

David Campo

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To: David Campo
Subject: RTM - 5/11/20 Waterford Board of Education Comment

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Hello RTM Members,

I hope you all are well and staying safe. I was very impressed with how this meeting on 5/11 was streamed, conducted, and made available to the public afterwards. Kudos to you all for making this work during this trying time. I appreciated hearing all of the different perspectives.

As a Waterford resident of 6 years, a tax payer, an employee of a local Waterford business, and a parent of a future student of the Waterford school district, I was very interested in how the Town of Waterford was going to proceed with its education budget. My husband and I chose to live and start our family in the Town of Waterford because of the stellar reputation of its schools, so after watching the special annual budget hearing, it was very disappointing to hear that there will be such drastic cut to the budget increase for an area as critical as education.

Based on the presentation by Mr. Giard, it sounds like the Board of Education has done quite a bit already to tighten their belts while still upholding the quality that the Waterford school district is known for. As someone who works in the technology field, hearing that they're using machines that are quite outdated was also a noteworthy data point that they're already trying to work within their means, even during a period of time where we rely on technology to remain connected.

If we have learned anything in the last two months during this global pandemic, it's that schools are for much more than just reading, writing, and arithmetic. Schools provide a place to hone our social skills, schools provide hot meals, schools provide a safe place, schools provide ways for us to experience the beginnings of our future passions whether it's to be an athlete, a musician, a mechanic, a scientist, or a town representative! Schools provide an opportunity for children to become part of a community, to be part of something bigger than themselves.

It sounds like there was a lot of data for the RTM members to process, so I implore you all to reconsider the cut to the Board of Education's budget increase. A lot of RTM members said that the Board of Education can just come back and request more money later from the RTM and the General Fund; however, that seems very inefficient to force the Board of Education to go through the effort to replan a budget on the hope for more money later. It seems especially inefficient if, as some RTM members implied, the request for more money at a later time would be approved anyway, forcing the Board of Education to go through a second effort to replan what they already have planned today. Additionally, it sounds as if the request process could take a minimum of 10-14 days. With all that talk about reducing inefficiencies, I feel that this is one of them.

I believe we as a town should give the Board of Education all what they're asking for. I absolutely hope that we do not put the Board of Education into a position where they are forced to lay off anyone. I recognize that we

cannot just close our eyes and wish for more money to pay for all of this, but I know I am not alone in being willing to pay more taxes to the Town of Waterford if it meant that our Board of Education can have what it needs.

Let's be a town that invests in and provides for its greatest resource: our children, our future.

Thank you for your consideration!

Best regards,
Marissa Nakaoka