



Evesham Township School District

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

www.evesham.k12.nj.us · (856) 983-1800 · Fax # (856) 983-2939

Dr. Justin Smith, Superintendent

Mr. John Recchinti, School Business Administrator
Mr. Richard G. Dantine, Jr., Director of Personnel

Ms. Danielle T. Magulick, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
Dr. Jennifer Bland, Director of Special Services

March 22, 2023

Dear ETSD Staff and Families,

Highlights: Ramadan; Tentative 2023-24 Budget Presentation from March 16 BOE Meeting; Some Positives of Free FDK for All Students; Friendly FDK Reminders from March 16 Budget Presentation.

“Prepare the child for the road, not the road for the child.”

– Unknown

“Be Kind. Be Very Kind.”

– T-Shirt worn by an ETSD student

“Kindness Is Power”

– T shirt worn by an ETSD student

District Wellness Night today, 6:30 - 8 pm, DeMasi

ETSD SEPAG General Meeting, March 30th, 6 PM, DeMasi library

Ramadan

As we have staff and families in our district who celebrate Ramadan, which starts tomorrow, I'd like to share information about what Ramadan is, as not many people may be aware. Sharing this information can help our Muslim students and families feel included and comfortable here in our district. Our goal is for all students to feel safe and feel they belong.

During the month of Ramadan, Muslims fast from dawn to dusk, abstaining from food and water. They prioritize praying and purification, bringing them closer to God. Please be considerate of our Muslim community during this time, as they may have altered schedules. For our teachers, as needed, please excuse students observing Ramadan from physical education activities and allow them to go to the library during lunch.

A special three-day festival called Eid al-Fitr (the Festival of the Breaking of the Fast) marks the end of Ramadan. It begins when the first sight of the new moon is seen in the sky. It's a joyous occasion. During the three days, Muslims attend prayers in the morning and visit loved ones and neighbors. They then enjoy a delicious traditional feast with friends and family. Children are often given presents, and it's custom to donate to those in need.

Acknowledging different cultural celebrations is important, especially in classrooms and schools where many ethnicities come together every day. That diversity is part of what makes our community so wonderful.

As a resource for further information, please feel free to reach out to Ms. Aliaa Elshantoury, ETSD staff member and parent, at elshantourya@evesham.k12.nj.us



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Tentative 2023-24 Budget Presentation from March 16 BOE Meeting

Our presentation runs from 1:11:00 to 2:00:45: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7z8rBptN0s0>.
Watching it is the best way to understand the [presentation powerpoint](#). Our 2023-24 Final Budget Presentation will be at our April 27 Board of Education meeting.

Some Positives of Free FDK for All Students

- Providing equal access to education, not based on family income (as \$5,500 tuition is beyond the reach of many of our families), is a powerful ethical statement for any community. A real and positive opportunity to answer, “What type of community are we? And what kind of community can we be?”
- Increased property value. Free FDK is the best way to raise property value for \$98 a year (cost of a can of paint plus accessories). \$98 is the annual cost of free FDK for the average assessed home in town. Our \$5,500 FDK tuition (\$11,000 for 2 kids) is a deterring factor against Evesham in people’s decision of where to live in our local area. Only 8 districts in our state still charge tuition for FDK.
- Investing more earlier pays dividends in education too. FDK for all will help students be more successful through their years in ETSD and beyond.
- Achieving free FDK for all will help make preschool expansion possible in ETSD. Preschool expansion is a state goal, backed by state aid. Surrounding districts are already expanding preschool with state money.

<https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562023/approved/20230223b.shtml>

Friendly FDK Reminders from March 16 Budget Presentation

- No rezoning needed for free FDK for all.
- Slide 25 “How would we pay for Free FDK through our Regular Budget?” is in response to the question that has been asked, namely, how we would pay for it if the separate proposal doesn’t pass. Paying for free FDK out of our regular budget would mean cutting \$1.9 million in other ways, all challenging paths. The most challenging step listed, closing DES, would be a last possibility, only a possibility if free FDK had to come through our regular budget. This is part of why we are using the separate proposal for free FDK. All info on this slide is intended to be helpful, more common awareness of our challenges.



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Opportunities and Resources

- https://www.evesham.k12.nj.us/community/community_activities
- <https://www.booksmiles.org/> (local resource)
- **Mar. 22:** District Wellness Night, 6:30-8 pm, DeMasi
- **Apr. 1:** [Teddy Bear Academy Open House](#), 10 am - 12 pm
- **Apr. 22:** 2nd Annual Black Run Preserve Poker Run
 - [BRP Poker Run - Register Today.pdf](#)
 - [PokerRun2023.pdf](#)
 - [2023 BRP Poker Run Map Flyer.pdf](#)
- **June 5:** [EEF Larry Kull Memorial Golf Classic](#)
- **June 15:** 8th Grade Graduation, DMS 5:30 pm, MMS 7:30 pm, Cherokee Performing Arts Center

Sincerely,

Dr. Justin Smith
Superintendent of Schools