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## **TESTIMONY REGARDING A-3775**

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**Submitted By: Melanie Schulz, NJASA Director of Government Relations**

Chairwoman Lampitt and Members of the Assembly Education Committee, thank you for posting A-3775 which will permit local school boards to decide on the compensation of the superintendent.

NJASA believes that school district boards of education should be able to determine the compensation for their chief school officer.

We expect a lot from our school leaders – and we should.

Everyday New Jersey's chief school officers are responsible for the health, safety and education of approximately 1.4 million students in our public schools.

In addition, they oversee budgets, physical environments, food services, transportation, athletics and personnel.

The traditional course to superintendence is having been teacher, principal, assistant superintendent.

This allows people to both observe and participate, over the course of many years and advanced degrees and certifications, on a path that can lead to becoming a chief school officer.

I would like to address a point that is often overlooked and has considerable savings and that is the number of small school districts that share a superintendent.

My latest information is that there are 28 districts that share a superintendent, 3 districts that share a superintendent and 4 districts that share a superintendent.

Current Regulations state that the stipend for a chief school officer who oversees an additional district is \$15,000. By any measure, this is a considerable savings.

In addition, there are often savings to be found (particularly in smaller districts) where the superintendent may function as a building principal, director of special services or other administrative functions.

For instance, a director of special services position could demand a salary of \$90,000, while current Regulations offer an increment of \$5000 for superintendents who serve another administrative position in a district.

In addition, there have been concerns in the past about transparency of both the salary and any additional contractual compensation.

In fact, most candidates use a model contract of employment that was developed by a joint effort of NJASA and NJSBA.

And, most important, the Executive County Superintendent must review and approve all superintendent contracts.

Should this legislation be enacted, the Executive County Superintendent's review and approval would remain, except for the maximum salary amount.

Again, thank you to the sponsors and to the Legislators who have taken the time to speak with me and/or our NJASA members.

I am happy to answer your questions.