



Superintendent's Report

October 29, 2026

Last week, five Board trustees, Edmund Choi, Marilyn Estrems, Cathy Lee, Janine Micera, and Gregory Shih, along with our Business Administrator, Floro Villanueva, and I attended the New Jersey School Boards Workshop in Atlantic City. It was a productive few days of professional learning. I am proud to share that at this event Mr. Villanueva, Mr. Choi, Ms. Joanne Iyo, and I presented a session entitled, *Budget Stability: A Whole District Team Effort*. Our session drew over 150 people. The feedback we received was positive, with attendees saying they found our presentation helpful and that they were leaving with pragmatic practices they could implement in their own districts. It was a proud moment for Closter Public Schools to be recognized as a model of budgeting and district fiscal management. Thank you to our Board and the presentation team!

October marks National Principals Month, an opportunity to honor the principals, assistant principals, and special education director whose leadership shapes the daily experience of every student in our district. Through their steady guidance, thoughtful decision-making, and genuine care for children, they make sure our students feel seen, supported, and encouraged to grow. Whether they are building a culture of safety and belonging, supporting teachers as they try new approaches, or partnering with families through challenges large and small, Ms. Smith, Mr. O'Neill, Ms. Cipollini, Mr. McElroy, and Ms. Cohen lead with integrity, purpose, and heart. I am deeply appreciative of the energy and commitment they bring to our schools each day and of the example they set for all of us. I invite our community to join me in recognizing and thanking our school leaders this month and throughout the year.

This evening, Ms. Cohen will present the 2026 Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) results to the Board of Education and the community. The DLM assessment is New Jersey's alternate assessment for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. This annual presentation about the DLM provides an important opportunity for us to demonstrate to the Board and the community that our school district complies with federal guidelines under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and state regulations regarding the participation and reporting of alternative assessments. In spring 2026, ten Closter students participated. Under New Jersey Department of Education reporting rules and federal student privacy law (FERPA), results are suppressed when a reporting category represents fewer than ten students. Because each performance level for our DLM cohort falls below that threshold, publishing a breakdown could allow individual students' results to be identified. For that reason, DLM performance data is not included in this public report. But be assured that these results have not been set aside. Each family received an individual student report, and our special education staff and IEP teams are using each student's results to plan instruction and set goals. [The presentation](#) is posted on our Closter Public Schools website under the District Assessment Results on the home page.

Schools will be closed on Thursday, November 5 and Friday, November 6, 2026, for the New Jersey Education Association conference. As Diwali approaches on November 8, we extend warm wishes to all members of our Closter community who celebrate. May the Festival of Lights bring joy, peace, and prosperity to you and your families.

Vincent Mc Hale