



Red Bank Borough Public Schools

Dream BIG... We'll help you get there!

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Jared J. Rumage, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

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Dear Red Bank Residents,

As you may be aware, the Red Bank Charter School submitted a proposal to the Commissioner of Education requesting an amendment to their current charter. If approved, Red Bank Charter School will double in size from 200 to 400 students over the next three years. The forthcoming decision from the Commissioner of Education will provide us the closure needed to move forward as a community and best meet the educational needs of all children in Red Bank. I look forward to serving this community and making Red Bank Borough Public Schools the pride of our community, as well as an exemplar in New Jersey.

The proposed expansion has resulted in numerous discussions regarding community engagement, standardized test scores, and segregation. All of these are relevant points and I am glad we had the opportunity to shed light on these topics using a 2016 perspective. The narrative of public education in Red Bank was long overdue for a rewrite. If any good has come out of the past two months, it was the opportunity to showcase our schools, staff, and students – an opportunity which revealed the true story of our schools to the greater community.

Regardless of all other factors and false claims which have repeatedly been refuted, there is only one crucial point when considering this expansion: **Any expansion to the Charter School will decimate the Red Bank Borough Public Schools.**

Recently, the Red Bank Charter School mailed their *Application for Admission* to all Red Bank residents. Included in this document is a “By the Numbers” look at the public schools in Red Bank. I feel compelled to share that these numbers are inaccurate. In addition, these numbers are different from those previously shared by the Charter School when making the same argument. This further amplifies the inconsistencies and contradictions that have been prevalent throughout the Charter School’s public communications. In light of the Charter School leadership team’s commitment to repeating unsubstantiated claims with no regard for our rebuttal, I have developed a chart to clarify our stance and data. Please review the information below for an accurate picture of the financial data.

We are a thriving school district on the verge of excellence. The true story of the Red Bank Borough Public Schools has now been shared throughout our community and beyond. An expansion to the Red Bank Charter School would be its own story rewrite, titled *Robin Hood in Reverse*. Any expansion, regardless of future changes to state funding, would take away from an already underfunded school community and provide more for a fully-funded Charter School community. This is not acceptable, nor does it properly represent the Borough of Red Bank and its residents.

If you have any questions or concerns, I would be happy to meet with any resident at any time to discuss the true implications of this expansion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. R.", is written over the printed name.

Jared J. Rumage

Red Bank Charter School Expansion

Fiction versus Fact

\$541,054 Taxes saved in levy that residents don't pay because RBCS exists

FACT: The residents do not save \$541,054 in tax levy because the Charter School exists. This calculation completely ignores the duplicative costs of the Charter School such as: administrative salaries, facility and maintenance costs, debt service and business operations which total \$851,000 per the Charter School Audit. If the Charter School did not exist, the District would save at least \$851,000.

\$128,959 Decrease in funding sent from Red Bank Borough to RBCS the past 6 years

FACT: The per pupil amount is decreasing because the district enrollment increased substantially about 5 years ago and has leveled off since that time. In addition, our population requires increased services (i.e. ELL, Special Education and Economically Disadvantaged). When applied to the funding formula, the enrollment and demographics lead to reduced funding for Red Bank Borough Schools, therefore, the Charter School is receiving a smaller number. We get less, so they get less.

\$3,007.69 Amount Red Bank tax payers save per student on educating RBCS students (local tax & state aid)

FACT: This point ignores the District's sole responsibility for all private, charter and district student transportations costs, as well as private placement tuition for special education students. The District's total for these items amounted to \$1,880,000 for the 2014-15 school year. RBCS does not incur these costs.

200 Reduction of students in overcrowded Red Bank Borough Schools; if RBB remain as they are, overcrowding will lead to increased taxes in order to build more facilities to accommodate growing population of students

FACT: The District is not overcrowded and we have no plans to purchase, lease, or construct an additional facility. We comfortably service more than 1,110 K-8 students in our two facilities: Red Bank Primary School and Red Bank Middle School.

10.2% Amount Red Bank Borough has raised your taxes this year

FACT: The District raised the tax levy 6.95% for the 2015-16 school year as allowed by State budget regulations. The increase attributed to "school" taxes was exacerbated by the shortfunding to the District by the State of approximately \$600,000. If the District was fully funded by the State, the 6.95% would have been reduced to 2.81%. Even more problematic, the Borough suffered a significant rateable decrease which ultimately increased all property tax categories (i.e. County, Public Library, etc.).

\$0 Amount taxes need to increase for RBCS expansion

FACT: The tax levy can only be increased by the 2% CAP and waivers available to the District. A Charter School expansion will require full use of these resources in order to meet the basic components of a thorough and efficient education – and it is possible that we will not be able to meet these requirements even with a maximum tax levy. The District will be forced to make significant and devastating cuts to staff and educational programs.