

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
WATERFORD, CT

2020 MAY 14 PM 12: 12

Mr. Daniel H. Campo
WATERFORD, CT

5/14/20

Mr. Campo and RTM members:

I am writing this letter not only as a tax payer of Waterford but as a concerned parent of my two children who attend Quaker Hill Elementary School, and a teacher in the District. I was extremely disappointed as I listened to the RTM debate on the BOE budget. I want to voice my concerns and am asking that the RTM reconsider their vote to reduce the BOE proposed budget by \$470, 000.

One of the many reasons my husband and I moved to Waterford was for the excellent schools that Waterford has to offer. Waterford is known for a great educational system and, as stated at the meeting, our district is increasing test scores and moving in rank among the CT schools. With a decreased budget from the BOE, you can expect to see this data impacted. Scores will not continue to increase by themselves; we need to continue to invest in education to promote the academic excellence that our children deserve.

I have attended previous BOE meetings prior to the proposed budget; therefore, I know that the BOE had already completed a thorough and careful investigation of line items to amend the budget and had decreased the budget so it would not interrupt academic growth and negatively impact learning. The BOE had proposed this budget because with additional cuts it would negatively impact our education system due to the elimination of programs and staff. Stating it that further cuts would not impact staffing is absurd.

As expressed during the RTM Meeting, these are unprecedented times, and we are unsure of the direct impacts it will have on our community. Our young children need an education regardless of the pandemic that now exists. Now, more than ever, our young children need continued academic instruction and additional social/emotional support for the stress that has been put on families during this time. Therefore, this is not the time to make additional cuts to the school budget as it will detrimentally impact children's academic growth and achievement.

As the district prepares for the uncertainty of educational guidelines that will need to be in place for our children to safely attend school next year, it will be necessary to have the educational funding. As we are going through these trying times of distant Learning, there will be additional impacts to our educational system that are unknown and the likelihood of additional educational needs will be necessary. It is clear that students will need: more intervention, appropriate protective equipment to ensure the safety of staff and students, reduction of class size due to social distancing recommendations, which could increase the

number of teachers and technology needed to be updated to handle distance Learning needs in the future. Quaker Hill's technology had already been previously cut from the budget for next year, and I as well as colleagues, are using personal technology to provide instruction for our students because the district laptops are outdated and can't perform necessary functions to provide our students' lessons online.

The voting procedures are unfair, the three members, who are Waterford teachers, were required to abstain from voting due to a conflict of interest. It seems that this will greatly skew voting.

The budget needs to continue to invest in education, and it needs to include a reserve fund for expenses incurred from this pandemic. The children of our community should not be the ones to suffer because the budget had already been reviewed and revised to ensure that the education of our youth would not be impacted and affect instruction in the district.

Thank you for letting me voice my concerns as a parent, taxpayer, and educator. I look forward to hearing your discussion on Thursday.

Lindsey Grgurich