



PITMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Robert J. Preston, Ed.D., Superintendent
Robert O. Miles, III, Business Administrator/Board Secretary

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Dear Community,

This week we celebrated **Teacher Appreciation Week** and **National Nurses Week**.

At Pitman Schools, we are incredibly grateful for the dedication, compassion, and professionalism of our educators and school nurses. Our teachers inspire curiosity, cultivate resilience, and empower every student to reach their full potential. Our school nurses provide care, comfort, and critical support that ensures our children are healthy, safe, and ready to learn.

To all our teachers and nurses—*thank you* for the remarkable difference you make in the lives of our students and families every single day. Your commitment to the well-being and success of the children of Pitman does not go unnoticed, and it is deeply appreciated.

Updates from our April Board of Education Meeting

- **Budget Presentation:** The 2025-26 Pitman Public Schools budget was presented on April 30 with a continued focus on delivering high-quality programs while navigating rising healthcare, salary, and tuition costs. Key investments include preserving all current programs, adding a preschool classroom for 15 additional students, adopting a new high school math program, initiating a Chromebook replenishment cycle, constructing a security vestibule at PES, and expanding the high school academies. In response to the \$343,973 loss in stabilization aid, the district is implementing zero-based budgeting and reducing reliance on reserves, with fund balance usage dropping from \$1.2M in 2024-25 to \$844K in 2025-26. Maintenance allocations are increasing, and both Preschool Expansion and Food Service Aid are being maximized to offset general fund pressures. Despite decreasing state aid—now at 24% of total revenue—the district is managing a \$745K reduction in overall spending and applying a 3.29% tax cap increase (2% base plus 1.29% healthcare adjustment), resulting in a projected annual impact of \$95.36 on the average assessed home. The presentation, along with the user-friendly budget, can be found [here](#).

A Tradition of Excellence

- Introduction of New Business Administrator: We are pleased to welcome Mr. Chris DeStratis as our new Business Administrator and Board Secretary. Mr. DeStratis brings over 19 years of experience in school finance and administration, with a proven track record of responsible fiscal management and commitment to educational excellence. Most recently, he served in the same capacity at both the Penns Grove-Carneys Point and Swedesboro-Woolwich School Districts. His deep understanding of school operations and budgetary planning will be a tremendous asset to our district. Please join us in giving Mr. DeStratis a warm welcome as he begins this new chapter in our community.

End of Year Events

In the coming weeks, our calendar will be filled with events that highlight the incredible talents, achievements, and hard work of our students. From performances and showcases to academic celebrations, there's so much to be proud of. I look forward to seeing many of you as we celebrate the spirit and success of our school community.

Memorial Rain Garden

We are pleased to announce that Memorial School will be receiving a rain garden this spring. Installation will begin on Monday, May 12th and the entire project will wrap-up in June. We would like to thank the South Jersey Land & Trust for partnering with the district and providing 100% of the funding for the garden.

Pitman BOE Members Honored for Leadership and Service

The Pitman Board of Education is proud to announce that several of our members were recently recognized by the Gloucester County School Boards Association for their commitment to professional development and leadership in education.

Congratulations to the following members for earning certification levels through the New Jersey School Boards Association:

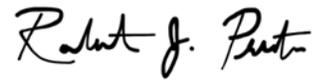
- Natalie Pote – Certified New Board Member
- Stacey Pappalardo – Certified Board Member
- David Grossman – Certified Board Member
- April Miller – Master Board Member

We also extend our congratulations to two Pitman BOE members on their recent elections to leadership roles within the Gloucester County School Boards Association:

- April Miller – Elected President for a two-year term
- Rebecca Higbee-Ionno – Elected Vice President of Legislation for a two-year term

Thank you to all our board members for your dedication to public education and continued service to the Pitman community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert J. Preston". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'R' and 'P'.

Robert J. Preston

Superintendent