

## **"Support Our Students" (SOS) Advocacy Group**

A state-wide coalition of school districts being negatively impacted by the reduction of state aid resulting from P.L. 2018, Chapter 67 has been created. This coalition of schools will be bringing their message and concerns to state legislators and the public about the severe and negative impact that the state aid reduction will have on students, educational programming and the taxpayers in their districts.

Currently there are ninety-seven (97) districts state-wide, representing school districts from seventeen (17) counties and more than 150,000 students who have joined the **"Support Our Students"** coalition.

The mission statement of **"Support Our Students"** is as follows:

The **Support Our Students (SOS)** coalition of school districts throughout the state being negatively impacted by the reduction in state adjustment aid shall advocate with our legislators, and convey our message to the public to ensure that **all** students continue to receive the quality education that they deserve and are entitled to in accordance with the state's mandate for a thorough and efficient education.

Our effort shall be sustained and inclusive of all stakeholders focusing on outcomes that result in educational services and programming being maintained for our school communities while seeking fiscally responsible solutions.

The coalition applauds state legislators for their work in increasing funding for school districts throughout the state who were previously not fully funded. However, in the process of doing so, the resulting legislation will inadvertently have dire and unintended consequences for the students in many districts whose state aid will be reduced over the next six (6) years. If fully enacted, the reduction in state aid will result in a catastrophic effect on educational programming for students.

SOS has sent a letter to the entire legislature and Governor Murphy requesting that no further reductions be made to state aid allocations until a joint legislative committee be convened that includes representatives from the New Jersey Department of Education and school districts. School district representatives would include educators from districts whose funding allocations are increasing, district scheduled to lose state aid, and districts whose state aid is not impacted.

**For additional information please contact:** Michael L. Harris, Southampton Schools, Superintendent (609-859-2256, Extension #127)