March 27, 2025

BOARD OF EDUCATION
SUMMIT, NEW JERSEY

The Board of Education held a Special Budget Meeting on Thursday, March 27, 2025 beginning at 5:00 PM in the LCJ Summit Middle School auditorium. Those present: Ms. Justice, presiding, Mr. Cho, Ms. Cohn, Ms. Erday, Mr. Mahecha, Ms. Kelly, and Ms. Stanton.

Also present were Mr. Hough, Superintendent, Mr. Jess, School Business Administrator/Board Secretary, and Ms. Sarno, Assistant Business Administrator. There were 31 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.

Mr. Hough opened the meeting by acknowledging this was a difficult budget year, but one where they were able to reduce the tax levy from the tentative budget to the final budget. He extended his thanks to Mr. Jess, Ms. Sarno, district administration, and the members of the Board of Education and Board of School Estimate.

President Justice extended her thanks on behalf of the Board, to Mr. Hough, Mr. Jess, and Ms. Sarno for their willingness to collaborate effectively to create a balanced budget centering on the needs of the students. As we continue our strategic planning, we must be mindful of the long-term effects – financial constraints will impact our students.

Ms. Kelly stated we prioritize our students and this is a sustainable budget, given several high increases in costs. The Board is supportive of our Jefferson School community in regards to the Jefferson playground.

Mr. Mahecha thanked the Summit community for their feedback & perspective and encouraged people to continue sharing them. He stated he had abstained from voting on the budget twice because it needed a comprehensive review. Mr. Mahecha thanked the Board of Education, Operations Committee Chair Eileen Kelly, and the Board of School Estimate for their leadership and collaboration.

Ms. Erday thanked the administration, Ops Committee members, and Board of School Estimate members. Our community and schools play a vital role in creating a quality education while maintaining a fiscally responsible budget. Transparency and clarity are essential and important going forward.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A parent asked the Board to consider including a teacher representative for the sailing team into the budget.

Parents and community members voiced their concerns about the budget increase; others voiced their concern about the process and what was in the budget vs. what is not in the budget; concerns about getting back to basics and teaching reading, writing, math & science.

One community member voiced his support of the budget increase, saying it supports our property values and maintains a quality education. He added his concern about announced Federal cuts.

A parent voiced her support for the Jefferson School playground project and the successful fundraising done by the Jefferson School community.

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

Mr. Jess then read the 2025-2026 School Budget Resolution.

Ms. Cohn moved the following:

Approval of 2025-2026 School Budget Resolution:

RESOLVED that the final 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	$85,346,203	$ 777,773	0	$86,123,976
Less Anticipated Revenues	9,222,476	777,773	0	10,000,249
Local Tax Levy to be Raised	$76,123,727	0	0	$76,123,727

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 $100,000 as follows:

$100,000 Architect/engineering fees district-wide, and

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the final budget the adjustment for increased costs of health benefits in the amount of $1,175,192. 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 final 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 $249,923 for the purpose of supporting the district's educational programs for all students. The district intends to complete said purposes by June 2026.

Seconded by Ms. Stanton. The roll was called, and all present voted "Aye." The motion was declared adopted.

FINANCE

Ms. Stanton moved the following:

A. Approval of a withdrawal from the Capital Reserve Account pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:26-9.1(c) is approved effective March 27, 2025 in the total amount of $303,000 for the projects and amounts listed as follows:

Project:	Renovation of the Jefferson School Playground
Account:	12-000-400-450-07-FAC
Amount:	$303,000

B. PLAYGROUND IMPROVEMENTS AT JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

WHEREAS, the Summit Board of Education advertised for bids for the Playground Improvements at Jefferson Elementary School ("Project"); and

WHEREAS, the lowest responsible bid for the Project was submitted by Z-Tech Contracting, LLC, 1207 US Highway 22, Mountainside, NJ 07092 with a base bid in the amount of $732,385.62, inclusive of a $25,000 project allowance, and Alternative No. 1 – Expanded Pavement Reconstruction in the amount of $92,053.73, for a total contract price in the amount of $824,439.35; and

WHEREAS, the bid submitted by Z-Tech Contracting, LLC is responsive in all materials respects; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to award the contract for the Project to Z-Tech Contracting, LLC

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The Board hereby awards the contract for the Playground Improvements at Jefferson Elementary School to Z-Tech Contracting, LLC in a total contract amount of $824,439.35.

2. This award is expressly conditioned upon Z-Tech Contracting, LLC furnishing the requisite documentation as required in the specifications, including the insurance certificate, bonds, and an executed A-101-Standard Form of Agreement Between Owner and Contractor and A-201-General Conditions of the Contract for Construction, as prepared by the Board, within ten (10) days of the date hereof.

3. The Board President and the Board Secretary are hereby authorized to execute such agreement and any other documents necessary to effectuate the terms of this Resolution.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ms. Erday, seconded by Ms. Stanton and carried to adjourn the meeting at 5:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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