

## Wappingers Central School District Legislative Action Committee Meeting

Wednesday, March 10, 2021 -- 3:00 p.m.

This meeting will be held remotely via Zoom and live stream to the public at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbmirHxXLln0yrMBhi6XJTA/videos>

Attendees: Eddy Slosower, John S. Morgan, Rob Rubin, Jaclyn Coffman, Sanjay Natesan, Carl DeMarco, Jr.

Others Present: Alberta Pedro

Not Present: Allison Conti, John Lumia

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The meeting was called to order by Chairman Eddy Slosower at 3:03 p.m.

### 1. **Approve Minutes**

Motion to approve the minutes of the Feb. 17 meeting, as stated.

Motion by Rob Rubin

Second by Carl DeMarco Jr

Yes: Eddy Slosower, John Morgan, Rob Rubin, Jaclyn Coffman, Sanjay Natesan, Carl DeMarco, Jr.

Motion passed.

### 2. **Review and Edit Draft Letters**

- Funding to Keep Schools Open – Unfunded Mandates to Require School Districts to test for COVID and provide PPE - [J. Coffman & A. Conti](#)
- Preventing 20% Reduction/Withholding of State Aid -- \$9.6-11 million - [J. Morgan and C. DeMarco](#)
- Mental Health (Social Emotional Well Being) - [R.Rubin and S. Natesan](#)

Funding to Keep Schools Open – Unfunded Mandates to Require School Districts to test for COVID and provide PPE - [J. Coffman & A. Conti](#)

- A request was made to provide the draft letter to all the Dutchess County Boards of Education asking that they sign the letter so that a collaborative effort can be made to secure funding to keep schools open. Sometimes the collective voice is stronger than individual requests. The committee agreed that this is a great idea; however, due to time constraints it may not be possible.

- The committee discussed whether to include future costs in the letter; it was agreed that it is unknown whether there will be PPE and distancing requirements next school year. It was felt that advocating for funding to keep schools open in general, without forecasting about future unknown expenses, was the best course of action.
- The committee worked collaboratively on edits to the draft letter provided by Ms. Coffman and Ms. Conti. It was the consensus of the committee that the draft letter be forwarded to the agenda setting meeting for discussion and approval at the upcoming board meeting. The committee requested a time allowance of 30 minutes on the agenda for all three letters.

#### Preventing 20% Reduction/Withholding of State Aid -- \$9.6-11 million - [J. Morgan and C. DeMarco](#)

- The committee reviewed the draft letter crafted by Mr. Morgan and Mr. DeMarco. It was suggested that the committee add a cc: to the Lieutenant Governor of NYS.
- The committee discussed the State's proposal to discontinue reimbursable aid and replace it with service aid. Under this proposal the district would receive approximately \$1 million more than last year; however, it removes the linkage of two of the district's largest expenses: BOCES and Transportation. In years to come there will be a negative impact felt by the district if there is an elimination of reimbursable aid.
- It was required that the sentence about BOCES be removed from the letter because it may not be in the best interest of the district to specifically name BOCES because it is unknown whether legislators look favorably on the BOCES program and services. It was also felt that WCSD is the largest contributor to BOCES and we need to drive the point home that reimbursable aid is important to the district.
- The committee worked collaboratively on edits to the draft letter provided by Mr. Morgan and Mr. DeMarco. It was the consensus of the committee that the draft letter be forwarded to the agenda setting meeting for discussion and approval at the upcoming board meeting.

#### Mental Health (Social Emotional Well Being) - [R. Rubin and S. Natesan](#)

- The committee reviewed the information provided about mental health, which was submitted by Mr. Rubin and Mr. Natesan.
- New York State has separate training for mental health. In speaking with the middle school and high school principals, it was expressed the need to hire staff specifically trained in mental health. In addition, the elementary school principals expressed the need for a full time counselor at the

elementary level. All in all, six staff members were requested (4 counselors specifically trained in mental health, and two counselors for the elementary level).

- The committee worked collaboratively to draft the first three paragraphs of the mental health letter. This work will continue at the next meeting.

**3. Schedule Next Meeting Date** - A brief half-hour Legislative Action Committee meeting will be scheduled for early next week to finalize the third letter.

**4. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by Carl DeMarco Jr

Second by John Morgan

Yes: Eddy Slosower, Rob Rubin, John Morgan, Jaclyn Coffman, Sanjay

Natesan, Carl DeMarco, Jr.

Motion passed.

The meeting ended at 4:14 p.m.