



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PO Box 500
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

JON S. CORZINE
Governor

LUCILLE E. DAVY
Commissioner

June 30, 2009

Ms. Stephanie Grimac, Board President
Tavistock Borough School District
P.O. Box 8988
Turnersville, NJ 08012-8898

Dear Ms. Grimac:

Pursuant to P.L. 2007, c.63 and A-4141, signed into law by Governor Corzine on June 30, 2009, I have reviewed the enclosed plan submitted by the Camden County Executive County Superintendent to eliminate the non-operating Tavistock Borough School District and to provide for the education of the children from Tavistock Borough in the Haddonfield Borough School District.

I find that the Executive County Superintendent's plan adequately addresses the statutory requirements for the elimination of the non-operating district. In particular, the plan provides for the continuation of a nine member board of education elected for staggered three year terms. Current members of the Haddonfield Borough Board of Education will continue in office until the expiration of their respective terms, at which time the successor shall be elected at-large by the voters of the new district. Within 30 days of the merger of the districts, the Executive County Superintendent will appoint a representative from Tavistock Borough to serve as a voting member of the Haddonfield Borough Board of Education until the first Monday succeeding the first annual election in which a member of the Haddonfield Borough Board of Education is elected at-large.

The Executive County Superintendent further recommends that for the first year (2009-10), the tax levy be allocated in the final amounts that were included in the districts' 2009-10 budgets. Thereafter, the Executive County Superintendent recommends that the levy be apportioned through 100% enrollment methodology. I find that this recommendation results in the least-fiscally disruptive tax levy allocation as required by the statute.

I further agree with the recommendations of the Executive County Superintendent regarding the liquidation of the remaining assets and the closing of the fiscal books of the Tavistock Borough School District, and regarding the remaining issues set forth in the Executive County Superintendent's plan. I conclude that this plan will effectuate the

legislative intent behind P.L. 2007, c.63 and A-4141 while causing the least disruption to the affected districts.

For all of the foregoing reasons, I approve the plan submitted by the Camden County Executive County Superintendent for the merger of the Tavistock Borough School District with the Haddonfield Borough School District, effective July 1, 2009. I direct the Camden County Executive County Superintendent to work closely with the two districts to ensure that this plan is implemented promptly, and that the transition to a single combined district is accomplished as seamlessly as possible.

Sincerely,



Lucille E. Davy
Commissioner

Enclosure

- c: Executive County Superintendent
- Executive County Business Administrator
- School Business Administrator, Tavistock Borough School District
- School Business Administrator, Haddonfield Borough School District
- Board President, Haddonfield Borough School District
- Chief School Administrator, Haddonfield Borough School District

CAMDEN COUNTY
REPORT ON NON-OPERATING SCHOOL DISTRICT

TAVISTOCK

Submitted by:

Peggy Nicolosi

Executive County Superintendent

Final Report – June 29, 2009

I. FOREWORD

Public Law 2007, Chapter 63, (known as “CORE legislation”) was enacted to encourage financial accountability of local units of government, including school districts. The CORE legislation serves to empower citizens, reduce waste and duplication of services, in districts, and direct shared services and consolidation consistent with amendments to existing law.

The CORE legislation established the position of Executive County Superintendent (ECS). In accordance with plans submitted to the Commissioner of Education, the ECS is required to eliminate districts located in their counties that are not operating schools (“non-operating school districts”). The accountability regulations, N.J.A.C. 6A:23A, promulgated consistent with the above law and recently proposed under the Administrative Procedures Act with substantive amendments reiterates the requirement for the ECS to submit such plans to the Commissioner to eliminate “non operating school districts” (N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-2.4). In addition, the Legislature has passed and the Governor intends to sign A-4141 which clarifies the procedures under which the non-operating school districts will be eliminated and merged into existing school districts.

Camden County has five Non-Operating School districts, Audubon Park, Chesilhurst, HiNella, Pine Valley, and Tavistock. This report presents a plan to join Tavistock with Haddonfield into a single school district to serve the students of both communities.

II. COMMUNITIES

A. Description

Tavistock

Tavistock is a borough in Camden County. As of the 2000 Census, the population was 24, making it the third smallest municipality by population in New Jersey, with just six more residents than the 18 residing in Teterboro in Bergen County and four more than the 20 in nearby Pine Valley. Tavistock was incorporated as a borough by an Act of the New Jersey Legislature on February 16, 1921 from portions of the now-defunct Centre Township. Tavistock was formed for the purpose of allowing the members of Tavistock Country Club the ability to play golf on Sundays as this was prohibited at the Haddon Country Club which was governed by a local blue law prohibiting sporting activities on Sundays. Tavistock's secession from Haddonfield, New Jersey, the original site of the club,

is said to have been driven by the fact that was (and remains) a dry borough though Tavistock was formed in 1921 during Prohibition when liquor would have been banned. Tavistock currently sends one student to the Haddonfield school district. With the elimination of the non-operating district, Tavistock, there would be no change in the general description of the merged new school district, no budget impact, and no change in building capacity, special education needs, and proximity of school districts.

Haddonfield

Haddonfield is a borough located in Camden County, New Jersey. As of the 2000 Census, the borough had a total population of 11,659. Haddonfield was incorporated by an Act of the New Jersey Legislature on April 6, 1875, within portions of Haddon Township, based on the results of a referendum held that same day. The borough separated from Haddon Township as an independent municipality in 1894. Haddonfield was the second municipality in New Jersey (after Cape May) to establish a historical preservation district. The Haddonfield School District is currently a K-12 district with approximately 2310 plus the one student who resides in Tavistock.

With the elimination of Tavistock, the Haddonfield School District would receive Tavistock's school levy and state aid. There would be no additional costs.

B. POPULATION

1. Total

	Year 2000	2003	2006
Tavistock Borough	24	24	26
Haddonfield Borough	11,659	11,590	11,515

(Source: U.S. Census, GCT-T1: Population Estimates)

2. Ages (Ranges)

Age Range	Under 5	5 to 14	15 to 19	20 and over	Total
Tavistock	1	7	2	4	24
Haddonfield	743	1,848	752	8,316	11,659

(Source: U.S. Census www.factfinder.census.gov)

3. Birth Rate (1998-2004)

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Tavistock	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	n/a
Haddonfield	125	130	125	136	124	138	119	131

(Source: N.J. Dept. of Health & Senior Services (www.state.nj.us/health))

C. HOUSING

1. Total

	Permanent	Seasonal
Tavistock Borough	7 Units	0 Units
Haddonfield Township	4, 620 Units	12 Units

(Source: U.S. Census www.factfinder.census.gov)

2. Growth (Bldg. permits 2000-2006)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Tavistock	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Haddonfield	7	10	5	18	15	16	18

(Source: N.J. Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development www.wnjin.state.nj.us)

D. Net Valuation Taxable

	As of 10/01/2008
Tavistock	\$16.5 million
Haddonfield	\$2.26 billion

(Source: Co. Board of Taxation – Abstract of Ratables)

III. SCHOOL DISTRICTS

A. BOARD OF EDUCATION

Tavistock Borough is a Type I district with an appointed board consisting of three (3) members appointed for three-year terms.

Haddonfield Borough is a Type II district with an elected board consisting of nine (9) members elected for staggered three-year terms. The Haddonfield District offers comprehensive Pre-K to grade 12 educational programs to meet the needs of a regular education population, as well as, students with special needs.

Combined Board of Education

In accordance with A-4141, the new combined district would continue with an elected board consisting of nine (9) members elected for staggered three year terms. The members of the Haddonfield board of education will continue in office as members of the combined district until the expiration of the respective terms for which they were elected. In any year in which the term of a member of the board of education of the new district expires, his successor shall be elected at-large by the voters of the new district. Within 30 days of the merger of the districts, the ECS will appoint a voting member from Tavistock to be

added to the existing Haddonfield board, thereby increasing the membership of the board temporarily to ten (10) members. Such member appointed by the ECS shall serve on the board until the first Monday succeeding the first annual school election in which a member of Haddonfield board member is elected at-large.

B. ENROLLMENTS

The tables below present the Tavistock's and Haddonfield's individual resident enrollments by grade levels, for the five years 2005-06 through 2009-10.

Enrollment-Tavistock Non-Op

Tavistock													
For Year	Total	K Half	K Full	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9-12	Sp Ed
2005-06	2					1							1
2006-07	1						1						
2007-08	1							1					
2008-09	1								1				

Enrollment- Haddonfield Receiving District

Haddonfield													
For Year	Total	K Half	K Full	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9-12	Sp Ed
2005-06	2301	145		152	149	148	139	150	168	149	140	673	288
2006-07	2344	134		157	159	151	150	143	149	175	154	659	313
2007-08	2363	140		150	158	157	153	154	151	155	177	635	333
2008-09	2350	137		157	144	160	154	156	162	147	152	651	330

(Source: Application for State School Aid (ASSA) resident enrollment.)

C. FINANCIAL

1. Budget Information

The following tables summarize the Tavistock's and Haddonfield's actual financial results for 2006-07 and 2007-08, and budget data for 2008-09 and 2009-10.

Tavistock Non-Op - Summarized

	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
Tavistock	Actual	Actual	Budget	Budget
Appropriations				
General Fund	0	12400	12919	14805
Special Revenues				
Debt Service				
Total	0	12400	12919	14805
Revenues				
Less: State Aid Other		385	423	423
Less: State Aide-Adjustments				
Less: Other Revenues				1386
Less: Federal; Special: Debt				
Total	0	385	423	1809
Taxes To be Raised				
	0	12015	12496	12996
Tax as % of Total Appropriations				
	0	96.90%	96.73%	87.78%

(Source: Tavistock 2008-09 and 2009-10 Budget Statements)

Haddonfield Receiving District - Summarized

	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
Haddonfield	Actual	Actual	Budget	Budget
Appropriations				
General Fund	29157554	30051338	31296039	31879868
Special Revenues	796071	805829	829219	874612
Debt Service	1962266	2026850	1991890	1981352
Total	31915891	32884017	34117148	34735832
Revenues				

Less: State Aid Other	1651866	1610445	1707531	1803009
Less: State Aide-Adjustments				
Less: Other Revenues	1026947	827965	887192	885833
Less: Federal; Special: Debt	891816	902080	927016	924061
Total	3570629	3340490	3521739	3612903
Taxes To be Raised	28345262	29543527	30595409	31122929
Tax as % of Total Appropriations	88.81%	89.84%	89.68%	89.59%

(Source: Haddonfield 2008-09 and 2009-10 District Budget Statements)

2. Equalized Valuation

The tables below present the Tavistock's and Haddonfield's assessed and equalized valuations, true values ratios and year-over-year growth, for 2004 to 2008.

Assessed and Equalized Valuations

History	Assessed	Equalized	Ratio	Year-over-year	
				Assessed	Equalized
Tavistock					
2004	\$3,353,121	\$3,339,442	100.41%	n/a	n/a
2005	\$16,557,646	\$10,202,187	162.31%	393.80%	205.51%
2006	\$16,557,339	\$13,380,078	123.75%	0.00%	31.15%
2007	\$16,557,398	\$14,969,380	110.61%	0.00%	11.88%
2008	\$16,557,493	\$15,763,146	105.04%	0.00%	5.30%
Haddonfield					
2004	\$1,011,118,379	\$1,555,236,374	64.91%	n/a	n/a
2005	\$1,018,820,904	\$1,749,133,703	58.15%	0.76%	12.47%
2006	\$1,030,417,376	\$1,983,430,626	51.87%	1.14%	13.40%
2007	\$1,038,588,443	\$2,141,295,069	48.43%	0.79%	7.96%
2008	\$2,261,891,796	\$2,214,640,177	102.14%	117.79%	3.43%

(Source: <http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/lpt/lptvalue.shtml>)

The properties in Tavistock were reassessed in 2005 and the properties in Haddonfield were reassessed in 2008 with resulting valuations as outlined in the chart above.

3. Borrowing Margin/Capacity

Tavistock School District –	n/a
Haddonfield School District -	\$54,928,006

(Source: Comprehensive Annual Financial Report)

Haddonfield has almost \$23.3 million of outstanding bonded-debt. The above capacity is net Haddonfield's outstanding debt. The combined district would appear to have sufficient borrowing capacity.

D. TAXES

1. General Fund Tax Levy (District Budget Statement)

	2008-09 Budget	2009-10 Budget
Tavistock District (nonop)		
Local Fair Share	136,857	73,399
Minimum Tax	12,015	9,436
Actual Tax Levy	12,496	12,996
Haddonfield District (receiving)		
Local Fair Share	26,101,368	27,754,219
Minimum Tax	26,101,368	25,615,876
Actual Tax Levy	28,835,895	29,287,620

1a. General Fund Tax Levy Allocation

Under A-4141, the general fund tax levy apportionment in the first year of the merger is directed in a manner determined by the Commissioner to be the least-fiscally disruptive. The districts' tax levy can be apportioned by equalized valuations, pupil enrollments, or some combination thereof. The impact of each method is illustrated below using the districts' 2009-10 actual General Fund tax levies.

	2009-10 Actual Levy	Levy at 100% Equalized Valuations	Levy at 50% Eq Val, 50% Enrollment	Levy at 100% Enrollment
Tavistock	12,996	207,079	109,800	12,522
Haddonfield	29,287,620	29,093,537	29,190,816	29,288,094

The combination of 0.2% of equalized valuations and 99.8% of pupil enrollment will result in the same levy allocated in 2009-10.

The allocation of 99.8% of pupil enrollment and 0.2% of equalized valuations would provide an allocation equivalent to the 2009-10 levy included in the final budget certified for taxes. For the first year (2009-10) I recommend that

Tavistock raise the same amount included in the 09-10 budget of \$12,996 and Haddonfield raise \$29,287,620.

A-4141 further provides that thereafter, the apportionment methodology shall be selected from those established in NJSA 18A:13-23, *i.e.*, equalized valuations, pupil enrollments, or some combination thereof, and that, if necessary, the Commissioner may direct a five-year phase in of that method. I recommend beginning in 2010-11 that the apportionment methodology be 100% enrollment and 0% equalized valuations as permitted in NJSA 18A:13-23. A five-year phase in is not necessary and therefore, not recommended.

2. Debt Service Fund Tax Levy (District Budget Statement)

	2008-09 Budget	2009-10 Budget
Tavistock District (nonop)		
Total Debt		
Total State Aid	0	0
Debt Service Levy	0	0
Other Local Sources	0	0
Haddonfield District (receiving)		
Total Debt	1,991,890	1,981,352
Total State Aid	97,797	96,594
Debt Service Levy	1,759,514	1,835,309
Other Local Sources	134,579	49,449

2a. Debt Service Levy Allocation

A-4141 further provides that the amount to be raised for interest upon and the redemption of bonds payable by the district for bonds issued prior to and after the effective date of this act shall be apportioned among the constituent districts of the merged district in such manner as the commissioner determines to be least fiscally disruptive. I recommend that all existing debt of Haddonfield Borough remain the responsibility of Haddonfield Borough and all new debt approved by the voters of the merged district will be the responsibility of the constituent districts and allocated in accordance with the general fund tax levy allocation recommended above.

E. STATE AID (School District Budget Statement)

	2009-10 State Aid
Tavistock District (nonop)	423
Haddonfield District (receiving)	1,706,415

School District Budget Statement includes Haddonfield's estimation of extraordinary aid.

Under A-4141, state aid will still be calculated as separate districts based on the Tavistock and Haddonfield's pupil and wealth characteristics. The resulting aid amounts will then be combined and provided in total to the new single district of Haddonfield for development of its combined budget.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMISSIONER

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-2.4, the ECS recommends elimination of the Tavistock Borough School District as of July 1, 2009. The one student of Tavistock Borough will continue to be educated by the Haddonfield School District and beginning with 09-10 will be counted as resident student in Haddonfield School District but for the purposes of calculating State school aid, both the Borough and the Township will continue to be considered separate school districts. Beginning in 09-10, the general fund tax levy of the Tavistock Borough School Districts will be apportioned as the Haddonfield School District, per the above allocation.

Residents of Tavistock Borough may run for the Haddonfield School District Board of Education beginning in April 2010. In accordance with A-4141, the new combined district would continue with an elected board consisting of nine (9) members elected for staggered three year terms. Within 30 days of the merger of the districts, the ECS will appoint a voting member from Tavistock to be added to the existing Haddonfield board for the 2009-10 school year or until the election of the first Haddonfield board member at-large. In 2009-10 and thereafter, the members of the Haddonfield board of education will continue in office as members of the combined district until the expiration of the respective terms for which they were elected. In any year in which the term of a member of the board of education of the new district expires, his successor shall be elected at-large by the voters of the new district.

This recommendation is the least disruptive on existing school district finances and educational operations of Haddonfield. The ECS may recommend further review and analysis of the Haddonfield School District as part of the ongoing K-12 consolidation studies, consistent with NJSA 18A:7-8(h) and A-4141.

That Haddonfield School district (receiving district) will have the responsibility to liquidate all assets, close the fiscal books (and conduct the final audit) of the Tavistock School district (non-op). Tavistock will bear the financial cost of the audit.

The ECS further recommends that all remaining cash balances after completion of the liquidation process go to the Tavistock (non-op) municipality.