

A Message from the Superintendent
May 29, 2024



A Failed Budget, What Now? — Civility in 2024

On Tuesday, May 28th approximately 15% of the Town’s citizens voted down the proposed 2024-25 budget by a wide margin. This budget was opposed by the Democrat Town Committee and supported by the Republican Town Committee. On all accounts, this was a first for me as Superintendent, for Ellington has a history of bipartisan governance and passing referendums.

In my opinion, the school district’s portion of the budget (*approximately 64%*) was affordable and reasonable with only a 3.79% increase. Add in the Town’s proposed operating budget and you have a 4.75% increase—also affordable and reasonable.

So, why an increase of 2.6 mils or 7.58%?

The answer lies primarily in the fact that federal pandemic funds were used by the previous Board of Finance to pay for capital project expenses to lower last year’s tax increase. This year’s Board of Finance has four new members—out of six total. With the federal pandemic funds having run out the current leadership is trying to fill the hole or repair the fiscal cliff that was created.

This year’s proposed capital project budget increase is 20%—which represents fixing the fiscal cliff. These capital projects include fixing the roads, purchasing snow plows, repairing roofs, and other large building repairs. To say the least, it is extremely difficult for the Board of Finance to convey this fiscal challenge and reach all of the voting citizens in Ellington.

To be clear, significant cuts to the Board of Education’s proposed budget (*3.79% increase*) will impact staffing, programs and services despite what some detractors are claiming. In good faith, I will work with the Boards of Education and Finance to recommend the most prudent fiscal path forward—understanding the concerns of the local taxpayers.

For Ellington, this open partisan polarization is something new—especially regarding the functioning of our Town government and schools. With a highly polarized national and state representative election on the table this year, we are not immune to the broader environment in Ellington. However, grounded in [Ellington’s Seeds of Civility](#), we believe there is a positive path forward for all of us—we just have to take it.

-Dr. Scott V. Nicol, Superintendent of Schools

The following public meetings will take place. Ellington citizens are encouraged to attend.

Governance Body	Date	Location	Time
Board of Finance	Thursday, May 30	EHS Library	6:00 PM
Board of Education	Friday, May 31	EHS Library	6:00 PM
Board of Finance	Monday, June 3	EHS Library	6:00 PM