



Board of Education Recognitions

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February 2026

NAME/SCHOOL	RECOGNITION
<p>Columbia High School Model United Nations Columbia High School</p>	<p>This evening, we are recognizing Naviya Vadlamani and Troy Stevenson-House, 10th-grade students at Columbia High School, for earning the Outstanding Delegate award at the Ivy League Model United Nations Conference hosted by the University of Pennsylvania.</p> <p>Among more than 120 delegations with international participants, they represented CHS in the Economic and Financial Committee, where they demonstrated strong preparation, strategic collaboration, and innovative diplomacy focused on safeguarding global trade amid uncertainty.</p> <p>Their work exemplifies the caliber of student leadership within the CHS Model UN program under the guidance of advisor Ms. Katerina Karis.</p>
<p>Dr. Antoinette Gelin Clinton Elementary School School</p>	<p>We proudly recognize Dr. Gelin for her exceptional leadership and service as liaison to Multilingual families, especially Haitian Creole families at Clinton Elementary School. She meets families where they are, whether in school, at conferences, in their homes, or within the community, building authentic relationships grounded in trust and respect.</p> <p>Her work goes beyond communication to elevate culture, celebrate Haitian heritage, and ensure families feel seen, heard, and empowered. Her advocacy strengthens connections between families and staff and deepens belonging across the school community.</p>

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<p>Columbia High School Symphonic Band and Honors Wind Ensemble Columbia High School</p>	<p>Congratulations to members of the Columbia High School Symphonic Band and Honors Wind Ensemble selected to prestigious college and university honor bands. Representing CHS in The College of New Jersey Honors Wind Ensemble are Julien Jhaw-Briot, Abby Keller, Jacinto Trujillo-Gomez, and Kyle Kuperman.</p> <p>Selected for the Rutgers University Honor Band are Phineas Beck, Abby Keller, Jacinto Trujillo-Gomez, and Dylan Haas. Through rigorous auditions and sustained dedication, these students earned placement among top performers from across the region and continue advancing a strong tradition of musical excellence at CHS.</p>
<p>Symphonic Band Selection Columbia High School</p>	<p>We'd like to wish congratulate Julien Khaw-Briot, sophomore bass clarinetist at Columbia High School, on being selected to the 2025-2026 All-North Jersey Symphonic Band. This regional ensemble brings together outstanding student musicians for rehearsals and performances hosted in partnership with Rutgers University and presented in professional venues known for exceptional acoustics.</p> <p>Julien joins a distinguished group of performers from across New Jersey and continues a long-standing tradition of excellence within the CHS band program.</p>
<p>Boy's Basketball Columbia High School</p>	<p>Congratulations to the Columbia High School boys basketball team on capturing the Essex County Invitational Tournament championship. After a tough preliminary round loss in the Essex County Tournament, the Cougars regrouped and claimed the ECIT title with a 53-32 victory over West Orange on February 21 at CHS.</p> <p>Senior guard Javon Rogers led the way with 22 points and eight rebounds, while Nate Kirby and Matthew Synsmir each added 13 points. Under head coach TJ Whitaker, the Cougars improved to 18-10 and showed resilience, focus, and team-first determination throughout their championship run.</p>

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<p data-bbox="256 283 555 472"> South Sectional Champions Columbia High School Boys Fencing Columbia High School </p>	<p data-bbox="613 283 1404 514"> Congratulations to the Columbia High School boys fencing team on capturing the NJSIAA South Sectional title in dramatic fashion. In a tightly contested 14-13 victory over Millburn on February 25, the Cougars battled through five ties and a winner-take-all final bout to secure the championship on the road. </p> <p data-bbox="613 556 1404 745"> Freshman Henry O'Briant delivered the decisive 5-4 win in the final epee bout to clinch the title. With contributions across sabre, foil, and epee, the team demonstrated composure, depth, and determination throughout the match. The Cougars now advance to the state team finals with a 16-1 record. </p>