

Glenn Brand, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools



Alice Brown-LeGrand
Director of Student Support Services

Christine Elliott
Assistant Superintendent for
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Kenneth Lord
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*A school and community partnership that provides an inclusive, respectful, and collaborative learning environment
where all stakeholders are engaged in the development of the whole child.*

March 23, 2022

Dear Members of the Wilmington Community,

Last week the Wilmington Finance Committee recommended a \$500,000 reduction to the school department's operating budget for the next fiscal year. This recommendation was made after the district worked collaboratively with the Town Manager and his staff to deliver a budget that could be fiscally supported by the Town while still allowing us to meet the educational and social and emotional needs of our students. The primary reason offered by the Finance Committee for its recommendation is the enrollment decline that Wilmington Public Schools has experienced and a belief that the district has been ignoring this decline and has no plan to address it. On the contrary, we have been actively working to address this issue even amid the pandemic. We regularly include this information in presentations to the School Committee as well as part of the annual presentation to the Finance Committee. As an example, please see the most recent presentation to the Finance Committee here: [WPS FY23 Budget Presentation for the Finance Committee](#). For additional information about our student retention plan, please access this document: [WPS Planning for Student Retention](#).

A \$500,000 reduction to the overall budget will have a direct impact on students. As a school system, almost 80% of our operating budget is directly tied to staffing. Consequently, reductions to the overall operating budget will inevitably include a reduction of positions which will impact programs and opportunities we can offer. At the high school, where the majority of the enrollment decline has occurred, cutting staff will result in fewer courses being offered, which will both harm the students currently enrolled and make the high school less attractive to students in the future.

A reduction of \$500,000 at this time, as the Finance Committee has proposed would exacerbate the situation. It would impact our ability to make *strategic changes* to address this situation as opposed to arbitrarily cutting programs and services which is counter-productive to the work underway. Like school districts everywhere, we are making our way to recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact will remain significant for our students. Our budget must be able to provide the resources that will support their academic, social, and emotional needs. We urge Wilmington residents to join us on April 30th at the Annual Town Meeting held at Wilmington High School at 9:00 a.m. to vote in favor of the School Committee's 2022-23 (FY23) budget.

We thank you for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Bryson, Ed.D.
School Committee Chair

Glenn Brand, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Notice of Non-Discrimination

All educational and non-academic programs, activities and employment opportunities at Wilmington Public Schools are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, age and/or disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.