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1. Education

Newark high school student accepted to 7 Ivy League colleges

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By [Noah Cohen](#) | [NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

A [Newark Public Schools](#) student and first-generation college student was accepted into seven of the eight Ivy League colleges he applied to, the school district announced Wednesday.

Janic Aguirre, a 17-year-old from the Class of 2021 at [Bard High School Early College](#), was accepted at Harvard University, Princeton University, Yale University, University of Pennsylvania, Dartmouth, Cornell University and Columbia University, while only waitlisted at Brown University, the district announced this week.

"I kind of took the YOLO (You Only Live Once) approach. I thought this will be the only time I apply to college so why not?" Aguirre said in a news release from the district.

Aguirre's career interests have spanned a range of academically-rigorous subjects, including astrophysics, computer science, law and his current focus on Mayan epigraphy, which he planned to pursue after studying anthropology and linguistics in college, a news release from NPS said.

"Some of my classmates call me quirky, and helpful and curious," Aguirre said in the release.

Joanne Baron, a professor at Bard Early College High School, echoed the word "curious" to describe her student. Baron taught a class on Ancient Mayan writing that led Aguirre to his interest in Mayan epigraphy.

"Janic is one of those people who just really seems to excel at everything he does," Baron said. "My colleagues and I actually had a bit of a competition to see who could get Janic interested in their specialty – and I feel like I won that competition."

Aguirre, who is from a family of Japanese and Nicaraguan descent, speaks fluent Japanese and is working to create his own language, the district's announcement said. So far, he has created 300 words.

“Janic is always in pursuit of ways to feed his passion for knowledge. I am proud and excited for him to arrive at his next ‘place to think’ and to continue nourishing his greatness. I can hardly wait to see the mark that he leaves on this world,” said Carla Stephens, principal of the high school.

The phrase - “place to think” - is the motto for [Bard High School Early College](#), which offers a range of electives and college services to help students explore career and higher education goals, the district said.

“The Newark Board of Education and Newark Public Schools community alike couldn’t be any prouder of Janic Aguirre and his fellow peers,” the district said in a statement. “It is with the utmost pride that we have our scholars join the ranks as game-changers and future leaders within our society.”

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