



Parsippany-Troy Hills Township Schools

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Dear Parsippany-Troy Hills Community,

Welcome back for the 2026–2027 school year. When I became Superintendent on October 1 last year, the school year was already in full swing. This year, I was able to see firsthand all of the preparation that goes into opening our schools, and for a district this size, it is a massive operation.

For those of you who may not be aware, we are the largest school district in Morris County. As of August 28, we are preparing to welcome 6,893 students back to school on September 2. Across the district, 1,304 employees will be ready to support them, while 354 bus routes will help transport students to and from school each day. With the size and complexity of our district comes the responsibility to be thoughtful about where we focus our attention and resources. As we begin the year, I want to share two areas that will shape much of our work this year.

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning are inseparable from the conditions in which learning takes place. Good teaching starts with understanding where the learner is academically and how instruction can move their learning forward. We also need to understand the conditions that affect a student's ability to learn. That is where student well-being becomes important. A student's ability to focus, persevere, and be ready to learn directly affects academic learning. Supporting student well-being is not separate from our academic work; it is part of creating the conditions in which students can learn and achieve.

This year, we will continue to strengthen both the instruction we provide and the conditions in which learning occurs. This includes a continued focus on student-centered instruction and a more purposeful look at how technology is used in our classrooms. We want technology to enhance learning rather than distract from it.

Our new cell phone expectations are part of that work. In accordance with New Jersey's new bell-to-bell requirements, students will not have access to their cell phones during the school day. This removes a significant source of distraction and allows students to focus more fully on learning.

Finances and Facilities

Finances and facilities are closely connected. We cannot maintain, repair, and improve our schools without the financial resources to do so. At the same time, our budget supports the teachers, programs, services, and opportunities that make up the educational experience within those buildings. You may have heard me speak about this often during last year's budget process.

As we look ahead to what is projected to be another difficult budget season, we will be examining how we continue to provide a strong educational program and appropriately maintain our facilities in the face of increasing expenses and limited revenue. This is not a challenge unique to Parsippany-Troy Hills. School districts across New Jersey are facing many of the same pressures as expenses increase and available revenue remains limited.

We will be talking much more about both of these areas, as well as our 2026–2027 District Goals, at upcoming Board of Education meetings. I encourage you to attend or watch our meetings and stay informed about this work.

Attendance

There is one more piece that connects directly to all of this: our students have to be here. Regular attendance gives students consistent access to instruction and keeps them connected to the learning taking place in the classroom. We understand that there are times when children are sick and should stay home. When they are healthy, however, we ask our families to make regular attendance a priority.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support as we begin the new school year. Working together makes a meaningful difference for our students, and the partnership of our families is an important part of their success. I wish our entire school community a strong start and a successful year ahead.

Sincerely,



Karen Chase

Education Today, Success Tomorrow