

JAMES SKOUFIS

for State Senate

May 12, 2025

DEAR TUXEDO NEIGHBOR,

It has recently come to my attention that Dan Castricone, in his bid for re-election to the Tuxedo Board of Education, used my name and the threat of a school merger in a mailer in order to sow fear in the community and position himself as the answer to Tuxedo Union Free School District's challenges. In my 13 years in the State Legislature, I've never before been injected into a school board campaign, let alone with lies and misinformation about my actions or words.

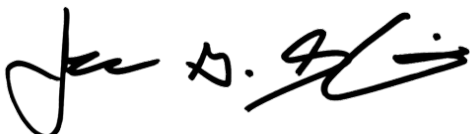
Mr. Castricone claimed I've spoken with him "a dozen times" about merging the Tuxedo district and Monroe-Woodbury, something that is patently false. **In fact, Mr. Castricone reached out to me earlier this year requesting a state-funded consolidation study through a hand-picked, for-profit company.** He agreed to my proposal to fund a study to evaluate **all possible consolidation/merger options** - not just some, as he proposed - for the TUFSD and to do so through an independent, unbiased, non-profit organization. This approach would be beneficial, allowing taxpayers and school leadership to have a set of data points to inform their future decision-making.

Tuxedo is an exceedingly special place, and you all deserve the best school district at the best value. That being said, it can't be overstated just how unique the district's position is among its peers in the state: TUFSD's total enrollment has hovered around 200 students, one of the smallest in the state, while per-pupil spending has risen to nearly \$75,000—roughly three times the state's average.

I've heard from a number of our constituents who are rightly concerned that the district's significant reliance on local tax dollars puts residents, students, and educators alike at a disadvantage. As the district considers its options, I believe it's prudent to arm ourselves with a comprehensive understanding of all possible moves and outcomes.

Thank you for providing me an opportunity to dispel the falsehoods and fearmongering in Mr. Castricone's campaign letter. My position is clear: a comprehensive study and, then, supporting the most beneficial outcome for the school district and taxpayers, whichever option that may be. As always, my office and I are a resource for you and your family, and I encourage you to be in touch. Mark your calendars for May 20, 2025, when you'll have a chance to weigh in on the TUFSD school budget and school board.

With gratitude,



James Skoufis
State Senator, 42nd District