



OUR Promise FEATURES

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A New Ride for PJUSD Students: Meet Bus Driver Refina Lotomau

Meet school bus driver Refina Lotomau, who brings a ton of experience, pride, and dedication when transporting our students to field trips and sporting events every day.

Our District is proud to introduce our PJUSD school bus driver, Refina Lotomau, a longtime Patterson resident who has lived in our community since 1994.

Refina began her bus driving career when her youngest child (now a Freshman at PHS) was in TK. Over the years, she's gained valuable experience driving for other districts, including Turlock Unified, and she even drove for Lawrence Livermore Labs.

"I was driving some of the smartest people in the world," said Refina. "Scientists, 5-star Generals, [and more], I'd transport them building to building."

Refina now brings that experience to PJUSD, where she plays a very important role in supporting our students with their day-to-day activities.

"I've driven Cheer to the airport, I've driven the Volleyball team, Track team, Softball, Baseball, and this Friday I'm going to be taking the Creekside PLUS students to UC Santa Cruz."



Refina says one of her favorite parts of the job is interacting with our students and being part of their daily experiences. She takes great pride in keeping the PJUSD school bus clean. Every Monday, she spends 3 hours washing and waxing the entire bus, including the wheels.

“My windshield is my office,” she said. “I always tell my students, respect the bus, and the cleanliness of it, pick up after yourself, and that respect will be reciprocated.”

To become a school bus driver in California, Refina underwent extensive training in the classroom and behind the wheel. She holds a Commercial Driver’s License, A California Special Driver Certificate issued by the California Highway Patrol, First Aid certification, and she is also trained to respond to emergencies, including assisting someone during cardiac arrest.

Our School Board of Trustees played a major role in ensuring a Bus and Driver were available in-house for our students. The Board strongly advocated for this position, and as a result, our district has already begun cutting costs by reducing the need for charter bus services.

With Refina behind the wheel, our District continues to expand opportunities for our students, staff, and community.