

# THE

# TIGERS DEN

## MLK NEWSLETTER

The Atlantic City School District



# BACK-TO-BACK CHAMPS

## LADY TIGERS WIN THE 2025 ULTIMATE CHEERLEADING SHOWDOWN



## ISSUE AT A GLANCE

### 2025 MLK

### SPELLING BEE

Three students are shown on a stage. The student on the left is a boy in a grey and white striped shirt, holding a certificate. The student in the middle is a girl in a white shirt, holding a trophy. The student on the right is a girl in a blue shirt, holding a certificate.

## TIGER PRIDE SHINES ON MUSICS BIGGEST STAGE

### AC man earns Grammy for helping son

**VINCENT JACKSON**  
Staff Writer

Alternative R&B singer-songwriter Iman Jordan spent his summers growing up visiting his father, Roy Gartrell, and his singing grandmother, Kitty Gartrell, in Atlantic City and Brigantine.

"My dad has played music since I was a little kid. He always had a guitar in his hand, always singing songs he had written," said Jordan, 44.

The musical connection between Jordan and Roy Gartrell, 70, bore fruit Saturday night as father and son and two other songwriters each received the Grammy Award statues for their lives as songwriters for "Deliver," which was honored as the recipient of the Harry Belafonte Best Song for Social Change Award.

"I was over the moon in shock. I was in tears," said Jordan. "It is something where I followed my heart that led to a miraculous occasion."

Besides Jordan and Gartrell, the other two people credited as



IMAN JORDAN  
Ariel Loh, second from left, Roy Gartrell, Iman Jordan and Tim Jones, winners of the Harry Belafonte Best Song for Social Change Award, pose with Shar Belafonte, Gina Belafonte and Harvey Mason Jr., CEO of T.I. Recording Academy, during the Special Merit Awards Ceremony and Nominees Reception of the 67th annual Grammy Awards on Feb. 1 in Los Angeles.





# BACK-TO-BACK CHAMPS

## THE MLK LADY TIGER'S WIN THE ULTIMATE SHOWDOWN FOR THE SECOND STRAIGHT YEAR

The energy was electric on Saturday, February 8, 2025, as Atlantic City High School hosted the district's annual Middle School Cheerleading Competition: The Ultimate Showdown 2025. The highly anticipated event brought together



all nine middle schools in the district, each showcasing their school spirit, talent, and dedication in an unforgettable display of cheerleading excellence.

Teams competed in two judged categories: The Opening Chant/Walkout and Team Cheerleading Performance. Every squad delivered impressive routines, highlighting their hard work, enthusiasm, and skill. However, for the second consecutive year, the MLK Lady Tigers dominated the competition, securing their title as back-to-back champions.

The Lady Tigers wowed the judges with their synchronized movements, acrobatics, and high-energy performance, proving that their rigorous training and team spirit were second to none. In addition to taking the overall championship and the Cheer Performance title, they also tied with New York Avenue School for first place in the Walkout Competition—a testament to their showmanship and stage presence.

With another championship under their belt, the question remains: Can MLK pull off a three-peat in 2026? Only time will tell!

Congratulations to all teams and individuals who participated, making the event a true celebration of school spirit and talent. And a special shout-out to the MLK Lady Tigers for once again proving that hard work and dedication pay off!





# MLK CHEER







February was an exciting month at MLK as students from grades 3 through 8 took the stage with one goal in mind: becoming the MLK Spelling Bee Champion! This year's competition was unique, challenging participants not only to spell words correctly but also to understand their meanings. In addition to traditional spelling rounds, a new Vocabulary round was introduced, requiring students to define words on the spot. This change ensured that every participant was more than just a word caller—they truly understood the language they were studying. Every student who competed had already proven their skill by winning their class spelling challenge, making each one a winner in their own right. As the rounds progressed, the packed auditorium buzzed with excitement and admiration for the incredible spelling prowess on display.

In the end, three outstanding students emerged as the top performers:

- 3rd Place: Kharma Kidd (Mrs. Becker's 5th Grade)
- 2nd Place: Harmoni Edmondson (Ms. Caldwell's 6th Grade)
- Champion: Mahkai Weekes (Mrs. Sander's 5th Grade)



Mahkai clinched the title with the winning word, "Inferno," and will now represent MLK at the Regional Spelling Bee on March 8th. The champion of the regional competition will earn a coveted spot at the Scripts National Spelling Bee finals in Washington, DC. Good luck, Mahkai!

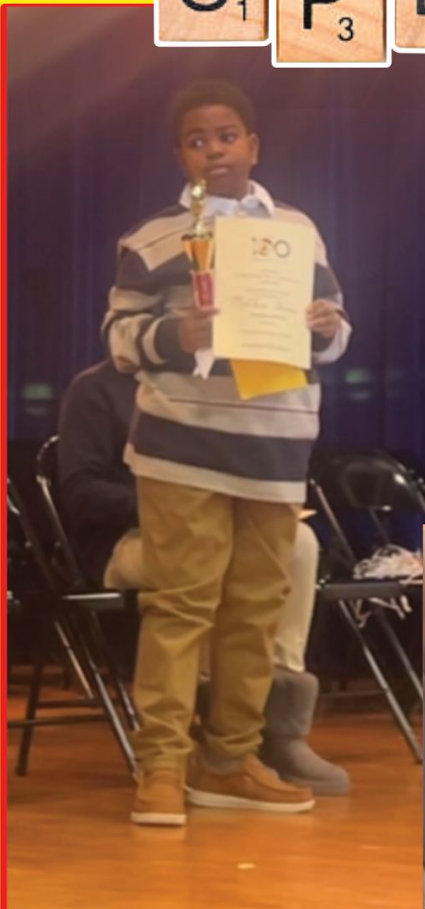
A special thank you goes out to everyone who participated, helped organize, judged and supported this amazing event. Kudos to our host, Mr. Kelly and a special thank you goes out to Mrs. Harrington, for putting together an engaging and educational competition that truly celebrated the power of words.





# 2025 MLK

S<sub>1</sub> P<sub>3</sub> E<sub>1</sub> L<sub>1</sub> L<sub>1</sub> I<sub>1</sub> N<sub>1</sub> G<sub>2</sub> B<sub>3</sub> E<sub>1</sub> E<sub>1</sub>





# TIGER PRIDE

## SHINES ON MUSICS BIGGEST STAGE

Last week at Venice Park, an inspiring story from our Tiger family hit all the high notes. Kitty Gartrell—fondly known as Miss Kitty—has been a cherished member of the Venice Park School family, working diligently in our kitchen and spreading warmth throughout our community. This week, her family’s musical legacy reached new heights when her grandson and her son were honored at the Grammy Awards.



### AC man earns Grammy for helping son

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Staff Writer

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JESSE GRANT/GETTY IMAGES FOR THE RECORDING ACADEMY

Ariel Loh, second from left, Roy Gartrell, Iman Jordan and Tam Jones, winners of the Harry Belafonte Best Song for Social Change Award, pose with Shari Belafonte, Gina Belafonte and Harvey Mason Jr., CEO of the Recording Academy, during the Special Merit Awards Ceremony and Nominees Reception of the 67th annual Grammy Awards on Feb. 1 in Los Angeles.

The dynamic duo took home the award for “Best Alternative R&B Singer-Songwriter” for their hit song “Deliver,” sharing the stage with two other talented songwriters. Music runs deep in the Gartrell household. Miss Kitty, an

accomplished singer with performances that span far and wide, has long instilled a love of music in her family. Her son, Roy, is renowned for his exceptional guitar skills—a talent that perfectly complements the family’s melodic traditions.

As a child, when her grandson Iman Jordan visited Atlantic City, the trio would fill the air with music: Miss Kitty singing and Roy strumming his guitar, creating memories that would last a lifetime. Earlier this year, when Iman needed a

guitar player for his latest track, he

knew exactly who to call—his dad, Roy, whose expertise once again helped bring their shared passion to life.

Congratulations to Miss Kitty and her family on this historic achievement. We are so proud to celebrate this Grammy-winning milestone as part of our Tiger family!





# IGNITING IMAGINATIONS

## KAPPA ALPHA PSI BRINGS STORIES TO LIFE

Last week, members of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc brought the magic of storytelling to MLK, giving back to the community through a shared reading event. Several guest readers captivated our students with engaging stories on a variety of topics, sparking wonder and excitement in every corner of the room.

The young audience listened eagerly, their eyes wide with curiosity as each reader brought characters and adventures to life. Every time a question was posed about the stories, enthusiastic hands shot up, showcasing their deep engagement and thirst for knowledge.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to the members of Kappa Alpha Psi for taking the time to share their love of reading with the MLK community. Their commitment to inspiring young minds is a reminder of how powerful stories can be in uniting and uplifting our community.





# PRE-K FASHION SHOW

Earlier this month, our school hosted its Pre-K Fashion Show, giving our youngest students the opportunity to shine on the red carpet! Dressed in their favorite outfits, students from each Pre-K classroom confidently took the stage, striking poses and showcasing their unique styles.

The event was met with overwhelming enthusiasm, as the theater was packed with proud parents cheering on their tiny fashion icons. But the show was more than just a fun day of dress-up—it was the culmination of a classroom unit dedicated to fashion. Leading up to the big day, students explored different fabric types, learned about various styles, and enjoyed read-aloud stories that expanded their understanding of fashion and self-expression.

Beyond the excitement of the runway, the experience played a valuable role in helping students develop self-confidence, teamwork, social interactions, and planning skills as they carefully coordinated their outfit choices. The Pre-K Fashion Show was a true celebration of creativity and individuality!

A huge thank you to our dedicated teachers for making this event such a special and memorable experience for our students and their families. We can't wait to see what next year's fashion show brings!





# HAPPY

# NATIONAL

# SCHOOL

# COUNSELING

# WEEK

Earlier this month, during National School Counseling Week, we took a moment to recognize and celebrate our incredible school counselor, Mrs. Hagel. Her dedication and unwavering support help make MLK a wonderful and nurturing environment for everyone.

Mrs. Hagel goes above and beyond every day—from making school announcements and answering phones to running the School Stripes Program and hosting student lunch lounges. She works closely with students and parents, handles attendance, manages HIB, and so many other tasks that keep our school running smoothly. Her commitment and tireless efforts truly make a difference in our school community.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Mrs. Hagel for everything she does for the MLK family.

Her passion and dedication remind us all of the importance of caring for one another and building a supportive school community.

Thank you, Mrs. Hagel!





# THE MLK PARENT CENTER PRESENTS BREAKFAST WITH MOMS

Last month, the MLK Parent Center hosted their annual Breakfast for Mom's celebration—and it was the biggest one yet! With over 300 attendees, the event was a heartfelt tribute to the mothers of MLK students, showing them just how much they are appreciated for all they do.

The day kicked off with a fun and competitive game of "Pick the Cup," where lucky winners received exciting prizes. Following the game, Parent Center members took the stage to deliver inspiring speeches and share important announcements with the gathered parents. Laughter, connection, and community filled the room as everyone enjoyed a delicious breakfast together.

This celebration wasn't just about great food—it was a time to relax, socialize, and honor the amazing mothers in our school community. A huge thank you to all the mothers who joined us, and to the MLK Parent Center for continually making our school and community a better place.

