



# Public Schools of Plainfield New Jersey

## Office of Community Engagement Liaison

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### **PLAINFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS WILL CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH WITH FREE VIRTUAL PROGRAMS THAT WILL BE ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC**

*The links will be available on the District's website at [www.plainfieldnj12.org](http://www.plainfieldnj12.org)*

Plainfield, NJ – Plainfield Public Schools will celebrate Black History Month with a series of virtual programs that will celebrate the contributions of African Americans to the History of the United States. The celebration will have a kick-off event on Friday, February 5 at 6:00 p.m. with a discussion on Black Education Matters: Africa's Ancient Civilizations.

Dr. Diana Mitchell, Superintendent of Schools, produced a video message saluting notable African Americans whose inventions have saved millions of lives worldwide in the areas of medicine, security, and engineering. In the video, Dr. Mitchell honored the First Madam Vice President of the United States, The Honorable Kamala Harris, and the first Youth Poet Laureate, Amanda Gorman, the youngest poet to ever participate in a presidential inauguration in the United States. The video is posted on the District website at <https://youtu.be/y4bwKVg2Xsg>

The Black History Month celebration was organized by the 2021 PPSD Black History Committee with a series of events that will be available free for the public via online links that will be posted on the District's website at [www.plainfieldnj12.org](http://www.plainfieldnj12.org). Friday's virtual talk on Black Education Matters: Africa's Ancient Civilizations by Dr. Tristian M. Cox, Plainfield Public Schools' K-12 Social Studies Supervisor, will be a virtual lecture entitled "The Story Untold". On February 12, Dr. Tristian M. Cox and his father, Martin P. Cox, Plainfield community historian, will conduct a lecture on Plainfield's African American history. The lecture will include information about the African American experience in Plainfield, New Jersey.

February 19, Watch Night, "A Time of Healing: The Talk," will be produced by Stevanie Rhim, a member of the committee, will gather a panel of students and law enforcement officials for a discussion on a better understanding. A children's program, on February 24, will include storytelling and feature two Plainfield authors who will read from their books, Trevor D. "Jayden & Zora's Crown" and Jennifer Nwokeji, "Use Your Words, Make Better Choices". On February 26, the program will feature a concert and music by the PAAAS Jazz Ensemble and PHS Orchestra, including a selection of online videos with music from "Fire", Rev. Kirk Franklin, Walter Hawkins and others. On March 3, Students Present for Black History Month, will feature a medley of young orators presenting brief speeches highlighting historic Black American figures and literary works. The program will include Chelsea Young, an 11<sup>th</sup> Grader at

Plainfield High School, and Kaleb Porter, members of the New Jersey Orators and other students from Plainfield and neighboring communities.

The committee is requesting vendors for a virtual shop. Interested vendors may apply online or call Ms. Janice Woods at 908-731-4342 for more information. Additional programs have been scheduled, for a complete listing and additional information, please visit the District's website at [www.plainfieldnj12.org](http://www.plainfieldnj12.org).

All the programs are free and open to the public. To access the links for the programs, please visit the District's website at [www.plainfieldnj12.org](http://www.plainfieldnj12.org).

For more information, please email [gmontealegre@plainfield.k12.nj.us](mailto:gmontealegre@plainfield.k12.nj.us).