



# Evesham Township School District

Meland Administration Building, 25 South Maple Avenue, Marlton, NJ 08053

[www.evesham.k12.nj.us](http://www.evesham.k12.nj.us) · (856) 983-1800 · Fax # (856) 983-2939

Dr. Justin Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Jonathan Yates, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Ms. Danielle T. Magulick, Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Mr. Richard G. Dantine, Jr., Director of Personnel

Dr. Jennifer Bland, Director of Special Services

March 13, 2024

Dear ETSD Staff and Families,

Highlights: Important Preschool Education Aid (PEA) Update; Friendly reminder about ETSD State Aid; Friendly reminder, How to Help with our Budget Challenges; Lunch and bus aides needed!; Events, Activities, and Resources.

## Events and More

March 10 (evening)-April 9, Ramadan (school closed for Ramadan and Diwali in [2024-25](#))

[ETSD District Calendar - for 2nd reading.pdf](#)

**March 13, 6:30 pm start, DeMasi–district-wide [ETSD Wellness Night](#)**

**Due March 15: [Cool NJ Conservation Poster Contest](#)** (last year's Grand Champion was an ETSD 3rd grader!)

**March 19, 7:30 pm, MMS, Tentative Budget Board Meeting**

Also livestreamed on Youtube as for all regular meetings. Final Budget Approval meeting will be in late April/early May, providing time for stakeholder input.

**March 20, 5:30 pm start, MMS–[All In Evesham Disability Awareness Event](#), fun for all**

## Important Preschool Education Aid (PEA) Update

### Short version:

- Our plan below enables Preschool and its many benefits without displacing a single ETSD student (4,524 total as of today), including no Grade 5 to Middle School. No student is moved out of a school as a result of this plan.
- Evans re-opens as a neighborhood elementary school in Sept. 2027, with only Preschool and Kindergarten in its 1st year, 2027-28. Those students age up each year thereafter, eventually making Evans like Rice, about half preschool, half K-5, 2-3 classes per grade.
- ETSD gets additional millions in yearly state funding. This aid covers ALL costs of general education preschool AND helps with regular budget expenses.
- All this = the mission of a school district.



# Evesham Township School District

Meland Administration Building, 25 South Maple Avenue, Marlton, NJ 08053

[www.evesham.k12.nj.us](http://www.evesham.k12.nj.us) · (856) 983-1800 · Fax # (856) 983-2939

Dr. Justin Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Jonathan Yates, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Ms. Danielle T. Magulick, Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Mr. Richard G. Dantine, Jr., Director of Personnel

Dr. Jennifer Bland, Director of Special Services

## Less short version:

As communicated via prior Updates and Board meetings, our district has been reviewing and exploring the [NJ Dept. of Education's Application for Preschool Education Aid](https://www.nj.gov/education/earlychildhood/preschool/). The State has made the expansion of tuition-free preschool its #1 goal and is paying for preschool (<https://www.nj.gov/education/earlychildhood/preschool/>) in many districts statewide, and has been making preschool aid available to districts for years. Now that ETSD has tuition-free full day kindergarten, our district is able to apply for the preschool aid. Every district around us has already applied for that aid, had their application approved, and is receiving that aid and implementing tuition-free full day preschool ahead of us. ***This aid covers all the costs of general education preschool AND helps with regular budget expenses.*** In Burlington County in 2023-24, each participating district received \$14,514 per preschool child (general education) educated in the district [the cost of educating preschoolers who are classified (special education) is already the district's responsibility as required by the State, thus not covered by PEA]. Through this aid, districts are winning, financially and educationally. The benefits of preschool are incalculable—to provide two years of school—full days—for the youngest students of a town—on their academic, their social, their emotional growth, and how the impact of those two years is going to echo into kindergarten, when on day 1 of kindergarten, they actually have two years under their belt, on through first grade, second grade, elementary school, middle school, high school, college, career, affecting how they are as people, as parents, as neighbors, as everything. **This is the mission of a school district.**

The key question, in our conversations, has been HOW to accomplish preschool, namely, how to find the space. To get its application approved, a district must show a plan for how it would serve 90% of its three- and four-year old “universe”, i.e. all 3 and 4 year olds in town, by the end of a five-year implementation period. In Evesham, that means showing a plan to serve 810 three and four year olds, which is 90% of 900 (our district averages 450 students per grade). Districts have been successfully using a lottery system until they are able to provide a preschool spot for every family seeking one. Note: Any multi-year plan is subject to variables beyond district control.

Now, for the first time, our district has a plan to be shared publicly. ***This plan enables preschool and its many benefits without displacing a single ETSD student (4,524 total as of today), including no G5 to MS.*** The key to this gradual approach is Evans reopening as a neighborhood school in September 2027, with just preschool and kindergarten, and then those students age up at Evans each year.



# Evesham Township School District

Meland Administration Building, 25 South Maple Avenue, Marlton, NJ 08053

[www.evesham.k12.nj.us](http://www.evesham.k12.nj.us) • (856) 983-1800 • Fax # (856) 983-2939

Dr. Justin Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Jonathan Yates, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Ms. Danielle T. Magulick, Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Mr. Richard G. Dantine, Jr., Director of Personnel

Dr. Jennifer Bland, Director of Special Services

## **TIMELINE**

March-May/June 2024

May/June 2024

July/August 2024

Fall 2024

January-June 2025 (Year 1)

Summer 2025

Sept. 2025-June 2026 (Year 2)

Sept. 2026-June 2027 (Year 3)

Summer 2027

Sept. 2027-June 2028

Sept. 2028-June 2029

## **STEPS (subject to change due to 5+ years of variables)**

Refinement of the Plan. District reaches out to private providers for potential partnership.

Superintendent's recommendation for Board approval of Preschool Expansion Plan as District/Board Goal.

District administration completes and submits the application per Board-approved Goal and Plan.

Application reviewed and (ideally) approved by state.

All existing half-day preschool classes become full day classes. Full day is required for application approval. ETSD receives yearly state aid of over \$14,500 per general education preschool student (+/- 120 total) already on our rolls and paid for by our regular budget. **This means \$1.74 million in additional State money directly to ETSD** that will help with regular budget costs.

Bathroom installed in hall of former Teddy Bear Academy (TBA).

6 preschool classrooms are opened in former TBA space.

2 preschool classrooms are opened at an elementary school (depending on available space)

Additional private provider partnership sought.

2 more preschool classrooms are opened at an elementary school (depending on available space)

Additional private provider partnership sought.

Evans leases end. ETSD prepares Evans for Preschool and Kindergarten.

**Evans re-opens as neighborhood school, with only PreK and Kindergarten in its 1st year.** Like Rice, Evans will

eventually become about half Preschool/half elementary school with 2-3 classes per K-5 grade. Like Rice, Evans will have a small sending zone. Evans is in a current Jaggard zone.

Evans serves Preschool, Kindergarten, and Grade 1

(Kindergarteners at Evans in 2027-28 are now 1st graders).

Capacity to serve 90% of the three- and four-year old universe is achieved, through the combination of ETSD classrooms and in-town private providers. Any plan this far out is subject to variables.



# Evesham Township School District

Meland Administration Building, 25 South Maple Avenue, Marlton, NJ 08053

[www.evesham.k12.nj.us](http://www.evesham.k12.nj.us) · (856) 983-1800 · Fax # (856) 983-2939

Dr. Justin Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Jonathan Yates, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Ms. Danielle T. Magulick, Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Mr. Richard G. Dantine, Jr., Director of Personnel

Dr. Jennifer Bland, Director of Special Services

And so on. Each year beyond 2028-29, Evans students age up into the next grade, and 2-3 new Kindergarten classes at Evans means the equivalent of 2-3 classes at other elementary schools are freed up for preschool. How to determine the Evans zone is something we are examining, and will continue examining into at least the 2024-25 school year. Changes within town (e.g. new construction) make it prudent to wait and base this determination on the most up-to-date, future circumstances. **No student will be moved out of a school as a result of this plan.** Opening a school (Evans) is an incredible opportunity for creating a positive and unique school culture right from the start.

Some have asked, what if state funding for PreK is cut by the State in the future (due to change in Governors, etc.)? It is very difficult to imagine any future Governor saying "Let's eliminate education for our youngest children," especially when it is already so widespread, more so every year, and interwoven with the health and well-being of countless families across our state. This preschool aid is strengthening whole communities, in addition to school districts, and to cut it would inflict significant damage statewide. At worst, and even this is hard to imagine, the State would continue making the funding available to districts already using it, and no longer for districts without an approved application.

The benefits of preschool aid are too great to ignore. It is nothing less than the greatest single opportunity ever provided for any district, including this one, in the state of New Jersey. To stand still is to fall behind. And now, our district is sharing a plan to achieve it. This plan will be discussed in more detail at our March 19 Board meeting.

## **Friendly reminder about ETSD State Aid**

In a nutshell, instead of losing \$719,000 in FY25 State Aid as projected, we are losing \$505,300 in state aid. Bad, but better than projected. From our Business Administrator Jon Yates: "In Fiscal Year 24, our district received an original State Aid allotment of \$6,773,130. Additionally, we secured \$486,787 in Stabilization Aid to counter S2 reductions, totaling our FY24 State Aid to \$7,259,917. For FY25, our State Aid is set at \$6,754,617, a reduction of \$18,513 from FY24. However, with the Stabilization Aid factored in, our actual reduction for FY25 amounts to \$505,300 compared to FY24."



# Evesham Township School District

Meland Administration Building, 25 South Maple Avenue, Marlton, NJ 08053

[www.evesham.k12.nj.us](http://www.evesham.k12.nj.us) · (856) 983-1800 · Fax # (856) 983-2939

Dr. Justin Smith, Superintendent of Schools

Mr. Jonathan Yates, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

Ms. Danielle T. Magulick, Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Mr. Richard G. Dantine, Jr., Director of Personnel

Dr. Jennifer Bland, Director of Special Services

## Friendly reminder, How to Help with our Budget Challenges

Here are some steps anyone can take to help with our budget situation.

- Using our voices. All voices help--community voices even more than administrative (e.g. superintendents') voices.
  - Contacting state elected officials: [Sample Email to NJ Officials](#)
    - Receiving district webpage with links to NJ legislator contacts:  
<https://www.lrhdsd.org/Page/10201>
  - Sign up to testify before the Senate and/or Assembly Budget Committees. I'll be testifying on behalf of our district on March 26.
    - <https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/budget-hearings-registration>
  - Developing a Fair Funding Committee. Local example:  
<https://www.facebook.com/FairFundingCH/>
- Using our "time, talent, and treasure" to support the great work of our PTA/PTO organizations.
- Supporting the Evesham Education Foundation (<https://eveshameducationfoundation.org/>), a non-profit formed to enhance the academic experience for all ETSD students.
- Donating directly to our district via our three-tier [ETSD Donation Form](#).

## Lunch and bus aides needed!

**\$17 an hour.** [Apply to be a Lunch Aide!](#) [Apply to be a Bus Aide!](#)

## Events, Activities, and Resources

- <https://raproom.org/home>: Local resource to help and advocate for families and their loved ones struggling with alcohol and drug addiction.
- [BookSmiles volunteer opportunity for students 16 years and older](#)
- [https://www.evesham.k12.nj.us/community/community\\_activities](https://www.evesham.k12.nj.us/community/community_activities): New additions!

Sincerely,

Dr. Justin Smith

Superintendent of Schools