



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*

March 31, 2026

Dear Kingsway Community,


With spring now upon us, our schools are energized by continued progress, purposeful work, and a shared commitment to excellence. This month's [Superintendent's News & Notes](#) and [March Board Brief](#) highlight student achievement, program updates, and important information as we move toward the close of the second marking period.

This month also marked an important step forward, as the Board of Education officially adopted the [2026–2027 Tentative School Budget](#), which continues to reflect full state funding for our students—an important investment in supporting their educational journey.

As we approach [Spring Recess](#), please note that schools will be closed beginning **Thursday, April 2**, and will reopen on **Tuesday, April 7**. I hope this time provides our students, staff, and families with an opportunity to rest, recharge, and enjoy time together.

As we enter the final stretch of the school year, I look forward to the many opportunities this season brings to celebrate and support our students. As always, please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or need for clarification. 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



Home of the Dragons

Spotlights and Recognitions

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

- **February Seniors of the Month**
Mahalakshmi Mopal & Shiven Shah
- **High School Student Spotlights**
Stephen Silvestro (Grade 9), Emma Murphy (Grade 10), Juliana Masciangelo (Grade 11), Giacomo Bindi (Grade 12).
- **Middle School Student Spotlights**
Bence Lendvai-Lintner and Byrce Solina (K), Adalyn Henry (I), Liam Flood (N), Dominic Triolo (G), Tyler Meade (S), Peyton Burns (W), Blaise Patel (A), Dylan Leshik (Y).



March Spotlight Teacher – Juliana Chellew, Middle School Math

It is an honor to recognize **Ms. Juliana Chellew**, Math Department Chair, as this month’s Spotlight Teacher. Ms. Chellew exemplifies dedication, leadership, and innovation, inspiring students to build confidence and find meaning in their learning. She fosters an inclusive classroom environment where mistakes are embraced as part of the learning process and students are actively engaged through collaboration, problem-solving, and reflective thinking. Beyond her classroom, Ms. Chellew has had a significant impact on the Math Department, leading professional development and supporting colleagues in the use of effective instructional and assessment strategies.

Kingsway’s Select Jazz Earns Gold Rating!

On Friday, the Kingsway Regional Select Jazz Ensemble made school history by competing for the first time in the NJAJE State Jazz Band Festival. The top 42 jazz programs from around the state performed at various locations this past week and Kingsway performed at Sterling High School on Friday. Of the 10 bands at the location, Kingsway was awarded the top Gold Rating along with only 2 other schools in attendance! In addition, Kingsway was awarded the Best Trombone section of the night! This impressive performance now qualifies Kingsway to continue to the State Finals round and the band will travel to Princeton High School on Saturday, April 25th! Kingsway's outstanding scoring



places them in 4th place in their size class division of the 9 bands invited to the State Finals Round! Congratulations to the band on their hard work as they represent South Jersey and Kingsway on the state jazz stage!

Attention Seniors! Scholarships Now Available

The **GENERAL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION** is open to Seniors who plan to further their education, career, profession, or occupation. Up to \$5,000 in scholarships are available for academic achievement, contributions to school or community, postsecondary plans, and financial need.



Commitment to Excellence

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.



Newest Dragons Welcomed to Kingsway

Custodian **Jonathan Rivera** and General Café Worker **Hope Ficara (KRHS '80)** were officially welcomed to the District during the March Board of Education Meeting.

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.



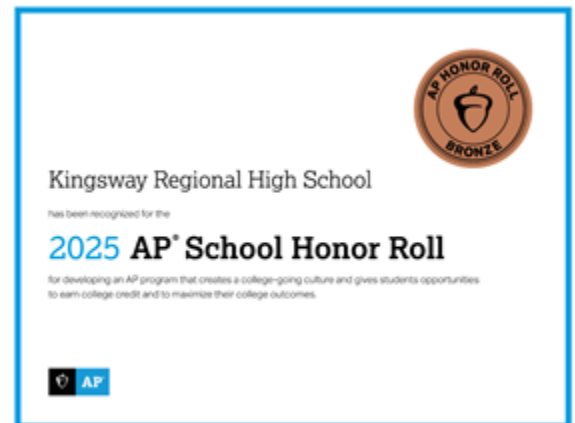
Look Ahead/Important Dates

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](#).

- March 30, 31 & April 1: School Open; Snow Makeup Days
- April 2-6 – Spring Recess (Weather Permitting)
- April 7 – School Reopens
- April 8 – Music Honor Society Induction Ceremony

You May Have Missed....

- [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 readiness. The honor builds upon our ongoing efforts to strengthen Advanced Placement offerings and create meaningful opportunities for students to challenge themselves academically.
- **Kingsway Launches New School of Education Program.** School officials are excited to launch its [School of Education](#), an innovative, multi-year pathway for



Commitment to Excellence

students interested in careers that support teaching, learning, and school communities. The program will open to students beginning in the **2026–2027 school year**.

- **2025–2026 Educators of the Year.** **Morgan Moore** (Educational Support Professional of the Year), **Amanda Ottinger** (Middle School Teacher of the Year), and **Meghan Mattson** (High School Teacher of the Year) were honored at the January 22, 2026 Board of Education Meeting. 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.
- **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



Commitment to Excellence

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.
- [**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.



Commitment to Excellence