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Public Statement at the Board of Education Meeting
May 9, 2017
Regarding the *Cherry Hill 2020: A Clear Vision for the Future*

Presented by: Dr. J. Barry Dickinson, President, Cherry Hill Board of Education, and
Dr. Joseph Meloche, Superintendent, Cherry Hill Public Schools

There has been a great deal of discussion during the past few weeks around our work on the “Cherry Hill 2020: A Clear Vision for the Future” plan. As a district, we are invigorated by the involvement of varying stakeholder groups in this discussion. We have heard from students, from parents and from community members on the topic of next directions in our discussion, on what folks value that is good and on what folks want to see the district improve.

In the April 7th issue of the CHPS Weekly Newsletter an update was provided on the progress of our Cherry Hill 2020 work in Dr. Meloche’s [letter to the community](#). This update included a discussion of two conceptual ideas - full day kindergarten and the reorganization of the middle schools. Our work as a school district and a community is still in the conceptual stage in this process. As a Board of Education and an administrative team, we have been following the [Cherry Hill 2020](#) plan that we outlined in September 2016.

A great deal of the recent discussion has been focused on a single issue, the concept of a 6th Grade Center resulting from the reconfiguration of our three middle schools. There was no intention for this topic to become divisive to our families or to our community. Unfortunately, this singular issue is detracting from the overall discussion moving forward. We will not include the concept of a 6th grade center in our discussions moving forward. While we believe in the academic opportunities that could be provided in a configuration model that includes all of our 6th graders being together, that model will not be part of our ongoing discussions or a part of any proposal that is ultimately considered by the Board of Education.

We encourage all members of our community to continue to embrace the opportunities to participate in our discussions regarding the future of our school district. As a community we have great opportunity to build on the success of our schools.