



MATAWAN-ABERDEEN CONNECTIONS

CLIFFWOOD NEWSLETTER

November 23, 2025

Important Links

[District School Calendar](#), [School Hours](#), [Cliffwood Morning Music Requests](#), [Breakfast & Lunch Menu](#), [PreK, K & New Student Orientation](#), [Welcome Cliffwood Students & Families 25-26](#)

Cliffwood Family Connections [8/6](#), [8/31](#), [9/7](#), [9/14](#), [9/21](#), [9/28](#), [10/5](#), [10/12](#), [10/19](#), [10/26](#), [11/2](#), [11/9](#), [11/16](#)

Message from Mrs. Cherence, Principal

Adventure Awaits! We are Curious. We are Kind. We are Cliffwood Proud!

Hello Cliffwood Families,

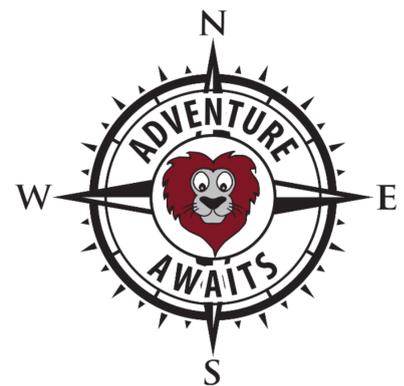
As we head into the holiday week, we are excited to share some of the wonderful moments and happenings at Cliffwood School and throughout the MARSD community.

We would like to invite all Cliffwood families to join the district's upcoming **Community Connection Session: "Shaping Our District's Future"** tomorrow at **5:30 PM** at **Lloyd Road School** or virtually.

Please see the information below for full details. Your voice and partnership are an important part of our district's planning, and we hope to see many of you there. A heartfelt **thank you to MARSD Cares, the Cliffwood PTO, and all of our Cliffwood families** for your incredible generosity during our recent food drive. Your donations helped ensure that many families across our community will have what they need for the holiday week. If your family is still in need of food or support, please see the contact information below, we are here for you.

What makes Cliffwood so special is the way this community shows up for one another. Time and time again, you demonstrate care, compassion, and kindness. This spirit of giving truly captures the heart of Thanksgiving and we are grateful for every one of you.

This past week was filled with meaningful learning and joyful experiences. Our students explored rhythm and note patterns in music, investigated sound in science, and enjoyed a special



CLIFFWOOD SCHOOL

Thanksgiving activity led by one of our very own Cliffwood alumni, now a junior at MRHS, who returned to give back to the place where her journey began. Moments like these remind us what a strong and connected community we truly are.

As we enter the holiday, I want to take a moment to share how thankful I am to be part of the Cliffwood School family. The way our staff, families, and students look out for one another and work together for our children is something truly extraordinary. It is an honor to serve this community every day.

We wish all of our Cliffwood families a warm, joyful, and restful Thanksgiving surrounded by loved ones.

Important Reminders:

- **Wednesday, 11/26:** Early dismissal at 1:20 PM
- **Thursday, 11/27 & Friday, 11/28:** School closed

Thank you for your partnership and for all you do to make Cliffwood such a special place.

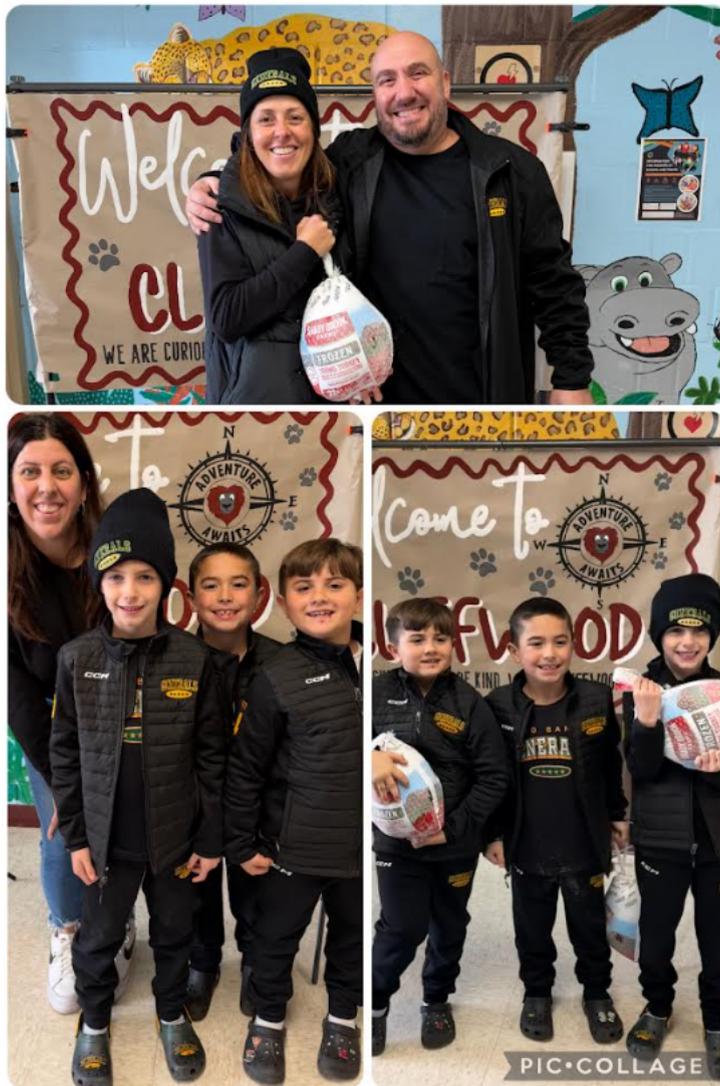
Happy Thanksgiving from all of us at Cliffwood School!

MARSD CARES & Cliffwood PTO Food Drive

Thank you to **MARSD Cares** and **Crossroads Church** for organizing a generous food drive for our local families. Thanksgiving baskets were thoughtfully prepared and made available at Crossroads Church this weekend. We are also incredibly grateful to the **Cliffwood PTO**, our **Cliffwood families**, and **Red Bank Generals Coach James Scarpantino** for collecting and donating turkeys and all the fixings for our Cliffwood families.

If you were unable to pick up a Thanksgiving basket this weekend and are in need of food for the holiday week, please reach out to our school counselor **Ms. Giacchi** at ggiacchi@marsd.org or our LDTC **Lauren Miles** at lmiles@marsd.org. We will make sure arrangements are made to support your family.

This is the **beauty of the Cliffwood community**, coming together, lifting one another up, and ensuring every family is cared for. This generosity and togetherness truly reflect the **real meaning of Thanksgiving**. We are so grateful for each of you.



MARSD Community Letter

We would like to invite all Cliffwood families to join the district's upcoming Community Connection Session: *"Shaping Our District's Future."*

This event will take place on **Monday, November 24, at 5:30 p.m.** Families may attend **in person at Lloyd Rd School** or choose to **join virtually**. If you select the virtual option, a Zoom link will be emailed to you prior to the meeting.



Pajama Day at Cliffwood School for a Great Cause!



YAY, IT'S
PAJAMA DAY!

We're having a Pajama Party...
and we want YOU to join us!

Cliffwood Elementary School

December 5, 2025



Support pediatric patients at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
and you can wear your jammies - all day long!

The kids at CHOP thank you!



THANK
YOU!





CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA PAJAMA DAY

Dear Parents and Guardians,

At Cliffwood Elementary School, we teach our students the importance of giving back. That's why we're participating in this year's Pajama Day for Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)!

We hope all students will celebrate the power of their pajamas on December 5th, when they are invited to wear their favorite school-appropriate sleepwear and bring in an optional donation for CHOP.

By making a donation, you will help Cliffwood students help the 2 million kids – many of them from our region – who receive care each year at one of CHOP's 50+ locations across Pennsylvania and New Jersey. CHOP also conducts groundbreaking research that shapes the landscape of all pediatric healthcare, bringing the promise of happier, healthier futures for all children.

Donations can be made through our school's Pajama Day fundraising page, which you can reach by scanning the QR code below. Students can also bring in checks payable to 'Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Foundation' with "Cliffwood Elementary School - Pajama Day" on the memo line.

Please join us in keeping children safe, healthy, and cozy while supporting CHOP!

Thank you for helping your kids help all the kids this Pajama Day!

Scan the QR code to visit our
school's fundraising page!



Questions? Email schoolfundraising@chop.edu

Cliffwood Alum Spreads Thanksgiving Cheer

Mrs. Royston's class had a very special visitor! **Ella**, a junior at MRHS and a proud former Cliffwood student, stopped by to read a story and lead a fun Thanksgiving activity with the class. She is giving back to her community while earning service hours for the **MRHS National Honor Society**, and we're thrilled that she'll be joining us once a month. What a wonderful full-circle moment for our Cliffwood family!



Science in First Grade

First graders have been exploring the world of sound in Science! During a hands-on “Guess That Sound” experiment, students listened, predicted, and tested their ideas as they worked to identify each mystery sound.



Music Class Scavenger Hunt

A musical adventure was happening in Ms. Dittloff's classes today! Students learned all about Quarter Notes and Barred Eighth Notes while taking part in an exciting scavenger hunt around the room.



Parent Workshop on Toilet Training

Our district preschool program will be hosting a **Parent Workshop on Toilet Training** on **Tuesday, December 10th from 6:30–7:30 PM**. This workshop is open to all families with children enrolled in our district's preschool program at any site.

Please see the attached flyers (in both English and Spanish) for full details. We encourage you to share this information with anyone who may benefit.

For your convenience, **free childcare** will be provided by the MRHS National Honor Society. Families planning to use this service should indicate so when registering.

We hope this workshop is helpful and supportive as we partner together in your child's early learning journey!

Parent Teacher Conferences

Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held on the following dates:

- **Tuesday, 12/2 from 2:05–3:50 PM**
- **Wednesday, 12/3 from 5:00–8:00 PM**

Conference sign-ups will open in **Genesis on Monday, 11/17 at 9:00 AM**, and the sign-up window will **close on Monday, 12/1 at 9:00 AM**.

Please reach out to your child's teacher with any questions about scheduling.

Please review the attached letters for detailed instructions on how to schedule your conference and to locate your child's teachers during conference days.

Conferences can be scheduled for homeroom teachers, ESL, Resource, and specials teachers at this time.

Classes with two teachers can be scheduled through the homerooms teacher.

3rd Grade- Ms. A. Pappas/ Ms. Coakley schedule through A. Pappas

2nd Grade- Ms. L. Pappas/ Ms. Coakley schedule through L. Pappas

1st Grade- Ms. Saviano/ Ms. Polakowski schedule through Ms. Saviano

Kindergarten- Ms. Maiello/Ms. Polakowski schedule through Ms. Maiello

At this time, conferences with the Related Service Providers, CST, Counselor, Interventionists and Nurse are not able to be scheduled through Parent Portal.

If you would like to meet with one or more of the following staff members please email them directly to arrange a conference day and time.

2nd Annual Holiday Giveaway

The [Synergies Family Foundation](#) will be holding their Annual Toy, Food and Clothing Giveaway on **Saturday, December 13, 2025** from 9-2 at the Matawan Regional High School Cafeteria. To help us better prepare for the event, please register by scanning the QR code in the attached flyer by November 22nd.

FLU Vaccine

Join our Team!

We're excited to share that the Matawan-Aberdeen Regional School District currently has several openings, and we would love your help in spreading the word! These are wonderful opportunities to be part of our district and make a difference in the lives of our outstanding students.

We are looking for:

- Substitute School Bus/Van Drivers
- Substitute Transportation Assistants
- Substitute Classroom Teachers
- Substitute Instructional Assistants
- Substitute Nurses (Please email smoore@marsd.org)

If you, or someone you know, may be interested, please visit this website to apply: [Applitrack](#).

To apply for Substitute Classroom Teacher and/or Substitute Instructional Assistant positions, please use this link: [ESS](#)

Come join our wonderful district and be part of the team that supports our students each and every day!

Stay Cliffwood Connected

- [Cliffwood School Website](#)
- Instagram: [@cliffwood_elementary](#)

- Facebook: [Cliffwood School PTO Parent Page](#)

The Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act requires that the week beginning with the first Monday in October of each year be recognized as the Week of Respect in the state of NJ. Students and staff are encouraged to participate in the Week of Respect!

Free & Reduced Breakfast and Lunch Form

The 2025-2026 Meal Applications are to be completed electronically this year. This will be done through Genesis link: [Parent Portal](#).

Families who wish to complete paper applications can request a copy of the application packet. They will also be available at Back To School Night.

Maschio's is our Food Service Company this school year. Below are POC's for your use as needed.

Lauren Dyer, On-Site Director, ldyer@maschiofood.com, 732-705-5326

Sarah Engst, Area Supervisor, sengst@maschiofood.com

Governor's Educator of the Year Program

The Matawan-Aberdeen Regional School District is excited to continue our participation in the New Jersey Department of Education's Governor's Educator of the Year (GEOY) Program. This program celebrates outstanding Teachers of the Year and Educational Services Professionals who make a lasting impact on students, families, and our community.

At Cliffwood, we are fortunate to have so many amazing educators who go above and beyond every day. This is your opportunity to nominate and highlight a teacher or educational services professional who has made a difference in your child's life or supported your family.

Nominations are due by **November 28th**. [GEOY Nomination Form](#)

Thank you for helping us recognize the incredible work of our Cliffwood team!



Breakfast & Lunch Menus

Information about Excused/Unexcused Absences

The New Jersey Department of Education recognizes only six allowable reasons for an "excused" absence; these reasons are listed below.

1. Religious holidays (Each year, the State Board of Education votes on a list of approved religious holidays for observance upon the written request signed by the parent.).
2. Participation in observance of Veterans Day.
3. Participation in district board of election membership activities.
4. Take Our Children to Work Day.
5. College visit(s), up to three days per school year for students in grades 11 and 12.
6. Closure of a busing school district that prevents a student from having transportation to the receiving school.

Being present and on-time to school each day is extremely important for students' success and well-being. School attendance is a powerful predictor of student outcomes; data shows that, when students are present daily, they learn better and are generally healthier. **Attendance matters and every school day counts!**

Cliffwood PTO NEWS

Cliffwood PTO Winter Festival

Join us for our Winter Festival! Click here to register! <https://forms.gle/nVubvGE2xGb3Ae3w7>

Volunteers Needed

The Cliffwood PTO is already planning some exciting events for the rest of the school year, and we'd love YOUR help! Whether you have just a little time to give or want to take on a bigger role, there's a place for you!

By joining a committee, you can:

- Help plan and organize fun events for our students and families
- Lend a hand during events (set up, run activities, or clean up!)
- Share ideas and talents to make our school community even stronger



You can choose your level of involvement-every bit of help makes a big difference!

We're looking to create committees for:

- Winter Festival
- 3rd Grade End of Year Events
- Fun Day

If you're interested in joining a committee or just want to learn more, please fill out our volunteer form or reach out to CliffwoodPTO422@gmail.com

Let's make this year amazing, together!

[Volunteer Interest Form](#)

Yearbook Photos

The Cliffwood PTO created an email address for all yearbook photos that they want to share with all families and staff so that they can send all pictures from events this year or any photos they take in their classrooms. The email is CliffwoodYearbook2526@gmail.com.



Box Tops



CLIFFWOOD AVENUE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
CLIFFWOOD, NJ

Be sure to sign up for Box Tops for Education and scan receipts to earn rewards for Cliffwood School!



Referral Code: I6D42ILN

Dates to Keep in Mind

- 11/24- Report Cards will be posted on Genesis at 5:00 PM
- 11/24- District Community Connection Session at Lloyd Rd School
5:30 PM - 6:30 PM
- 11/26- Early Dismissal for all Students & Staff
- 11/27 & 11/28- Thanksgiving School Closed
- 12/1- Parent Teacher Conferences will close on Genesis on Monday, 12/1 at 9:00 AM
- 12/2- Afternoon Parent/Teacher Conferences (Early Dismissal for all Students)
- 12/3- Evening Parent/Teacher Conferences (Early Dismissal for all Students)
- 12/5- Pajama Day at Cliffwood School for a Great Cause!
- 12/10- Free Parent Workshop on Toilet Training at Cambridge Park School 6:30 - 7:30 PM
- 12/13- Cliffwood PTO Winter Festival 12:00-2:00 PM



Matawan-Aberdeen Regional

School District

