

Town of Winchester

Board of Selectmen - Regular Meeting

Monday April 20, 2026 - 7pm

Winchester Town Hall - Hicks Room

Noticed in Town Clerks Office and on Towns Website

Item 1 **Call to Order**

Meeting called to order by Mayor Todd Arcelaschi at 7:06pm

Attending Members	Todd Arcelaschi (Mayor)	William Pozzo (Selectman)
	Paul Marino (Selectman)	Kevin Bishop (Selectman)
	William Hester (Selectman)	Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn (Selectwoman)
	Troy Lamere (Selectman)	
Staff Members	Paul Harrington (Town Manager)	
	Glenn Albanesius (Town Clerk)	
	Ann Marie (Finance Director)	
	Tom Heuschkel (Budget Analyst)	

Item 2 **Pledge of Allegiance** The Pledge was recited by all

Item 3 **Citizens Comments**

The following people addressed the Board

* Kurt Werner	* Payton Call	* Kurt Werner	* Frank Oliveri
* Peggy Halloran	* Lucy Gable	* Debra Jablonski	* Nora Mocariski
* John Pollack	* Renee Waldron	* Jaye Markwell	* Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn (Read for Melissa Bird)
* Christine Rylander	* Rachel Gagnon	* Kelly Hicks	* Tim Strahan
* Matt Smith	* Candy Perez	* Christine Rylander	
* Rachel Maxwell	* Jennifer Mitchell	(Read for Kelly Hicks)	

Item 4 **New Business**

A) Discuss and Possibly Act on the FY2026-2027 Budget

* Sel. Marino opened discussion by suggesting reduction of the April 13, 2026 amended Budget by eliminating the following Capital road paving projects. These reductions totaled \$821,000.

The following actions were each Motioned by Sel. Marino and seconded by Sel. Lamere

- 1) Old New Hartford Road Reclaim and Pave from \$400,000 to \$0.
- 2) Intersection Aprons from \$41,000 to \$0.
- 3) Winchester Avenue Peel and Pave from \$105,000 to \$0.
- 4) Ledge Drive Peel and Pave from \$81,000 to \$0.
- 5) Gaylord Road Reclaim and Pave from \$96,000 to \$0.
- 6) Orchard Street from \$68,000 to \$0.
- 7) Cornelio Avenue from \$30,000 to \$0.

Vote to individually approve - Unanimous (7-0)

* Motion Statement - I move that the Board of Selectmen increase the "Fund Balance Injection for Capitals" by \$421,000 and reduce the Transfer to Capital - General Fund" expenditure line from \$784,333 to \$363,333.

Motion - Sel. Heffernan McGlynn / Second - Sel. Hester

Vote to approve - Unanimous (7-0)

* "I move that the Board of Selectmen increase the "Property Taxes - Past Due" revenue line by \$200,000 from \$350,000 to \$550,000."

Motion - Sel. Marino / Second - Sel. Pozzo

Vote to approve - Unanimous (7-0)

* "I move that the Board of Selectmen increase the General Roadway Repair "State/Federal Aid" funding by \$75,768; from \$85,000 to \$160,768, for total project funding of \$560,768."

Motion - Sel. Lamere / Second - Sel. Hester

Vote to approve - Unanimous (7-0)

* "I make a motion to accept the budget as is right now and to send it to referendum."

Motion - Sel. Heffernan McGlynn / Second - Sel. Bishop

Vote to approve - Yes (2) / No (5) Sel. Lamere / Marino / Hester / Pozzo / Mayor Arcelaschi

Sel. Hester motioned for a brief recess at 9:01pm. This was seconded by Sel. Lamere and approved by a unanimous (7-0) vote. The Board resumed the meeting at 9:16pm

* "I move that the Board of Selectmen reduce the Board of Education Expenditures line by \$1,000,000; from \$26,050,562 to \$25,050,562.

Motion - Sel. Lamere / Second - Sel. Marino

Vote to approve - Yes (5) / No (2) Sel. Heffernan McGlynn / Sel. Bishop

B) Possibly set Public Hearing for Budget Referendum

"I move that the Board of Selectmen approve a budget of \$42,290,600 and an appropriation of \$1,296,000 from the Town's fund balance for one-time Capital Improvement Projects to the Annual Town Budget Meeting on May 11, 2026 at 7pm."

Motion - Sel. Hester / Second - Sel. Lamere

Vote to approve - Yes (5) / No (2) Sel. Heffernan McGlynn / Sel. Bishop

C) 26-15 Proposed Line Item Transfers

Motion Statement - "By recommendation of the Town Manager, I move that the Board of Selectmen approve the above Action Step 26-15 budget transfer 2026-09 totaling \$78,186.00."

Motion - Sel. Hester / Second - Sel. Marino

Vote to approve - Unanimous (7-0)

D) 26-16 Proposed Line Item Transfers

Motion Statement - "By recommendation of the Town Manager, I move that the Board of Selectmen approve the above Action Step 26-16 budget transfer 2026-10 totaling \$504.00."

Motion - Sel. Hester / Second - Sel. Marino

Vote to approve - Unanimous (7-0)

E) 26-17 Proposed Line Item Transfers

Motion Statement - "By recommendation of the Town Manager, I move that the Board of Selectmen approve the above Action Step 26-17 budget transfer 2026-11 totaling \$5,000.00"

Motion - Sel. Hester / Second - Sel. Marino

Vote to approve - Unanimous (7-0)

F) 26-18 Proposed Line Item Transfers

Motion Statement - "By recommendation of the Town Manager, I move that the Board of Selectmen approve the above Action Step 26-18 budget transfer 2026-12 totaling \$600.00"

Motion - Sel. Hester / Second - Sel. Marino

Vote to approve - Unanimous (7-0)

Item 5 **Citizens Comments** The following people addressed the Board

* Candy Perez

* Tyler Asbury

* Note - Unread E mail correspondence related to the Budget will be attached to these minutes

Item 6 **Selectmen's Comments and Reports**

* Sel Bishop - Expressed hope that Gilbert and WPS would work together to mitigate any cuts that may be approved at referendum.

Item 7 **Adjournment**

To adjourn the meeting at 9:57pm

Motion - Sel. Hester / Second - Sel. Lamere

Vote to approve - Unanimous (7-0)

ATTEST:

Glenn Albanesius, Town Clerk

These Minutes are subject to formal approval at the next scheduled meeting. Any amendments, corrections or revisions will be noted in the next Meeting Minutes.



I support our schools

From Kenny Feder <harpofeder@icloud.com>

Date Mon 4/20/2026 11:46 AM

To Paul Harrington <pharrington@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; julie.luby <julie.luby@winchesterschools.org>; Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>

To the Board of Selectmen:

Something can be a cliché and manifestly true at the same time. Like this: expenditures for education represent an investment in the future. If we further cut the Winchester school budget we are endangering that future. I say this as a taxpaying citizen with an enormous real estate bill. I also say this as a father with two children in the Winchester public school system. (And in the spirit of full disclosure, my wife is an assistant teacher at Hinsdale.)

Anyone who has spent any time in our local schools realizes that our teachers, assistant teachers, special education teachers, paraprofessionals, social workers, security personnel, and other staff do a difficult job astonishingly well. Anyone with a child and, maybe especially, anyone with multiple kids at home recognizes the challenge of keeping them engaged and happy. Now imagine having sixteen kindergartners in a single room five days a week, teaching them, dealing with their fears, needs, and tears without another adult in the room in the form of a dedicated teaching assistant. Now imagine the number of kids in each class increasing because the number of teachers has been cut. Further imagine doing that job without enough para-educators helping those students who need and deserve additional help so that they might reach their full potential.

I recognize that for many of us, teaching assistants and paraprofessionals weren't part of our school experience, and we turned out fine. Okay but, whether you like it or not, it's a different town, a different state, a different country, and a different world today. We have kids for whom English is a second language. We have kids with personal histories that we can scarcely imagine. We have kids with special challenges and with special needs that deserve attention.

We can cut the school budget, sure. But at what cost to our kids?

The Winchester school budget is already cut to the bone. Any further cutting will slice into the marrow. Please keep the budget at current levels. Our kids, all of them, deserve nothing less.

Respectfully submitted,



Outlook

Budget- Needs first, then funding

From Tim Strahan <strahantim@gmail.com>

Date Sun 4/12/2026 2:10 PM

To Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>; julie.luby <julie.luby@winchesterschools.org>

EXTERNAL EMAIL - This email was sent by a person from outside your organization.

Our esteemed Board of Selectmen,

At its core, budgeting should start with a simple question: what does the town actually need?

Only after that should we determine how to fund it.

Too often, the process feels reversed — we look first at what seems affordable, and then shape needs around that number. In the short term, that can feel responsible. In the long term, it is usually more expensive.

This proposed budget reflects a significant increase. For residents, that is a real and immediate impact. At that level, the expectation is not just balance, but clarity — that what is being funded reflects actual needs, not simply what fits within a number.

On education, the reality is fairly clear. The majority of costs are structural — contractual obligations, transportation, and special education. There is very little discretionary spending. Reductions here don't trim excess; they reduce capacity and shift costs elsewhere, often at a higher price later.

That makes this less a question of "can we afford it" and more a question of whether we are investing in a way that reduces long-term pressure — particularly around in-district capacity and out-of-district reliance.

On infrastructure, the contrast stands out. Roads and Public Works are seeing only minimal increases, despite rising costs. Infrastructure is one of the clearest examples where underfunding today does not save money — it simply defers it at a higher cost.

If we begin with needs, both of these areas are not optional — they are foundational.

If residents are being asked to absorb a near 10% increase, it is reasonable to expect that the budget reflects disciplined prioritization — not just what we can afford in the moment, but what the town actually requires to function well and avoid larger costs later.



Outlook

Budget Goals

From Olympia Thomson <olympiathomson@gmail.com>

Date Tue 4/14/2026 12:53 PM

To Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>; julie.luby <julie.luby@winchesterschools.org>

Members of the Board of Selectmen,

Our household will not be in physical attendance during your upcoming budget workshop sessions, however we would like to be counted amongst supporters of a strong and fully intact education budget and a wider town budget that meets the foundational needs of a thriving, revitalized, and restored Winsted.

Thank you for your time and consideration during the budget development process.

Sincerely,

Michael and Olympia Thomson



Outlook

MWGA

From Olympia Thomson <olympiathomson@gmail.com>

Date Wed 4/15/2026 6:56 PM

To Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>; julie.luby <julie.luby@winchesterschools.org>

Members of the Board of Selectmen,

You have a really good thing right in front of you: a totally revitalized school district full of lots of excited townspeople. The district model is now undergoing a survey to become EVEN BETTER.

What you have sitting in your lap is an incredible PR opportunity for Winsted. You could use the positive momentum from the schools to transform public opinion of Winsted. You could use your leadership positions to educate residents on the broader economic significance of building up strong public schools. You could use the stellar WPS Climate Survey results to woo investors. The list goes on and on.

There is so much good news you could spread about this town, within it and outside of it, that could rest entirely on the positive truths about our schools.

Winsted needs YOU, our town leaders, to speak unrelenting positive truths about our schools (and, ipso facto, our entire town). What Winsted does not need is for our town leaders to suggest that the education budget is sucking the life out of the Winsted. It's utterly untrue, and worse, totally counterproductive.

I urge you to think like our President. He has harnessed American pride for the betterment of our country.

You can do this in Winsted. Harness our pride in our schools for the promotion and enrichment of our town.

That's the trick.

Yours truly,

Olympia Thomson



Outlook

Winchester Budget

From Erica M <rickic84@gmail.com>

Date Mon 4/13/2026 11:01 AM

To Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>

EXTERNAL EMAIL - This email was sent by a person from outside your organization.

Good morning Selectmen,

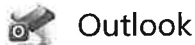
I urge you to go forward with the current proposed budget, as is.

Our town needs to be able to grow and prosper. With the continued cuts that have been occurring we are damaging our town and driving taxpayers away. In the past 24 hours I have been told two separate families are looking to move out of town because of these issues. You will not help the town by reducing funding.

Continue proper funding for our schools, library, and services and you'll see even more (positive) town engagement and spending. Any improvement in our town will draw in more taxpayers which is a win-win.

Please keep our proposed budget as is. Let Winsted thrive!

Erica Monroe



Education Budget

From C Perez <perezcandywinsted@gmail.com>

Date Wed 4/15/2026 2:11 AM

To Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan <cheryleheffernan@gmail.com>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>

Cc julie.luby <julie.luby@winchesterschools.org>; Paul Harrington <pharrington@townofwinchester.org>

EXTERNAL EMAIL - This email was sent by a person from outside your organization.

Good Morning ,

I am away on a trip and wanted to share these questions with you.
I would ask these questions of the education budget.

As you know during last year's budget discussions, there were a lot of questions for PreK-6 and 18-21 but there were no questions asked of 7-12.

This year, The Gilbert School has asked for one of their largest increases ...almost a mill of new taxes from the community.

Last summer, the BOE signed a contract naming The Gilbert School as a designated school. 10-34 a state statute also gives them the right to set the tuition. The public was told once there was an agreement there would be more money from the state. Could you please tell us the amount of that increase of money in the operating budget?

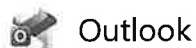
To be clear, The Gilbert tuition rate is for regular education. Transportation, nurses, and special education 7-12 is paid for in the Winchester BOE budget. When added together what is actual amount per student in grade 7-12? What is the regular education increase for PreK-6? What is the increase in special education costs for the district preK-21? Transportation?

When The Gilbert School ends the year in a surplus can you identify where the money goes. Winsted BOE sends theirs back to the general fund of the town unless they ask special permission. Were there remaining funds at the end of 2024-2025 7-12 regular education budget? How did this offset the current ask?

At a time when our Town Manager cut department asks 3%, The Gilbert School ask remains the largest.

Is the Gilbert School still endowed? If so, how much of the school's endowment is applied to the school's operating budget each year? We know the taxpayers provide 96.5% of the operating budget.

We know the trust is generous with scholarships.



Huge Taxes for Little Services - Please Vote NO

From Alison Pierce <alisonpierce11@yahoo.com>

Date Wed 4/15/2026 11:35 AM

To Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>

EXTERNAL EMAIL - This email was sent by a person from outside your organization.

Hello Board of Selectmen,

I do not envy the position you are in as you work to balance the town budget while maintaining services for residents. That said, I am writing to express my growing frustration with the level of services I have experienced and what feels like a very low return on my tax dollars.

My family and I moved to Winchester in 2012 because we valued its small-town charm, natural landscape, and strong sense of community. Over time, however, it had become increasingly clear that both the schools and the town's infrastructure have fallen short of reasonable expectations.

In 2020, I began reporting ongoing illegal activity at a landlocked property behind my home. I provided extensive documentation—including photos, videos, and written communication—demonstrating large-scale tree removal along the mountain off Smith Hill Road (over two million board feet). This activity caused significant downstream damage to neighboring properties, including my own, as well as to Ledge Drive. I worked closely with the former Town Manager, Public Works Director, and Land Use Office, and I understand the Town ultimately pursued legal action that stopped the work. However, the damage to surrounding properties was never addressed.

At the same time, residents like myself continue to pay substantial taxes while receiving limited municipal services—no trash pickup, no leaf or bulk pickup, inconsistent road maintenance, and delayed snow removal. When services are provided, they should be delivered equitably across all areas of town. It is frustrating to see noticeable disparities between outlying areas and Winsted center.

As a former Town employee in the Finance Department and a former Board of Education member, I understand the financial pressures the Town faces, particularly in education. However, accountability and efficiency must remain a priority. At present, it feels as though residents are being asked to contribute more without seeing meaningful improvements—particularly in road maintenance.

My road, in particular, has been consistently overlooked and appears to receive only leftover attention. Neighbors who have lived here for over 30 years report requesting paving annually for decades, only to be told each year that our road is not included in the project.



Urgent Opposition to Proposed \$1,000,000 Education Budget Reduction

From Jade Avlasevicius Oliveira <onlyjade@gmail.com>

Date Mon 4/20/2026 2:34 PM

To Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>; julie.luby <julie.luby@winchesterschools.org>

Dear Members of the Board of Selectmen,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed \$1,000,000 reduction to Winchester's education budget. This cut would eliminate approximately 26 positions, 17% of our school staff, and the consequences for our children and community would be severe and long-lasting.

The positions slated for elimination are not administrative luxuries, they are the backbone of our schools. Cutting 4 Kindergarten Assistants means 20 five-year-olds per class with only one adult. Eliminating 4 Classroom Teachers pushes grades 2–5 class sizes into the high 20s. Removing 2 Special Education Teachers risks potential lawsuits for failure to meet students' legally required IEPs. Reducing Pre-K spots by half eliminates 32 seats for preschool children. Having a single nurse travel between two buildings is not a safety plan, it is a liability.

These are not numbers on a spreadsheet. These are children who depend on interventionists to catch up, social workers to feel safe, and coaches to support their teachers. Stripping away this support does not save money in the long run; it shifts costs to special education referrals, legal fees, and remediation down the road.

I urge the Board to find alternative solutions that protect our schools, our students, and our community's future. Please do not balance the budget on the backs of Winchester's children.

Thank you for your time and service to our town. **I respectfully ask that you vote against this reduction.**

Best,

Jade Avlasevicius Oliveira, town resident



I support our schools

From Eric Swenson <duffterrall@gmail.com>

Date Mon 4/20/2026 8:22 AM

To Paul Harrington <pharrington@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; julie.luby <julie.luby@winchesterschools.org>; Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>

This is my third try at writing this email without turning into an angry rant.

Established people with houses that have done nothing but increase in value for decades have plenty of options if they feel life in Connecticut has gotten too expensive.

I don't.

If we are going to say that we care about families and the future, this town has to be willing to spend money on those things. It sucks that everything got expensive. It happens.

Please fund the school.

Eric Swenson
24 Cherry Street
Winsted



Outlook

I support our schools

From Mollie Deegan <deegan.m19@gmail.com>

Date Mon 4/20/2026 12:21 PM

To Paul Harrington <pharrington@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; julie.luby <julie.luby@winchesterschools.org>; Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>

EXTERNAL EMAIL - This email was sent by a person from outside your organization.

Good Afternoon,

I am unable to attend the budget workshop this evening, but I felt it was important to express my strong support for our schools and the Board of Education budget.

I have followed the entire budget process on both the BOE and Board of Selectmen sides, and as both a resident and a parent in town, I have found the process disheartening. Our town and most importantly, the children and students of Winsted, deserve the very best.

I understand that creating a budget that both improves the town and remains fair to taxpayers is an incredibly difficult task. Many residents recognize the challenge you face. However, there is also a shared belief that our children should not bear the burden of budget cuts. They are far more than a line item, and I hope that perspective remains central in your decisions.

Investing in our town means investing in our children and their education. The proposed budget cuts would be detrimental to both schools and students. Proper staffing, including teachers and specialists, is essential to maintaining safe and effective learning environments. Increasing class sizes while reducing staff is not a responsible path forward, especially when our schools are already in need of greater support. As a parent, I urge you to prioritize what is best for the children of Winsted.

Lastly, I hope we can all remember that Winsted is a strong community with dedicated families. It should not be defined by divisions such as Gilbert vs. BOE or BOE vs. BOS, nor should it ever come down to a choice between students and paved roads. I remain hopeful that a more sustainable solution for our schools can be found in the future, so that this annual conflict can be avoided.

For now, please know that many families, including mine, fully support the education budget without cuts.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Mollie Deegan



Outlook

I Support Our Schools

From Kaitlin Layton <kaitlin.layton@winchesterschools.org>

Date Mon 4/20/2026 1:45 PM

To Paul Harrington <pharrington@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; julie.luby <julie.luby@winchesterschools.org>; Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>

EXTERNAL EMAIL - This email was sent by a person from outside your organization.

Dear Members of the Board of Selectmen,

I strongly oppose any cuts to our school budget. Reducing funding at this level will lead to larger class sizes, less student support, and more unmanaged behaviors. It will also make it difficult to meet IEP requirements, likely resulting in increased out-of-district placements.

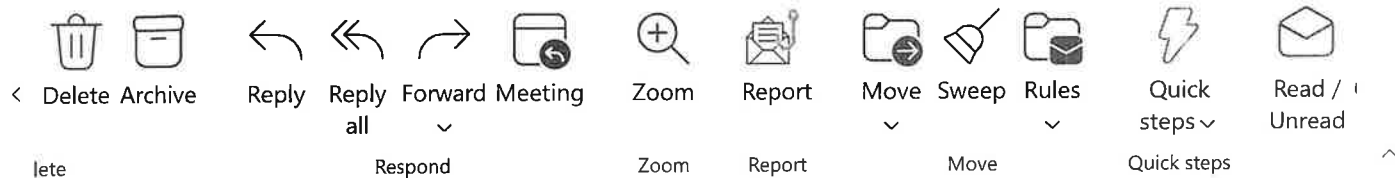
These conditions will place significant strain on staff and may lead to the loss of experienced educators. As both a teacher and a parent, I cannot support cuts that will ultimately harm our students and school community. I would rather dodge potholes all day long on our roads than lose the education we have for our students.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Kaitlin Layton

Pre-K Teacher & Special Education Teacher

Mary P. Hinsdale School



Concerns Regarding School Budget and Long-Term Impact

JM Jennifer Mitchell <mrsmitchell1114@gmail.com>

To: Todd Arcelaschi; William Hester; Troy Lamere; Paul Marino; Mon 4/20/2026 12:09 AM

Some content in this message has been blocked because the sender isn't in your Safe senders list. [Trust sender](#) [Show blocked content](#)

EXTERNAL EMAIL - This email was sent by a person from outside your organization.

I'm writing as both a parent and a long-time member of this community.

Recent discussions around potential school budget cuts have raised serious concerns for my family. I grew up here and made the intentional decision to raise my children here, in part because Connecticut is known for strong public schools. At the moment, I am questioning what that will look like for my children moving forward.

My concerns are not theoretical — they are practical:

- Will students continue to receive necessary services?
- Will class sizes increase?
- Will we see further strain on already limited resources?

This town has faced ongoing challenges with school funding for many years. However, what is particularly concerning now is the growing disconnect between public perception and the realities of running a modern school system. The needs of today's students — academically, behaviorally, and developmentally — are significantly different than they were decades ago, and funding must reflect that reality.

Strong schools are not just a benefit to families — they are critical to the long-term stability and economic health of the community as a whole.

I care deeply about this town. My family, my home, and my work are all rooted here. I want to be part of a solution, but it is becoming increasingly difficult to feel confident in the direction we are heading.

I would appreciate any clarity on how the proposed budget will support students and what steps are being taken to ensure the long-term strength of our schools.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jennifer Mitchell Realtor®
520-906-2253



Licensed Real Estate Salesperson in Connecticut
RES.0831511

Northwest CT Realty
98 Main St, Winsted, CT 06098
Broker: David L. Sartirana
www.nwctrealty.com



Outlook

I support our schools

From Jacqueline Hall <jackiecovillhall@gmail.com>

Date Mon 4/20/2026 8:30 AM

To Paul Harrington <pharrington@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; julie.luby <julie.luby@winchesterschools.org>; Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>

EXTERNAL EMAIL - This email was sent by a person from outside your organization.

Good morning. I am aware of the proposed budget cuts for the schools, and aware that there is a meeting tonight. I unfortunately can not attend because I work 12 hour overnight shifts. I would however, like to express my concern for school funding and or position cuts. As a tax payer, I understand that it may cost more in taxes or other places, in order to maintain the school support we have now. I am willing to invest in our children, our school system and our community. I hope that the community and our leaders understand that the cost of everything has gone up, and the school support is no different. Cuts to the education of our children, our future, should be the last place we make cuts. Thank you for listening to our concerns.

Jackie Covill



Outlook

I support our schools

From kirstinds <kirstinds@yahoo.com>

Date Mon 4/20/2026 9:11 AM

To Paul Harrington <pharrington@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; julie.luby <julie.luby@winchesterschools.org>; Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>

EXTERNAL EMAIL - This email was sent by a person from outside your organization.

Good morning,

I regret that I am unable to attend this evening's meeting, but I wanted to take a moment to express my concerns regarding the proposed school budget cuts.

As a parent of a child with special needs, I find these potential reductions particularly concerning. My son has Apert syndrome and relies on essential support services at school, including a dedicated paraprofessional, as well as physical and occupational therapy. These services are critical to his development, learning, and overall well-being.

Any reduction in funding could directly impact his ability to access the support he needs to succeed. I respectfully urge you to carefully consider the consequences these cuts may have on students who depend on these vital resources.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kirstin DeGregorio



Outlook

I support our Schools

From Kelly Hicks <kellyhicks85@yahoo.com>**Date** Mon 4/20/2026 11:16 AM**To** Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>; Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozso@townofwinchester.org>

EXTERNAL EMAIL - This email was sent by a person from outside your organization.

Dear Winchester Board of Selectmen,

My name is Kelly Hicks and I live at 80 Hurlbut St. in Winsted. I have 5 children. One is a Senior at Explorations, one is a freshman at Explorations, I have a 6th grader at Pearson, a kindergartener at Hinsdale, and an infant who is a future Winchester Public Schools student. We moved to this community in 2012 and survived the receivership, many administrators, and were actively involved in the process of school improvement that led us to where we are today.

Some of the factors that were identified as critical needs for improvement during the receivership were:

- The complicated relationship between The Gilbert School and Winchester Public Schools (which has not changed)
- Frequent overturn in administration causing constant transitions (now we have a dedicated superintendent who even bought a home in our town)
- Rebuilding trust within the community (which is still in the process and requires support and a positive attitude from our elected officials)
- Underfunding the district and maintaining the MBR year over year (which you're looking to go back to)

Public Schools? The simple answer is that we can't. It will only create larger gaps between the schools.

Lastly, we are not the only community facing these issues in education. There is guaranteed to be movement within families seeking educational opportunities elsewhere.

Lets not lose the families we have, and let's let our beautiful, charming town of Winchester be the place they seek. Let them see that during challenging times, we still chose schools and they SHOULD invest here.

Please do not cut any further funding to our education budget and let Winchester continue moving onward and upward.

Kelly Hicks

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone



Cheryl Heffernan <ceh@farverandheffernan.com>

Fwd: Winchester Board of Education budget

1 message

Cheryl Heffernan <cheryleheffernan@gmail.com>
 To: ceh@farverandheffernan.com

Mon, Apr 20, 2026 at 2:14 PM

Cheryl McGlynn
 Winsted, CT

Begin forwarded message:

From: Lara Green-Kazlauskas <larakaz69@gmail.com>
Date: April 20, 2026 at 1:01:36 PM EDT
To: Cheryl Heffernan <cheryleheffernan@gmail.com>
Subject: Fwd: Winchester Board of Education budget

I keep getting your email wrong for some reason. Got a message from Kevin Bishop re: BOE budget

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Lara Green-Kazlauskas <larakaz69@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Apr 20, 2026 at 12:57 PM
Subject: Winchester Board of Education budget
To: <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>, <whester@townofwinchester.org>, <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>, <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>, <cheffernan@townofwinchester.org>, <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>, <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>, <pharrington@townofwinchester.org>, <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>

Good Afternoon, I am writing in support of the Board of Education proposed budget. I am not in favor of the outrageous cuts being considered, to the services provided to the children of Winsted.

My daughter is 24, but she went through the educational system when she was little. I was always involved and did a lot of volunteer work. As time went on, and after she was finished- I watched the educational system get better.

Cutting any educational system does nothing more than negatively impact children- the future- as well as decrease the value of your home. Who wants to move to a town with their children, OR move to a town to start a family when they know their children are going to be treated as "a line item"???

Kids are NOT a "line item".

Do what's right. Find cuts elsewhere or increase the Mil. Anyone who considers children "a line item" has NO PLACE in town government. Period.

Just because you do not have a child in the educational system does not mean the cuts will not affect you. They will.

If you disagree, I will find statistics to prove you wrong.

Thank you,

Lara Green-Kazlauskas
 55 Crescent Street



I support the budget

From Annie Trepanier <atrepanier@gmail.com>

Date Mon 4/20/2026 1:52 PM

To Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester <whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino <pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn <cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Harrington <pharrington@townofwinchester.org>

EXTERNAL EMAIL - This email was sent by a person from outside your organization.

Hello,

My name is Annie Trepanier. I am writing to let you know that I support education and will vote to support the budget.

Thank you,

Annie Trepanier
www.violinviolaect.com
www.cuatropuntos.org
860-379-3190

Hi Todd – I did some research on this question.

I would like to begin with; I have no details on what comprise Dr. Luby's \$28,088 per student number so I cannot speak to that. The Gilbert School per student tuition for 2026-2027 is \$24, 226.

It should be noted that the schools that are listed in the question are all K-12 schools. It is typically less expensive to run elementary schools than a high school due to having:

- (1) specialized teachers (by subject),
- (2) more expensive facilities & equipment such as science labs, technical/vocational spaces (science lab, woodshop, etc.),
- (3) athletics and extracurricular activities
- (4) Guidance and counseling department
- (5) Course variety – AP classes, tech classes, etc.

I pulled up the budgets for each of the towns mentioned and found the following:

- Putnam 2026-2027 total budget is \$23,734,750 and they have 1,049 students. This comes out to \$22,626 per student (K-12)
- Torrington 2026-2027 total budget is \$82,728,744 and they have 3,821 students. This comes out to \$21,651 per student (K-12)
- Plainfield 2026 -2027 total budget is \$22,668.52 and they have 1,795 students. This comes out to \$22,668.52 per student (K-12)

It is important to note that these three districts all have over 1,000 students and Gilbert has 420. This is comparing apples and oranges, because all of the overhead costs to open the building are being spread across fewer students in our budget.

A comparison of 7-12 schools would be more reasonable. I looked at NW Region #7 budget for 2026-2027. Total budget is \$23,021,681 and they have 771 students. This comes out to \$29,859 per student. In comparison to Dr. Luby's per student number we are almost \$2,000 less per student.

I also found the attached chart in Region #7s budget presentation that shows the per student cost across schools in the Berkshire League and includes the CT state average.

The source of this data is noted to be from the CT State Department of Education. The state average is \$24,251 and Gilbert is slightly below this.

Lastly, I know there was mention that Gilbert has over \$2M in Capital and it was from leftover tuition funds. The source of the majority of this money is from the Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) that we received last year, which we were eligible for due to our Independent School status. At the June 18, 2025, Gilbert School Corporation meeting, the Board voted to put the ERTC money into capital reserves, to be used specifically for a capital project or project from the 5-year plan. The motion was unanimously approved with all nine board members present. This money may go to support the cost of fixing the bus

loop, therefore excluding this large expense from being included in future budgets (tuition numbers).

One additional reminder is that Gilbert took \$250,000 from our Capital Reserve Fund to offset this year's budget. This was included in the budget that Mr. Susi presented to the Board and the Board approved. This is not an insignificant amount.

Holly Cassaday

Dear Members of the Board of Selectmen,

I am writing as a parent in this community to express serious concern regarding the proposed budget cuts, particularly as they relate to our schools and the students who rely on them every day.

As a parent of a child with an IEP receiving special education services, I understand that certain federally mandated services and supports cannot simply be reduced or eliminated. However, that does not mean cuts can occur without consequence. When funding is tightened, districts are forced to stretch already limited resources, and the impact is felt directly by students. We are already seeing this happen, special education staff and interventionists, who are responsible for delivering required services, are being pulled to cover absences and serve as substitutes. This disrupts consistency and compromises the quality of support students are legally entitled to receive.

I would respectfully ask for greater transparency regarding how our tax dollars are currently being allocated. Since such large reductions to the education budget are being considered, the community deserves a clear understanding of where funding is going and whether all areas are being evaluated thoughtfully and equitably.

Our children are the future of this town. Investing in their education is both a moral responsibility and a long-term investment in the strength and sustainability of our community. Continued cuts, especially in an already strained system, risk compounding existing issues and placing additional pressure on staff, students, and families.

I also believe it is reasonable to take a broader look at how our school system is structured to ensure we are operating as efficiently as possible. For example, given that the vast majority of Gilbert's student population is made up of Winsted students, it may be worth evaluating whether the current model remains the most effective and fiscally responsible approach for the town. This is not about tradition, but about making sure resources are being used in ways that best support students. Tradition alone should not be the deciding factor if it is no longer aligned with the needs of our students or the financial realities of our community.

I urge the Board to carefully consider the real-world impact of these decisions, prioritize transparency, and ensure that our students, especially those requiring additional support, are not placed at further disadvantage.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Ashley Crance

-----Original Message-----

From: Gayle Parks <gayleparks@live.com>

Sent: Monday, April 20, 2026 4:26 PM

To: Todd Arcelaschi <tarcelaschi@townofwinchester.org>; William Hester

<whester@townofwinchester.org>; Troy Lamere <tlamere@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Marino

<pmarino@townofwinchester.org>; Cheryl Heffernan McGlynn

<cheffernanmcglynn@townofwinchester.org>; William Pozzo <wpozzo@townofwinchester.org>; Kevin

Bishop <kbishop@townofwinchester.org>; Paul Harrington <pharrington@townofwinchester.org>

Subject: Education Budget

Hello Selectman,

I am unable make the meeting tonight, but want to share my thoughts about potential cuts to Education here in Winsted.

As a life long resident of Winsted, except for Active duty time, and raising four children here, one with special needs, I personally do not support a cut of any amount to our education system. The children of this community matter! They may be the next selectman or even better next President. Please let's support our children!!!

Thank you for listening!

Gayle Parks

Sent from my iPad

Hello,

My name is Steve Larson and I live on Wheeler St. in Winsted.

I want to encourage all of you to support our town by supporting our school students, families, teachers and staff. Please do not make any further budget cuts. I will vote to pass the budget without additional cuts.

Thanks for all of your work.

Steve

Steve Larson

www.violinviolaetc.com

cell (860)523-8931

Senior Artist Teacher, [The Hartt School](#), CT

Principal Viola, [Wintergreen Music Festival](#)

& [LEAD Cooperative](#), VA

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cell (860)523-8931

Senior Artist Teacher, The Hartt School, CT

Principal Viola, Wintergreen Music Festival

& LEAD Cooperative, VA

Dear Board Members,

I am writing to share my family's experience since recently moving to Winstead. While we are enjoying living here, I have noticed a significant gap in educational needs and activities compared to the previous towns we have lived in. With two children currently at Pearson and one at Gilbert, my family has observed several areas where we feel improvements are necessary.

It appears to me that there is an overall lack of morale among both students and staff. Some staff members seem burnt out, and my children have noticed that the excitement and fun that should be present in a school environment is missing. Additionally, communication from teachers is less frequent than what we experienced at our previous schools. I believe increased communication is essential for parent engagement, as it is difficult for parents to be involved if they aren't fully informed about what is happening in the classroom, especially at Pearson.

My children have described the environment as very strict and lacking in fun, which makes it difficult for them to stay engaged. We have also encountered issues with bullying, which I believe may stem from staff being overwhelmed. Furthermore, my student at Gilbert has noted a lack of necessary supplies, and my child with a special education plan has expressed that the experience here is quite different and less supportive than at their previous schools.

I am writing to advocate for an increase in the school budget to address these concerns. I believe additional funding could help by:

- Providing more engaging activities related to the curriculum.
- Hiring extra staff to reduce the load on current teachers and hiring qualified personnel to improve morale.
- Offering raises to retain high-performing employees.
- Ensuring classrooms are properly equipped with necessary supplies.
- Maintaining a safe and positive environment for all children.

In this day and age, I do not believe it is possible to cut or maintain a budget and expect better results. The budget needs to be spent where it is needed most to foster positivity and improve the educational experience for our children.

Thank you for your time and for the work you do for our schools. I trust that you will make the right choices for the community.

Best regards,
Winstead taxpayer

Nicole Simpson