



# TRADING BLOWS

AFTER TRADE NEGOTIATIONS CRUMBLE AND TRUMP'S 50% TARIFFS ON CANADIAN IMPORTS KICK IN, P.M. CARNEY PROMISES "DOLLAR FOR DOLLAR" RETALIATORY MEASURES STARTING SEPT. 8. **C1**

## EDUCATION

### Back to school already? Why some districts are starting earlier.



With Labor Day on Sept. 7, the latest possible date, some districts that ordinarily start after the holiday are not doing so. *File*

*Labor Day’s late calendar placement has created one of the most unusual back-to-school seasons in recent memory.*

**Rob Jennings** *NJ.com*

Summer vacation is ending this week in many New Jersey public school districts as students prepare to go back to class. But other districts are stretching summer break even longer, delaying the first day of school until after Labor Day. Because Labor Day falls on the latest possible day this year — Sept. 7 — the return to school is varying widely in New Jersey’s more than 600 school districts. Some school districts that ordinarily start school after Labor Day are going back well before the holiday this year. While more than four in five schools in

#### MARK YOUR CALENDAR.

- EARLIEST START DATE**  
**Aug. 27:** North Hunterdon-Voorhees Regional
- LATEST START DATE**  
**Sept. 10:** Jersey City, Elizabeth
- MAJOR DISTRICTS**  
**Sept. 8:** Newark, Paterson, Lakewood, Trenton

the U.S. are getting started before Aug. 31 this year, New Jersey is among five states where a majority of schools are starting the first or second week of September, according to a recent nationwide study.

A new state law will recommend a universal spring break schedule for all New Jersey public schools starting in 2027. But no uniformity exists for the first day of classes. School districts set their own calendars. In prior years, the first day of school in New Jersey has been spread out over a three-week period. The North Hunterdon-Voorhees Regional High School district starts on Aug. 27, one of the earliest start dates. But on the same day students in that district head back to class, Jersey City will be holding a five-hour job fair seeking to hire teachers and fill other positions. And when Jersey City schools hold their first day of classes on Sept. 10, North Hunterdon-Voorhees Regional High School District will already be on its tenth day of school. “Our district has been starting early for many years now and the rationale was based on having more instructional **SEE SCHOOL, A2**

## MORRIS COUNTY

### Detective alleges sex assault, harassment at state AG’s office

*He was allegedly forced to disclose sexuality to his father, retaliated against when trying to document abuse, suit says.*

**Anthony G. Attrino** *NJ.com*

A New Jersey detective says years of anti-gay harassment inside the state’s top law enforcement agency culminated in an alleged sexual assault, retaliation and a forced disclosure of his sexuality. Now, Division of Criminal Justice Detective Russell Kingsland is seeking \$1.5 million from the state, accusing Attorney General’s Office employees of discrimination and misconduct that he says destroyed his law enforcement career. “I have experienced severe psychological trauma along with compounding substance use disorder from these events, and it was recommended by a doctor that I not return to work as a police officer due to this,” Kingsland, 33, states in a notice of tort claim filed Aug. 18. A notice of tort claim is a required precursor to lawsuits against public agencies in New Jersey. It notifies the government of allegations and potential damages before a lawsuit is filed. The detective has worked for the Attorney General’s Office since May 2016, conducting long-term investigations involving organized crime, narcotics, weapons and violent offenses. However, he says he was suspended last year after internal affairs learned that he was documenting instances of harassment. “I have been diagnosed with PTSD and other mental disorders from the treatment and harassment done by the Attorney General’s Office,” Kingsland wrote. According to his notice of claim, two of Kingsland’s supervisors approached him about rumors concerning his sexuality in November 2022, which led him to disclose to his coworkers and family that he is gay. “Do you find me attractive?” one of the supervisors allegedly asked Kingsland in response, according to the claim. “What are you going to tell your father?” asked another supervisor. One of the supervisors repeatedly brought up Kingsland’s sexuality despite the detective’s discomfort discussing the matter, according to the notice of claim. **SEE LAWSUIT, A2**

## TRANSPORTATION

### Commuter railroads on course for rising insurance costs

*Mandatory increase in liability insurance next month could cost millions of dollars.*

**Larry Higgs** *NJ.com*

NJ Transit and other commuter railroads are facing a multi-million dollar jump in the cost of liability insurance being driven by inflation rather than their safety record. Commuter railroads that use tracks

owned by other carriers face an increase in the maximum liability insurance requirement from \$322.86 million to \$401.9 million under federal law. The changes take effect on Sept. 4. “The host railroad will require us to ensure up to the federal liability cap,” said Kelly A. Gallagher, CEO of the Commuter Rail Coalition. “Our PTC (Positive Train Control) vendors will require it as part of that contract. So, yes, everyone who’s got that provision in their contracts is required to carry it.” NJ Transit belongs to the Commuter

Rail Coalition, a nationwide advocacy group that works to highlight the importance of commuter rail service and secure resources for rail systems. The coalition estimates a nearly 20% jump from the last Passenger Rail Excess Liability cap increase in 2021. The increase is driven by inflation, not by changes in safety performance or claims experience, Gallagher said. The federal cap is adjusted based on a five-year Consumer Price Index review, which is required by the 2015 Fixing America’s **SEE RAIL, A2**

## NEWS 2 killed by stolen car

Luxury vehicle heist ends in tragedy for 2 in Mays Landing, authorities say. **A3**

## BAMBOOZLED Phone line ‘ripoff’

A pastor fights costly Verizon disconnect fees in Hoboken. **A7**

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