



Township of Monroe

County of Middlesex

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Monroe Scores Major Funding Victory with New School-Aid Legislation

MONROE – Wielding the power of a signature, Gov. Phil Murphy enacted legislation in late July that ensured a phased-out overhaul of school state-aid distribution and Monroe its overdue fair share of funding.

Using annual adjustments, the measure will gradually redistribute state aid among under- and overcompensated school districts, appropriating Monroe Township with a 100 percent of its entitled funding, approximately \$9.123 million, by 2025.

“We’ve spent years writing letters, making phone calls and holding petition drives, calling for an end to the disparity in state-aid funding,” said Monroe Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro. “I’ve personally worked with the Governor and our state legislators, even offering testimony to the Senate Select Committee. It took our collective voices – intervention from our legislative leadership and action from residents, our Council, school board and both administrations, as well as impacted districts from around the state – to finally reach a point of resolution.”

The law requires full implementation of the state-aid formula over the next six years, primarily through the elimination of adjustment aid and state aid growth caps.

The formula itself, outlined by the 2008 School Funding Reform Act, was intended to create a state share of school funding with the balance or local share to be provided by local taxpayers.

“While I have serious reservations about the SFRA itself, and how it treats our residents, the current formula – a mandate for state aid calculation under SFRA law – has never been fully funded or fairly implemented to the benefit of Monroe,” Tamburro added.

With Senate President Stephen Sweeney leading the legislative charge, lawmakers approved an amended State budget in early July that would hike Monroe’s initial general fund school state-aid increase of \$344,000 to \$2 million – the 10th largest award increase in New Jersey.

“For the past several years, our 14th District legislators, Senator Linda Greenstein and Assemblymen Wayne DeAngelo and Dan Benson, have been supporting our fight for fair funding during much of this uphill battle,” said Monroe Township Council President Stephen Dalina. “Their efforts will help lift a huge burden off of the community’s taxpayers.”

In recent weeks, the Monroe Township school board opted to dedicate \$1 million of this year’s additional \$1.6 million in state aid to offset property taxes, said district Business Administrator Michael Gorski. For a homeowner with an average assessed residence of \$315,299, the application of new aid will reduce this year’s anticipated tax increase from 1.7 cents to 1 cent per \$100,000 of assessed value.

“The remaining amount will be used to replenish an almost exhausted capital reserve fund intended for long-range facility planning,” said Gorski, who attended Gov. Murphy’s July 24 bill signing in Cliffside Park. “Our Middle School needs a roof replacement, expected to cost between \$750,000 to \$1 million.” Top brass from the New Jersey Senate Majority Office have verbally indicated that the Township’s district can expect an additional \$1 million in state-aid funding during next year’s budget cycle, Gorski added.

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