

MARCH ON TRENTON



**SUPPORT OUR
STUDENTS**



**SAVE OUR SCHOOLS
DEMAND FAIR STATE FUNDING
NOW!**

WEAR white.

BRING signs.

LIFT voices.

ON MARCH 5, 2019 WE ARE TRAVELING TO TRENTON TO RALLY AT THE STATEHOUSE, AND WE HAVE ONE GOAL: **TO GET OUR MONEY BACK.**

THANKS TO CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF SENATE BILL S2, TOMS RIVER REGIONAL SCHOOLS' BUDGET IS BEING SLASHED BY MORE THAN \$80 MILLION OVER THE NEXT SIX YEARS.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

- ⌘ **JOBS**-- We expect to have to cut **400 staff positions** over the next six years.
- ⌘ **SPORTS**-- All non-mandated programs. **Athletic programs** could get cut entirely or incur a cost to participate.
- ⌘ **SERVICES**-- Including **busing**. Program funding will be cut 10% across the board.
- ⌘ **FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN**-- A huge district initiative installed in 2015 **could be lost.**
- ⌘ **CLASS SIZES**-- Class loads increasing to **30-40 students.**
- ⌘ **TOMS RIVER, SOUTH TOMS RIVER, BEACHWOOD, PINE BEACH**-- Schools represent a town's quality of life and its **future**. These cuts will render our schools inoperable. Plain and simple.

| **MARCH 5, 2019** |

BUSES DEPART RWJBARNABAS HEALTH ARENA 12 PM
SIGN UP AT [HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/3-5-19-MARCH](https://tinyurl.com/3-5-19-MARCH)

WHY EVERY CITIZEN SHOULD BE **OUTRAGED**:

The funding formula has always been critically flawed, and the "revised" version is even worse. It does not consider that WE ARE:

- the 2nd lowest total cost-per-pupil district in NJ
- the 8th lowest in administrative costs in NJ
- already operating at \$30 million under adequacy
- still recovering from Superstorm Sandy including \$500 million in tax base.

Our students and teachers will NOT be the collateral damage of a critically-flawed system.

Be well informed. Turn over for FAQ Sheet.

FAQ Sheet

Why is the state reducing Toms River Regional Schools' funding, and why is it an urgent crisis?

Bill S2 is being promoted as a measure to move money from "overfunded" school districts to "underfunded" districts. However, the formula they are using to distinguish between "over" and "under"funded schools is critically flawed: 1) it does not factor billions of dollars in Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILOTs); 2) the property wealth figures it relies on include 25+ towns that have not had legally-required property revaluations in more than 25 years; and 3) the calculations are impossible to verify without the state disclosing how it allocates \$6.3 billion in Equalization Aid, which to this point the NJDOE has refused to do. The aid cuts in Bill S2 are unjust and unfair as a whole, but are especially draconian to Toms River Regional Schools, which is essentially being punished for operating at maximum efficiency and with a bare minimum of state support over the past decade. As the fifth largest district in NJ already functioning at more than \$30 million under adequacy, it is not an exaggeration to say that losing more than \$80 million will render us **incapacitated**.

- ★Our primary goal is to restore our funding in full.
- ★Our larger goal is a revision of the funding formula that would provide equitable distribution of state funding to ALL school districts, not just ours. This has been the basis of our lawsuits and public efforts to date.

What has the district done to combat the state aid cuts in this bill?

Let's see ...

1. Toms River Regional Schools is part of a **lawsuit** opposing the aid cuts in S2. The complaint was filed in collaboration with other school districts that, like TRRS, have the support of their town councils through adopted resolutions to oppose to the bill.

2. We are a member of the **Save Our Students (S.O.S.) coalition** of 70+ districts fighting the aid cuts in this bill ... and we **presented our case** at the S.O.S. council of districts at a conference in Atlantic City.

3. We've issued **formal letters** to our school community and resolutions to legislators and the governor.

4. We've met directly with state legislators.

5. We've produced and distributed **public videos** outlining our plight.

6. We've supported a **parent-led petition** opposing these cuts that has more than 13,000 signatures.

7. We've hosted **press conferences** and issued numerous press releases to our media contacts.

8. And now, we are organizing a March 5 rally at the statehouse in Trenton so our legislators can hear and see the children, families, teachers, and taxpayers they are affecting.

Click highlighted words for full story

Toms River residents just voted to pass a \$147 million referendum, and now THIS?

The public discussion to go to a referendum vote for priority repairs began well over a year ago, but the fight for funding began with the first round of attempted cuts in the summer of 2017 when the state stripped us of \$3.3 million. After we held a public rally on the steps of High School South, a portion was restored. Since then, we continue to meet with and petition legislators and have testified in Trenton. Here's how the two are different and how they are related:

Referendum:

- ★Goes to a public vote under state law
- ★Funded by bonds accounted for in the Debt Services Fund (separate fund)
- ★Specifically targets repairs to our aging facilities
- ★Our effort was to **secure** public funding to ensure safe, highly functional, and efficient buildings for years to come.

Funding crisis:

- ★Due to lack of state aid for our General Fund budget with the redistribution of aid to other districts
- ★Will adversely affect every facet of our educational system
- ★Our effort is to **restore** state funding

We've been through this before, haven't we? The schools always seem to figure a way out, so we'll be fine-- won't we?

We won't. Not unless something in Trenton changes. Despite our relentless efforts, there is no solution in sight. They are not hearing us, so only one strategy remains:

- ★Go to Trenton on March 5th.
- ★Transform our voices into one unified message.
- ★Be the change we need for Toms River Regional Schools and the communities we serve.

#WeAreTRschools