



# THE LINK

TO THE LAWRENCE COMMUNITY

MARCH 2026

## Lawrence Township Public Schools Invites Community to Strategic Planning Sessions

The Board of Education invites you to take part in a districtwide Strategic Planning initiative to help shape the future of Lawrence Township Public Schools. This collaborative process, facilitated by the New Jersey School Boards Association, will bring together neighbors, families, staff, students, administrators, and community members to chart a clear path forward.

Together, we will examine our district's strengths, consider the challenges ahead, and explore meaningful solutions and opportunities for growth. Your ideas, insights, and hopes are essential as we develop a shared vision that supports the success of every student and strengthens our community.

All interested residents are encouraged to participate in any or all of the meetings. Your voice matters, and we look forward to your involvement.

**Dates:** April 15, May 27, June 8, 2026

**6:00 p.m. (sign-in at 5:45 p.m.)**

**Location:** Lawrence High School Media Center

Scan to Register



## LTPS Celebrates Black History Month

Last month, Lawrence Township Public Schools (LTPS) proudly celebrated Black History Month with a series of meaningful learning experiences that highlighted Black history, culture, and contributions across the district.

Thanks to a generous grant from the Lawrence Township Education Foundation (LTEF), students and staff at Lawrence High School experienced a powerful reenactment honoring the life and legacy of Phillis Wheatley, the first published African American woman poet. Through dynamic storytelling and performance, Wheatley's words and experiences were brought vividly to life, offering students an engaging and memorable connection to history.

Wheatley's poetry challenged 18th-century beliefs about race, intellect, and freedom at a time when such voices were rarely heard. The reenactment allowed students to explore her impact in a way that was both educational and deeply moving, reinforcing the relevance of her work and the importance of diverse perspectives in American history.

High school students also participated in an engaging Intergenerational and Interracial Panel Discussion featuring a diverse group of students, faculty, and community stakeholders. The panel created a true living classroom experience, moving beyond textbooks to real-world dialogue. Students heard firsthand stories across generations, engaged in thoughtful conversations about Black history, and experienced the power of collaborative learning in action.

Schools districtwide engaged students in thoughtful lessons, discussions, poster making (pictured above), door decorating and other activities designed to celebrate Black history and amplify the stories and contributions of Black leaders, artists, and change-makers.

The month concluded with a districtwide celebration on Saturday, February 28, bringing the community together to reflect on learning, honor history, and reaffirm LTPS's commitment to equity, inclusion, and meaningful education for all students.

## Kindergarten Registration



We can't wait to meet our new students! To join our Kindergarten class, children must turn 5 years old on or before October 1, 2026. Please note that proof of residency is required for all new enrollments.

Register at [www.ltps.org/registration](http://www.ltps.org/registration).



# REFERENDUM UPDATE: ONE YEAR LATER

## From Vision to Reality

On March 11, 2025, the Lawrence Township community made a powerful statement about its commitment to students, schools, and the future by approving a \$98 million referendum. One year later, we pause to reflect and remind the public why the referendum was needed, what it is making possible, and where we are headed over the next five plus years.

### Why a Referendum?

The referendum was driven by a clear, long-term goal: to meet our growing student needs, modernize educational practices, and align our district with the New Jersey Department of Education recommended grade-bands.

Beginning in the 2029–2030 school year, third grade will move to Lawrence Intermediate School, and sixth grade will move to Lawrence Middle School. This shift will transform Lawrence Intermediate School into an upper elementary school serving grades 3–5 and expand Lawrence Middle School into a true middle school model educating grades 6–8. This model supports both academic growth and social-emotional development at critical stages of learning.

### What the Referendum Is Funding

The \$98 million referendum supports a comprehensive set of construction and renovation projects, including a new classroom wing at Lawrence Middle School, an “all-school” gymnasium specially designed for community use, an expanded cafeteria, a fully renovated auditorium, an outdoor learning courtyard, and a new turf athletic field replacing an aging grass field with poor drainage to safely support an additional grade level in school athletics.

### Where We Are Now

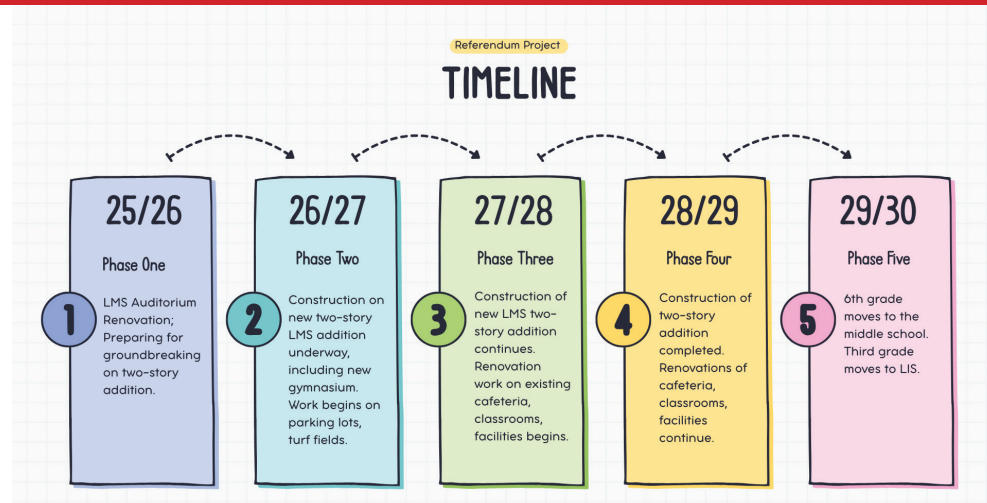
Phase One of this work, the full and complete renovation of the Lawrence Middle School auditorium, is already fully underway. This project represents a visible and exciting first step in bringing the referendum plan to life and will result in a modernized space that supports student performances, assemblies, and community events, starting as early as next school year.

### What's Still to Come

Over the next five years, construction, taking place in phases, will continue as the district prepares for the 2029–2030 school year transition. Each step will be carefully planned to minimize disruption while ensuring our schools are ready to meet the needs of future learners. Lawrence Township Public Schools will continue to hold Community Conversations and Information Sessions to keep the community informed and involved in all referendum projects every step of the way.

The referendum was a promise to our students today and to generations to come. One year later, that promise is becoming reality, thanks to a community that believes in investing in strong schools and a strong future for Lawrence Township.

Did you know? You can follow along with the Lawrence Middle School auditorium renovation on our website. Each week, a new construction field report is posted with current photos of the project. We invite you to check it out and see the progress for yourself.



## Community Conversation Highlights Grade-Level Restructuring and School Improvements

On February 18, families, community members, and stakeholders gathered in the Lawrence High School Library for a meaningful community conversation focused on the future of Lawrence Township Public Schools. The evening centered on current and upcoming renovations and expansions at Lawrence Middle School (LMS), and how these projects will support districtwide grade-level restructuring in the future.

Representatives from Higley Construction and FVHD Architects shared detailed updates on work already underway, including the long-anticipated renovated LMS auditorium, and future significant building upgrades including a new wing at LMS. They also discussed how the projects will improve traffic flow, parking, accessibility, and learning environments for all students, including those with special needs.

Families asked many thoughtful and insightful questions throughout the evening. Much of the discussion focused on how grade-level restructuring will affect current students, (e.g. what grades children will be in by the time construction is complete, and which schools they will attend once the new structure is in place). School and district administrators were able to address these questions directly, helping families better understand the long-term vision and timeline, with full implementation anticipated in the 2029-2030 school year.

The conversation reflected years of careful planning, collaboration, and community support. With these projects, Lawrence Township Public Schools is moving into alignment with best practices and state recommendations, creating spaces and structures intentionally designed for how students learn and grow at each stage.

This work is about more than buildings. It's about investing in a strong future for Lawrence schools and ensuring that our students have the environments they need to thrive for generations to come.





## Navigating the Future: Lawrence High School Hosts AI Workshop for Families

Lawrence High School recently hosted an AI Parent Workshop, an evening dedicated to demystifying the role of Artificial Intelligence in today’s classrooms. As technology evolves, Lawrence Township Public Schools (LTPS) remains committed to ensuring that families are partners in the journey toward responsible and innovative learning.

The workshop provided a deep dive into how AI tools can enhance instruction, promote critical thinking, and support student engagement. Rather than viewing AI as a shortcut, the district presented it as a sophisticated tool that, when used with intention, can amplify a student’s ability to analyze, create, and refine their work.

### The AI Use Scale: Task-Based Clarity

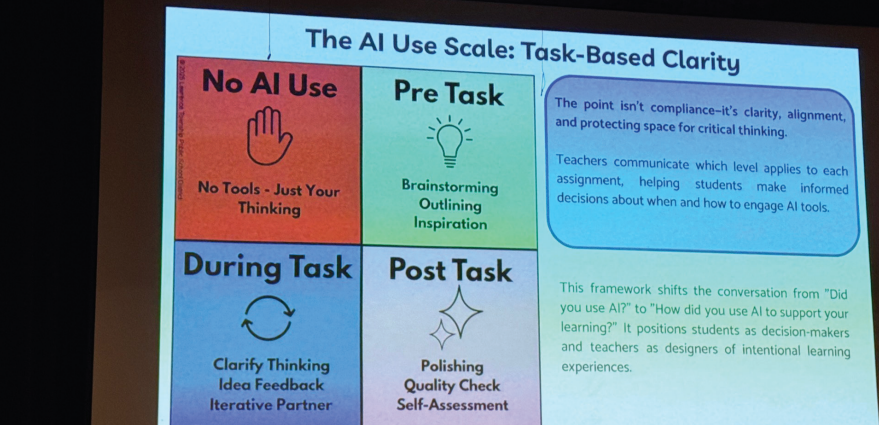
A central feature of the district’s strategy is the AI Use Scale, a framework that provides “Task-Based Clarity” to protect the space for critical thinking. This model guides students through different levels of engagement, from “No AI Use”—where students rely solely on their own cognition—to using AI as a “Pre-Task” spark for brainstorming and inspiration, “During Task” as an iterative partner to clarify thinking, or “Post-Task” to assist with polishing, quality checks, and self-assessment.

This framework shifts the fundamental question from “Did you use AI?” to a more meaningful inquiry: “How did you use AI to support your learning?” By positioning students as the primary decision-makers and teachers as designers of intentional learning experiences, LTPS is teaching students to be discerning users of technology rather than passive consumers.

### Preparing for a New Professional Landscape

At Lawrence Township Public Schools, preparing students for college, careers, and the future workforce remains a top priority. In a world where AI proficiency is becoming a vital skill, LTPS is taking a proactive approach to instructional practice, ensuring that all exploration occurs within a secure environment backed by rigorous safety and privacy guidelines.

Opportunities like this workshop help keep our families informed and connected as we adapt to emerging technologies together.



## Lawrence Township Public Schools & St. Baldrick's: More Than a Fundraiser — A Tradition of Heart

For more than a decade, Lawrence Township Public Schools students and staff have stepped up — and shaved down — in the fight against childhood cancer. What began as a school-based effort has grown into a powerful community tradition. Each year, Lawrence students raise money for childhood cancer research through St. Baldrick’s Foundation events, with many participants courageously shaving their heads in solidarity with children undergoing treatment.

And the impact is extraordinary. From 2014 through 2025, Lawrence school-based teams have raised more than \$800,000 for childhood cancer research. In addition, the Lawrence community’s partnership with the Amalfi’s St. Baldrick’s events has generated close to \$2,450,000 over the years. That brings the known total connected to Lawrence participation to more than \$3.2 million raised to support lifesaving research.

The numbers are impressive. But what makes this story remarkable is not just the money raised; it is the message sent. Students as young as elementary schoolers stand in front of their peers, families, and teachers and choose to shave their heads. They do it to honor friends, family members, and children they may never meet. They do it to show that no one fights alone.

They learn empathy. They learn courage. They learn that their actions matter. Year after year, Lawrence students demonstrate that service is not something you wait to grow into; it is something you live.

St. Baldrick’s in Lawrence is not simply an event. It is a reflection of who we are. It is students organizing teams. It is staff members leading by example. It is families donating, cheering, and supporting. It is a township that shows up. Lawrence Township Public Schools has long emphasized belonging, unity, and the importance of making a difference beyond our classrooms. This tradition embodies that spirit.

More than a decade of participation. More than \$3 million raised. Countless shaved heads. And immeasurable heart. That is Lawrence.





## Sophomores Explore Future Pathways at Annual Career Day

Lawrence High School sophomores took an exciting step toward their futures during the annual LHS Career Day, hosted at Rider University. The experience gave students a meaningful opportunity to explore a wide range of career paths aligned with their interests while also getting a taste of college life.

Throughout the day, students participated in engaging career sessions held in Rider classrooms, learning directly from professionals about real-world pathways, required skills, and next steps after high school. Students also enjoyed lunch in the University cafeteria, adding to the authentic college campus experience.

Career Day emphasized learning, reflection, and thoughtful preparation for life after LHS, encouraging students to think critically about their goals and the many possibilities ahead. A sincere thank you to Rider University for their continued partnership and hospitality, to keynote speaker Darren “Freedom” Green for his inspiring message, and to all of our presenters who helped motivate students to think big and plan for success.

## LHS Awarded Bronze Level AP Honor Roll Recognition

Lawrence High School has been named to the College Board’s AP School Honor Roll for the 2024–25 school year, earning Bronze-level recognition for its commitment to expanding access to Advanced Placement (AP) courses and supporting student success.

The AP School Honor Roll celebrates schools that have demonstrated outstanding efforts to welcome more students into AP coursework and help them succeed in college-level learning. At Lawrence High School, students took 25 different AP exams during the past school year, reflecting the breadth of course offerings and strong student participation.

During their high school experience, 41% of LHS seniors took at least one AP exam, with 32% earning a score of three or higher on at least one AP exam. Additionally, 6% of seniors took five or more AP exams, highlighting a high level of academic engagement and perseverance.

Research consistently shows that students who take AP courses and exams are more likely to attend college and graduate on time. Students who earn college credit through AP are often able to accelerate their path to graduation and enter college with increased confidence, while those who do not earn credit still benefit from early exposure to rigorous, college-level expectations and help build a strong college-going culture.

Earning Bronze recognition reflects a significant, schoolwide effort. It takes the dedication of teachers who deliver engaging and challenging instruction, counselors who guide students toward opportunities, administrators who prioritize access and equity, and families who support their students. Most importantly, it reflects the hard work and commitment of Lawrence High School students.



## Families Explore Learning at K-6 Curriculum Night

Lawrence Township families gathered at Lawrence High School for our recent K–6 Curriculum Night, an engaging evening focused on learning, resources, and partnership.

Parents and caregivers explored curriculum displays that highlighted how reading, writing, math, science, and social studies are taught across our K–6 schools. Staff members were available throughout the evening to answer questions and share practical strategies families can use to support learning at home.

Families also connected with representatives who shared information about at-home learning resources, including NJSLA assessment details, as well as Special Education services, K–6 counseling supports, Multilingual/ESL programs, Title 1 information, kindergarten registration, and enrichment and gifted services. The event provided a comprehensive look at the academic experience from kindergarten through sixth grade and helped families better understand the supports available to their children.

Thank you to everyone who attended and engaged in thoughtful conversations with our educators. Strong school–family partnerships make all the difference, and we are grateful for our involved and supportive Lawrence community.

