



PRESS RELEASE

Prince George's County Public Schools • www.pgcps.org
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STUDENTS RECEIVE A POLICE PARTNER OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO GO TO SCHOOL

The Prince George's County Board of Education and the Prince George's County Police Department along with Prince George's County Public Schools joined together today to announce a new partnership. The "Community Policing Partnership" will encourage student attendance in all County public schools particularly on testing days.

"We want all of our students in school, ready to learn, and receiving a good quality public education. However, they cannot do that if they are not in class," said Verjeana M. Jacobs, Esq., Chair, Prince George's County Board of Education. "Through this partnership we are working together with the Prince George's County Police Department to combat truancy and ensure no students miss an opportunity to succeed."

County Police will have an increased presence around public schools and will work in conjunction with school personnel to return students to school if they are found to be truant.

"The police department is proud to fully support the school system in encouraging school attendance, especially during High School Assessment testing. We know that students who apply themselves in their studies and attain their high school diploma are much more likely to become productive citizens and not engage in illegal activity," said Roberto L. Hylton, Acting Chief, Prince George's County Police Department.

Prince George's County public high school students began taking the current administration of the High School Assessments (HSAs) today and will continue through the week. Beginning this year with the class of 2009, all students are required to sit for and pass the HSAs with a combined score of 1602 as a graduation requirement.

PGCPS has experienced a significant increase in average daily attendance in high schools, following the Board of Education's anti-truancy campaign last year. The average daily attendance for the first quarter of the 2008-09 school year was 91.15 percent compared to 79.64 percent during the same time period during the 2007-08 school year. The Board of Education launched a public awareness campaign against truancy last year and worked with county police to encourage the public to report students seen in the community during the school day. The Board also held community meetings in all five school districts last year and will schedule additional meetings this spring.

Citizens and business owners are encouraged to call the county police non-emergency hotline, 301-333-4000, to report truant children, so they can be assisted with returning safely to school.