March 3, 2025

BOARD OF EDUCATION
SUMMIT, NEW JERSEY

The Board of Education held a Special Meeting on Monday, March 3, 2025 beginning at 6:56 PM in the Summit High School auditorium. Those present: Ms. Justice, presiding, Mr. Cho, Ms. Cohn, Ms. Erday, Ms. Justice, Ms. Kelly, Mr. Mahecha, and Ms. Stanton.

Also present were Mr. Hough, Superintendent of Schools, Mr. Jess, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, and Ms. Sarno, Assistant Business Administrator. There were 15 members of the public in attendance.

NOTICE OF CERTIFICATION

The following notice was presented:

Let the minutes reflect that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the regulations of the Open Public Meetings Act.

Ms. Justice opened the meeting and asked that Ms. Kelly, as the Operations Committee Chair, begin the discussion.

DISCUSSION – BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

Ms. Kelly acknowledged that this budget is difficult as it introduces increases, and the district needs to fill the gap of fund balance from previous years. She noted this is a tentative budget, and while she is voting yes, the expectation is that the next budget presented will be improved.

Ms. Kelly questioned how transportation is increasing, but extraordinary aid is decreasing. Mr. Jess responded.

Ms. Kelly followed up with a question about the necessity of textbooks – is there a breakout of digital vs. paper copies of textbooks? Ms. Rocco responded.

Mr. Mahecha asked about current enrollment versus last year's enrollment. Mr. Hough responded. He then stated as this is a tentative budget, he will be abstaining tonight and will vote at the next meeting.

Ms. Erday questioned how increased vocational enrollment is impacting the high school. Mr. Hough responded.

Mr. Cho gave background on how the budget works – based on the slide shown regarding actual tax levy increases in the last decade versus a constant 2% tax levy increase, this

budget introduces a tax levy amount that is similar to what we could have raised if we had gone to 2% every year.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A resident requested consideration for funding a paid coach for the sailing team in this budget.

Mr. Pawlowski of the Common Council stated that while hopefully residents will understand this increase, it will still be a shock so we need to be sure we're taking a close look and getting it down as much as possible.

A parent stated she supports the budget increase as it supports the quality education that the district provides to our students and the community.

Ms. Erday reiterated her stance that her yes vote today is not an endorsement of the current number – she expects the group to bring it down significantly before the next vote. A balance needs to be struck between supporting the teachers and students and the need to be fiscally responsible.

Motion by Ms. Kelly, seconded by Ms. Stanton, unanimously approved by voice vote to close public comment.

APPROVAL OF 2025-2026 SCHOOL BUDGET RESOLUTION

Ms. Kelly moved the following:

> RESOLVED that the tentative budget be approved for the 2025-2026 School Year and sent to the Executive County Superintendent of Schools in accordance with the statutory deadline for review and approval:

	GENERAL FUND	SPECIAL REVENUES	DEBT SERVICE	TOTAL
2025-2026 Total Expenditures	$87,989,203	$ 777,773	0	$88,766,976
Less Anticipated Revenues	11,297,476	777,773	0	12,075,249
Local Tax Levy to be Raised	$76,691,727	0	0	$76,691,727

> And to advertise said tentative budget in the Local Source in accordance with the form suggested by the State Department of Education and according to law;

FURTHER RESOLVED that the public hearing be held in the Wilson Board Meeting Room on Thursday, March 27, 2025 at 11:00 AM for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2025-2026 school year;

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education authorizes a supplemental adjustment to exceed the local tax levy limitation in the amount of $3,008,119 for purposes of maintaining the district's quality educational programs. The district has made efforts to enter into shared arrangements and maximize efficiencies;

FURTHER RESOLVED that included in the general fund appropriations the Summit City Board of Education authorize the approval of withdrawal from Capital Reserve in the amount of $1,800,000 as follows:

$650,000	Brayton School playground update
$650,000	Jefferson School playground update
$500,000	Summit H.S. auditorium floor replacement;

FURTHER RESOLVED that as per N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-14.2(d) included in the general fund appropriations, the Summit City Board of Education authorize the approval of withdrawal from Maintenance Reserve in the amount of $375,000 as follows:

$ 75,000	Brayton School asbestos removal & floor replacement
$100,000	LCJ Middle School floor replacement
$100,000	Doors replacement district-wide
$100,000	Architect/engineering fees for district-wide projects;

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the tentative budget the adjustment for increased costs of health benefits in the amount of $1,455,789. The additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increases in health benefit premiums, and

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Summit Board of Education includes in the tentative budget the adjustment for banked cap in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-10.1(b). The district has fully exhausted all eligible statutory spending authority and must increase the base budget in the amount of $537,326 for the purpose of supporting the district's educational programs for all students. The district intends to complete said purposes by June 2026.

NOTE: Figures subject to change up to the time of adoption of this resolution based on state aid figures or other adjustments

Seconded by Ms. Cohn. The roll was called, Mr. Mahecha abstained, and all others present voted "Aye." The motion was declared adopted.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ms. Erday, seconded by Ms. Kelly, and carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Derek J. Jess
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary
Summit Public Schools