

School Committee Government Relations Subcommittee
Wednesday, March 31, 2022, 2022
12:00 PM-12:50 PM
Remote via Zoom

Government Relations Subcommittee Members Present: Helen Charlupski (Chair), Valerie Frias, Andreas Liu, and Mariah Nobrega.

Other School Committee Members Present: David Pearlman and Suzanne Federspiel.

Staff Present: Linus Guillory, Erin Cooley, Jenee Uttaro, and Robin Coyne.

1) Review of Minutes

On a motion of Ms. Nobrega and seconded by Dr. Liu, the Government Relations Subcommittee voted unanimously (by roll call), with a vote of 4 in favor (Ms. Charlupski, Ms. Frias, Dr. Liu, and Ms. Nobrega), 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions, to approve the December 15, 2021 minutes.

2) Discussion and Possible Vote on a Letter to Brookline's State Legislators regarding an Increase in Funds to Towns and Schools

The Subcommittee drafted a letter asking that the Legislators support and advocate for increased funding for Schools.

On a motion of Ms. Charlupski and seconded by Ms. Nobrega, the Government Relations Subcommittee voted unanimously (by roll call), with a vote of 4 in favor (Ms. Charlupski, Ms. Frias, Dr. Liu, and Ms. Nobrega), 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions, that the School Committee Chair, on behalf of the full School Committee, send the following letter to State Representatives Balser, Coppinger, Elugardo, Honan, Moran, and Vitolo.

We write to ask for your support and advocacy for an increase to the budget line items for Chapter 70 and Local Aid, along with fully funding Special Education Circuit breaker. Brookline, along with many communities in the Commonwealth, is experiencing devastating budget pressures, including unfunded state mandates. These pressures have been exacerbated by the small 2.7% increase in Unrestricted General Government Aid, at the same time as the state has received significantly increased tax revenues.

Specifically, the budget for the Public Schools of Brookline is facing a \$3.3M shortfall for FY23, which means losing up to 70 educators. This is not a one-year problem – it will require sustained revenues.

We ask you, as one of the representatives for the Town of Brookline, to exercise your power in the budget process starting immediately for FY23, to help us keep our teachers and the quality of education that Brookline's students receive.

Thank you in advance for your advocacy and support.

Ms. Federspiel, Mr. Pearlman, and the administrators present expressed support for sending the letters. Ms. Coyne will share the letters with Ms. Ditkoff, Dr. Ehrenberg, and Ms. Monopoli before they are sent to the Legislators. Ms. Charlupski will forward the letter to Senator Creem.

After the letters go out, School Committee members will follow up with the legislators: Ms. Charlupski (Representatives Balser and Vitolo and Senator Creem); Ms. Frias (Representatives Elugardo, Honan, and Moran); and Mr. Pearlman (Representative Coppinger).

3) Discussion of a Letter to the Lexington School Committee regarding their Financial Obligation to EDCO

The Subcommittee discussed whether to craft its own letter or to send a letter that endorses the sentiments expressed by another district's letter. Ms. Charlupski will find out what other EDCO districts have done. Discussion will continue during the April 7, 2022 School Committee meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 PM.