

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE BOARD OF FINANCE

The Board of Finance held a public hearing on Thursday, February 20, 2014 in the Council Chambers at the Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT. Chairman John Kortze called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**Present:** John Kortze, Harry Waterbury, Joseph Kearney, James Filan, John Godin, Mike Portnoy.

**Absent:** NONE

**Also Present:** First Selectman Pat Llodra, Director of Finance Bob Tait, 52 members of the public and one member of the press

Public Comment on the proposed 2014-2015 Town of Newtown Budget:

Mr. Kortze explained the calendar for the budget cycle. They have scheduled 6 nights with start times at 7pm. The budget needs to get to the Legislative Council by March 14<sup>th</sup>. The February 27<sup>th</sup> meeting will be devoted to enrollments, trends and security. Because of the nature of that discussion, an executive session will be warned. Everything that can be discussed in public will be done prior should an executive session be needed.

Barbara Sibley, 39 great Ring Road – Urged the BOF to send the budget to the Legislative Council without any additional cuts.

Stephen Rosenblatt, 50 Watkins Drive – The state allows for ½% reduction from last year's budget with the decline in enrollment. It is the only reduction allowed, given that the BOE applies for and accepts ECS grant money. Prior to the re-evaluation, was there consideration given to asking for a postponement, with anticipation a housing recovery, as other towns in CT have asked for and received?

Tony Onorato, 16 Watkins Drive – Asked if the BOE is setting up an authority to set up a surplus fund to spend money on their own without getting prior approval. Mr. Kortze replied that there is verbiage that has been drafted that enables and empowers the financial board in town working with the BOE to set that up. It has been forwarded to the BOE. But they have not heard back from them as of yet. Mr. Onorato expressed concern about this procedure and believes that it is a mistake.

Karyn Holden, 68 Berkshire Road – Thanked Dr. Reed for his work. Enrollment has declined and they have reduced teacher and custodial staff. The BOF requested that the Selectman and the BOE come in with 0% budgets and that is what has happened. Please send the BOE budget onto the LC without further reduction.

Lynn Edwards, 3 Sand Hill Road – Encourage the BOF to send the BOE budget to the LC with no further reductions.

Denise Tramposch, 35 Littlebrook Lane – Middle School PTA president, asked that the BOF not make any more reductions to the BOE budget.

Jennifer Belcolore-Arguello 46 Jeremiah Road – She would not like to see any reduction in the school budget. If you have a strong school budget, it will be better for the town. This is an opportunity to invest not only in our children but in our town.

Casey Ragan, 12 Meadow Road – She is a teacher and has children in the school. She asked that the budget be left alone.

Nick Waaler, 186 Berkshire Road – Every year the education budget gets cut. This is not acceptable. It is the bare minimum that they put forward a 0% budget.

Janet Ziperstein, 5 Charter Ridge Drive – Believes that no more cuts should be made to the lean BOE budget put forward.

Rebekah Harriman Stites, 6 Littlebrook Lane – President of the Middle Gate School PTA, urged the BOE budget be passed the LC with no further cuts.

John Masotta, 10 Grand Place – He believes he is part of a silent majority. They are working parents. He is asking the BOF restore Dr. Reed's original budget.

Michele Hankin, 16 Greenleaf Farms Road – Schools are still in a state of recovery and will be for years to come. By asking Dr. Reed to come in with a 0% budget is implied lack of trust and lack of respect. Schools should be a pride and joy in Newtown. Newtown has a low per child spending compared to other towns in CT. Trust that the Superintendent is recommending what is needed for students. She does not support cuts to the BOE budget and asks that it be restored to the original request.

Laura Terry, 64 Robin Hill Road – Feels that bifurcating the budget is hurting our town. Supports security and strongly feels that the SSOs should be part of the police budget. Any unused contingency fund from last year should offset security costs needed this year. Fully supports the BOE budget.

George Ann Manfredonia, 35 Charter Ridge Drive – Secretary of the Sandy Hook PTA, explained that they voted to advocate for the 0% BOE budget. Speaking for herself, Dr. Reed put together a fair budget. It is not extravagant, but realistic. That is how this town should continue to run. We are putting our town at a disadvantage.

Stephanie Burns, 10 Cidermill Road – Requests that the BOE budget be forwarded to the LC with no further reductions. This is a thoughtful budget that takes into account the decline in enrollment while maintaining quality education for the children.

Erin Masotta, 10 Grand Place – Moved to Newtown because of all the town has to offer and because of the reputation of the schools. Thanked Dr. Reed for his efforts and trusts the decisions he has made preparing the budget. She does not agree with the BOE's reduction of Dr. Reed's original budget. She asked that the BOF put forward the BOE budget to the LC without further reduction.

Daniel Krauss, 22 Beechwood Drive – Ask that no more reductions to the BOE budget be made and asked that they restore the budget to the original amount that Dr. Reed had requested.

Anthony Kalamas, 11 Flat Swamp Road – Today he met with Danbury schools. Over the next three years they can save \$215,000 with waste management costs. Take that money and use that to help the schools. It is an environmentally green friendly product that saves the schools 50 to 70% with waste management costs. He has tried to contact someone in Newtown but no one is returning his calls.

Kinga Walsh, 21 Horseshoe Road – She and her husband are part of the group that got a decrease in assessment and increase in taxes. They are supporting the BOE budget and ask that the BOF does the same.

Okan Akbas, 30 Tunnel Road – For the last several months he has been serving on the parent advisory board brought together by Dr. Reed. There has been conflict between the different segments of the community. He does not want his taxes raised but he wants a BOE budget that is viable and affordable. Dr. Reed has taken the group through the budget and doesn't see any fat in the budget. Newtown is in the bottom 25 towns in CT, in cost per pupil but we are in the top 30 in school performance. Respectfully asks that they move this budget forward.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56pm

Respectfully Submitted,  
Arlene Miles, Clerk

Attachment: Correspondence

Fwd: Support for BOE approved budget

Thu 2/20/2014 2:05 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** David Battaglia <[david.battaglia@oracle.com](mailto:david.battaglia@oracle.com)>

**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 1:58:17 PM EST

**To:** [newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us](mailto:newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us), [harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net](mailto:harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net), [jkortze@mac.com](mailto:jkortze@mac.com), [james.filan@gmail.com](mailto:james.filan@gmail.com), [mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com](mailto:mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com), [jgodin1312@gmail.com](mailto:jgodin1312@gmail.com), [jkearney19@aol.com](mailto:jkearney19@aol.com)

**Subject:** Support for BOE approved budget

To members of the BOF and BOE:

Unfortunately I will not be attending the Board of Finance Public Budget Hearing tonight, however I **would like to express my support of the BOE's approved budget with NO further reductions.**

Thank you.

Regards,

David Battaglia

53 Riverside Rd

Sandy Hook

Fwd: PLEASE APPROVE THE SCHOOL BUDGET AS-IS

Thu 2/20/2014 2:06 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Jennifer Walsh <jennifer.a.walsh@gmail.com>

**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 1:48:05 PM EST

**To:** jkearney19@aol.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, james.filan@gmail.com, jkortze@mac.com, newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net

**Subject:** PLEASE APPROVE THE SCHOOL BUDGET AS-IS

Dear Board of Finance Members,

Please approve the Board of Education's approved budget without any further reductions. We think it's critical to the success of the schools, the teachers and the children that no further cuts are made.

Thank you for your help.

Jen Walsh + Matt Petrillo

Parents of SHS 4th Grader Dylan Petrillo

Parents of NMS 8th Grader Henry Petrillo

13 Gelding Hill Road

Sandy Hook, CT 06482

203-364-9959

Fwd: PLEASE APPROVE THE SCHOOL BUDGET AS-IS

Thu 2/20/2014 2:06 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Jennifer Walsh <jennifer.a.walsh@gmail.com>

**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 1:44:05 PM EST

**To:** jkearney19@aol.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, james.filan@gmail.com, jkortze@mac.com, newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net

**Subject:** PLEASE APPROVE THE SCHOOL BUDGET AS-IS

Dear Board of Finance Members,

The SHS PTA voted at yesterday's meeting to support the Board of Education's approved budget

**with NO further reductions**

Fwd: Support for BOE approved budget

Thu 2/20/2014 1:40 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Carrie Battaglia <[carrie.battaglia@oracle.com](mailto:carrie.battaglia@oracle.com)>

**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 1:25:48 PM EST

**To:** [newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us](mailto:newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us), [harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net](mailto:harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net), [jkortze@mac.com](mailto:jkortze@mac.com), [james.filan@gmail.com](mailto:james.filan@gmail.com), [mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com](mailto:mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com), [jgodin1312@gmail.com](mailto:jgodin1312@gmail.com), [jkearney19@aol.com](mailto:jkearney19@aol.com)

**Subject:** Support for BOE approved budget

To members of the BOF and BOE:

Unfortunately I will not be attending the Board of Finance Public Budget Hearing tonight, however I **would like to express my support of the BOE's approved budget with NO further reductions.**

Thank you.

Regards,

Carrie Battaglia

53 Riverside Rd

Sandy Hook

## Fwd: Board of Education Budget Concerns

Thu 2/20/2014 1:41 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Vicky Ricks <[ricksfamilyfive@gmail.com](mailto:ricksfamilyfive@gmail.com)>**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 1:22:43 PM EST**To:** [jkortze@mac.com](mailto:jkortze@mac.com), [jkearney19@aol.com](mailto:jkearney19@aol.com), [james.filan@gmail.com](mailto:james.filan@gmail.com), [jgodin1312@gmail.com](mailto:jgodin1312@gmail.com), [mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com](mailto:mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com), [harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net](mailto:harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net), [newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us](mailto:newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us)**Cc:** "Ricks, EThomas" <[EThomas.Ricks@espn.com](mailto:EThomas.Ricks@espn.com)>**Subject:** Board of Education Budget Concerns

Good Afternoon –

I am the current PTA President at Head O' Meadow school with children at HOM, Reed and the NMS. As we get into the budget cycle, I thought it was important to let you know where the families at HOM stand in regards to the Board of Education's proposed budget.

Last week Monday, the HOM PTA had an emergency general meeting to discuss our position of support on the Board of Education's Budget. Below are the two motions that were made at our meeting.

1. The Head O'Meadow PTA voted unanimously to advocate for the Board of Finance to return \$139,481 to the Board of Education approved budget of \$71,045,304, for a total of \$71,184,785.
2. The Head O'Meadow PTA voted unanimously to advocate the Selectman's Budget to include funding for armed officers at all public schools in Newtown, as previously recommended by Dr. Reed.

I also would like to personally express my full support of the Board of Education's budget and ask that no additional cuts be made to this budget. I personally feel that both Dr. Reed and the Board of Education have made a lot of hard decisions this year and I feel this budget is both fair and what the town has requested, a zero percent increase over last year. As far as security goes, I personally feel it is essential to keep armed officers at all of the schools in Newtown and I feel the town should include this in their budget versus including the funding in the education budget.



Thank you for everything you do for Newtown –

Victoria Ricks

106 Boggs Hill Rd

Newtown, CT



This email is free from viruses and malware because avast!  
Antivirus (<http://www.avast.com/>) protection is active.

Fwd: Vote to pass the BOE Budget

Thu 2/20/2014 1:41 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Judy Dubois <[chuckjudydubois@charter.net](mailto:chuckjudydubois@charter.net)>

**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 1:00:31 PM EST

**To:** [jkortze@mac.com](mailto:jkortze@mac.com), [jkearney19@aol.com](mailto:jkearney19@aol.com), [james.filan@gmail.com](mailto:james.filan@gmail.com), [jgodin1312@gmail.com](mailto:jgodin1312@gmail.com), [mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com](mailto:mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com),  
"." <[harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net](mailto:harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net)>

**Cc:** [newtownhoe@newtown.k12.ct.us](mailto:newtownhoe@newtown.k12.ct.us)

**Subject:** Vote to pass the BOE Budget

Dear Finance Board members-

Please vote to pass the BOE budget tonite.

We feel that Dr. Reed and the BOE have submitted a lean and very responsible budget for our town.

We will vote YES for this budget. We cannot support any budget that cuts our education dollars further.

Judy and Chuck Dubois

7 Marlin Rd

Sandy Hook

Fwd: BOE Budget

Thu 2/20/2014 1:41 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Robin Fitzgerald <rlf222@aol.com>

**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 12:55:40 PM EST

**To:** jkortze@mac.com, jkearney19@aol.com, james.filan@gmail.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net

**Subject:** BOE Budget

Hello BOF Members,

I am writing to encourage you all to re-instate the Education budget to the Superintendent's original .75% increase over last year which is conservative and serves the purpose of acknowledging the trend of declining enrollment, but, yet again, does not move our district forward in any way. Anything less than reinstating those funds may serve as a rallying point for education supporters and have the negative effect of defeating the budget with a "no, too low" vote. While a 0% increase education budget may be a slick marketing sound-byte, it does not address the needs of our students fairly, nor does it address the needs of the senior sector who deserves remediation on their unfair re-valuation issue. It will only serve to define Newtown as a town that does not support quality education, young families or children.

Please attach this email to the public record for the BOF Public Hearing on the Education Budget as correspondence.

Respectfully,

Robin Fitzgerald  
24 Old Farm Hill Road

Fwd: the BOE's budget/Public Hearing tonight

Thu 2/20/2014 1:41 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Lisa Wallace <lwallace62@att.net>

**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 12:02:02 PM EST

**To:** "jkortze@mac.com" <jkortze@mac.com>, "jkearney19@aol.com" <jkearney19@aol.com>, "james.filan@gmail.com" <james.filan@gmail.com>, "jgodin1312@gmail.com" <jgodin1312@gmail.com>, "mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com" <mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com>, "harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net" <harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net>

**Subject:** the BOE's budget/Public Hearing tonight

**Reply-To:** Lisa Wallace <lwallace62@att.net>

Dear members of the Board of Finance,

First, would you please read my email to you aloud during tonight's public hearing? I'm not able to attend due to my 6th grader's band concert.

I write to you today to request that you put forward the BOE's proposed budget as is, without further reductions requested. As one who has been involved and engaged with the budget process for some time, I know that a 0% increase (or no increase) from the BOE has always been your desire. Dr. Reed presented an already trimmed and frugal budget to the BOE, making adjustments due to enrollment changes in the school district. The BOE has voted to reduce that budget by \$139+K to present to you a 0% increase budget.

I am in the schools often. I see the condition of some of the schools and I know that between maintenance and technology, we are a district in less than optimal shape and its getting worse. I know that you are greatly concerned with the seniors here and their requests for tax relief, but you must be as concerned about the schools and the students.

Please forward the BOE budget to the Legislative Council without further reduction. It is the right thing to do and it is the fair thing to do.

Respectfully,

Lisa Wallace

43 Mile Hill South

Newtown, CT

Fwd: Budget!

Tue 2/18/2014 7:05 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Arlene,

I'm going to forward you any emails for the budget to be added to correspondence. Please compile and I'll reference then at the meeting.

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Beth Hegarty <hegartyb@yahoo.com>

**Date:** February 18, 2014 at 5:21:11 PM EST

**To:** "jkortze@mac.com" <jkortze@mac.com>, "jkearney19@aol.com" <jkearney19@aol.com>, "james.filan@gmail.com" <james.filan@gmail.com>, "jgodin1312@gmail.com" <jgodin1312@gmail.com>, "mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com" <mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com>, "harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net" <harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net>, "newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us" <newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us>

**Subject:** Budget!

**Reply-To:** Beth Hegarty <hegartyb@yahoo.com>

Please do NOT make any further cuts in the budget. Our children are counting on us!

Kind regards  
Beth Hegarty

Fwd: Newtown budget

Tue 2/18/2014 7:05 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Steve Hinden <steve.hinden@gmail.com>

**Date:** February 18, 2014 at 5:12:05 PM EST

**To:** jkortze@mac.com, jkearney19@aol.com, james.filan@gmail.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net, newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us

**Subject:** Newtown budget

I urge you not to make any further cuts to the budget. I realize that some people in town who do not rely on the schools are looking for ways to reduce their taxes, but this is a town that is heavily populated with children, and they should not be the ones who suffer. Seniors in particular who located in Newtown did so knowing that this is an area where property value depends on the quality of the schools. Please use good judgment and provide for that quality.

--

Steve

## Fwd: Resident opinion on budget

Tue 2/18/2014 7:06 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Lynn Edwards <[lebedwards@charter.net](mailto:lebedwards@charter.net)>

**Date:** February 18, 2014 at 3:05:02 PM EST

**To:** [jkortze@mac.com](mailto:jkortze@mac.com), [jkearney19@aol.com](mailto:jkearney19@aol.com), [james.filan@gmail.com](mailto:james.filan@gmail.com), [jgodin1312@gmail.com](mailto:jgodin1312@gmail.com), [mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com](mailto:mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com), [harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net](mailto:harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net), [newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us](mailto:newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us)

**Cc:** [newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us](mailto:newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us)

**Subject:** Resident opinion on budget

To the members of the Board of Finance,

I am urging each of you to move forward the Board of Education's budget with no further reductions for the 2014-15 year.

Declining enrollment has been appropriately addressed in this very lean budget. In addition, \$139,481 was removed by the BOE from the Superintendent's recommended budget for no other apparent reason than to be able to present a budget to the voters with a 0% increase. I believe this was a mistake on the part of the BOE and a disservice to the students and families of our town, because the cut was made without consideration of the best interests of the students and seemingly done only to achieve an arbitrary "goal" of a 0% increase; there was no other rationale presented when the cut was made. It nonetheless means that the district will have to find a way to cut that amount from an already lean budget, even with no further changes from you. The most appropriate thing for you to do would be to add that \$139,481 back into the BOE budget.

I hope to attend the Public Hearing on Thursday to express this in person, but wanted to put my opinion in writing.



Sincerely,

Lynn Edwards

3 Sand Hill Road

Sandy Hook, CT 06482

## Fwd: A Letter in SUPPORT of the BOE Budget

Tue 2/18/2014 7:06 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Marabeth Pereira <marabeth1968@gmail.com>**Date:** February 18, 2014 at 4:39:40 PM EST**To:** JOHN KORTZE <jkortze@mac.com>, jkearney19 <jkearney19@aol.com>, james.filan@gmail.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, "harrison.waterbury" <harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net>**Cc:** newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us**Subject:** A Letter in SUPPORT of the BOE Budget

Dear Board of Finance,

I'm sorry I will not be able to attend Thursday night's meeting. I have a family commitment that takes precedence and prevents me from attending in person. Please know that my absence in no way diminishes my belief that this meeting is an integral part of the budget process.

Before getting into my thoughts on the BOE budget, I would like to address security. I fully support SSOs in the schools and feel that, like SROs, the cost burden should fall on the town side of the budget.

Now as far as the BOE goes, it is true that enrollment is decreasing. Dr. Reed, along with the school administrators, have accounted for those reductions by agreeing the right course of action is to eliminate teaching positions. I believe they have acted in good faith to come forth with a fair budget.

Over the past six years I have attended many budget meetings from those originating with the Superintendent's presentation all the way through to the LC's setting of the referendum date. This year is no different for me. I was at the Board of Education meeting in the NHS lecture hall when the Superintendent's budget was presented all the way through until the evening of February 6th when the BOE unanimously voted to pass along to you a budget netting a 0% increase.

Personally I did not agree with the BOE's motion for the \$139,481 "modification" merely to get from a .2% increase down to 0%. The BOE nonetheless voted to pass this motion because they knew going forward with anything more than 0% would be a mistake given the statement made at your 12/18/13 meeting. The minutes from that special meeting clearly state your request for a "flat or zero increase from the previous year," so ultimately, the BOE did as you requested, and I choose to support what they have forwarded for your consideration.

As for security, if it is ultimately determined that the cost for SSOs should fall to the BOE, I do NOT want to see the current BOE budget decreased to accommodate those costs. Trying to maintain a competitive and rigorous curriculum (not to mention keeping up with 21st century learning) will be difficult enough with the budget as it stands now. As a parent with a junior and an 8th grader I'm very concerned about what will happen at our high school in regards to the diversity of course offerings in the coming years. I realize many of you have children who graduated from NHS years ago, but comparing current graduation requirements and college competition to even five years ago is both unfair and unrealistic.

I ask that you please keep all of this in mind when discussion how to proceed. **The BOE did as was requested of them.** Any further reductions will adversely affect the quality of our schools and, I fear, the "vote no, too low" contingency will come out in droves. For the record, I have never been part of that faction.

I hadn't intended this letter to be so lengthy, and appreciate your taking the time to read it through.

Thank you,  
Marabeth Pereira

-----  
Marabeth Pereira  
33 Pocono Rd.  
Newtown, CT 06470  
(203) 426-1902 (h)  
(203) 417-2906 (m)

## Fwd: BOF Public Hearing 2/20

Tue 2/18/2014 7:06 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Jennifer Chaudhary <jen@thechaudharyfamily.com>**Date:** February 18, 2014 at 12:38:10 PM EST**To:** james.filan@gmail.com, ikearney19@aol.com, jkortze@mac.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net**Cc:** 'Rebekah Harriman-Stites' <harriman.rebekah@gmail.com>, 'Lara Wheat' <lara@wheatweb.com>, 'Jennifer Avari' <jenniferavari@yahoo.com>, 'Joe Harrington' <joeharrington2012@gmail.com>, 'Kelley Mozelak' <kelleymozielak@yahoo.com>, 'Nancy Ruhs' <nancyruhs@hotmail.com>, 'Roxann Monaghan' <spokes112070@hotmail.com>, 'Jennifer Chaudhary' <jen@thechaudharyfamily.com>**Subject:** BOF Public Hearing 2/20

Good afternoon Board of Finance,

I am sending this email in support of the budget as presented to the Board of Finance by the Board of Education. It is my opinion that the 0% budget represents a budget that is fiscally responsible and yet still meets the needs of our students. The BOE met the suggestion by the BOF to produce a 0% increase over last year despite the fact that Newtown is still dealing with the repercussions of the 12/14 massacre. I understand that with decreased enrollment that a 0% increase is an increase in per student expenditures but as you know Newtown has one of the lower per pupil costs in the State and its ranking is unlikely to be impacted too severely by this nominally increased rate.

I know the BOF is facing pressure from a group of seniors who believe they have been unfairly taxed but I urge you to consider the needs of parents who have traditionally been less organized but likely represent a larger proportion of our population. I don't believe that the members of the BOF would be fairly representing their constituents by indulging one group because they are noisy at the expense of the desires of less vocal groups.

I agree that ever increasing budgets at a time when the economy is, at best, recovering is not sustainable. I have heard “rumors” that the BOF is considering reducing the budget as allowed by the MBR. I hope that those rumors are unfounded and merely a result of the BOF performing due diligence towards a full understanding of what is allowable by law.

As a member of the PTA Board of Directors at Middle Gate Elementary School I am well aware of the emotions and sentiment of parents in the community. Many are unsettled even by the 0% “change.” Some groups may push for the BOF to add money to the budget but I trust our current BOE to know what our schools need—I ask you to trust them also. Please pass the budget on to the council without any additional cuts.

In this time of recovery, and fear, I believe parents need to know that our elected officials are part of the healing process and will move Newtown forward. Thank you for your time and long hours spent as a BOF member and for taking the time to hear my concerns as a resident of Newtown.

Thank you,

Jennifer Chaudhary

Middle Gate parent and member of the MG PTA Board of Directors

CC: Middle Gate PTA Board of Directors

Fwd: Concerned parent and taxpayer

Thu 2/20/2014 6:15 AM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Dcroth21@aol.com

**Date:** February 19, 2014 at 8:24:38 PM EST

**To:** jkortze@mac.com, jkearney19@aol.com, james.filan@gmail.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net

**Cc:** newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us

**Subject:** Concerned parent and taxpayer

Please make no further reductions in the budget! We moved to Newtown for the quality of the school system here...please help us maintain (and even improve upon!) that quality for years to come.

Thank you,

Dana Roth

## Fwd: No more cuts to the education budget

Thu 2/20/2014 6:15 AM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

---

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** D Totir <dt4496@gmail.com>

**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 1:09:25 AM EST

**To:** jkortze@mac.com, jkearney19@aol.com, james.filan@gmail.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net

**Subject:** No more cuts to the education budget

Please do not make any further cuts to the education budget!

Thank you for your consideration,

Dana Totir

Newtown resident

## Fwd: No more cuts to the education budget

Thu 2/20/2014 6:15 AM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

---

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** D Totir <dt4496@gmail.com>

**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 1:09:25 AM EST

**To:** jkortze@mac.com, jkearney19@aol.com, james.filan@gmail.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net

**Subject:** No more cuts to the education budget

Please do not make any further cuts to the education budget!

Thank you for your consideration,

Dana Totir

Newtown resident



**Fwd: Budget Considerations**

Thu 2/20/2014 6:15 AM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

---

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** kingawalsh@charter.net

**Date:** February 19, 2014 at 3:23:45 PM EST

**To:** jkortze@mac.com, jkearney19@aol.com, james.filan@gmail.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net

**Cc:** newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us

**Subject:** Budget Considerations

Dear Board of Finance,

Regarding the 2014-15 Education Budget that is being discussed at Thursday's BoF meeting, we would like you to consider the following requests:

- 1) That you leave the security portion of the budget under the Town's authority,
- 2) That you add back the recently reduced \$139,481 to the Education budget's bottomline and let the voters decide,
- 3) That you do not make any additional reductions to the requested amount.

Thank you,

Glenn and Kinga Walsh  
21 Horseshoe Ridge Rd  
Sandy Hook, CT

## Fwd: Education Budget

Thu 2/20/2014 6:16 AM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

---

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** kelley mozelak <kelleymozelak@yahoo.com>

**Date:** February 19, 2014 at 3:20:06 PM EST

**To:** james.filan@gmail.com, jkearney19@aol.com, jkortze@mac.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net

**Subject:** Education Budget

Dear Board of Finance,

I am sending you this email in support of the budget as presented to the Board of Finance by the Board of Education with a 0% increase. Please pass the budget on to the council without any additional cuts. Thank you for your time.

Best Regards,

Kelley Mozelak

Middle Gate parent and member of the MG PTA Board of Directors, Vice President.

## Fwd: Upcoming Education Budget: A concerned Citizen

Thu 2/20/2014 6:17 AM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

---

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Robert Bazuro <rkbazuro@gmail.com>

**Date:** February 19, 2014 at 2:00:40 PM EST

**To:** jkortze@mac.com, kearney19@aol.com, james.filan@gmail.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net

**Subject: Upcoming Education Budget: A concerned Citizen**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am a local physician, town resident and parent of three children in the Newtown school system. I wanted to take a moment to express my desire that you pass the school budget as it was submitted by the Board of Education. I regret that I have a prior commitment or I would be attending tomorrow nights meeting personally. Please accept this letter of my concern for the budgetary process.

I have been very involved in the town at the school level as well as for the entire community even our elderly population for several years now. Taking this into account I feel that a zero increase school budget is appropriate and what we as residents are looking for. I do not want to see further cuts to our children's education. I have heard that enrollment is down and that is a reason to decrease the education budget. Unfortunately due to state mandates such as full day kindergarten and the tragedy of last year our students need our commitment more then ever. We have been fortunate to receive outside funding for some of our needs however we need to make sure that the children are taken care of. Dr Reed has decreased 18 teacher positions as well as two janitors. Unfortunately even with these cuts the fixed services that we have to supply for. I feel that any further cuts will dramatically affect our children in a negative way. My wife grew up in this town and it was mostly because of the schools that we returned with our family to make it our home.

Please accept this letter as my expression that I want to see the budget sent to the voters as is with no further cuts. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely

Robert K Bazuro, DO FACEP; FACOEP

3 Miya Lane, Sandy Hook

Fwd: budget

Thu 2/20/2014 5:31 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

---

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Julia Conlin <juliaconlin@gmail.com>

**Subject:** budget

**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 5:15:12 PM EST

**To:** jkortze@mac.com, jkearney19@aol.com, james.filan@gmail.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net

**Cc:** newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us

As you know, the majority of the Board of Education voted to cut \$139,481 from Dr. Reed's proposed budget in order to meet an arbitrary goal of a zero percent increase. Their action was particularly irresponsible as they did so with no plan for where further cuts could be made from this already bare-bones budget -- our per pupil spending is abysmal, and every year our teachers are asked to make due with less. The Board of Education has left parents in the unfortunate position of having to request that the Board of Finance right their wrong. I ask that you reinstate this sum before presenting the budget to voters at a referendum.

It also appears that it is unsettled whether the municipal side of the budget or the education side should include the costs for police officers or school security officers for next year. The Board of Selectmen's budget should continue to cover such police-related costs and allow the education side of the budget to focus on educating the children of Newtown.

-Julia Conlin

Fwd: From the Sandy Hook School PTA

Thu 2/20/2014 6:12 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

---

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Stephanie Burns <stephani\_burns@sbcglobal.net>

**Subject:** From the Sandy Hook School PTA

**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 6:09:04 PM EST

**To:** jkortze@mac.com, jkearney19@aol.com, james.filan@gmail.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net

**Cc:** newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us

Dear Members of the Board of Finance,

On February 19, 2014, Sandy Hook School PTA members voted to support the 2014-2015 Board of Education Budget as submitted to the Board of Finance. We respectfully request that this budget, which represents no increase over the prior year, be submitted to the Legislative Council as is, with no further reductions.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Burns

Sandy Hook School PTA President, on behalf of the Sandy Hook School PTA

## Fwd: Support for the BOE Budget

Thu 2/20/2014 6:40 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Stephanie Burns <stephani\_burns@sbcglobal.net>

**Subject:** Support for the BOE Budget

**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 6:23:02 PM EST

**To:** jkortze@mac.com, jkearney19@aol.com, james.filan@gmail.com, jgodin1312@gmail.com, mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com, harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net

**Cc:** newtownboe@newtown.k12.ct.us

Dear Members of the Board of Finance,

I am writing to respectfully request that the budget submitted to the Board of Finance from the Board of Education for the 2014-2015 fiscal year be forwarded to the Legislative Council with no further reductions. I truly believe that Dr. Reed and the administrators of the schools in the district have worked in earnest to bring forth a thoughtful budget that takes into account the decline in enrollment while maintaining a quality education for our children.

When my family and I moved to Connecticut in 2003, we specifically chose Newtown based on the reputation of the school system. Our children were just beginning their educational journey and we firmly believed that Newtown would provide the excellent education that we desired. I now have children in three Newtown schools. Thus far, I have been pleased with the education that they have received and am very concerned that further reductions to the current budget will jeopardize the reputation that this district has worked so hard to achieve. I believe that maintaining a quality school district is crucial to attracting families to our town.

I respect the difficult decisions that this Board has to make, but I believe that Dr. Reed and the Board of Education have in good faith presented a fiscally responsible budget. At the December 18, 2013 Board of Finance meeting, the Board strongly recommended that the Board of Education budget contain a flat or zero increase. Dr. Reed and the Board of Education have delivered on your request and I request that you in turn recognize their good faith and put forth this budget to the Legislative Council with no further reductions.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Burns

10 Cider Mill Road, Sandy Hook CT

Fwd: Please do not remove any more funds from the proposed education budget

Thu 2/20/2014 9:46 PM

**From:** JOHN KORTZE

**To:** arlene.miles@newtown-ct.gov

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Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Theresadt2@gmail.com" <theresadt2@gmail.com>

**Date:** February 20, 2014 at 8:06:59 PM EST

**To:** "jkortze@mac.com" <jkortze@mac.com>, "jkearney19@aol.com" <jkearney19@aol.com>, "james.filan@gmail.com" <james.filan@gmail.com>, John Godin <jgodin1312@gmail.com>, "mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com" <mike.e.portnoy@gmail.com>, "harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net" <harrison.waterbury@sbcglobal.net>

**Subject:** Please do not remove any more funds from the proposed education budget

Gentlemen:

As concerned citizens and parents of two students in the Newtown School System, we urge you to consider the current budget proposed by Dr. Reed which contains a 0% increase in spending, and allow it to pass with no further reductions.

Our school system and our students must remain current and enriched both academically and technologically. Removing additional funds from this budget will easily result in a decrease in the quality of our children's education. A reduction in staffing positions, services and equipment puts our students at a disadvantage by increasing class sizes, decreasing services that are crucial to their growth and development and potentially sacrificing the reputation of our school system.

Our community deserves a system worthy of blue ribbon status.

Thank you for your careful consideration.

Michael and Theresa Talluto

Sent from my iPad