March 18, 2026

BOARD OF EDUCATION
SUMMIT, NEW JERSEY

The Board of Education held a Special Meeting on Wednesday, March 18, 2026 beginning at 6:49 PM in the Summit High School Library/Media Center. Those present: Ms. Kelly, presiding, Ms. Cohn (virtual), Mr. Hanley, Ms. Justice, and Mr. Mahecha. Mr. Cho and Mr. Gundersen were absent.

Also present were Mr. Hough, Superintendent of Schools, and Ms. Sarno, Assistant Business Administrator/Board Secretary. There were four 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. Kelly opened the meeting and thanked Mr. Hough, Ms. Sarno, and district administration for the hard work and time spent building this budget. She also thanked Mr. Hanley for his leadership throughout this process, and asked that he begin the discussion.

DISCUSSION – BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBERS

Mr. Hanley reported that the Operations Committee met this past Monday to discuss the most current information regarding health benefits cost and state aid. Prior to Monday, the budget increase had been 5.1%, and in light of the new information, the committee voted unanimously on the 4.93% increase. This budge aligns closely with the goals of the focus groups and ongoing communications between the Superintendent, administration, community, staff and leaders. This budget is financially sustainable and continues investment in our students – the community and the Board confidence in this budget process should be high. The committee also voted unanimously on the withdrawals from maintenance and capital reserves.

Mr. Mahecha also gave thanks to Mr. Hough, Ms. Sarno, and the administration. He noted that the health insurance increase, which is out of our hands, is the largest driver of the increase – and this will continue for years to come.

Ms. Kelly asked Mr. Hanley to talk about future healthcare increase challenges.

Mr. Hanley asked Mr. Hough to expand on what was able to be added back into the budget due to the changes in healthcare and state aid.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Multiple residents gave their thoughts on what is driving the increase in healthcare costs, as well as additional costs of home ownership.

A resident spoke of her desire to restart the community group, "Speak Up Summit" in order to increase communication between the district and residents.

Motion by Mr. Mahecha, seconded by Ms. Justice, unanimously approved by voice vote to close public comment.

APPROVAL OF 2026-2027 SCHOOL BUDGET RESOLUTION

Mr. Hanley moved the following:

RESOLVED that the tentative budget be approved for the 2026-2027 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
2026-2027 Total Expenditures	$89,672,896	$ 838,949	0	$90,511,845
Less Anticipated Revenues	9,799,533	838,949	0	10,638,482
Local Tax Levy to be Raised	$79,873,363	0	0	$79,873,363

And to advertise said tentative budget 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 Summit H.S. Library/Media Center on Thursday, March 26, 2026 at 6:00 PM for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on the budget for the 2026-2027 school year;
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 $850,000 as follows:

$600,000 LCJ Summit Middle School new generator
$150,000 Summit High School hot water heater
$100,000 Architect/engineering fees for district-wide projects;

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 $50,000 for the LCJ Summit Middle School VCT replacement; and

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Education includes in the tentative budget the adjustment for increased costs of health benefits in the amount of $2,227,161. The additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increases in health benefit premiums.

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

TRAVEL & RELATED EXPENDITURES REIMBURSEMENT FOR 2026-2027

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23:A-7.3 a board of education must establish a maximum dollar limit for travel expenditure, as defined in N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.1 et seq.,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Summit Board of Education approves establishing the maximum expenditure for the 2026-2027 school year, not to exceed $1,500.00 for regular travel pursuant to Policy #6471, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Summit Board of Education approves establishing a maximum travel expenditure amount of $200,000 for the 2026-2027 school year.

The maximum travel expenditure for the 2025-2026 school year is $200,000 of which $34,392 has been spent and $5,586 is encumbered to date

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

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Hanley seconded by Ms. Justice and carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Sarno
Asst. School Business Administrator/
Board Secretary
Summit Public Schools