are not the same as the normal bus stops. Please review with your child the route that he/she will need to take home. It is the student's responsibility to know which stop to exit the bus from. Please review the stop, as well as the safest route home. This should be done before riding the late bus.
- Students will use their student ID badge to scan themselves on and off the bus.
- Please remember that normal bus rules apply. Students will be held accountable if they violate bus rules and/or the Code of Student Conduct.

## REPORTING SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITIES OR THREATS

Students, parents, CCPS employees, and members of the community have a responsibility to report suspicious activities and potential threats to schools. Any suspicious activity or threat shall be promptly reported to one of the following individuals, agencies or reporting tools:

- School Resource Officer or local law enforcement agencies.
- School Administrator or any available staff member.
- The FortifyFL Reporting APP or to the Crimestoppers Tipline (1-800-780-TIPS).
- Contacting the Supervisor of District Security and Emergency Management at (941) 255-0808
- Calling 9-1-1.

Note: Reports may be done anonymously.



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