



Ocean Gate Elementary School

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Statement from the President of the Ocean Gate Board of Education

For more than a century Ocean Gate Elementary School has been the heart of our town. Generations of children learned and grew here and the school helped shape who they became. In recent years we faced severe financial pressures including large reductions in state aid, rising costs, and strong consolidation pressures. The Board worked diligently to preserve our school's independence while listening to the concerns of residents.

After exploring every responsible option, tightening budgets, pursuing partnerships, and advocating at the state level, the Board voted to enter a sending and receiving relationship with the Berkeley Township School District. That decision reflects the financial and operational realities we face and our commitment to do what is best for our students.

What this means now

The Ocean Gate Elementary School building will close at the end of this school year. This decision is the result of circumstances that no longer allow us to operate as an independent school. The building has served our families for generations and its legacy will remain central to our community.

Beginning next school year Ocean Gate will be a sending district. We will pay tuition for our students to attend Berkeley Township schools. The Ocean Gate Board of Education will remain in place to represent our community, manage district assets, and oversee tuition agreements. This change affects how we deliver education but does not change who we are or our responsibility to advocate for our children.

Berkeley Township School District will serve as our receiving district. We appreciate Berkeley's professionalism, respect, and commitment to supporting our students. With the Board's vote, Berkeley will finalize and submit the agreement to the New Jersey Department of Education for review and approval. We will work closely with Berkeley to ensure a smooth student centered transition.

Commitments and supports

Berkeley has expressed its intention to keep Ocean Gate students together as much as possible, to welcome and maintain all Pre K students, and to absorb tenured Ocean Gate staff. We will continue to press for continuity of programs and support for families and staff throughout the transition.

The Board will evaluate the Ocean Gate school property in the months ahead to determine whether retaining the building or selling it best serves the long term interests of the community. Any decision will be made through a transparent deliberate process focused on what benefits Ocean Gate's future.

Gratitude and forward focus

This is an emotional moment but it is a transition not an ending. Ocean Gate's spirit lives in our families, traditions, teachers, and the generations of students who carry our story forward. I extend deep gratitude to former and current Board members, administrators, teachers, support staff, parents, and community volunteers whose dedication sustained this school for more than 100 years.

We are proud of our history and are committed to ensuring the next chapter reflects the same care, connection, and pride that have always defined Ocean Gate. With Berkeley as a partner we will move forward with compassion, clarity, and a focus on student success.

Richard J Casey

President

Ocean Gate Board of Education