

Township of Manalapan

Office of the Mayor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
May 4, 2023

Press Release: School Bussing in Manalapan Township

As Mayor of Manalapan Township, along with the Township Committee, we are deeply troubled by the impact that SENATE BILL S2, from Governor Murphy's office, which cut funding that will result in the elimination of Manalapan High School courtesy bussing. In Manalapan Township this will have an effect on 1/3 of our bussing population and potentially take bussing or the availability of bussing away from approximately **550** students. As many of you know there will be no more "courtesy" bussing offered to any student that lives within the 2.5-mile radius of the school. This change brought about by state funding cuts does not consider the safety of our children.

Unfortunately, unlike many schools in the district our High School is on a residential street, located between two County roadways that do not have continuous sidewalk. We are currently in the process of installing a crosswalk on County Road 522 for the safety of the students.

This is extremely troubling to me and I have reached out to the Governor's office to express my dire concern for the safety of our school children. In the last several years, I along with former Mayor Jack McNaboe, our Township Administrator Tara Lovrich, other Mayors and Deputy Mayors, County Legislators, Freehold Regional High School District Superintendent Sampson and former Manalapan Englishtown Regional School Superintendent Marciante have gone to

Trenton at least four times to express our concerns to the Governor's Office representatives and Department of Education leadership regarding the effect these funding cuts will have on Manalapan residents.

I also want everyone to know that I have been in contact with school administration and our Police Department and our Police Commissioner Mary Ann Musich, and we are actively working on a viable plan to reduce the risk to our students during their arrival and departure from our high school. We are attempting to address the safety concerns as well as the traffic and congestion issues this bussing cut will undoubtedly cause. Unfortunately, so many roadways within the 2.5 mile radius do not have sidewalks and it is not feasible to install them in those locations throughout the Township. This is an issue for Manalapan parents and the community. We are working carefully to sort through the issues this funding cut has caused. Our primary concern is the safety of our children and their safe passage to and from school.

We are grateful to all the legislators that have come out against these cuts on both sides of the aisle.

I urge you all to contact the Governor's Office at 609-292-6000 or constituent.relations@nj.gov to voice your concern and to ask the Governor's office to consider the safety of our children. He should prioritize the safety of our children and restore the funding that has caused the loss of bussing in Manalapan Township High School and the High Schools in the Freehold Regional High School District. He should also restore the major funding cuts in the Manalapan-Englishtown School District also.