MATAWAN–ABERDEEN CONNECTIONS

DISTRICT UPDATES

Superintendent's Message

Dear MARSD Community,

As we conclude another successful school year, I would like to take a moment to thank our students, families, staff, Board of Education members, and community partners for their continued support, collaboration, and commitment to the Matawan-Aberdeen Regional School District.

This year has been filled with remarkable accomplishments, memorable experiences, academic growth, and opportunities for our students to learn, lead, and thrive. Together, we celebrated student success, expanded learning opportunities, strengthened school-community partnerships, and continued our commitment to providing a safe, supportive, and engaging educational experience for every child.

On a personal note, this has been an especially exciting and meaningful year for my family. This spring, both of our daughters graduated from college a milestone that filled our home with tremendous pride, gratitude, and celebration. As a parent, I understand firsthand the excitement that comes with watching our children reach important milestones and pursue their dreams. At the same time, I also recognize the uncertainty that often accompanies these transitions and the questions that naturally arise about what lies ahead.

Whether your child is moving from preschool to kindergarten, transitioning to middle school or high school, graduating, entering college, beginning a career, or exploring new opportunities, these moments are both exciting and emotional. As parents, we celebrate their accomplishments while hoping we have prepared them to navigate the challenges and opportunities that await them. It is a reminder that growth often requires courage, resilience, and a willingness to embrace new beginnings.

Across our district, we have much to celebrate. From academic achievements, artistic performances, and athletic accomplishments to community service initiatives and the graduation of the Class of 2026, our students continued to demonstrate resilience, perseverance, and excellence. We also completed several significant district initiatives, including the implementation of our elementary redistricting plan, continued expansion of preschool opportunities for our

youngest learners, enhancements to school safety and security, and the opening of our Outdoor Fitness Court for students, families, and community members.

I would also like to extend a special thank you to our families and community members for their engagement throughout the redistricting process. Your feedback, participation, and partnership helped inform important decisions that will support equitable opportunities and sustainable growth for years to come. While change can be challenging, I am confident that together we will continue to build strong school communities where every child feels welcomed, supported, and inspired to succeed.

As we look forward to summer, I would like to share several important district updates and information to help your family prepare for the 2026-2027 school year.

From my family to yours, we wish you and your family a safe, healhy, and enjoyable summer.

Dr. Nelyda Perez

Extended School Year (ESY)

Our Extended School Year (ESY) programming for identified special education students will be held at Cambridge Park Elementary School, Strathmore Elementary School, Matawan-Aberdeen Middle School and at our REACH program.

Dates:

July 6th-August 6th (Monday-Thursday)

Times:

Cambridge Park/Strathmore: 8:15 AM-11:45 AM

MAMS/REACH: 9:00 AM-12:30 PM

Summer Operations

Beginning July 1 through August 30, district operating hours will be:

Monday–Thursday: 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

If you need assistance during the summer months, please contact your child's school administrator to schedule an appointment prior to visiting.

School Hours

2026-2027

Thank you for your patience, understanding, and valuable feedback as we worked through the process of determining school hours for the 2026–2027 school year. Throughout this process, district administration worked collaboratively with local police departments and traffic safety officials to review traffic patterns, transportation logistics, and student safety considerations.

The finalized school hours for the 2026–2027 school year are as follows:

Grades K-12

Matawan Regional High School (MRHS)

🕗 Doors Open: 7:05 a.m.
🗐 First Class Begins: 7:15 a.m.
🏁 Student Day Ends: 2:04 p.m.

Matawan Aberdeen Middle School (MAMS)

🕗 Doors Open: 8:10 a.m.
🗐 First Class Begins: 8:15 a.m.
🏁 Student Day Ends: 2:33 p.m.

Lloyd Road Elementary School (LRES)

🕗 Doors Open: 8:55 a.m.
🗐 First Class Begins: 9:05 a.m.
🏁 Student Day Ends: 3:20 p.m.

Ravine Drive Elementary School (RDES)

🕗 Doors Open: 8:55 a.m.
🗐 First Class Begins: 9:05 a.m.
🏁 Student Day Ends: 3:20 p.m.

Strathmore Elementary School (STES)

🕘 Doors Open: 9:15 a.m.
🗐 First Class Begins: 9:25 a.m.
🏁 Student Day Ends: 3:40 p.m.

Cliffwood Elementary School (CLES)

🕘 Doors Open: 9:15 a.m.
🗐 First Class Begins: 9:25 a.m.
🏁 Student Day Ends: 3:40 p.m.

Preschool Programs

Ravine Drive Elementary School (RDES)

🕘 Pre-K Doors Open: 8:55 a.m.
🏁 Pre-K Student Day Ends: 2:55 p.m.

Strathmore Elementary School (STES)

🕘 Pre-K Doors Open: 9:15 a.m.
🏁 Pre-K Student Day Ends: 3:15 p.m.

Cliffwood Elementary School (CLES)

🕘 Pre-K Doors Open: 9:15 a.m.
🏁 Pre-K Student Day Ends: 3:15 p.m.

Cambridge Park Elementary School (CPES)

🕘 Pre-K Doors Open: 9:15 a.m.
🏁 Pre-K Student Day Ends: 3:15 p.m.

Lightbridge Academy Partnership

🕘 Pre-K Doors Open: 9:15 a.m.
🏁 Pre-K Student Day Ends: 3:15 p.m.

Families are encouraged to visit the district website to review attendance zones and school assignments. **Click here to view the Redistricting Attendance Zone Maps.** You may also log into the Parent Portal to view your child's zoned school for the 2026–2027 school year.

Families of students receiving special education services should continue to work directly with their child's case manager regarding program-specific information and placement details.

Student Cell Phone Use

As many families may be aware, the State of New Jersey has recently announced new guidance regarding student cell phone use in schools. The state continues to review policies and regulations to reduce distractions, improve student engagement, and support student well-being during the school day.

At this time, additional guidance and potential regulatory changes are still being reviewed at the state level. The Matawan-Aberdeen Regional School District is closely monitoring these developments and will work to ensure compliance with any new requirements while considering the unique needs of our students, staff, and families.

We will provide additional information regarding district expectations, procedures, and any changes to our current practices as further guidance becomes available from the New Jersey Department of Education and state lawmakers. We appreciate your patience and partnership as we navigate these potential changes together.

Transportation Update

Families whose children are eligible for transportation will receive bus route information before the start of the school year. You may also receive a request to complete a Transportation Waiver Form if your child will not be utilizing district-provided transportation.

Completing this form is extremely important because it helps us:
• Plan and create efficient bus routes
• Reduce unnecessary transportation costs
• Minimize the need for contracted transportation services
• Ensure resources are allocated effectively for students who utilize transportation

For example, during the previous school year, approximately 125 Cambridge Park students were eligible for transportation; however, only about 50 students regularly utilized bus service. Because this information was not communicated in advance, routes and staffing had to be planned for all eligible students and could not easily be adjusted throughout the year.
Your cooperation with this process allows us to better serve students while being responsible stewards of district resources. We appreciate your partnership and support.

Stay Active This Summer

We are pleased to remind families and community members that our Outdoor Fitness Court, located at Matawan Regional High School, remains open for community use throughout the summer months. We encourage residents of all ages to take advantage of this wonderful resource to stay active, healthy, and engaged in physical wellness.

Whether you are walking the track, completing a workout, or enjoying time outdoors with family and friends, we hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to prioritize your health and well-being.

Please Note: Effective July 1, 2026, the District will implement designated hours for community use of outdoor facilities. The high school track, fitness area, tennis courts, and elementary school playgrounds and courts will be available for community use, walking, running, and exercise from dawn until dusk, unless otherwise reserved for school-sponsored activities.

School buildings and grounds will be secured outside of these hours.

Please be advised that athletic fields and other outdoor facilities, including tennis courts and athletic field facilities, are available through the District's facility use permit process. School programs, school-sponsored events, youth leagues, and approved rentals shall take priority over all other uses. No permits will be issued during the school day or during school-sponsored events, and all users are expected to respect approved schedules and facility reservations.

School activities and events shall always take precedence over community use.

Please be advised that outdoor facilities will be closed during inclement weather.

To help preserve our facilities and ensure a safe environment for all users, the following are prohibited on all school grounds and facilities:

- Bicycles, scooters, e-bikes, skateboards, and similar devices

- Pets or animals, except for authorized service animals
- Smoking, vaping, smokeless tobacco products, or any tobacco use
- Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages

These guidelines are intended to ensure the safety of our students, staff, and community members while preserving and maintaining our facilities for future use. We appreciate your cooperation and partnership in helping us care for these valuable community resources.

Looking Ahead

As we prepare for another exciting school year, we remain committed to providing engaging learning experiences and important opportunities that promote student safety, wellness, and academic success.

Please be on the lookout throughout the summer for important communications regarding:

- Kindergarten and Preschool Orientations
- Elementary School Orientations
- Middle School Orientation Programs
- High School Freshman Orientation
- New Student Welcome Events
- Transportation Information
- Back-to-School Procedures and Forms

Additionally, one of the first districtwide initiatives planned for next school year will be our Bike Safety Assemblies, which will provide students with important safety education and awareness. More information regarding transportation, school assignments, back-to-school procedures, student cell phone expectations, and upcoming events will be shared throughout the summer.

CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITIES

Matawan-Aberdeen Regional
School District