



New Jersey School Boards Association

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REVISED

AGENDA ITEM NO: XI. (A)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

For Meeting of May 19, 2017

FOR: **ACTION**

 DISCUSSION

FROM: **DR. LAWRENCE S. FEINSOD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

SUBJECT: **DONATION TO SUSTAINABLE JERSEY FOR SCHOOLS**

Background: The New Jersey School Boards Association is a founding partner in Sustainable Jersey for Schools, which is operated by the Sustainability Institute at The College of New Jersey. Our involvement in the program is based on the positive impact of financially and environmentally sustainable practices on public school districts and the education of our students.

Enthusiasm for the program among NJSBA's membership has far exceeded initial expectations. More than 45 percent (257) of the state's operating school districts have joined the free program, which provides guidance, resources and recognition/certification for sustainable practices. Participation has grown steadily since Sustainable Jersey for Schools was launched at Workshop 2014. I expect that the level of interest will continue to grow.

Funding for of this valuable service for public school districts comes from a variety of sources. Contributors include the New Jersey Education Association, New Jersey's Clean Energy Program (which operates under the state Board of Public Utilities), the New Jersey Department of Health, and others, but not currently NJSBA.

NJSBA last contributed to Sustainable Jersey for Schools in July 2015 through a grant of \$25,000. That donation was part of a series of start-up grants authorized by the Board of Directors in 2012 and 2013 and funded through proceeds from the Alliance for Competitive Energy Services, our cooperative statewide energy-purchasing program. In total, NJSBA provided \$225,000 in grants to Sustainable Jersey for Schools from January 2013 through July 2015, using ACES proceeds.

We recently learned that the level of school district participation in Sustainable Jersey for Schools will exceed the program's current capacity unless it secures additional resources. The program asked if NJSBA could provide assistance.

NJSBA is a founding partner of Sustainable Jersey for Schools. Our members derive benefit from their participation in Sustainable Jersey, which has also served as a resource for NJSBA's own

sustainability training programs and services. Therefore, I propose that NJSBA make a donation to Sustainable Jersey for Schools of \$50,000 to support the program's continued maintenance and growth.

The donation, if approved, would not be funded through ACES proceeds, as were the earlier start-up grants. Rather, because of higher-than-anticipated revenue this year from sources such as Workshop and other programming, sufficient funds are available to support the expenditure, while ensuring that our free balance remains at the level recommended by our independent auditor.

Recommendation: I recommend that the Board of Directors approve a \$50,000 donation to Sustainable Jersey for Schools. The funds will be taken from the Association's current budget.