



Borough of Rocky Hill New Jersey

July 1, 2009

Dear Rocky Hill Resident,

You are receiving this letter because, as a taxpayer in the Borough of Rocky Hill, we wanted you to be aware that Governor Corzine signed legislation this past Tuesday, June 30, 2009 that will directly impact your property taxes. Effective July 1, 2009, the legislation eliminates the Rocky Hill Board of Education along with a select few of the 25 other non-operating school districts in the state.

At this point in time we are not exactly sure how this will impact the Rocky Hill property taxes since there is currently no transition plan in place to accommodate this significant administrative change. We have yet to be informed about many things including but not limited to the following; how the Montgomery Township School District (our receiving school district) will receive our tax dollars for the education of Rocky Hill school children, if there will be any governing oversight to insure that projected student enrollment and actual student enrollment are adjusted correctly, how this will impact any students with special needs who have out of district educational placements, or if we will have any recourse if the administrative costs that Montgomery School District passes on to our taxpayers become unfairly excessive.

The legislation temporarily expanded the Montgomery Township Board of Education by one seat to allow for a Rocky Hill member to sit on the Montgomery School Board through April of next year. At that time the seat will be eliminated and the appointed Rocky Hill member would be required to run for an existing open Montgomery School Board seat. Because the Rocky Hill representative would need to be elected by Montgomery residents there is no guarantee that we would be able to maintain Rocky Hill representation on the Montgomery Board of Education past April 2010.

The Rocky Hill Board of Education and the Borough of Rocky Hill have made multiple requests to receive any information from impact and/or feasibility studies that the state has performed, which led them to determine that this change in administrative structure was necessary. They have either skirted or ignored these requests. Because we have not had the opportunity to review any information that the state has collected regarding the elimination of non-operating school districts such as ours, the Rocky Hill Board of Education attempted to set aside money in our 2009/2010 school budget to conduct our own feasibility study. The Somerset County Executive Superintendent, Ms. Trudy Doyle, refused to approve the budget until the money for the study was removed.

In closing, without the appropriate information being made available it is hard to determine whether or not this merger makes sense. More importantly, we find it difficult to understand why the voters of Rocky Hill were not allowed to participate in this very important decision, as has been the case in other communities. Since this decision was done with little or no notice, no tax implication or transition information, and no input from you the taxpayer, the Rocky Hill Board of Education along with the Borough of Rocky Hill and the Board of Education of Millstone Borough have jointly filed for a temporary injunction against the disbanding of the two school boards. We will keep you posted on the outcome of this filing. We believe that the actions taken by the Governor and the County Executive Superintendent is at best legislative irresponsibility and at worst unconstitutional. We strongly encourage you to contact our state legislators and Governor Corzine's office at (609) 292-6000 to express any concerns you may have regarding this legislation.

Respectfully,

Janine Lacava- President, Rocky Hill Board of Education
Edward P. Zimmerman- Mayor, Rocky Hill Borough

All bills and communications should be sent to

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Edward P. Zimmerman

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William Hallman

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