



# HADDON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION

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## Broadcast

Dear Haddon Township School District Community,

Good Afternoon and Happy Friday. As we conclude teacher appreciation week, I hope many of you took the opportunity to acknowledge the adults who work the closest with our students each day. Thank you very much to each of the school PTAs for everything you did this week on behalf of the staff at our schools. A more extensive district update is scheduled to be distributed next week, but I want to take the opportunity to inform each of you of the critical pending legislation as it relates to our school budget that will be on Governor Murphy's desk on Monday, and I expect him to sign it. This legislation has significant implications for our school district and your understanding of it is vital. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the efforts and support of Assemblywoman Lampitt, the catalyst of this bill, who has been highly responsive and supportive of our school district.

### School Funding Update

Yesterday, I had an opportunity to provide testimony before the Senate Budget Appropriations Committee, which approved Bill (A-4161/S-3081), providing relief to districts that recently experienced unanticipated cuts to school funding. It was a very long day, but I had a first-hand opportunity to observe this bill while it was negotiated, and there were moving parts throughout the day. My full testimony can be viewed here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= GqMalxBgQM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqMalxBgQM)

Please see the points below to understand how the pending legislation will affect our state funding.

- While the original bill aimed for a two-thirds restoration, the final bill approved will actually provide 45%, or **\$362,000** in funding that I will recommend to the school board, be utilized to renew some personnel and programs that were tentatively eliminated. The administrative team and I will utilize time next week to formulate these recommendations.
- A second part will allow "certain" school districts to exceed the 2% cap of the local tax levy under the condition that their state aid totals are less now compared to 2021. Since we have received **more** of an increase than a decrease in recent years, I do **not** believe Haddon Township will be one of the districts identified as eligible to exceed the tax levy.

### Respect for HT Taxpayers

Over the last few days, I have also fielded some emails and questions about why I did not recommend using (\$127,000) in banked cap from a health benefits adjustment to exceed the 2% cap for next year. For the last 12 months, while campaigning for the recently passed referendum, I spoke with hundreds of residents who were concerned about the referendum's

financial implications. During **every** public meeting, members of our community were **assured** that the Board would not exceed the 2 percent cap under **any** circumstances, and **our residents could confidently be assured of projected tax increases**. During these conversations, I learned that every dollar matters month to month from many individuals, many of whom voted yes on the referendum with confidence in our assurance. **It is simply not fair or honest to ask our residents to pass a referendum under assured conditions and then change those conditions for any reason, including the unjustified cuts from Trenton. The right path forward is to continue to fight for the complete stabilization of our state aid from Trenton, not to ask our residents to absorb more of a local increase.**

Thank you very much for your continued support and have a great weekend.

-Sincerely,

Robert J. Fisicaro, Ed. D. Superintendent