

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 6

35 WAMOGO ROAD

LITCHFIELD, CT 06759-3204

860.361.9033 ~ 860.361.9665 (FAX)

SERVING THE TOWNS OF WARREN, MORRIS AND GOSHEN



RE: 2020 RSD6 Budget Ideas

Dear RSD6 Community,

I am thankful for those that sent forward their 2020-2021 budget ideas, questions, and suggestions. The following is a summary of your community work with all identifiable information redacted.

We have approximately two months until the "Superintendent Recommended Budget" is presented to the Board of Education on March 9, 2020. There is plenty of work to accomplish in that time but I know that together we will continue our progress.

Regards,

Chris

Suggestion: I would like to expand the use of our community mental health agencies within our school environment.

Response: Over the past two years we have increased our partnership with Greenwoods. Based on need the partnership will increase again in 2020-2021. Ideally, I expect to have an onsite mental health clinic available at WAMOGO.

Budget Request: 1. Tennis Courts Resurfaced; 2. Drainage of fields at WAMOGO and 3. Adjustable basketball hoops at elementary schools.

Reponse: Items 1 and 2 are on our list (for the coming summer(s) and capital work). While it must go before the BOE, I expect the tennis courts (WAMOGO and GCS) will get approved because of their condition and also as part of our land use agreement with Town of Goshen for the solar field. Item 2 may not be a simple fix, but will be further investigated. Item 3 will need some more research but I do appreciate the request and need based on use by our community students.

Regional School District No. 6 does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following people have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Title IX Contact – Debra DeLisle
35 Wamogo Road, Litchfield, CT 06759
860.361.9033

Section 504 Contact – Debra Foley
98 Wamogo Road, Litchfield, CT 06759
860.567.6642

Budget Request: 1. Shorts for the MS basketball teams; 2. Theater Costumes need replacement and 3) Chromebook Replacements.

Response: Item 1 is a part of the WAMOGO uniform replacement schedule. Item 2 is needed and many costumes come from community members (please encourage donations). Item 3 was recently addressed this past fall with over 50 replacements. We will continue to update technology year-by-year as needed per our capital plan.

Budget Request: 1. An additional bus or van for field trips; 2. Adventure Classroom (like Litchfield has at LCS); 3. Scoreboards for middle school sports fields

Response: Item 1 will be included in the capital needs list. I also would like to explore greater collaboration with LPS and best utilize all of our resources. Item 2 is possible but I believe that collaboration, instead of duplication, would be best. Item 3 is a must!

Budget Suggestion: I would like to see the school put out a "wish list" on an ongoing basis, both at the classroom level and the school/district level. It would be nice to see what materials might be needed for upcoming projects/events or what basic supplies are needed in my child's classroom. This can be something small like buying an extra box of tissues when we do our family's shopping or buying a more specialized list of supplies for a project. This might help with the budget while also letting families contribute in a more helpful way.

Response: I love this idea. I expect that RSD6 will unveil a donors choose website for 2020-2021. In the interim, please look out for a trial model of this concept. The generosity of our communities knows no limits and I am thankful for the gifts to support our teachers and students at every level.

Budget Request: Could you please take a look at the parking situation at Goshen Center? There are never enough spots, and during good weather parents know to find any bit of grass they can (I have often parked directly in front of a "no parking" sign. Explain that one to the kids. Once the snow piles up, those extra "spots" are inaccessible. I warn family and friends to arrive early to evening events (and yes, even avoid going to some of them) if I know they involve dealing with the lack of parking at GCS. I've heard there is "no easy answer" but it really discourages community/family participation in GCS events.

Response: The GCS parking lot, along with that at Warren, will be addressed in the capital plan for 2020-2021. The last thing we want is to discourage parent, or community, participation. The state of the parking lots is in need of repair (long ago).

Budget Suggestion: 1) Put money into meaningful PD- Pay for speakers; 2) Empathy training; 3) PD for the staffs mental health/self care. Mindfulness, meditation, yoga; 4) Offer a stipend for teachers to facilitate after school tutoring, study groups, Social peer groups (a form of group counseling).

Response: All PD funds are controlled at the school level and I agree that training needs to be impactful for teachers and students. We are working to provide a greater catalog of training for all staff. We have had some great success with the after-school programing (but can always improve). We will search for this addition to the afterschool program (tutoring, study groups, mentoring) for 2020-2021.

Budget Request: Could you please fix the after-school care problems in Goshen?

Response: We are working with EdAdvance and recently sent out a survey to all elementary parents. Please complete this survey as it will help for programing in 2020-2021.

Budget Request: Could you please reconsider the busing policy for Pre-K? It just doesn't make sense to put one kid on the bus and then drive the younger one into school.

Response: This is a liability and policy issue. We want all of our students to be safe. I fully understand the frustration, but at this time changing back to PK transportation is not possible.

Budget Request: I would love to see the PreK day extended, both my kids were in "school " (daycare)" 8:30- 1:00 pm since they were tiny- trying to switch to a 9:00-11:30 day was a struggle in terms of childcare. Surely they could use more time to learn/play etc!

Budget Request: I would love to see an extended day pre-k offered for four year olds.

Response: We are looking at PK numbers for 2020-2021 with enrollment coming soon. If there is space, then there will be a recommendation to increase to full day for PK4. This would also mirror the recommendation of the Work Group from April 2019.

Budget Suggestion: I would like you to consider including the pre-k program in the public school budget and not have an additional fee for the program. I understand this is more complicated than a simple wave of the pen, but please consider: If children begin learning at birth, shouldn't our communities make a strong effort to make education available to them, in the same capacity that we make it available for children from kindergarten through 12th grade. There is a huge amount of research out there, which proves early childhood education is necessary for some and beneficial for all children to begin their school years on the same playing field. Not just cognitively, but social and emotionally as well. I feel that it is our duty as educators, parents, and all people who care about equity for our community's children, to offer quality pre-school at no cost to the parents outside of taxes.

Response: This goes beyond just a pen or a budget. PK is not included in the charter and enrollment does not count in the assessment. PK is run based on the legislated requirement to provide special needs students a program with peers. The tuition for PK is a sliding scale and does not meet the actual cost. We will look to increase to full day for PK4 as possible, but free PK is a larger issue that needs to go to the legislators in Hartford.

Budget Suggestion: The way my daughter's bus route is currently configured makes no sense. ... I think next year, the school needs to take some time to restructure the routes to make sure they are effectively utilizing the bus routes.

Response: This is an issue across the entire district. We have dirt roads, dangerous road curves, blind spots, and areas that can't accommodate a turnaround for any vehicle regardless of size. We will be looking at routes this spring and analyze the best way to make routes efficient.

Budget Suggestion: My children come home with papers printed using colored ink on a regular basis. Most of these are worksheets that are just thrown away. It seems so simple, but I am thinking it may be something worth looking into.

Response: A clear waste of good resources and a good suggestion. This is something to address with the schools.

Budget Request: Pave the awful excuse for a parking lot at GCS, pleassseeee!!

Response: Amen!