



ENGLEWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING, 274 KNICKERBOCKER ROAD, ENGLEWOOD, N.J. 07631

Phone (201) 862-6247

Fax (201) 862-6226

Office of the Superintendent

April 2, 2026

Englewood Public School District

Office of the Superintendent & Board of Education

Dear Englewood Public Schools Community,

As we continue our work to finalize the 2026–2027 school budget, we write to you together, as Superintendent and Board President, to reaffirm our shared commitment to unity, transparency, and, most importantly, doing what is best for our students and staff.

We recognize that this year's budget development process has presented significant challenges. These challenges are not unique to Englewood, but they are very real for our community. Despite these obstacles, we want to be clear: we are working collaboratively and in good faith to develop a balanced budget that preserves the integrity of our educational programs, minimizes staffing reductions, and maintains the high-quality learning experiences our students deserve. Several of the budget pressures we face are driven by rising costs that are largely outside of the district's direct control:

- Special education transportation costs are projected at approximately \$2.3 million due to increased specialized routes, additional services required for students with disabilities, and rising vendor and operational costs. These services are mandated by law and must be provided.
- Out-of-district placements, required when a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) cannot be fully implemented within the district, have increased significantly, from \$8.46 million in 2025–2026 to a projected \$10.5 million in 2026–2027. These costs include both tuition and transportation and are required under state and federal law.
- Employee healthcare costs have risen dramatically, with a 31.9% increase beginning in January 2026, adding approximately \$3 million to our operating budget. These costs are determined at the state level and are not controlled locally.
- Additional factors include contractual salary increases, legal settlements, pending litigation, and other mandated expenditures. It is important for our community to

understand that the majority of these costs are fixed or legally required. They are not the result of new discretionary spending, but rather obligations we must meet to ensure compliance and to properly serve all students. In the face of these realities, we are approaching this work with a shared sense of responsibility to our students, our staff, and our taxpayers. Together, we are committed to:

- Preserving academic programs and student opportunities as much as our budget allows, while increasing academic rigor in K–12
- Minimizing staff reductions wherever possible
- Increasing fiscal responsibility and transparency

At the same time, these challenges underscore the need for broader advocacy. We encourage our community to join us in advocating at the state level for increased funding, relief from rising healthcare costs, and more equitable support for districts facing similar financial pressures. Sustainable solutions will require partnership beyond the local level.

We are confident that by working together, making thoughtful decisions, and engaging the community, we will arrive at a responsible budget that reflects our shared values.

Thank you for your continued support of the Englewood Public Schools. Wishing you and your families a joyful Passover, a happy Easter, and a restful and safe spring break.

With appreciation,



Dr. Marnie Hazelton
Superintendent of Schools



David Matthews
Board President