



Palisades Park School District

410 Second Street ▪ Palisades Park ▪ NJ 07650
Ph. 201-947-3550

April 28, 2026

Dear Mayor Kim and Council Members of Palisades Park,

I am Soo Chung, President of the Palisades Park Board of Education. I am here tonight on behalf of the Board of Education to inform the Borough Council and Mayor of our concerns regarding the Borough's planned approval of redevelopment plans and related settlements that could potentially increase burdens not only for the children and students of Palisades Park, but for all existing property owners and taxpayers.

Various local media reports over the past year were brought to our attention that the Borough of Palisades Park has been embroiled in legal disputes over its affordable housing development obligations. The Palisades Park Board of Education and the School District administrators are unaware of the current development plans beyond what has been reported through external channels such as the media. For example, if 1,000 or more apartment units are constructed on a few lots in Palisades Park within a short period of time, it will result in an influx of new students into the Palisades Park Public Schools. Moreover, if the Borough pursues a commonly practiced approach in municipal development settlements - such as offering tax incentives to the developers that could exempt them and future property owners from paying property taxes for decades, the School Board will be especially troubled by such a decision.. The Board of Education and Palisades Park Public Schools would receive no additional revenue from the developer, property owners, or eventual tenants, yet would incur the significant costs necessary to educate many additional residents.

Under the current law, there is no legal obligation for developers and or Borough officials to notify school districts about development plans, nor allocate a portion of development fees to the school districts when entering into development contracts, whether or not they include affordable housing units.. However, many municipalities and cities in New Jersey cooperate with their respective school districts regarding large-scale construction projects, including providing a portion of the revenue generated through PILOT or other incentive agreements. In general, municipal governments ensure such revenues are split with their Boards of Education in recognition of the importance of public education and the potential negative impacts that

increased enrollment can have on students, parents, teachers, and existing taxpayers when population growth is not matched with increased revenue for the Board of Education. We hope that the Palisades Park School District will not be left financially defenseless in addressing this issue.

The Palisades Park Board of Education, therefore, respectfully requests the Mayor and Borough Council members consider the following:

- Please present maximum support measures during negotiations with developers to ensure that the Palisades Park School District does not suffer financial, educational, or environmental damage caused by large-scale development projects; and
- Please consider reviewing case studies of NJ municipalities regarding their general practice when entering into revenue-sharing agreements with developers and school districts. An impact analysis reflecting the current financial status of the Palisades Park School District would also be helpful; and
- Please provide updates regarding the status and nature of any proposed or planned redevelopments, including the extent and nature of any tax abatements or other incentives being considered or offered in connection with such plans.
- Please provide information regarding revenues from PILOT programs related to all housing projects approved in connection with the redevelopment of additional residential units in Palisades Park; and
- Please require any revenues created or paid by the developers of such projects to be shared with the Board of Education to offset the costs associated with increased student enrollment; and
- Please provide corrected data on the municipal website regarding the tax levy of the Board of Education and its impact. Currently, the information specified in the copy of the 2024-2025 Annual Friendly Budget posted on the Palisades Park municipal website is incorrect. The 2024/25 School Tax Levy is only \$26,371,112, which is 11 million dollars less than the incorrectly listed amount of \$37,534,767. We believe this information is critical for the Borough and the public to understand when considering the implications of any future redevelopments.

Thank you for your understanding and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "soo chung". The signature is written in a cursive, lowercase style.

Palisades Park Board of Education