



March 24, 2021

Dear Governor Murphy:

As a resident and VOTER of Upper Township and a proud New Jersey citizen, I remind you that during this unprecedented year we have endured enough physical, emotional and financial difficulties due to the pandemic. We are just beginning to catch our collective breath, to see a glimmer of hope to return to normal routines this summer and, most important for our families and children, to a typical school year and school days in the fall.

But we're not there yet. As schools and communities are struggling to fully reopen at what we hope is the tail end of this pandemic, we should **NOT** be threatened with the burden of **funding cuts**. Every penny is necessary to reopen schools, to give every student the opportunity to learn and succeed following a year that tested our ingenuity, our strength and our mettle.

The additional aid for the pandemic is not taken for granted, but it is a band-aid, not a long-term, viable solution to fund New Jersey's high achieving public education system. The one-time injection of stimulus money provided to districts is not a substitute for the millions of dollars of state school funding being stripped away by S2, rather it is to provide for schools to safely emerge from COVID-19. If the timeline for funding cuts continue as planned under S2, there will be long-term consequences for hundreds of thousands of students in communities from Warren to Cape May counties, affecting their education today and their future in college and careers.

This year, hear our calls to pause the S2 cuts. It is time to reform a flawed and antiquated funding formula that does not take into account student learning needs and economic conditions in the 21st century, especially post-pandemic. And, the timeline for S2 cuts then must be extended in order for districts to manage funding reductions without decimating educational programming and staffing or asking taxpayers to shoulder an exorbitant tax increase.

Our state's exceptional public schools, literally first in the nation, are a point of pride and build strong communities. As a state, we have made the choice to invest in our children, in our future and theirs. **I support my community and our public schools and expect - demand - the same support from our elected officials.**

The future of every New Jersey child cannot and should not wait. We look forward to your immediate action.

Sincerely,

Name and Address