

Dear Members of the New Jersey Department of Education,

As a parent in Jefferson Township, I am deeply concerned about the ongoing school funding crisis and the negative impact it is having on my child and others in our district. Our schools are essential to preparing students for the future, but the drastic cuts in state aid have hindered their ability to provide basic resources and opportunities. Since the adoption of S-2, Jefferson Township Public Schools has faced increasing annual losses which now exceed \$11 million per year. The cumulative loss to our district since the inception of S-2 is just under \$45 million and will continue to grow each year. Teachers and staff are being asked to do more with less, vital programs are being scaled back, and our facilities are struggling to meet the demands of providing a thorough and efficient education.

It is clear that the current funding formula does not adequately account for the needs of all districts, especially those like ours that face unique challenges. For instance, the restrictions imposed by the Highlands Act limit our community's ability to grow and generate additional revenue, yet the state funding formula fails to address this. Additionally, rising costs for special education, transportation, and healthcare benefits further strain our district's already stretched resources.

I urge you to review the school funding formula and take the following actions:

- Cut aid proportionally to mirror the decline in student enrollment.
- Fund special education aid based on actual enrollment.
- Increase the base per-pupil cost.
- Increase the amount provided for special education extraordinary aid.
- Provide impact aid to districts affected by the Highlands and Pinelands Acts.

Our schools are filled with excellent educators who have worked hard, built relationships with our children, and are irreplaceable. They have worked tirelessly to support our children despite these challenges and deserve the state's commitment to ensuring fair and adequate funding. I respectfully ask that you prioritize reviewing and revising the school funding formula to reflect the needs of all New Jersey students and communities.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. I look forward to your support and action on behalf of our children and their education.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Address]

[Your Email/Phone Number]