



Red Bank Borough Public Schools

Dream BIG... We'll help you get there!

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For Immediate Release

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Dream BIG...We'll Help you Get There!

The tagline of the Red Bank Borough Public Schools has been heard by the State of New Jersey. After many years of being underfunded as per the School Funding Reform Act (SFRA) of 2008, the District received notification on Friday, July 13th that the state aid allocation for the 2018-2019 school year will include a substantial increase with the anticipation of fully funding Red Bank and all other underfunded school districts over the next seven years. In spite of many challenges, the students, staff, and community of Red Bank have continued to do more and more with less. Because our District and community continued to Dream BIG, we now have received some help to get there!

Over the last six years, the District received approximately one-third of state aid delineated by SFRA resulting in a shortage of nearly \$6 million dollars per year. In March of 2018, Red Bank was notified it would receive \$3.7 million, a figure that represented 39% of the full funding and an increase of only \$178,000 from 2017-2018. At that time, the District was also required to increase its mandated payment to the Red Bank Charter School by \$184,000 resulting in an overall loss of \$6,000. The increased funding will play a huge role in reducing the stress in the Borough Schools and offer our talented students and dedicated staff an improved access to equity.

At the Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, July 17th, the Red Bank Board of Education adopted two resolutions relative to the funding increase. The first resolution expressed our appreciation for the efforts of our staff, families, and community leaders which enabled this dream to become a reality. The resolution also specifically recognized state leaders:

Be it therefore resolved that the Red Bank Borough Board of Education thanks Governor Murphy, Senate Majority Leader Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Coughlin, and our 11th District Legislators Senator Gopal, Assemblywomen Downey, and Assemblyman Houghtaling for that relief and former Senator Jennifer Beck for having kept this in the forefront in previous sessions of the legislature.

Furthermore, the resolution implored the Governor and Legislature to continue the path to fully funding Red Bank Borough and all underfunded schools. Although this year's new total state aid allocation will be a significant benefit to Red Bank, it still only represents about 58% of the \$9.5 million Red Bank is entitled. Board President Frederick Stone noted that the State budgetary process can be used to override the funding levels specified by the legislation (S2) accompanying this year's budget in future years. "We will continue to press the State Government to continue to escalate school aid over the seven years specified until full funding is indeed realized," he said.

Additionally, the BOE adopted a resolution to accept an additional \$1.78 million in state aid and allocated the majority of resources for immediate use. According to Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Jared Ramage, “the money can be looked at in three pots. One-third will be utilized to meet mandates and issues of compliance, one-third will restore the many cuts made to the budget back in March, and one-third will be used to provide our students and staff some of the additional educational resources they need, deserve, and have done without for far too long.”

Of the \$1.78 million, \$153,534 must be distributed to the Red Bank Charter School bringing the total burden from the District to the Charter School to \$1,935,647 for the 18-19 year. Furthermore, approximately \$1.5 million dollars of the Charter School’s Budget represents duplicative costs resulting from having two school districts within a 1.739 sq mi town with barely 13,000 residents. Another \$300,000 will be needed to meet unanticipated needs for special services, which have come to light since March, in order to fully serve students at both the Red Bank Charter School and in the Borough Schools. The District will use some of the money to replace several damaging cuts necessary in the original budget such as a World Language Teacher, Child Study Team Services, and other instructional and administrative supports. Finally, the District will capitalize on the remaining one-third of the resources to provide some of the many educational supports our students have done without in recent years. These resources will bolster classroom instruction and provide the many intervention and enrichment opportunities previously unavailable to our students. The District has also allocated a small amount to initiate a strategic planning process. “I’m really looking forward to the strategic planning process.” said Tom Labetti, RBBOE Community Relations Committee Chair, “We’ll build upon the teamwork established during the funding fight to design a vision that our schools and community partners can achieve together. This process is going to be great for Red Bank.”

As a school community, the Red Bank Borough Public Schools have inspired our students to Dream BIG and we have deliberately prepared our budgets to help them achieve their dreams. Today, our BIG Dreams have been partially realized and we are excited about what the future will bring. A once hidden gem of this community will now shine brightly to benefit all students and the entire community of Red Bank!



