

EATONTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



*Eatontown Public Schools
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*Scott T. McCue
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Press Release

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After the announcement this morning by state Senate President Stephen Sweeney and state Assembly Speaker Vincent Prieto regarding their school funding plan for New Jersey public school districts, we wish to note the devastating effects that cuts in funding would not only have to the Eatontown School District but to many other districts throughout Monmouth County as well as the rest of New Jersey.

While recognizing that there are districts that are shortchanged under the current funding formula, taking away needed funding from other districts is solving one problem while causing another. **During the 2009-2010 school year, the Eatontown School District lost \$1,281,016 in state aid. With careful planning, we have put the district on solid ground once again. However, the Sweeney Plan certainly jeopardizes about seven years worth of work and tough decisions.** Note that the 16/17 state aid funding to Eatontown of \$3.89 million, is nowhere near the level of 7 years ago (\$4.25 million). Under the Sweeney/Prieto plan, the district would face a cut of \$291,575 to its coming school years (17/18) state aid even though school budgets (for the upcoming school year) and tax levies in districts in the state were long ago voted on and approved. These proposed cuts in state aid come on the heels of rising educational expectations and the increasing number of state mandates promulgated by the state.

In 2009 to the present time period, the needs of the Eatontown district have changed drastically. A few data points are presented below:

	<u>2009/2010</u>	<u>2016/2017</u>
Free and Reduced Lunch-	299	475
ELL-	16	80
Special Education-	188	236

In addition, the closing of Fort Monmouth caused a huge drop in commercial retail. This goes to show that one size does not fit all when it comes to school funding. Another way to look at state aid to local districts is that it is actually property tax relief.....in other words money that does not need to be

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obtained through the local property tax levy. When state aid is reduced, school districts are faced with two alternatives either cut programs and staff and/or raise local taxes.

The link below shows a chart that was prepared by the Office of Legislative Services which shows the aid reductions under the Sweeney/Prieto plan for districts throughout the state in the 4th column.
<https://www.njsba.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/state-aid-run-june15.pdf>

Please contact your local State Legislators and ask them to vote NO to the Sweeney/Prieto plan. Districts in Monmouth and Ocean Counties that would be highly affected by the Sweeney Plan include Freehold Regional, Marlboro Township, Middletown Township, Ocean Township, Tinton Falls, Monmouth Regional, Brick Township, and Toms River Regional.

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