



Assemblywoman Jean Stanfield

Assemblyman Ryan Peters

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Governor Phil Murphy

Office of Governor

PO Box 001

Trenton, NJ 08625

March 11, 2021

Dear Governor Murphy,

We are writing to urge you to pause S2 school funding cuts in your 2022 budget. The \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan was signed into law Thursday, and the State of New Jersey, its counties and municipalities will be receiving more than \$10 billion in funding.

The state itself will receive a majority of the funding, nearly \$6.5 billion. With the substantial amount of money headed to this state, it would be unconscionable to cut funding from schools. The numbers bear out a dreaded landscape for a lot of New Jersey's school districts, as some of them are set to lose millions and others are losing as much as a full quarter of their budgets, this year alone. We are aware that local school districts will be receiving money directly in the stimulus, but paired with their scheduled loss of funding, they will have little left over to plan for increased expenses.

The Covid-19 pandemic has compounded what was already an uphill battle for these school districts. They have had to buy PPE, technology for remote learning and capital upgrades to make their buildings safer. Many districts that put forth a Herculean effort to return to in-person learning are now facing the astronomical costs associated with abiding by the state's health and safety protocols. They should not be doubly punished with funding cuts and increased expenses for doing everything they can to help students.


In the end, it will be the students and teachers who suffer the most. These funding cuts will most assuredly lead to program cuts, larger class sizes and teacher layoffs. Students have suffered enough during the pandemic, as they have lost out on person-to-person education and socialization. They need to be able to hit the ground running in a great environment when they are back in school full time.

The massive funding cuts will not only affect students and teachers, but will also affect taxpayers. Too many tax-paying residents have gone into a financial hole during the pandemic and will not be able to afford any tax increases that may come as the result of the state slashing school funding.

The more than \$10 billion in stimulus funding must be used to address the negative economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. Increased costs for school districts and taxpayers are a direct negative impact of the pandemic. We must use a portion of the stimulus funding to pause S2 funding cuts in your upcoming budget.

Thank you for your time, your consideration and all your efforts on behalf of the people of the great state of New Jersey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jean Stanfield". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "S".

Assemblywoman Jean Stanfield

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Ryan Peters". The signature is cursive and stylized, with a large initial "R" and "P".

Assemblyman Ryan Peters