



EATONTOWN BOARD OF EDUCATION

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SCOTT T. McCUE
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

March 24, 2021

Dear Eatontown School Community Member:

Our school district is collaborating with SOS, Support Our Students, in order to help stop the S-2 funding cuts. Today, our district will join other districts in raising awareness regarding the S2 cuts. The 2021-2022 school budget will see a reduction of \$520,000 in state aid. During this unprecedented year we have endured physical, emotional, and financial difficulties due to the pandemic. We are just beginning to catch our collective breath, to see a glimmer of hope to return to normal routines this summer, and most importantly for our families and children, return to a typical school year and school days in the fall.

As you know, we are not there yet. As schools and communities are struggling to fully reopen at what we hope is the tail end of this pandemic, we should **not** be impacted by the burden of funding cuts. Every penny is necessary to reopen schools as well as to give every student the opportunity to learn and succeed following a year that tested our ingenuity, our strength, and our mettle.

The additional federal aid provided for the pandemic is not taken for granted. However, it is a band-aid, not a long-term, viable solution to fund New Jersey's high achieving public education system. Once this federal funding is spent, it will no longer be available in the future. The one-time injection of stimulus money provided to districts is not a substitute for the millions of dollars of state funding being stripped away by S2. If the timeline for funding cuts continue as planned under S2, there will be long term consequences for hundreds of thousands of students in communities from Warren to Cape May counties affecting their education today and their future in college and career tomorrow.

This year, we need to pause the S2 cuts. It is time to reform a flawed and antiquated funding formula that does not take into account student learning needs and economic conditions, especially post-pandemic. The timeline for S2 cuts should be extended in order for districts to manage funding reductions without decimating educational programming and staffing or asking taxpayers to shoulder an exorbitant tax increase. After all, Eatontown is still recovering from the closing of Fort Monmouth. Once the S2 cuts are completed, Eatontown's state aid will be reduced from \$3.8 million to \$1.4 million. Impacts on the school community may include larger class sizes, cuts in programs, higher taxes, and closure of a school.

Our state's exceptional public schools, literally first in the nation, are a point of pride and help to build strong communities. As a state, we have made the choice to invest in our children and in our future. We need to expect the same support from our elected officials.

<https://actionnetwork.org/letters/our-children-need-your-help>

Please consider sending a message to your local officials using the link above which will send a pre-populated email with your information to the Governor and all of your district's legislators. Your voice and participation are important tools for change. There are over 100 school districts supporting this cause statewide.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Scott T. McCue
Superintendent of Schools

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