COLLINGSWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
collsk12.org

Fredrick H. McDowell, Ed.D.
Superintendent
856-962-5702, ext. 9002

Meredith Howell-Turner
Asst. Supt./Curr. & Instruction
856-833-5291, ext. 8100

Beth Ann Coleman, R.S.B.A.
Asst. Supt./Bus. & Operations
856-962-5702, ext. 9004

February 11, 2025

Mayor James Maley
Commissioner Lewandowski
Commissioner Robinson
Borough of Collingswood
678 Haddon Ave.
Collingswood NJ 08108

Dear Mayor and Commissioners:

At its February 10, 2025 Special Meeting, the Collingswood Board of Education unanimously approved the resolution requesting borough partnership and financial assistance. Enclosed with this letter, please find the certified minutes from that meeting.

Please feel free to contact me at 856-962-5702, ext. 9004 if you have any questions. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Beth Ann Coleman
Assistant Superintendent for
Business & Operations

BAC/mpt

Enclosure

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EXTRACT OF THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COLLINGSWOOD BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE BOROUGH OF COLLINGSWOOD, CAMDEN COUNTY, NJ, AS RECORDED IN THE OFFICIAL MINUTES

Collingswood Board of Education met at 6:30 p.m. on February 10, 2025 in the Collingswood High School Cafeteria, 424 Collings Ave, Collingswood, New Jersey.

The following members of the Board were present:

Danielle Brown
Matthew Craig
Zakiya Devine
Kelly Maia
Meghan Mikulski
Kate Seltzer
Sarah Sherman
Maggie Zmijewski
James McMillan, Oaklyn
Christopher Dilkus, Woodlynne
Roger Chu

The following member of the Board was absent:

5. Resolution

5.01 Request for Borough Partnership and Financial Assistance

MOTION by Mr. Craig, second by Mr. McMillan, on the recommendation of the Superintendent, to approve the following resolution:

RESOLUTION
Request for Borough Partnership and Financial Assistance

WHEREAS, a strong, well-funded public school system strengthens an entire community; and

WHEREAS, Collingswood Public Schools educates the community's youth and approximately 2,300 students; and

WHEREAS, Collingswood Public Schools and schools across New Jersey have faced continually rising costs of supplies, services, and programming; and

WHEREAS, Collingswood Public Schools has received essentially the same amount of school funding from the state since the 2022-23 school year; and

WHEREAS, Collingswood Public Schools is subject to N.J.S.A 18A:7F-38, which limits its ability to raise revenue from increases in its property tax levy to an additional two percent (2%) per year, with limited exceptions and adjustments; and

WHEREAS, Collingswood Public Schools has raised additional revenue up to the statutory maximum every year since the 2014-15 school year; and

WHEREAS, Collingswood Public Schools is required by N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-16.2(d)(3) to maintain a balanced budget; and

WHEREAS, Collingswood Public Schools has limited its school supplies budgets, delayed facility maintenance, sustained one of the lowest administrative costs per pupil in the state, and brought in grant funding to offset continually rising costs; and

WHEREAS, despite these cost-saving and revenue-generating efforts, which included $1.3 million in cuts to budget lines for the 2024-25 school year, Collingswood Public Schools had to lay off twenty-one (21) valued teachers, staff, and administrators in May 2024 to close an additional $1.4 million deficit due to rising costs to maintain a balanced budget; and

WHEREAS, Collingswood Public Schools projects at minimum a $1.8 million increase in costs for the 2025-26 school year; and

WHEREAS, Collingswood Public Schools anticipates the need to cut additional services, programs, and staff to maintain a balanced budget for the 2025-26 school year if additional school funding is not secured; and

WHEREAS, Collingswood Public Schools received 46.8% of Collingswood property taxes in 2023 compared to the state average of 52.4%; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Collingswood has the statutory ability to raise an additional $3.6 million in revenues in its 2025 budget through the use of its banked levy cap pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.45; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Collingswood anticipates raising $4.6 million in revenue in its 2025 budget from Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreements; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Collingswood has the statutory ability per N.J.S.A. 40:48-17.1 to appropriate additional revenues to supplement the Collingswood Public Schools budget.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Collingswood Board of Education requests partnership with and financial assistance from the Borough of Collingswood that will enable Collingswood Public Schools to provide quality education to each of its students and continue to serve and strengthen the community of Collingswood; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Collingswood Board of Education asks the Borough of Collingswood to raise $3 million in additional revenue in the 2025 budget year and every budget year moving forward to provide additional revenue to Collingswood Public Schools; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Collingswood Board of Education urges the Borough of Collingswood to allocate in the 2025 budget year and every budget year moving forward at least an additional 10% of yearly revenue from existing PILOT agreements to supplement Collingswood Public Schools budget; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Collingswood Board of Education urges the Borough of Collingswood to commit to providing at least 50% of yearly revenue from new PILOT agreements to supplement Collingswood Public Schools budget; and be it further

RESOLVED that this resolution be delivered to James Maley, Mayor of Collingswood, and Robert Lewandowski and Morgan Robinson, Commissioners.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 11 Aye 0 Nay 0 Absent

MOTION CARRIED

I certify that the above extract of the minutes of the February 10, 2025 meeting of the Collingswood Board of Education to be a true and accurate copy of the official minutes of the meeting.

Beth Ann Coleman
Board Secretary