



New Jersey Association of School Administrators

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Acting Commissioner Harrington and Members of the State Board of Education:

Please find attached to this introduction the recommendations for modifications to Chapter 23A previously submitted to Commissioner Hespe and President Biedron jointly by:

- The New Jersey Association of School Administrators;
- The New Jersey Education Association;
- The New Jersey School Boards Association;
- The New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association;
- The New Jersey Association of School Business Officials; and
- The New Jersey Parent Teachers Association.

Please note that while the New Jersey Association of School Administrators supports the proposed modifications to the maximum salary amounts for superintendents with one recommendation, the Association maintains that salary restrictions are unnecessary for the following reasons:

1. Local Control.

School board members are elected by their constituents to govern their school systems. They should retain the authority to determine compensation for the school superintendent just as they do for all others in the employment of the school district.

2. The Economy and State Funding

School funding has remained static for the last seven years while uncontrolled costs absorbed by the school district have impacted district programs and operations. School board members carefully weigh all decisions relating to district expenditures, including the salaries and benefits of all school employees.

3. State Overview

By law, the publicly approved board of education contract of every New Jersey school superintendent requires review and approval by the New Jersey Department of Education through the office of the Executive County Superintendent of Schools, ensuring state review before a contract is finalized.

4. Tax Levy Budget Cap

School district budgets are limited by a 2% tax levy cap, ensuring that school districts cannot implement a budget in excess of legal guidelines without state and voter approval in limited circumstances.

5. Administrative Spending Already Capped

Every school district has a cap on its administrative spending which is implemented through state review of proposed school budgets which cannot move forward without the endorsement of the Executive County Superintendent of Schools.

The proposed regulations will permit superintendents serving in the same school district to receive an annual salary that exceeds the maximum salary amount by up to two percent in the first year of the renewal contract, followed by annual increases of up to two percent in each of the remaining years of the renewal contract, and any contract thereafter. Since initial employment contracts for superintendents must be a minimum of three years and a maximum of five years, the proposal provides unequal treatment for those superintendents who have entered into a four or five year contract as these individuals are not eligible to be considered for the two percent increase above the maximum salary until one or two years after their colleagues who have entered into a three year employment contract. NJASA recommends that the proposal be modified to permit a superintendent to be eligible for the additional two percent salary increase beyond the maximum salary beginning in the fourth year of employment in the same district, thereby making the opportunity available at the same period of employment for all superintendents.

We applaud the Governor and Education Commissioner for acknowledging and mitigating the negative consequences that have resulted from the decision in 2011 to cap superintendent salaries. The proposed regulations will contribute positively to the recruitment and retention of effective chief education officers.

NJASA looks forward to the final adoption of these changes.