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Ellington Board of Education Adopts Net Spending Increase of 2.83% for the 2024-2025 Budget

ELLINGTON, CT – On Wednesday, January 31st, at a monthly Board of Education meeting, the Ellington Board of Education adopted a net spending increase of 2.83% for the 2024-2025 budget. The spending increase of the proposed budget falls at \$1,826,813 or 4.05% and is significantly offset by \$549,005 in revenue, bringing the total proposed budget to \$46,910,160, which includes the 2.83% increase.

The Board of Education had five budget meetings in January where deliberation took place. Board members examined spending accounts from a historical perspective resulting in targeted cuts totaling approximately \$90,000 to Superintendent Dr. Scott Nicol's proposed budget.

Chair of the Board's Finance Committee Steve Viens stated, *"Past reductions to the budget were fiscally prudent. Yet, over time many of our accounts, especially the facilities were significantly underfunded which contributed to annual budget freezes. We were able to right-size those accounts and make responsible reductions elsewhere based on past spending patterns."*



With the adopted budget addressing the right-sizing of nineteen facilities accounts, the Board was also able to provide funding for athletic transportation, which was underfunded by 70%, and programming including the boys' swimming, girls' gymnastics, and ice hockey teams.

Health insurance remains a significant challenge for school districts across the state including Ellington. The budget includes an eleven percent increase in the health insurance account due to continuing trends of high employee illness claims. Of note, the Board avoided possible increases as significant as twenty-five percent by developing a self-insured model starting in 2021.

“Developing a solvent reserve fund in a health self-insured model is challenging and is only possible by working in concert with the Board of Finance. The research is clear on the long-term savings of the self-insured approach and we are seeing some of the benefits in 2024.”

-Jennifer Dzen, Chair - Board of Education

The next step in the budget process will be the presentation of the adopted budget to the Board of Finance on Wednesday, March 13, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall by Superintendent Dr. Scott Nicol, Director of Finance and Operations Alisha Carpino and Board of Education Chair Jennifer Dzen.

Board Chair Dzen continues, *“The Board feels strongly that this adopted budget is fiscally responsible. However, we are aware of the challenges the Town faces with a loss of revenue due to the Governor’s reduction of the annual car tax. While this car tax break for Ellington residents is helpful, the loss of revenue that typically supports the Town’s budget will need to be partially offset. We are confident that our collaborative relationship with the Board of Finance, which includes Chair Doug Harding and Liaison to the BOE Dan Keune, will lend to a budget we all can support as it is sent to a town referendum in May.”*

Updates to the budget process including all presentations may be found on the [Ellington Public Schools 2024-2025 Budget Information](#) webpage.
