



Hartman • Duff
Attorneys-at-Law

Hartman • Duff
A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY
William R. Burns
wburns@hartmanduff.com

Please reply to:
29 Hadley Avenue
Toms River, NJ 08753
Tel 732.475.4740
Fax 609.586.9404
www.hartmanduff.com

Tim Kalavruzos*
W. Les Hartman§
Michael J. Lento
Brian J. Duff
William Burns*

Hamilton Office:
Quakerbridge Road
Suite 202
Hamilton, NJ 08619
609.586.9000

Of Counsel:
Anthony M. Massi, J.S.C. (Ret.)
Michael D. Mumola*
Curt J. Cox
Joseph W. Eustace
Lawrence E. Popp
Christopher S. Tretola
Kristian Stout
* Admitted in NJ & NY
§ Certified Criminal Attorney

September 30, 2024

VIA ELECTRONIC REGULAR AND CERTIFIED R.R.R. MAIL

Marisa Matarazzo & Diane Oxley
TR Students First
32 Leone Road
Toms River, NJ 08755
trstudentsfirst@gmail.com

RE: TRUE FACTS LETTER

Dear Ms. Matarazzo and Ms. Oxley:

On behalf of the Board of Education of the Toms River Regional Schools District and the Superintendent, this letter is notice to you and the entire TR Students First campaign that your undated letter addressed to “Fellow Taxpayer” containing the statements, “However, the Toms River School Board voted on June 18th to support a 9.9% tax increase” and “While our school taxes continue to rise, educational programs, sports and extracurricular activities continue to be cut” is false and defamatory.

The true facts are that the Toms River Regional Schools Board of Education NEVER passed a 2024-2025 budget that increased taxes. To the contrary on July 3, 2024, the Board refused to adopt the budget, voting down the 9.9% tax increase and instead authorized legal action to secure full funding from the State of New Jersey. In response, on July 24, 2024, the State of New Jersey unilaterally imposed a budget on the Toms River Regional Schools Board of Education that ordered and compelled the imposition of the 9.9% tax increase, which again was rejected by the Board on July 3, 2024. Specifically, in a letter dated July 24, 2024, Susan Naples, the Interim County Superintendent wrote, “I have no choice but to exercise my delegated powers pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7-1, et seq., and N.J.A.C. 6A:23A-1.1, to adopt a 2024-2025 budget for the Toms River Regional School District.” This letter confirms the true facts and notifies you that your letter is false and defamatory.

Moreover, the Toms River Regional Schools Board of Education has not cut educational programs, sports, or extracurricular activities. To the contrary, the Board of Education and Superintendent have maintained and expanded opportunities for students in and out of the classroom including extracurricular activities and athletics through grant funding and



volunteerism from the district's dedicated staff and supportive community. This letter confirms the true facts and notifies you that your letter is false and defamatory.

The Board of Education of the Toms River Regional Schools District demands that you cease and desist from any further publication or dissemination of the words in your letter through any course (written or spoken, audio or visual, and/or mailed, broadcast, or published through any form of media, including traditional and social) and that you publish an immediate retraction of the words in a notice to all residents of the Township of Toms River.

If you continue to publish those false statements you and those who participate or assist in publishing such defamatory speech, are subject to prosecution for defamation, and the imposition of all relief (injunctive and/or the imposition of monetary damages, including punitive damages) available at law or in equity.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'WRB', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William R. Burns, Esq.