

David Campo

From: Megan Nelson <mesweeney81@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2020 2:47 PM
To: David Campo
Subject: RTM and the BOE Budget

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization.

Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender's email address and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Campo,

I would like to start by thanking the members of the RTM for the time they have put into researching the budget. I am writing to you as a Waterford resident and parent of a daughter who is enrolled in the Pre-K program at Oswegatchie Elementary School. My husband and I bought a house in Waterford 6 years ago knowing we wanted the best well-rounded education for our future children. Many of our United States Coast Guard Band colleagues have also moved their families to Waterford and have an invested interest in the arts; specifically, the Waterford Music Department which is currently one of the top programs in the state.

I watched the RTM Meeting on May 11, 2020. I ask you to consider the following:

1. There would be no tax increase with no cuts to the initial budget proposal.
2. Number 1 above is especially meaningful since there are many uncertainties in the world today.
3. There was no real justification for that large of a number.
4. A cut of \$470k will result in job and program loss.

I speak to my elementary school students daily. They express to me that they "miss hearing the band together" and "miss playing their instruments alongside their friends." They were heartbroken to miss their jazz and spring concerts. Music, and other extracurriculars, is often what makes students excited about school and learning. These programs provide the opportunity for our students to be a part of something great. It is clear that the social and emotional health of our children is and will continue to be at the forefront of their needs. With a cut of this magnitude, the first programs to be considered will be those programs that offer the most social emotional health to our student population.

In addition to my daughter being accepted into the Oswegatchie Pre-K program, she was accepted into a local magnet school. A few months ago, the decision to choose Waterford was easy. I am disheartened that the RTM approved such a large cut at this stage in the budget process.

I look forward to hearing your discussion. I certainly hope this cut is reconsidered for our children's sake.

Sincerely,
Megan Nelson
12 Best View Road
Quaker Hill, CT 06375

RECEIVED
MAY 14 PM 3:10