



Christie Administration Applauds Start of Newly Created Regional School District

For Immediate Release

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Lambertville, NJ – Acting Education Commissioner David Hespe took part in a ceremonial ribbon cutting today to mark the creation of the South Hunterdon Regional School District, the first newly created regional school district in the state in 19 years.

The new pre-K to grade 12 South Hunterdon Regional District includes students from Lambertville, Stockton and West Amwell. Previously, the three communities had independent K-6 districts that sent students to South Hunterdon Regional High School. Last year, voters in all three communities passed a ballot question to merge the districts.

South Hunterdon Regional is the fifth regional district established in the past 32 years. The most recent was the creation of Great Meadows Regional in Warren County in 1995. Others have included Somerset Hills in 1994; the School District of the Chathams in 1986; and Bordentown Regional in 1982.

Acting Commissioner Hespe attended the celebration today at the Lambertville School, along with students, parents, and officials from the local district, municipal, state and county levels. The following is a statement from the Acting Commissioner:

"This is quite a significant and unique event. Even though New Jersey has 600 school districts, regionalization has proven to be a difficult undertaking. A number of communities have explored regionalization over the years. Unfortunately, many of these efforts never materialized due to financial concerns, politics, or issues of local control.

"Something special occurred in South Hunterdon, and the entire state should take notice. If we're going to reignite the discussion about regionalizing school districts, that conversation starts with these communities.

"Students will benefit from a seamless, K-12 education, as the curriculum is aligned from one school to the next. For taxpayers, greater cost efficiencies can be expected. And the entire school community has experienced the unexpected benefit of increased public engagement.

"We will take the lessons learned here and apply them to other areas throughout the state where regionalization can both add to the student experience and ease the burden on taxpayers."

Acting Commissioner Hespe applauded the efforts of local officials and citizens, as they worked through a regionalization process that ultimately took six years. He noted that community leaders ensured decisions were designed to have minimal disruptions to the communities, and that local and state officials worked collaboratively to keep the focus on children instead of politics.