



COLCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

We Create Innovative Thinkers for a Dynamic World

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Superintendent of Schools

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Date: March 16, 2023
To: Andrea Migliaccio, Chair, Board of Finance
From: Board of Education
Re: Board of Finance Chair's Email sent on March 15, 2023

Andrea:

Please be advised that the Board of Education met on Wednesday, March 15, 2023, to discuss your email and associated demands relative to the budget presentation. The Board remains confident that we are in full compliance with the Town Charter and Connecticut General Statutes.

Pursuant to the Connecticut General Statute 10-222, "Each local board of education shall prepare an itemized estimate of the cost of maintenance of public schools for the ensuing year and shall submit such estimate to the board of finance..." "...itemized estimate" means an estimate in which broad budgetary categories including, but not limited to, salaries, fringe benefits, utilities, supplies and grounds maintenance are divided into one or more line items."

CT Gen Statute 10-222 also defines the role of the Board of Finance (BoF), "The board or authority that receives such estimate shall, not later than ten days after the date the board of education submits such estimate, make spending recommendations and suggestions to such board of education as to how such board of education may consolidate noneducational services and realize financial efficiencies". The Board of Education (BoE) has provided far more information to the BoF than required according to Connecticut State Law.

Several BoE members and BoF members, along with members of the public, find it difficult to understand the budget as presented in MUNIS. Further, we are concerned MUNIS was never listed as a reporting requirement in the Town Budget Process Memo, Town Charter, or State Law.

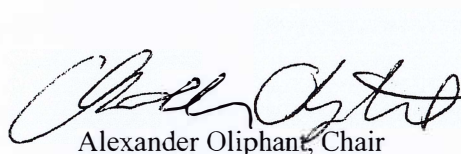
In prior years, teachers and programs have been cut. So far, there has been no threat made by this Administration or the BoE. At the budget workshop, a citizen questioned what further cuts might look like if the BoF decreased the proposed budget. The Superintendent (BOE) simply answered this question.

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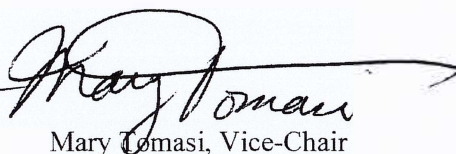
The fiscal reality facing the school district this year is something that should concern our entire community. Decisions made over the past 10 years have combined to make this perfect storm necessitating a record budget increase. The budget has been far from stable and consistent. This BoE is willing to meet the challenge of fixing this, as we are committed to sustaining the learning needs of Colchester's students.

The BoE has always budgeted for the full cost of Special Education (see attached memo from the Director of Pupil Services and Special Education). Neither the BoE nor the Superintendent ever said the community is "on the hook" for the entire \$1.2 million increase in Special Education. The school district has already provided summary statistics and an explanation of this increase. The district will not provide student level data, as that would violate student confidentiality and the Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Our Administrators have worked diligently and collaboratively to provide an honest representation of our schools' needs. Our Central Office has provided all required budget information in a format that is transparent and contains more detail than any year prior. We compliment them on their hard work. We are prepared to answer any BoF questions at the workshop on Tuesday, March 21 2023, and we eagerly await BoF recommendations.



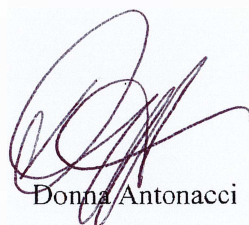
Alexander Oliphant, Chair



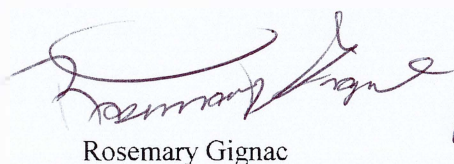
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Margo Gignac, Secretary



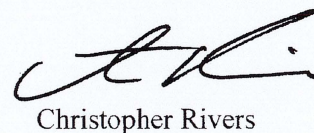
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