

RESOLUTION NO. 158-2024
BOROUGH OF SEA BRIGHT
SUPPORTING THE WITHDRAWAL OF SEA BRIGHT STUDENTS FROM THE
OCEANPORT AND SHORE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO JOIN
THE HENRY HUDSON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Councilmember Leckstein introduced and offered for adoption the following Resolution; seconded by Councilmember Bieber:

WHEREAS, the Borough of Sea Bright ("Sea Bright") is a member of the consolidated Oceanport School District ("Oceanport") pursuant to a 2009 mandatory merger under P.L. 2009, c. 78 (eliminating non-operating school districts) and, by virtue of that membership, students residing in Sea Bright in grades PK-8 are educated in schools operated by Oceanport; and

WHEREAS, Sea Bright is a constituent member of a limited purpose regional school district, Shore Regional High School District ("Shore Regional"), whereby students residing in Sea Bright in grades 9-12 are educated in schools operated by Shore Regional; and

WHEREAS, Sea Bright, the Borough of Highlands ("Highlands"), and the Borough of Atlantic Highlands ("Atlantic Highlands") wished to determine the viability and impact of a proposed school district reconfiguration whereby a new All-Purpose PK-12 Regional School District would be created with Sea Bright, Atlantic Highlands, and Highlands as constituent districts of this new district and which would educate all students residing in the three communities in grades PK-12;

WHEREAS, in an effort to explore this proposed school district reconfiguration, Sea Bright, Highlands, and Atlantic Highlands retained Porzio, Bromberg, & Newman, P.C., to facilitate a feasibility study that was issued in March 2020 and updated in January 2022 and which analyzed the financial, demographic, and educational impact of creating a new All-Purpose PK-12 regional school district which would be responsible for educating students residing in Sea Bright, Highlands, and Atlantic Highlands; and

WHEREAS, with regard to educational impact, the feasibility study concluded that "[t]he All-Purpose PK-12 Regional District will present distinct advantages" for students from Sea Bright, Highlands, and Atlantic Highlands "as opposed to the status quo given the degree of cooperation, alignment and articulation possible through a unified district from PK-12 in areas of curriculum, instruction, student services, transitions, enrichment, athletics and clubs, governance and leadership;" and

WHEREAS, with regard to the financial impact of the possible reconfiguration, the feasibility study concluded that "the increased financial resources that Sea Bright students will bring to the regional district provides the opportunity for greater investments in education resources, programs and services" while still providing long-term tax savings to Sea Bright and moving "to an arguably fairer and more equitable allocation of cost methodology" for all three communities; and

WHEREAS, Sea Bright joined with the Boroughs of Highlands and Atlantic Highlands and the Boards of Education of Highlands, Atlantic Highlands and Henry Hudson Regional to petition the Commissioner of Education to authorize a referendum on the expansion of Henry Hudson Regional into an all-purpose PK-12 regional school district and to allow Sea Bright to join this PK-12 regional; and

WHEREAS, the Commissioner of Education authorized a referendum on the expansion of Henry Hudson into an all-purpose PK-12 regional school district with Highlands and Atlantic Highlands; and

WHEREAS, on September 22, 2023, the Commissioner of Education determined that Sea Bright was eligible under Section 11(a) of P.L. 2021, c.402, N.J.S.A. 18A:13-47.1 *et seq.* to petition for authorization to withdraw from Shore Regional and Oceanport in the event that the referendum to expand Henry Hudson were to pass; and

WHEREAS, on September 26, 2023, the voters in Highlands and Atlantic Highlands approved the expansion of Henry Hudson into an all-purpose PK-12 regional school district and that expansion was effectuated on July 1, 2024; and

WHEREAS, at the same time, Sea Bright and Highlands commissioned an update to the above feasibility studies to include analysis of the specific items set forth in N.J.S.A. 18A:13-47.11 such that an amended petition could be filed with the Commissioner of Education; and

WHEREAS, that supplemental feasibility study concluded that all elements of N.J.S.A. 18A:13-47.11 will be met in the event that Sea Bright is permitted to withdraw from Shore Regional and Oceanport and join Henry Hudson as a constituent member of the Henry Hudson all-purpose PK-12 regional school district; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, after due consideration, Sea Bright continues to believe that its students can receive an outstanding and fully aligned and articulated PK-12 education by becoming a constituent member of Henry Hudson; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Sea Bright has determined that there exists good cause to pursue authorization from the Commissioner to withdraw from Shore Regional and Oceanport, and upon such authorization, to hold a referendum to allow the voters in Sea Bright to determine whether Sea Bright should join Henry Hudson; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Sea Bright seeks to have a referendum placed on the November 2024 ballot, or as soon thereafter as possible, with regard to its joining Henry Hudson as a constituent member, which, upon passage, would result as a matter of law in its withdrawal from Oceanport and Shore Regional; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Sea Bright authorized and continues to authorize the filing of a petition with the Commissioner of Education seeking authorization for its withdrawal from Shore Regional and Oceanport upon successful passage of a referendum on its joining Henry Hudson as a constituent member; and

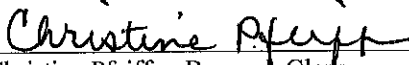
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Sea Bright authorizes special counsel, Porzio, Bromberg, & Newman, P.C., to take any and all appropriate action to obtain the aforementioned authorization from the Commissioner of Education and to effectuate same.

Roll Call:	Bieber,	Catalano,	Gorman,	Keeler,	Lamia,	Leckstein
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

September 17, 2024

CERTIFICATION

I, Christine Pfeiffer, Borough Clerk do hereby certify that the foregoing is a resolution adopted by the Borough Council of the Borough of Sea Bright, County of Monmouth State of New Jersey at a Council Meeting held on September 17, 2024.


Christine Pfeiffer, Borough Clerk