

**Hand Outs - Board of Finance Public Hearing
April 6, 2021**

All budgets are available on the Town of New Hartford website and are NOT included as hand outs

[https://www.newhartfordct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf961/f/uploads/town_proposed_budget_2021 -
2022_as_of_march_17_2021.pdf](https://www.newhartfordct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf961/f/uploads/town_proposed_budget_2021_-_2022_as_of_march_17_2021.pdf)

https://www.newhartfordct.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlf961/f/uploads/boe_budget_revised_3_31_2021.pdf

[https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1615479452/nwr7com/qd5xunoo55z14v4fs8by/MergedMediu
mBudgetforWebsite.pdf](https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1615479452/nwr7com/qd5xunoo55z14v4fs8by/MergedMediumBudgetforWebsite.pdf)

Correspondence:

Stephanie Genao-Reyes dated March 8, 2021

Jane Allyn – dated March 8, 2021

Marissa Klepps – dated March 8, 2021

Donna LaPlante – dated March 9, 2021

Megan Rogers – dated March 11, 2021

Heather Morin - dated March 11, 2021

Erin Kenney – dated March 11, 2021

Erika Pratt – dated March 13, 2021

Hillary Schibi – dated March 13, 2021

Melissa Ferrucci – dated March 11, 2021

Brooke Harris – dated March 12, 2021

John Tavano – dated March 12, 2021

Lauren Lyn – dated March 12, 2021

Leah Drouin – dated March 12, 2021

Michelle LeClair – dated March 12, 2021

Julie Albert – dated March 29, 2021

Sue Lundin – dated April 5, 2021

Aulay Carlson – emailed 4/5/2021 (dated March 26, 2021)

Christine Hayward

From: Stephanie Genao-Reyes <s.genaoreyes@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 12:16 PM
To: Christine Hayward
Subject: 4th grade teacher reduction

Good afternoon,

I am writing in response to the recent change approved by the BOE to decrease the 3rd and 4th grade class counts to three. As a mother of a child who will be going into 4th grade next year this change really concerns me.

These children have not been able to get the proper education they need over the past year because of the impact COVID has had on their learning. They need in class learning as much as they need one on one time with their teacher. How will they get the much needed one on one time with their teacher if he/she has so many children? The children can not get back the time they lost of valuable in class learning, but these kids can work hard with their teacher to help them push forward.

Maybe during "normal" times this would be acceptable, but not when the children have already lost so much education over the past year. I beg you to reconsider this decision for the sake of my child's education and future. These children have already gone through so much. We need to encourage growth and stability, not give them another obstacle for them to overcome.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Genao

Sent from my iPhone

Christine Hayward

From: Jane Allyn <janeallyn2@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 5:00 PM
To: Christine Hayward
Cc: Brian Murphy
Subject: Board of Finance - BOE Budget

Good afternoon Ms. Wexler and fellow members of the board,

My name is Jane Allyn and I am writing regarding the BOE budget for the upcoming academic year. I've also reached out separately to Brian Murphy and the BOE.

The BOE budget includes a significant year over year increase for outplacement costs for high needs students. The budget assumes that a classroom teacher and tutor position will need to be eliminated in order to help cover these increased expenses. As I understand it, the outplacement costs for the high needs students will be reimbursed by the state. It would stand to reason that no positions should need to be eliminated to cover these outplacement costs since they are reimbursed. However, I've been told that the BOE budget cannot reflect this reimbursement because it goes to the town and not back to the BOE. If this is true, can an accommodation be made this year so that the BOE budget receives the reimbursement, or at least enough of it to avoid having to cut a classroom teacher and tutor to meet the budget?

I am asking to avoid eliminating a classroom teacher because the student population is not driving the staff change. In fact, the upcoming 4th grade class will see an increase in their average class size of 5 to 6 students. This will not only be larger than any other grade in town, but it will result in the largest average class size for the town for the last 4 years. This is coming on the heels of a full year of adjustments due to COVID which has set most, if not all, students behind. If we expect to get our students back to pre-Covid academic status, it would seem that we should at a minimum, keep our staff at pre-Covid levels.

If this is not an option, is there any other way we can be creative to avoid a reduction in classroom teachers?

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Jane Allyn

Christine Hayward

BoF Correspondence

From: Marissa Klepps <marissa.klepps@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 8, 2021 8:51 PM
To: Brian Murphy; Christine Hayward; kellyodell3@yahoo.com; kleppst@newhtfd.org; tomalah@newhtfd.org; buzzit@newhtfd.org; gofft@newhtfd.org; stempienm@newhtfd.org; persechinoa@newhtfd.org
Subject: Budget Concerns

Hello members of the New Hartford Board of Finance, Board of Education and Brian Murphy:

I am writing this letter to voice my concerns about the decrease in classroom sections, specifically next school years 4th grade class. After last year and this years "pandemic year", I'm afraid that many of the students needs will not be met with average class size increasing by 5/6 students.

First, The short and long term impact Covid-19 has had on students academically and/or psychologically is unknown. If classroom Sizes increase, children who have already fallen behind or will fall behind, will struggle to meet expectations or ever exceed expectations.

Additionally, with the uptick in the housing market in New Hartford, we run the potential for more families to move to town, which could further increase classroom sizes.

The decision to cut staff appears to be financially Driven and not based on what's Best for each individual Student success. It can't be disputed that a student in a 22/23 student classroom will not be receiving the same amount of 1:1 time with a teacher as one in a class with 17/18 students. This doesn't maintain an equal learning environment across the district.

It should be highlighted to the town tax payers that any state reimbursement that the town receives for special education costs goes directly to the town budget and is NOT reflected in the BOE budget. This creates the appearance that the BOE increased spending this year when the majority of the increase in the budget comes from outplacement of students whose needs cannot be met in our district.

I ask that both the BOF and BOE address these concerns and reinstate the 4th section in the 4th grade.

Thank you,

Marissa Klepps

March 9, 2021

To Chairperson Regina Wexler and Board of Finance Members:

As the recent events unfolded regarding the Asset Evaluation Sale, I believe it became clear to all that deferred maintenance results in unpleasant consequences. Residents want property taxes kept low and are only willing to fund feel-good projects. Projects such as the Town Hall renovation and Sewer Plant Upgrade occur only when the town is under a mandate from the state.

I am no different than my fellow taxpayers, I like to see minimal, if any tax increases. However there are infrastructure projects which need to be done and the obvious place to find the money is to discontinue the practice of operating three elementary schools. I am open to all arguments for closing New Hartford Elementary rather than Bakerville Consolidated, but have yet to hear a compelling one. At some point, Bakerville Consolidated will close, I expect because the maintenance and capital improvements will become prohibitive. **We need a plan to begin a transition to two elementary schools.**

The first step should be grade consolidation – a good idea proposed by the BOE years ago but ignored after the school consolidation vote. A committee should be formed to study of actual space needs for the various educational activities that occur in our schools. As an example, a school psychologist occupies a classroom that could house 20+ students. This is an inefficient use of space. Once a study is done, renovations should occur to provide the necessary and appropriate spaces for all functions within two school buildings. Oak Hill should be evaluated on the basis of how many New Hartford students it serves. When I toured the schools in 2019 there were no New Hartford students in the program.

Several Bakerville Coalition members are now on BOE and are dealing with unpleasant budget choices. The Coalition utilized excellent community connections to rally their support and I'd like to see those connections used to conduct a voluntary survey on how many pre school age children actually live in New Hartford, so we have some idea of the number of students in our future. A 3 % budget increase this year in the BOE Budget is unacceptable as few households have avoided some form of financial loss because of Covid. I cannot support such a budget unless a clear commitment to begin the process of closing a school is on the table, painful as it will be for some.

Donna LaPlante
77 Stedman Road
New Hartford

March 11, 2021

To whom it may concern,

I am writing today to voice my concern around the recently approved budget which will decrease the number of classroom sections for the 3rd and 4th grades in the 2021/2022 school year.

I have one child going into the 3rd grade and one child starting kindergarten. From what I understand the kindergarten enrollment is high for the 2021/2022 year and an additional teacher is needed. Why are we not hiring one? Taking teachers and tutors away from the 3rd and 4th grade will greatly impact class sizes. Smaller classes create better academic and social/emotional learning. These past two "pandemic" years have caused great stress on our children's academics and psychological well being. My soon to be 3rd grader is really struggling academically and emotionally.

This is NOT the year to be taking support away from our students. I truly hope that this budget will be revised to provide our students with the smaller class sizes that they are used to having.

Thank you for your consideration
Megan Rogers

Christine Hayward

From: Christine Hayward
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 4:46 PM
To: 'Regina Wexler'
Subject: FW: Education budget, 4th grade teacher reduction

Forwarding .. (these are coming to me to send to BoF)

*Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant
530 Main Street
P.O. Box 316
New Hartford, CT 06057
860-379-3389
"Practice kind speaking and kind listening"*

From: Heather Morin [mailto:first_impressions@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 3:49 PM
To: gofft@newhtfd.org; kleppst@newhtfd.org; tomalah@newhtfd.org; buzzit@newhtfd.org; kellyodell3@yahoo.com; stempienm@newhtfd.org; persechinao@newhtfd.org; Christine Hayward <CHayward@newhartfordct.gov>; Murphyb@newhtfd.org
Subject: Education budget, 4th grade teacher reduction

Hello all,

First off, thank you for all you do. I know your jobs aren't easy ones. I'm writing to you to express my heavy concerns over the proposed removal of one of the fourth grade teachers for the 2021-2022 school year. This will have a direct impact on one of my children. I feel that having class sizes of 22-23 students is too high and will negatively impact all the students in that grade. This is especially harmful in a year following a pandemic where a lot of kids - my child included - will be playing catch up.

I urge you to reconsider this reduction and put the students' well being ahead of budget concerns. We specifically moved to New Hartford to provide our children with a quality education. We, as a town, should never sacrifice providing a quality education to all students.

Thank you,
Heather Morin
860-707-5049

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

Christine Hayward

From: Kenney, Erin E. (Counselor Education & Family Therapy) <e.kenney@ccsu.edu>
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 4:21 PM
To: gofft@newhtfd.org; kleppst@newhtfd.org; tomalah@newhtfd.org; buzzit@newhtfd.org; kellyodell3@yahoo.com; stempienm@newhtfd.org; persechinoa@newhtfd.org; Christine Hayward; murphyb@newhtfd.org
Subject: Class size concern

To Superintendent Murphy and Board of Education Members,

It was brought to my attention that there was a proposed drop in the educational budget impacting classroom size and therefore impacting my son's future grade(s).

I find it important to advocate for many reasons but would like the opportunity to express a few specifics in my correspondence.

First, I want to share that we moved to town when my son (now age 7) was entering Kindergarten. We vacillated about whether to accept his granted spot in the lottery for Ana Grace Magnet school that we pursued or send him to public school in town. After having a tour of New Hartford Elementary and many discussions we ultimately decided to send him to public school in New Hartford and a big part of that decision was contingent on the small class sizes. Over the years we have felt that New Hartford Elementary has provided a safe space for learning that feels like a family away from home. I strongly believe this would not be the case if the class sizes were larger.

In addition to this I am a licensed therapist and own a private practice in Avon. I have seen firsthand since this pandemic has entered our lives how much our children have been impacted emotionally. I feel that it is imperative that their needs are prioritized at this time. Increasing class size puts more of a stressor on the teachers who as a result are unable to focus on the needs of each child both emotionally and academically. I also urge you to take into consideration the academic needs as well after almost 2 years of disruption. The young individuals I see in my practice are all struggling right now emotionally because of the many impacts the pandemic has had on them. They need our support more than ever, we are their community, this is their future.

I thank you for taking the time to read my words.

Erin Kenney MS, LPC
Adjunct Professor
Department of Counselor Education and Family Therapy
Central Connecticut State University
Carroll Hall Room 249
1615 Stanley Street New Britain, CT
(860) 832-2420
e.kenney@ccsu.edu
Pronouns: (She, Her, Hers)

Christine Hayward

Subject: FW: Parent Concern - 2021-2022 School Year

From: Erika Fritch [<mailto:erika.fritch@gmail.com>]

Sent: Saturday, March 13, 2021 9:09 PM

To: gofft@newhtfd.org; kleppst@newhtfd.org; tomalah@newhtfd.org; buzzit@newhtfd.org; kellyodell3@yahoo.com; stempienm@newhtfd.org; persechinoa@newhtfd.org; Christine Hayward <CHayward@newhartfordct.gov>; murphyb@newhtfd.org

Subject: Parent Concern - 2021-2022 School Year

March 13, 2021

Dear Board of Education Members, Board of Finance, and Superintendent Murphy,

My name is Erika Pratt and I am the parent of two daughters that attend the New Hartford Public Schools. Over the past four years, my husband and I have been so pleased with the education our daughters have received. The teaching staff and administration have been exceptional about meeting their social-emotional and academic needs. I would also like to commend the New Hartford Board of Education for how well they have navigated the many difficult decisions throughout the current pandemic.

It has come to my attention that the New Hartford School District is considering eliminating a fourth grade classroom for the 2021-2022 school year. My oldest daughter will be directly impacted by this potential decision. There are currently four third grade sections and I feel it is in the best interest of all students to have four sections of fourth grade in the upcoming school year. Reducing sections during a time when so much educational learning has been lost due to the pandemic does not seem to be in the best interest of all students. Smaller class size allows the teacher to have closer proximity to their students. It also allows for more one-on-one and small group instruction. In turn, the teacher can better meet the individual needs of their students. Lastly, students are more likely to participate and become more involved when there are less students in the classroom.

My husband and I are both educators and have firsthand experience with the impact larger class size has on instruction. Likewise, we are keenly aware of the affects Covid has had on academic and social-emotional growth. There are educational gaps that have widened because of Covid that will become more apparent in subsequent years. Larger class size can lead to more students falling through the cracks on either end of the educational spectrum. If the New Hartford School Systems has four sections of fourth grade next year it will better help lessen these gaps and better meet the needs of the students.

In closing, I urge all members of the Board of Education, the Board of Finance, and Superintendent Murphy to seriously consider my request to have four sections of fourth grade in the 2021-2022 school year. Thank you for taking time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Erika Pratt
erika.fritch@gmail.com
860-733-9999

Christine Hayward

From: Hillary Coan <hillscoan@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 13, 2021 2:17 PM
To: Christine Hayward
Subject: budget

see letter below addressing my concern with BOE recent proposed budget.
Thank you!

Dear Board Members,

I'm writing as a parent of a current 3rd grader. I would like to voice my concern about the proposed budget in which will decrease the number of sections for my child's class next school year. I worry about my son's needs being met along with his fellow classmates. I feel the class sizes need to stay at a more manageable size, research shows that class sizes at this grade level shouldn't exceed 20 students. With the smaller classroom sizes, there are less distractions, more time for the teachers to devote to instruction and less to classroom management. I would like to ask you to consider adding the teacher and para position back into the budget for the upcoming academic year.

Thank you for your consideration,

Hillary Schibi

Christine Hayward

From: Melissa Ferrucci <mel779@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 11, 2021 9:41 PM
To: Christine Hayward; Brian Murphy, Superintendent of Schools; Tom Buzzi; gofft@newhtfd.org; hermonatk@newhtfd.org; kleppst@newhtfd.org; millerp@newhtfd.org; Ryane Longhi; persechinoa@newhtfd.org; stempienm@newhtfd.org; tomalah@newhtfd.org
Subject: Staffing for the 2021-2022 School Year

Dear Board of Finance Members,

My name is Melissa Ferrucci. Both of my children attend Ann Antolini school. My son, Ethan, is in 6th grade in Mrs. Daigle's class and my daughter, Alexa, is in 3rd grade in Mrs. Underwood's class. My husband and I made the decision to move our family to New Hartford four years ago. Our major deciding factor was the public education that would be offered to them.

As an elementary school teacher, I have seen first-hand the effects that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on students. During these unprecedented times, educators are seeing many gaps in learning and achievement. In order for students to make the necessary progress to meet grade level expectations and state standards, it is essential that class sizes remain the same for the benefit of our students. If the decision is made to cut teachers, this will impact our children negatively.

New Hartford has always put their community first and I trust that you will do the same in this situation. Please grant our children the opportunity to be successful as they recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my concerns about the staffing for the 2021-2022 school year at Ann Antolini School.

Respectfully,
Melissa Ferrucci

March 12, 2021

Dear Superintendent Murphy, Members of the Board of Education, and Members of the Board of Finance,

I am writing this letter out of concern for the proposed reduction of a 4th grade section for the 2021-2022 school year. I respectfully ask that you reconsider this decision. As a parent of 3 children and a 19-year veteran elementary school teacher in a larger school district, I am fully aware of the drastic impact that class size has on education. Class size affects academic performance, student engagement, and social emotional well-being, especially in the elementary grades.

Class size affects academic performance. Overall, students in smaller classes perform better than those in larger classes. This is well known and one of the reasons families looking to buy homes and/or leave larger districts are drawn to New Hartford Public Schools. Students in smaller classes receive more individualized attention and have more opportunities for both enrichment and intervention. New Hartford Public Schools teach Lucy Calkins' Units of Study for Reading and Writing. These rigorous programs rely heavily on teachers conferring frequently with students. Larger class sizes mean less opportunity for this critical 1:1 time.

Another factor is student engagement. The smaller the class, the stronger the classroom community, and the greater the opportunity for engagement. A large class makes it more difficult to get to know students, build rapport, and establish relationships with families. Students in smaller classes have more opportunities to participate, engage, and receive teacher feedback than those in larger classes. Students in smaller classes are apt to feel more comfortable asking questions and/or participating in an environment that feels comfortable to them.

A third concern is the social emotional well-being of both staff and students. The current school year has been extremely challenging for all. The NHPS staff is incredible and I am so impressed by how the pandemic has been handled. I applaud teachers for their flexibility in teaching students in the classroom and remotely on a day-to-day basis. However, the fact remains that the fluctuation between in-person and remote learning (sometimes globally, sometimes due to specific classes in quarantine) and the fear of contracting COVID-19 takes a toll on educators and children. A larger class environment will not support the current fragile social-emotional state of our valued educators and our children.

In summary, I am extremely concerned about the proposal to eliminate a 4th grade class section in 2021-2022. In these challenging times, our children need more opportunities to be successful. Increasing class size by 5-7 students is bound to have a negative effect on our students and staff. I strongly encourage you to revisit this decision. I sincerely thank you for all you do for our children.

Respectfully,

Brooke Harris

Christine Hayward

From: john tavano <tavano_50th@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2021 8:09 PM
To: Murphyb@newhtfd.org; Christine Hayward; Millerp@newhtfd.org;
persechinoa@newhtfd.org; stempienm@newhtfd.org; kellyodell3@yahoo.com;
buzzit@newhtfd.org; tomalah@newhtfd.org; kleppst@newhtfd.org; gofft@newhtfd.org
Subject: Teacher reduction and classroom section removal

Good evening to the members of the New Hartford Board of Finance, Board of Education and Brian Murphy.

It has been brought to my attention that there is a plan in place to remove some classroom sections for the upcoming school year, specifically the 4th grade class (currently 3rd graders). I am not sure what the logic would be for this other than simply trying to save some money at the expense of our young children. To increase each class section size by at least 6 children is an extreme change in any climate, but seems extraordinarily careless considering what these children have gone through over the last 12+ months.

I have witnessed firsthand with my own children the negative effects this last year's type of learning atmosphere has already had on their education and growth, and adding more children to the classroom would then further hurt both their short and long term development. Those children that have fallen behind over the last year will now struggle even more to catch up and meet their expectations with these excessively large student to teacher ratios. Our children simply deserve better!

Another reason why the idea of removing a section for the upcoming school year is extremely short sided is the current state of the New Hartford housing market. Families continue to look to move into our town, which makes it likely that the already high number of students in these grade will grow even further.

We need to put the needs of our children's first and should always look to promote success in the classroom. A child forced to be in a class with 23 students will be at a huge disadvantage when compared to those in more reasonably sized classrooms. What ever happened to providing equal learning environment across the entire district?

Our town has always been proud of our school systems and with good reason. However, if you implement this section reduction you will be actively participating in something that will directly result in a lesser education for the students.

I implore both the BOF and BOE address my concerns and reinstate the 4th section for the upcoming 4th grade.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Mr. & Mrs. John Tavano
130 Lair Road

Christine Hayward

From: Lauren Lyn <laurenslyn@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2021 9:54 PM
To: Brian Murphy; Christine Hayward; kellyodell3@yahoo.com; kleppst@newhtfd.org; tomalah@newhtfd.org; buzzit@newhtfd.org; gofft@newhtfd.org; stempienm@newhtfd.org; persechinoa@newhtfd.org
Subject: Budget/classroom size concerns

Dear members of the New Hartford Board of Education, Board of Finance and Brian Murphy,

I am writing to voice my concerns about regards to the number of teachers in 4th grade for the upcoming 2021 school year. It is my understanding that by removing a single teacher the average class size will increase from about 17 to about 24. I believe this would be difficult for the kids in these classes under normal circumstances.

We cannot discount the fact that we are not under normal circumstances. These children have gone from full time in school to distance learning and back and forth and I am afraid that the education of some, if not all of them has most likely abated to some degree. I believe that a change in class size of this scale has the potential to leave some students behind if they are already struggling.

Another point that concerns me is an increase in class size will make individualized attention to each student much less, and has the potential to escalate any behavioural issues.

This is a key point in their development and I believe this is a very precarious situation that requires our full attention. My opinion is that increasing the average class size by reducing the number of teachers is a really bad idea. In fact, I think we should be going in the opposite direction.

I am asking that the BOE and BOF address these concerns and reinstate the fourth classroom in the fourth grade for the next school year.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lauren Lyn

emailed 3/12/2021

Dear Mr. Murphy,

I am writing due to concern about the proposed elimination of a 4th grade classroom teacher for the 2021/2022 academic year. As a parent of 3 children, 2 currently in the school system I am concerned about how this decision will affect their classroom experience. This has been a challenging year for many children, adjusting to in person and distance learning models (often on their own at home). I feel there is risk of kids falling behind as well as lacking additional challenges in the classroom for those who need it. I am concerned that having increased class sizes will continue to impede their learning by providing less attention for each child. The teachers have done an amazing job of rising to the challenge of engaging children online and in person but I feel that adding many additional children to the class would make this far more challenging.

Is there a consideration or plan in place if enrollment continues to rise? Will class sizes continue to grow to an unlimited number or is there a cap? I continue to see a trend of many new families moving into town. We personally chose this town in part due to the reputation of the school system including its smaller class sizes.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you could please share this with the board of education as well as the board of finance I would greatly appreciate it.

Take Care,

Leah Drouin

Christine Hayward

From: Michelle LeClair <michelleleclair11@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 12, 2021 7:12 PM
To: gofft@newhtfd.org; kleppst@newhtfd.org; tomalah@newhtfd.org; buzzit@newhtfd.org; kellyodell3@yahoo.com; stempienm@newhtfd.org; Christine Hayward; murphyb@newhtfd.org; millerp@newhtfd.org
Subject: Proposed Budget

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you in regards to the proposed budget to decrease the number of teachers for the upcoming year in the 3rd and 4th grade.

I do not believe this is in the best interest of our children.

Having gone through this pandemic over the past year, do we really know how these students are doing socially and emotionally? Or academically? With smaller class sizes, teachers will be able to give more attention to each student. I feel some will really need it! I also don't want any child who has fallen behind academically to continue to struggle in a bigger class next year.

The 2nd graders right now will have more stress next school year to deal with. They are going from a small school that they have been going to now for several years to a new school, a bigger school, new teachers and even new classmates with both NHE and BAK combining. They could have more anxiety with what they've already dealt with over the past year and the pandemic.

I hope you will consider my opinions on this and not cut the teachers or tutors for the next school year. Especially in the 3rd grade. These students need the fourth section and this is not the year to make it only three sections.

Thank you for your time,
Michelle LeClair

Sent from my iPhone

Christine Hayward

From: Sue Lundin <suelundin@charter.net>
Sent: Monday, April 5, 2021 7:51 AM
To: Christine Hayward
Subject: Board of Finance

I have a few questions for the Public Hearing I am unable to attend.

1) ~ I understand the local BOE has over \$100,000 in a non-recurring account from the 2019-2020 surplus. Why are they not expected to use that money in this year's proposed budget? We have already paid taxes on that money.

2) ~ The local BOE budget increase is too high a percentage. As I read the newspaper, most area budgets for districts comparable to us have 1.8% or lower budget increases. What makes us to be two or three % more? There should be a deeper dive into our budget and cut back on some line items.

3) ~ I believe it is irresponsible to give the Superintendent of Region 7 an 8% pay increase for next year. If their BOE wanted to reward her for the job she did this past year, if anything she should be given a bonus not affiliated with a pay increase. And a 5% pay raise is ridiculously high given the pandemic and the financial burden many of our taxpayers are experiencing. At least our local Superintendent is getting a 2% pay increase and we had in-person learning all or most of the school year. Region 7 had a less than good academic year for our students. An 8% increase is so unreasonable.

The budgets being presented are not in the best interest of the taxpayers of New Hartford. Budget increases should be weighed against residents' ability to pay. This pandemic has hit many people hard and the taxpayers interests should be balanced with a good education. Budgets impact more than the students only.

Susan Lundin
428 Town Hill Rd.
06057

Sent from my iPhone

Christine Hayward

From: Julie Albert <jul333@live.com>
Sent: Monday, March 29, 2021 9:32 AM
To: Christine Hayward
Subject: Board of Finance - Budget comment

In this economic environment, how is the Town of New Hartford, the Board of Education and Region 7 able to justify ANY Expenditure Budget increase?

- many Town Residents will not be getting any salary increases this year. Why are salaries increasing for Town employees and elected official's salary?

emailed 4/5/21

26 March 21, 2021

To the Tax Payers in New Hartford:

All the numbers in this letter are in the public record. The Board of Education's budget this year is \$8,869,070.00. The school has three schools with 1150 seats for 400 students. This means each seat costs \$7,712.23 or \$5,784,176.09 for empty seats. For the last 10 years the BoE has wasted somewhere between \$40 to 50 million dollars on nothing. The school has 38 teachers and 24 assistant teachers. With a class size of 20 the system has the capacity to teach 1240 students. Now perhaps if the student performance was excellent, you could argue this was money well spent. But over the last ten years, roughly 40 percent of the students have failed the grade state level test in English and roughly 50 percent of the students have failed the state grade level test in math every year. This is chronological incompetence. If you were homeschooling your child you would have to not teach anything to match the school's performance. Given the schools performance you would be doing your child a favor by homeschooling. Now many will say I do not understand education, but I do understand waste and incompetence. The BoE is running a jobs program for the incompetent educator and our children pay.

The BoE has a prekindergarten program. One quarter of the children are 3 years old. This is not pre-kindergarten; this is day care. The BoE is running a daycare center with public dollars and public employees in competition with commercial operations.

So, who we have to thank for these last 10 yearlong abuse of our tax dollars? There are three. First is the First Selectman. He is supposed to look after the town and see that all tax dollars are spent in the best interest of all. He has not. The second is the Board of Education. Their job is to provide the best education possible at the lowest dollar cost. They have not. The third is the Board of Finance. Their job is to oversee and ensure that our tax dollars are spent correctly They have not. In the meetings I have attended it was clear no review was done of the budget and no critical questions were asked by the First Selectman or the Board of Finance.

Now, it is up to you, the taxpayers of New Hartford to fix this. Vote no and reject the budget.

Aulay Carlson