



# Ridgefield Public Schools

...valuing each and every student

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Superintendent of Schools

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Floro M. Villanueva, Jr.  
Business Administrator

January 20, 2017

Members of the School Community,

I write today regarding our public school district's Second Question that will go before you for vote on this coming Tuesday, January 24, 2017 from 2:00 to 8:00 PM. I take this opportunity to offer you the following for consideration:

## Our Past Financial Failure

- For far too many years, the Ridgefield Board of Education presented school budgets that yielded zero increases during times when most other districts were passing budgets that were well above 2 percent.
- For many years, Ridgefield Public Schools mixed funds between its regular budget and Learning Center budget, resulting in mandatory multi-million dollar refunds to sending districts.
- The State of New Jersey cut public education funding considerably and never restored most of it, not even through its health benefits employee contribution plan.
- **As a result of the abovementioned and as per the State of NJ, our district has operated at an average deficit of \$1.2 million and has sustained significant personnel and program cuts during times when other public school districts have been restoring personnel and building programs.**

## Our Recent Responsibility and Progress

- Our schools operate within state-imposed budget caps (this includes our administrative spending).
- We have reconciled all licensure and qualification issues among administrators and faculty.
- In recent years, we have placed student achievement, health, and safety at the center of all we do.
- Within our means, we have implemented progressive programs that serve students better than ever.
- **We have a multi-year strategic plan and a detailed budget that clearly presents every aspect of Second Question funding. There is no fluff in this plan, only essentials.**

## A Future for Both Our Students and Our Homeowners

- We can hire the counselors, media specialists, and subject area teachers and provide programs and resources that other districts now provide. We can ensure that students thrive in the world.
- We can improve one of the primary drivers of home value—the local public education system.
- **In short, we can transform our public schools into places to which all students run.**

Regardless of your choice to support students or not, please do your homework before casting your vote on January 24, 2017 because the future of Ridgefield Public Schools and the children they serve lies in your hands. Please visit: [www.ridgefieldschools.com/Q2](http://www.ridgefieldschools.com/Q2).

Sincerely,

Frank Romano, III, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools