



KINGSWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Committed to Excellence

Ms. Sharon Ormsbee, CPA
School Business Administrator

Dr. James J. Lavender
Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Patricia Calandro
Assistant Superintendent

January 28, 2026

Dear Kingsway Community,

As we settle into the new year, our schools continue to reflect the energy, purpose, and excellence that define Kingsway. The January Board of Education meeting provided an opportunity to celebrate student and staff achievement, recognize outstanding educators, and share important updates that support our academic programs, operations, and school community as we move into the second half of the school year.

This month's [Superintendent's News & Notes](#) and [January Board Brief](#) include highlights from the **January 22 Board of Education meeting**, including recognition of our **Spotlight Students, Seniors of the Month, and Educators of the Year**;

updates on **Advanced Placement achievements, music program honors, and dual credit registration**; important information for the **Class of 2026 graduation requirement**; and district updates related to **communications, employee privacy, mental health supports, governance, and the 2026–2027 school calendar**.

I encourage you to review the information below and follow the embedded links to learn more about the initiatives, recognitions, and upcoming events shaping our schools.

Very truly yours,



James J. Lavender, Ed.D.
Superintendent



Spotlights and Recognitions

The following spotlights and recognitions celebrate individuals and groups whose dedication and accomplishments exemplify our district's **Commitment to Excellence**.

- **January Seniors of the Month**
Madelyn Cassidy & David Oravetz
- **High School Student Spotlights**
Rocco Salamone (Grade 9), Sophia Boyizigies (Grade 10), Abby Vander Vennen (Grade 11), Elena Farro (Grade 12)
- **Middle School Student Spotlights**
Paul Applegate & Connor Guadalupe (K), Courtney McCann (I), Matt Bagocius (N), Conor Lydon (G), Mia Masciangelo (S), Brendan McCue (W), Vanessa Volpe (A), Macy Lee (Y)

Home of the Dragons

VFW 10886 Patriot Pen & Voice of Democracy Essay Winners

We are proud to recognize the talented middle and high school students submitting outstanding essays and presentations that support patriotism. Their thoughtful reflections on patriotism are a testament to their hard work and dedication. This year's *Voice of Democracy Essay Winners* are **Paige Oatman** (1st Place) and **Haley M. Blair** (2nd Place). *Our Patriots Pen Essay Winners* are **Mackenzie L. Booker** (1st Place), **Byron D. Ramsay** (2nd Place), and **Bryce M. Booker** (3rd Place).

Welcome Our Newest Dragon

The Board of Education was excited to welcome **Cameryn Martin**, a new high school Special Education Teacher and **Sharon Ormsbee**, our new School Business Administrator.

Teachers and ESP of the Year

Kingsway honored our [2025–2026 Educators of the Year](#) at the January Board of Education meeting.

- **Morgan Moore**, Educational Support Professional of the Year
- **Amanda Ottinger**, Middle School Teacher of the Year
- **Meghan Mattson**, High School Teacher of the Year

Each of these outstanding professionals exemplifies the very best of Kingsway. Through their dedication, leadership, and commitment to student growth and well-being, they have inspired, innovated, and made a meaningful difference in the lives of those they serve. We extend our heartfelt congratulations on this well-deserved recognition.

Communications Committee Feedback

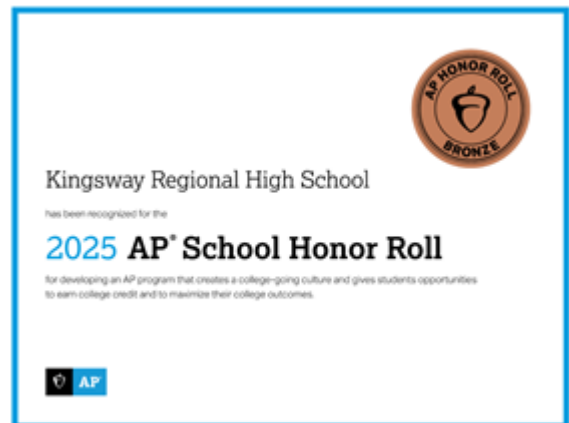
The time, energy, and attention invested by our Communications Committee is already leading to meaningful improvements. Consisting of various members of our middle school and high school faculty and facilitated by Human Resources Director, Melissa Brown, and Assistant Superintendent, Trish Calandro, the committee engaged in a review of survey data, additional focus group discussions, and a review of the staff page of the website. While additional details will be shared at a later date by Meghan Mattson and Lauren Warner, several immediate steps, including improvements to the staff website page(s) and expansion of the Teaching & Learning Calendar, are underway.

Protecting Employee Images and Likeness

In response to staff feedback and growing concerns about the unauthorized use of images, the district is currently removing faculty and staff photos from the public-facing staff directory. Staff photos will continue to be available on the staff website page(s), accessible only via secure internal access. This approach allows employees to continue identifying and connecting while balancing accessibility with appropriate privacy and security measures.

Kingsway Earns AP School Honor Roll Recognition

Kingsway Regional High School has been named to the [College Board's AP School Honor Roll for the 2024–2025 school year, earning Bronze-level distinction](#). This recognition highlights Kingsway's continued commitment to expanding access to rigorous, college-level coursework while supporting student achievement and college



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readiness. The honor builds upon our ongoing efforts to strengthen Advanced Placement offerings and create meaningful opportunities for students to challenge themselves academically.

Care Solace Partnership Continues to Thrive

Kingsway Regional School District remains committed to the health, safety, and well-being of our students, staff, and families. Through our partnership with **Care Solace**, individuals seeking assistance with mental health or substance use concerns can be quickly connected with community-based providers matched to their needs. Support is available 24/7 by calling **888-515-0595** or by visiting www.caresolace.com/krsd.

Middle School Dragon's Tale and Video

The Middle School **KRMS News Club** has published the [November and December 2025 edition of *The Dragon's Tale*](#) featuring highlights and happenings from throughout the school. Families can also view a video showcasing [some of Kingsway Middle School's favorite moments](#) from November and December.

Dual Credit Program Registration Now Open

Registration is now open for Kingsway's **Dual Credit Program** in partnership with **Camden County College**, allowing students to earn college credits for eligible high school courses and potentially reduce future tuition costs. Students can view qualifying courses and register through the district website under the [Camden County College](#) tab. Returning students should use their existing Enrole login, while new students will need to create an account. **All registrations must be completed by Friday, February 27.** For technical assistance, contact dualcredit@camdencc.edu; questions about eligibility or the program should be directed to a school counselor.

Music Program Achievements: Olympic Conference Honor Bands

Kingsway students continue to excel in the performing arts. This year, **six Middle School students** and **eight High School students** were selected to participate in the **Olympic Conference Honor Bands**. Impressively, **three middle school students and one high school student** earned the **top seat** in their respective sections—a first-time achievement for our program. These students will rehearse and perform at **Washington Township High School** in the coming weeks. We congratulate them on this prestigious honor.



Attention Class of 2026 – Graduation Requirement

The New Jersey Department of Education has implemented a new graduation requirement (P.L.2023, c.295) for the **Class of 2026**. To receive a high school diploma, all seniors (or a parent/guardian if the student is under 18) must complete **one** of the following by **April 14**: submit the [FAFSA](#), submit the [NJFAMS](#) application (for NJ Dreamers), or complete the [Graduation Waiver](#) through the **Genesis Parent Portal**. Families may contact a school counselor with questions or visit the [HESAA FAFSA webpage](#) for additional information.



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Kingsway Launches New School of Education Program

Kingsway Regional High School is proud to announce the launch of its [School of Education](#), an innovative, multi-year pathway for students interested in careers that support teaching, learning, and school communities. The program will open to students beginning in the **2026–2027 school year**.



Kingsway Welcomes Sharon Ormsbee as School Business Administrator

Kingsway has named [Sharon Ormsbee, CPA](#), as its next **School Business Administrator/Board Secretary**, effective **January 2, 2026**. Sharon brings more than 15 years of experience in school finance and operations and joins Kingsway from the Lacey Township School District.

The 2026-27 School Calendar Has Been Approved!

We are pleased to announce that the [2026-2027 School Calendar](#) was officially approved this past November and being shared here for your planning needs. It is now available for viewing on our website under the 'Calendars' section.

Emergency Closings – Weather Alerts

In the event of inclement weather, decisions regarding school closures and employee reporting expectations will be communicated accordingly. Additional information is available under the [Emergency Closings](#) tab on the district website. Questions may be directed to the Superintendent's Office at **(856) 467-4600, ext. 4205**.

Policy Updates

The Board of Education has amended and/or adopted several policies. Updated policies and regulations are available on the district website and in the [2025-26 Board Briefs](#) section. All POLICIES & REGULATIONS can be viewed on our website [HERE](#). Employees are reminded of their obligation to review all policy updates carefully.



Look Ahead/Important Dates

Please update your calendars to include the following key dates. For more, click on the District's [2025-26 School Calendar](#) or the [Athletics & Activities Calendar](#).

- January 13 – School of Health Professions Virtual Info. Session. [Reg. Link](#)
- January 20 – School Closed to Students/Staff; MLK Jr. Day
- January 22 – Board of Education Meeting
- February 3 – School of Education Virtual Info. Session. [Reg. Link](#)
- February 3 – Semester 1 Ends
- February 4 – Semester 2 Begins
- February 5 – NCAA Virtual Info. Session. [Reg. Link](#)
- February 16 – School Closed to Students/Staff; President's Day



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You May Have Missed....

- [Kingsway Names Nelson New Head Softball Coach](#)
School Officials announced the appointment of Diane Nelson as Head Softball Coach for Kingsway Regional High School (January 2026).
- [Kingsway Names Shaup New Head Girls' Lacrosse Coach](#)
School Officials announced the appointment of Carly Shaup as Head Girls' Lacrosse Coach for Kingsway Regional High School (January 2026).
- [Meet the Cadets of Kingsway's Rising NJROTC Program](#) by Matt Rappa, SW Neighbors "These students aren't just earning academic credits – they're building character, sharpening leadership skills, and discovering the power of camaraderie."
- [Connor's Crew: Kingsway Students Turn Personal Tragedy into Hopeful Mission](#)
Born out of personal tragedy, **Paige Oatman** and **Audrey Klieger** have transformed grief into action, hope, and healing for others. Their story is a reminder of the extraordinary impact young people can make when they lead with empathy and heart.
- **Committed to Excellence: Perez & Mopal Stand Out**
The Kingsway Regional School District proudly congratulates Senior [Jayden Perez](#) on his remarkable achievement—graduating from the **Gloucester County Fire Academy**. This milestone reflects Jayden's dedication, perseverance, and passion for public service. We also extend our heartfelt congratulations to [Mahi Mopal](#), an 11th-grade student at Kingsway Regional High School, for being featured in the **American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine!**
- ["Commended Students" in the 2025 Merit Scholarship Program](#)
Daniel Houck, Evan Frederick, Natalie Ficarra, and Kai Tolley have been named Commended Students in the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program.
- [Three Seniors Achieve the Prestigious Eagle Scout Rank!](#)
Celebrating the remarkable achievement of three best friends—Seniors *Devin Soffy*, *Robert "Bobby" Rittershausen*, and *Anthony Barone*.
- [Kingsway Celebrates Excellence at This Year's NHS Induction Ceremony!](#)
A record 168 new inductees alongside 159 returning members, celebrating their achievements and bright futures. These students exemplify the values of leadership, learning, and character, standing as tomorrow's leaders and compassionate citizens.
- [Kingsway's Commitment to AP Courses Drives 37% Growth in Enrollment](#)
Kingsway Regional School District is proud to announce a significant increase in student participation in [Advanced Placement \(AP\) courses](#) and exams. For the 2024-25 school year, AP course enrollment has climbed to 2,183 seats, representing a 37% increase from the 1,375 seats filled during the 2022-23 school year. Additionally, AP exam registrations have risen by 46%, from 627 in 2022-23 to 913 this year.
- [Kingsway Recognized as Gloucester County's Best High School by NJ.com](#)
Kingsway Regional High School has been recognized as the top high school in Gloucester County, according to a recent NJ.com article published on September 5, 2024.



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- [Quilts of Valor Honorees Celebrated at 4th Annual Veterans Day Program](#)**
 Representatives from the South Jersey Quilts of Valor Foundation participated in Kingsway's 4th Annual Veterans Day Breakfast on Friday, December 15, 2024, to bestow upon Kingsway employees who have served in the United States Armed Services a handmade quilt. Honored this year were Bus Driver Henry Olinsky (U.S. Army) and School Resource Officer Billy Franklin (U.S. Marine Corps). Kingsway's Navy JROTC Cadets, Middle School Choir, Band, Student Council Members, and the Woolwich VFW Post 10886 also participated this year.
- [Celebrate Students' Academic Honors from College Board's National Recognition Program](#)**
 We are excited to highlight our students' exceptional achievements and the significance of these honors in showcasing their academic prowess. We are immensely proud of their accomplishments and the recognition they have received.
- [Kingsway Introduces Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Playbook](#)**
 This comprehensive playbook offers invaluable guidance and a wealth of resources to enhance our collective AI Literacy, empowering us to support student learning better and streamline educator workflows.
- [Kingsway Offers More than 20 Advanced Placement \(AP\) Courses](#)**
- [Kingsway's Armed Service Veterans Honored with Quilts of Valor](#)**
- [Kingsway's Navy JROTC Promotional Video](#)**
- [Kingsway Ranked Among Best High Schools in South Jersey](#)**
 Kingsway is the highest-ranked high school in Gloucester, Salem, Cumberland, and Cape May Counties (U.S. News & World Report).
- [Kingsway is Named to the College Board's AP District Honor Roll](#)**
 With more than twenty Advanced Placement (AP) offerings.
- [Kingsway Partners with Care Solace, Removing Barriers to Mental Health Access](#)**
 Kingsway recently announced a partnership with Care Solace to support our ongoing commitment to removing barriers to access to mental health services.

Thank you for your attention to this announcement. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at your convenience.

Very truly yours,



Dr. James J. Lavender
 Superintendent of Schools

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