

To the members of the RTM,

I am writing as a taxpayer and parent regarding the decrease in the BOE budget. I understand that there are significant concerns about our tax base and the desire to keep the town's expenses in check. However when it comes to the education and services of our youth I vehemently disagree with your assessment. The idea that this should be a shared pain across all the budgets is not clearly thought out. I feel that this cut will not only decrease morale of our teachers, but our students. In fact my high school student has encouraged me to write this as she is concerned about her class size, access to honors classes, library resources and her ability to participate in her sport not only for her, but her peers whose families struggle financially.

As a teacher at Clark Lane, I was disappointed to hear that our math coaches who have worked so hard to help our students and increase our test scores are being disparaged as if they are not pulling their weight. From my experience these individuals are willing to help in any way possible. When the math department needed a change, Rob Cillino put forth a plan and continues to help the teachers implement it. Even during our distance learning, he is working with the teachers and individually with students to provide the support they need. To remove the support of these math coaches too early would be detrimental the program. Additionally, I'd like address the substitute comments that came up during the RTM meeting. You should be aware that many of us at CLMS cover for other teachers either when substitutes are unavailable or when another teacher on our team has meetings. I was deeply offended by these comments considering the effort my peers and I are currently putting forth.

Right now our students and staff need to have stability. This stability will help our community get through these trying times. I also feel that this is an opportunity for us, as a district to be on the forefront of virtual learning. A strong school system is a great way to new attract businesses, families and students. If we can demonstrate our commitment to education over the neighboring districts, if we can continue to provide our students with a positive learning experience then we can recruit and improve our tax base when the dust settles.

In the recent RTM meeting, it was stated that this decrease in budget is not intended to cut jobs. **IF you decide to move forward with this cut** and you truly do not want the loss of jobs, there be a clear stipulation that the loss of positions are not permitted in meeting this number. Our schools benefit the whole community and we cannot be short sighted about the impact our schools have on our town.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jo Ann Dumin, PhD

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