



Superintendent's Report

September 17, 2025

The 2025-2026 school year is officially underway! Our faculty and staff started on September 2 and 3, 2025, and we welcomed 1,188 students on Thursday, September 4, 2025. I hope that our students have enjoyed the first ten days of school.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to our amazing educators, support staff, and administrators for their diligent work in creating a safe, nurturing, and welcoming environment for our students. Their efforts to start our new school year have been outstanding, and the Closter School community is much stronger because of their contributions!

Also, thank you to the Closter PTO, who provided a wonderful first-day breakfast for our faculty, staff and administrators on September 2, 2025. We are truly grateful for your hospitality on the first day.

Our eighth-grade students, together with several teachers and administrators, participated in *Closter's September 11th Memorial Service*. This solemn event served as a poignant remembrance of the tragic occurrences that took place on that fateful day in our nation's history. The ceremony was conducted with great respect, honoring the memories of those affected by the events of September 11th. We are always honored to have students attend this town event.

Our [District Assessment Calendar](#) has been posted to our district website. This document lists the standardized assessments that will be administered this year, with information about the grade participating, the testing time, the test administration window, and when results will be available. Please take a look at the district assessment calendar to be aware of when testing will take place throughout the year for your students.

On the topic of assessment, the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments (NJSLA), which are designed to evaluate students' understanding of key concepts in mathematics and English Language Arts in grades 3 through 8, will be given in an adaptive format this year. In this new adaptive test, students will receive questions tailored to their individual skill levels. If a student answers a question correctly, the next question will be more challenging. Conversely, if they answer incorrectly, the following questions will be easier. This approach allows for a more personalized assessment of each student's abilities. The NJDOE has shared that the adaptive format will have several benefits, including: a more individualized assessment; a reduction in student frustration during testing; and the ability to provide teachers with more focused feedback on students' strengths and areas for improvement. All students in grades four through eight will participate in field testing of the new adaptive assessment between October 27 through November 14, 2025. The NJDOE will not share student results from this field test with the district or parents. The new adaptive assessments will be fully implemented in Spring 2026.

Mark your calendars for the remaining Back-to-School Nights:

- Thursday, September 18, 2025: Grades 5–6 , TMS, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.
- Thursday, September 25, 2025: Grades 7–8, TMS, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

The [Closter PTO website](#) has information on membership registration, their mobile app, and many upcoming events, including the Closter PTO Fall Social taking place on Thursday, October 9, 2025, from 7:30 – 11:30 p.m. at Sear House.

Tonight, I will present the Student Safety Data System Report for second reporting period of last school year - from January 1 through June 30, 2025. This report includes data on incidents related to harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB), as well as other safety concerns within our schools. By analyzing this information, we can identify trends, assess the effectiveness of our safety programs, and implement necessary improvements to ensure a safe learning environment for all students. I am pleased to report some positive trends between the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 school year: TMS showed significant improvement with a 48% overall reduction in incidents; HIB confirmed cases at TMS decreased by 66.7%; and HIB alleged cases at TMS decreased by 43.2%. There are no incidents reported in violence, vandalism, substance abuse, or weapons categories at either school in both years. We will continue our efforts to enhance student safety in our district.

Schools will be closed for Rosh Hashanah on Tuesday, September 23, 2025. I wish a sweet new year to all those who will be celebrating. Schools will also be closed on Thursday, October 2, 2025, for Yom Kippur. I wish an easy fast to those observing this solemn day.

Vincent Mc Hale