Porzio Spearheads Historic Regionalization of Three New Jersey School Districts

September 26, 2013

On September 24, 2013, voters in Lambertville, Stockton and West Amwell overwhelmingly approved the dissolution of South Hunterdon High School Regional, a grade 7-12 school district, and also approved the regionalization of the towns' schools into a single regional district for students from pre-kindergarten through high school. This is only the third regional school district dissolution in State history, and will be New Jersey's first three-town PreK-12 regional school district.

Local school and municipal officials have been exploring regionalization for several years. Porzio, Bromberg & Newman P.C. ("Porzio") was retained to quarterback a state-required feasibility study to examine the educational and financial benefits and disadvantages of unifying the four local districts. The study concentrated on four areas: analysis of the demographics of the four local school districts, with projections about future enrollment; review of the educational quality of the four local districts' current programs, and whether combining school districts could improve those programs; examination of the financial impact of regionalization, to determine the effect on local property taxes and whether any savings could be achieved through consolidating the four districts; and investigation of the legal ramifications of undertaking such a step, should it prove to be feasible.

Porzio's Vito A. Gagliardi, Jr., and Kerri A. Wright led the local school boards through the legal process required to get the referenda authorized by the State, and will now handle the novel and challenging issues which come with dissolving an existing regional school district (the Porzio team having handled the two prior dissolutions), and with forming a new PreK-12 regional school district.