

LACEY TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SPECIAL MEETING

**ADOPTION OF THE
2025-2026 AMENDED TENTATIVE BUDGET**



**Wednesday, April 9, 2025
Lacey Township High School Lecture Hall
6:00 p.m.**

MEETING OUTLINE
April 9, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Adequate notice of this meeting was advertised in the Asbury Park Press on April 8, 2025, and by posting the notice in the Forked River Post Office and the Lanoka Harbor Post Office, and by filing a copy of the notice with the Lacey Township Clerk, as required by the Open Public Meetings Act.

4. ROLL CALL FOR ATTENDANCE

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION

6. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

- Presentation of 2025-2026 Amended Tentative Budget
 - Mr. William W. Zylinski, Acting Superintendent
 - Ms. Sharon Ormsbee, Business Administrator

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

8. SUPERINTENDENT COMMENT

9. BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

10. RESOLUTION(S)

A. NEW BUSINESS

11. ADJOURNMENT

(A) NEW BUSINESS

1. ADOPTION OF THE AMENDED TENTATIVE BUDGET FOR 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR

MOTION: Application Submission – Additional Expenditures and Tax Incentive Aid

WHEREAS, in the proposed FY2026 State Budget, certain districts have the opportunity to apply to the Commission of Education to increase expenditures, including an allocation of Tax Levy Incentive Aid, in order to satisfy the thoroughness and efficiency standards established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-46, and

WHEREAS, based on the information provided by the New Jersey Department of Education, Lacey Township is below local fair share and spending below adequacy to be eligible to participate in this program, and

WHEREAS, Lacey Township is eligible to increase expenditures by up to \$17,541,395 and qualify for Tax Levy Incentive Aid in the amount of up to \$877,070, and

WHEREAS, Lacey Township is requesting to increase expenditures by \$6,681,867 and qualify for Tax Levy Incentive Aid in the amount of \$334,093, and

WHEREAS, General Fund Expenditure Budget as proposed is \$76,713,370, which is an increase of 6.72% from the prior year budget (10-year average increase is 1.58% when comparing original budgets to original budgets), and

WHEREAS, a large portion of the increases are attributable to projected cost increases in health insurance, transportation, utility costs insurances and special education, etc; and

WHEREAS, the Lacey Township School District is requesting the approval to increase expenditures based on the following reasons to maintain 61 teaching positions and purchase curriculum materials for K-8 English Language Arts and High School Mathematics.

WHEREAS, during the last ten years the Lacey Township School District has utilized all allowable increases under the School Funding Reform Act and S2; and

WHEREAS, Lacey Township School District requires additional funding to satisfy the increased cost and projected expenditures related to health care, insurance, utility, special education and transportation costs; and

WHEREAS, despite the latest Taxpayers' Guide to Education Spending (2024) demonstrating that Lacey Township School District already has one of the lowest comparative cost per pupil in the state for districts with 3500+ students, the district is not seeking an increase in expenditures above the amount already proposed in the submitted 2025-26 tentative budget, but rather the district is seeking a funding solution for the

\$6,681,867 necessary to cover those proposed expenditures, which are necessary for a thorough and efficient education, and to qualify for Tax Levy Incentive Aid in the amount of \$334,093, and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Education is proposing capping state aid losses at 3%, and state aid gains at 6% for the 2025-26 budget cycle, thereby acknowledging the need for ‘guardrails’ when there are significant changes in state aid allocations from year to year, and such guardrails have been necessary in districts like Lacey Township School District for many years, therefore, if Lacey Township School District’s aid losses were capped at 3% annually and applied retroactively beginning with the 2020-21 school year, this would result in a state aid adjustment of \$10,649,520 for the 2025-26 budget cycle (the district is not seeking retroactive funding prior to the 2025-26 budget cycle), which would provide a sustainable funding solution to address the district’s projected revenue shortfall for the 2025-26 school year, and

WHEREAS, by approving this resolution, the Board of Education is seeking either the return of \$10,649,520 in state aid with the retroactive application of a 3% annual state aid loss guardrail back to the 2020-21 school year, or a state loan/aid advancement of \$6,681,867, or the authority to increase the tax levy by \$6,681,867, as one of these solutions is necessary for the Chief School Administrator (CSA) to balance the 2025-26 proposed budget and provide a thorough and efficient education, and

WHEREAS, by approving this resolution, the Board of Education is **NOT** authorizing a \$6,681,867 tax increase and will continue to explore and exhaust all opportunities to recover lost state aid, but is simply approving the submission of the application for authorization to do the same and to request Tax Incentive Aid, and

THEREFORE, the Lacey Township School District Board of Education is approving the submission of this application to the Commissioner of Education.

Amended Tentative Budget for 2025-2026 School Year

Move that the Board adopt the amended tentative budget for the 2025-2026 school year.

BE IT RESOLVED that the amended tentative budget for the 2025-2026 school year be approved using the 2025-2026 state aid figures, and that the School Business Administrator/Board Secretary be authorized to submit the following amended tentative budget to the Ocean County Executive County Superintendent of Schools for approval in accordance with the statutory deadline:

	General	Special	Debt	
	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Revenues</u>	<u>Service</u>	<u>Total</u>
Total Expenditures	\$76,713,370	\$9,078,347	\$2,349,850	\$88,141,567
Less: Anticipated Revenues	<u>8,870,358</u>	<u>9,078,347</u>	<u>275,945</u>	<u>18,224,650</u>
Taxes to be Raised	\$67,843,012	\$0	\$2,073,905	\$69,916,917

And to advertise said amended tentative budget in the Asbury Park Press and the Beacon newspapers in accordance with the form required by the State Department of Education and according to law; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a public hearing be held in the Lacey Township High School Lecture Hall, Lanoka Harbor, New Jersey on Wednesday, May 7, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on and adopting the budget for the 2025-2026 school year.

Travel and Related Expense Reimbursement

WHEREAS, the Lacey Township Board of Education recognizes school staff and Board members will incur travel expenses related to and within the scope of their current responsibilities and for travel that promotes the delivery of instruction or furthers the efficient operation of the school district; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3 et seq. requires Board members to receive approval of these expenses by a majority of the full voting membership of the Board and staff members to receive prior approval of these expenses by the Superintendent of Schools and a majority of the full voting membership of the Board; and

WHEREAS, the Lacey Township Board of Education established \$92,350 as the maximum travel amount for the current school year and has expended \$49,247 as of this date; now

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves travel and related expense reimbursements in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-7.3, to a maximum expenditure of \$57,050 for all staff and board members for the 2025-2026 school year.

Adjustment to Health Care Costs

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Lacey Township Board of Education includes in the final budget the adjustment for increased costs of health benefits in the amount of \$1,428,884. The additional funds will be used to pay for the additional increases in health benefit premiums.

Use of Banked Cap

BE IT RESOLVED that the Lacey Township Board of Education includes in the proposed 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 \$104,051 for the purpose of maintaining 1 teacher. The district intends to complete said purposes by June 2026.