

TOWNSHIP OF MAPLEWOOD



RESOLUTION NO. 20-16

RESOLUTION RELATING TO THE SCHOOL FUNDING REFORM ACT (SFRA) STATE AID REDISTRIBUTION

WHEREAS, the School Funding Reform Act (“SFRA”) uses a student need-based formula to determine financial state aid for school districts; and

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey produced “For Information Only” State Aid Notices for the 2015-2016 school year (FY16) that included Total “Aid Before Cap”, or uncapped aid; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's aid distribution is severely uneven, with 220 districts receiving 100% or more of their SFRA FY16 uncapped aid and 118 receiving 50% or less; and

WHEREAS, in per student terms, 112 districts receive aid surpluses greater than \$1,000 a student and 25 receive surpluses over \$3,000 a student while 73 districts have deficits greater than \$3,000 a student and 154 have deficits greater than \$1,000 a student, with the most extreme surpluses and deficits reaching \$10,000 a student; and

WHEREAS, the inequity of the distribution is becoming more odious, as districts become poorer or richer, smaller or larger, and yet districts gaining wealth and/or losing student population do not lose aid nor do districts becoming poorer and/or gaining student population gain aid; and

WHEREAS, the excess aid given to over-aided districts based on actual aid compared to uncapped SFRA aid for FY16 is almost \$600 million; and

WHEREAS, the South Orange Maplewood School District (“SOMSD”) is an under-aided school district, receiving less than 50% of the FY16 SFRA uncapped aid amount which is based on student need; and

WHEREAS, historically, state aid for SOMSD was reduced significantly in 2010-11 and has not yet been restored despite an increase in enrollment; and

WHEREAS, the municipalities of Maplewood and South Orange have some of the highest tax rates in the state, with local property taxes funding over 94% of the school budget; and

WHEREAS, a district may spend Above Adequacy due to the acceptance of a high tax burden while it is under-aided.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Maplewood, County of Essex, State of New Jersey that:

1. The Township of Maplewood supports a redistribution of state aid with the primary determinant being aid relative to SFRA uncapped aid, where aid should be transferred from districts receiving more than 100% of their uncapped aid to districts that receive less than 100% of their uncapped aid, with the largest increases going to districts that have the largest per student aid deficits relative to uncapped aid; and
2. The Maplewood Township Committee requests that Total Aid Before Cap, or uncapped aid, be included in the annual District level State Aid Summaries to illustrate by district, actual total aid received compared to uncapped aid as determined by SFRA.
3. The Maplewood Township Committee believes that no district that is spending Above Adequacy but receives less than 100% of its uncapped aid should lose aid; and
4. A copy of this duly adopted resolution shall be forwarded to Senator Richard Codey, Assemblywoman Mila Jasey and Assemblyman John McKeon, Senate President Stephen Sweeney, Assembly Speaker Vincent Prieto, the members of the governing body of the Township of South Orange Village, Essex County Freeholders, the Governor of the State of New Jersey, and to the New Jersey School Boards Association.

I, Elizabeth J. Fritzen, Township Clerk of the Township of Maplewood, in the County of Essex and State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Township Committee of the Township of Maplewood, County of Essex, State of New Jersey, at a regular meeting of said Committee held on January 19, 2016.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Township of Maplewood in the County of Essex and State of New Jersey, on this 19th day of January 2016.

ELIZABETH J. FRITZEN, R.M.C.
Township Clerk