

CAMDEN PARENT & STUDENT UNION NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

CAMDEN PARENTS CALL FOR LOCAL CONTROL AMID SCHOOL CHALLENGES

More than a decade after the state took over Camden City School District, enrollment in traditional public schools continues to decline as charter and renaissance schools gain popularity. Over half of the district's 2024-25 budget is now spent on tuition for these schools.



Parents and advocates expressed frustration at the State Board of Education, citing budget cuts, staff reductions, and declining communication that have weakened trust and family involvement. To address a \$91 million deficit, the district cut full-time staff from 1,618 to 1,331, including family engagement coordinators.

Residents worry that traditional public schools may disappear entirely and are urging the state to return control to the local community, audit the district's budget, and ensure meaningful family engagement as a new superintendent is appointed.

[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)


NEWSFEED



Teacher Layoffs and School Closures Hit NJ Districts Amid Budget Shortfalls



Faheem Lea, CPSU's Community Outreach Coordinator, spoke for many residents about low literacy, school closures, and families having little say in decisions for their children.



CPSU Connects with Camden Families at Forest Hill Back to School Night, Highlighting Leadership and Advocacy Opportunities



TEACHER LAYOFFS AND SCHOOL CLOSURES HIT NJ DISTRICTS AMID BUDGET SHORTFALLS

As New Jersey students head back to school, several districts are grappling with significant budget deficits. Jackson Township, facing an **\$11 million shortfall**, closed a middle school, restructured its district, and reduced over 100 positions, though programs remained intact.

Camden schools are managing a \$91 million deficit, prompting outgoing superintendent Katrina McCombs to lay off 117 staff, including key support roles like family outreach coordinators and attendance officers.

Some districts are turning to taxpayers to fill gaps. Plainfield increased local taxes by 18%, deferring some facility projects but avoiding staff cuts. Toms River saw a 22% tax increase over two years, using attrition and administrative scaling to balance budgets while maintaining student programs.

Despite challenges, district leaders report cautious optimism, focusing on sustaining programs and support for students while navigating financial constraints.

[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

FAHEEM LEA, CPSU'S COMMUNITY OUTREACH COORDINATOR, SPOKE ON BEHALF OF MANY RESIDENTS, POINTING OUT DECLINES IN LITERACY, ONGOING SCHOOL CLOSURES, AND EXPRESSED THAT TOO MANY FAMILIES LACK INFLUENCE IN DECISIONS THAT DIRECTLY AFFECT THEIR CHILDREN.

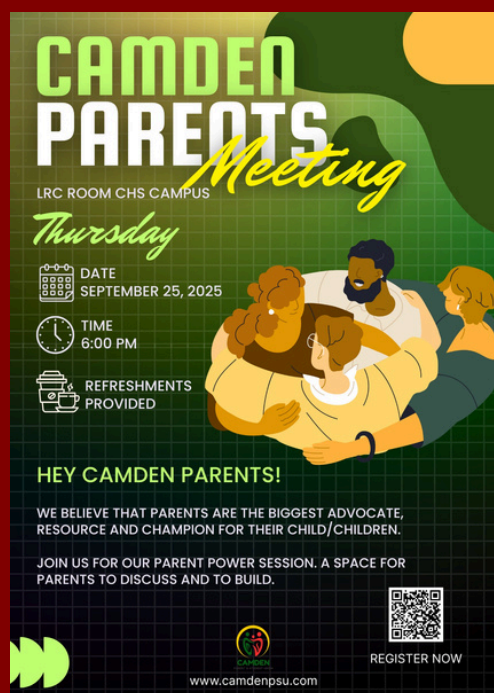


Camden residents spoke before the New Jersey State Board of Education to raise concerns about the Camden City School District, which has been under state control since 2013. They cited limited academic progress, a \$91 million budget deficit that led to staff cuts, and a lack of transparency in hiring the district's next superintendent.

Community advocates, including Alesha Figueroa-Falcon of Parents Invincible and Faheem Lea of Camden Parents Union, highlighted declining literacy rates, school quality, and community engagement. Residents stressed the importance of being involved in the superintendent selection process and urged the return of support staff who were let go.

The session was part of three annual opportunities for public testimony, with additional sessions scheduled for January and May. Last June, Camden students held a rally after being denied a chance to speak about budget cuts.

[READ FULL ARTICLE](#)



CAMDEN PARENTS MEETING PARENT POWER SESSION

Thursday, September 25, 2025 | 6:00PM
LRC Room, CHS Campus

Hey Camden Parents!

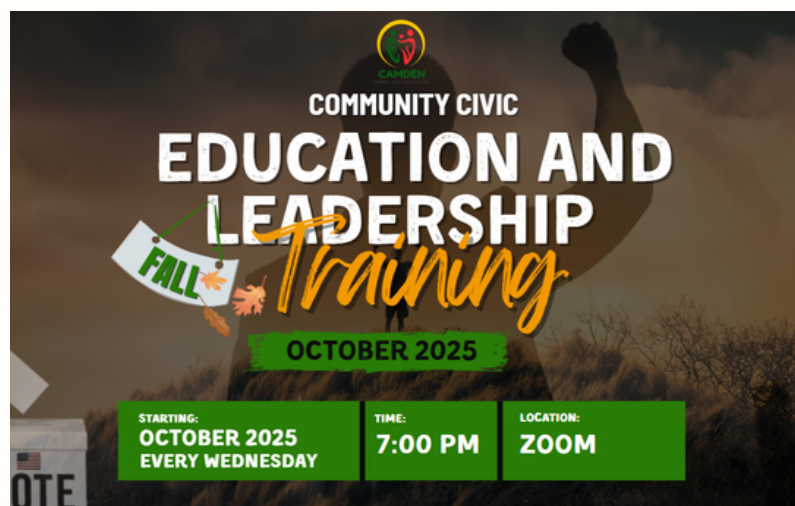
We believe parents are the biggest advocates, resources, and champions for their children. Join us for a Parent Power Session — a space for parents to connect, discuss, and build together.

REGISTER NOW

To secure your spot .



COMMUNITY CIVIC EDUCATION & LEADERSHIP TRAINING



Starting October 1, 2025 – Every Wednesday

7:00 PM

Online via Zoom (registration required)

REGISTER TODAY

To secure your spot and receive the Zoom link.



PEOPLE POWER. VOTING POWER. EDUCATION IS POWER.

This fall, Camden Parent & Student Union invites you to join our Community Civic Education and Leadership Training series. Each Wednesday evening at 7:00 PM, we will gather virtually to build knowledge, strengthen community leadership, and learn essential tools for civic engagement.

Topics include the power of voting, strategies for effective civic action, and the importance of creating a strong base of informed and committed voters. This series is designed to empower residents with the skills and confidence to lead, advocate, and make lasting change in Camden and beyond.

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CPSU AT FOREST HILL SCHOOL BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT RECAP

On Wednesday, September 17th, Camden Parent & Student Union (CPSU) joined families at Forest Hill School's Back to School Night. Our team had the opportunity to meet and greet parents, share resources, and highlight the many ways families can get involved with CPSU.

Parents learned about our monthly meetings, leadership training opportunities, and how CPSU works alongside students to advocate for equity, transparency, and accountability in Camden schools. We emphasized that parents are the strongest advocates for their children and that CPSU provides a space for their voices to be heard, their leadership to grow, and their collective power to make a difference.

It was inspiring to connect with so many parents who are eager to engage and support our mission. We look forward to welcoming new families into our movement for stronger schools and a stronger Camden community.

RECENT & UPCOMING EVENTS

