



Media Kit

<https://savemiddletownschoools.org>

Save Middletown Schools: How We Got Here

On Tuesday, March 18, Middletown Schools Superintendent Jessica Alfone unveiled a surprise closure plan that would impact several schools and thousands of students and teachers.

The announcement came just a few hours before the Board of Education was set to vote that evening on a tentative budget for the 2025-2026 school year and after rumors of school closures had spread on social media.

The Closures

The plan calls for closing **Navesink Elementary School** (209 students) and **Leonard Elementary School** (284 students) and turning **Bayshore Middle School** into a combined elementary facility, even though it's not designed for younger students.

The displaced **Bayshore** middle school students (current enrollment is 534) would be redistricted to either **Thorne Middle School** or **Thompson Middle School**, where parents have already complained of overcrowding.

The schools set for closure are precious parts of two historic communities in Middletown. They have provided close-knit learning environments that foster familiarity between parents and faculty but have also been traditional gathering places for the neighborhoods they serve.

In addition to those massive changes, hundreds of students who would have gone to **Middletown High School South** would be redistricted to **Middletown High School North**, further upending what several generations of families in the district expected for their children.

A Surprise Deficit

During the March 18 school board meeting, Alfone said her "Middletown Reimagined" plan was necessary because of a \$10 million gap between the district's revenue and operating expenses.

The district has been criticized for deprioritizing its strategic planning efforts. There had been no previous announcement concerning the deficit or community engagement around possible solutions.

“Middletown Reimagined” would seemingly mean dozens of layoffs with no guarantee of true savings over time. Importantly, Alfone offered no logistical or financial details on how the district would accomplish this massive consolidation in a way that protected student education and safety.

Other Schools Threatened

Alfone’s plan also made clear that the district doesn’t want to stop at Navesink, Leonardo and Bayshore.

Middletown currently has 11 elementary schools. Alfone’s presentation said the district will “examine the remaining elementary school footprint to further consolidate to an 8-school elementary model” during the 2025-2026 school year.

While their schools might not be part of this year’s plan, families in other parts of Middletown should be concerned.

It’s Not Over

Hundreds of parents packed the March 18 meeting to protest the plan, with hundreds more forced to stand outside the building. However, the board voted 6-3 to pass a tentative budget for the upcoming school year. In essence, the board approved the budget’s overarching numbers but not how the district gets there.

The board is set to vote on a final budget during its April 30 meeting. This vote would lock “Middletown Reimagined” into place, and impacted families are racing against time to convince the district to adopt a different plan.

Amid public pressure, media scrutiny and outreach from other government officials, Alfone on Friday, March 21 announced the district would take additional steps to gather feedback on budget solutions, including a series of community forums. It’s unclear how district leadership may use this process ahead of the April 30 vote. The closure plan very much remains on the table.

Fast Facts

Navesink Elementary School

- 209 students
- 21 teachers (full-time equivalent, as of 2023-2024 school year)
- Student-to-Teacher Ratio: 10:1
- Ranked first in Middletown and 27th among the nearly 4,000 elementary schools in New Jersey

Leonardo Elementary School

- 284 students
- 26 teachers (full-time equivalent, as of 2023-2024 school year)
- Student/Teacher Ratio: 10:1

Bayshore Middle School

- 534 students
- 60 teachers (full-time equivalent, as of 2023-2024 school year)
- Student-to-Teacher Ratio: 9:1

* Enrollment statistics from MTPS budget presentation, 3.18.25

* All other data from [National Center for Education Statistics](https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/natdbase/)

An Open Letter to Middletown, NJ

March 2025

To the residents, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members of Middletown:

We are coming together to fight for the future of our schools. The Middletown School District and Board of Education have proposed closing Navesink and Leonardo Elementary Schools and relocating students from Bayshore Middle School at the end of this school year, citing a \$10 million budget deficit as the reason for these drastic measures. Superintendent Dr. Jessica Alfone recently presented the 2025-2026 budget, claiming that school closures are the only solution. We refuse to accept that as the only option. Our mission is to stop this proposal and present viable alternatives. Closing schools should never be the first resort.

We recognize the financial challenges facing our district, including inflation, fluctuating, and budget constraints. However, we also know that our taxes have increased and that the State of New Jersey has provided additional funding—yet we are still being told that closures are inevitable. That doesn't add up. We are not reacting out of anger or frustration alone; we are taking a stand against a process that has been secretive and dismissive of community input. Households adjust their budgets when money is tight—we cut back on extras, but we don't sell our homes. The same logic should apply to our schools.

Our schools are the heart of this community. They provide not only education but also stability, connection, and a shared sense of purpose. The decision to close them should not be made without full transparency and collaboration with the people it impacts most. While school closures are happening across the state and country, we refuse to accept that as an inevitability for Middletown without exploring every possible alternative.

We urge every member of this community to get involved. Attend Board of Education meetings. Stay informed. Volunteer. Donate. Spread the word. Together, we can ensure that Middletown remains a place where our children and our schools come first.

Signed –

Navesink Elementary PTA
Leonardo Grade School PTA
Bayshore Middle School PTO

(And every student and parent who will be impacted by this now and in the future.)

Dates To Know

March 18

Middletown Schools Superintendent Jessica Alfone unveils "Middletown Reimagined." The school board approves the district's tentative budget for the 2025-2026 school year during a meeting that evening.

March 21

Alfone announces a series of forums to hear community concerns and, eventually, receive comment on budget proposals

March 26

First community forum to be held at High School North Auditorium from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

March 31

Second community forum to be held at Thompson Gymnasium from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

April 1

School district to distribute survey seeking feedback on budget options

April 8

School board to hold executive session and discuss community feedback

April 9

Third community forum to be held at High School North Auditorium from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The district plans to receive feedback on budget alternatives.

April 10

Fourth community forum to be held at High School South Gymnasium from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., again to gather feedback on budget alternatives.

April 30

School board is expected to take a final vote on the budget for the 2025-2026 school year, including the possible closure of Navesink and Leonard elementary schools and displacement of Bayshore middle school students. Typically the open portion of these meetings starts at 7:30 p.m., following an executive session among board members at 7 p.m.

Resources

See how families are fighting back

<https://savemiddletownschoools.org>

Watch the March 18 Board of Education meeting

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cYOkxrw33Kc>

Stream upcoming Board of Education meetings

<https://www.youtube.com/@MTBOE/streams>

View the Middletown's superintendent's "Middletown Reimagined" plan

[3.18.25 Budget Presentation](#)

Contact Middletown Board of Education members for comment

<https://www.middletownk12.org/board-of-education/board-members>

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