



TOWN OF LEDYARD CONNECTICUT

Chairman S. Naomi Rodriguez

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February 27, 2025

Chairman Anthony Favry
Ledyard Board of Education
1 Lucienne Way
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Dear Chairman Favry:

While the Town Council appreciated your prompt response to our February 24, 2025 letter in which we requested an alternate date for the Board of Education to present their proposed Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget to the Town Council; we were dismayed that there seemed to be some misunderstanding with regard to the Town Council's communications to date; our interest to provide the Board of Education the opportunity to present an overview of the School District's needs and challenges in the upcoming year; and regarding some of the incorrect information that was included in your February 24, 2025 email.

The following is provided for clarification:

- 9/2024 Board of Education's Draft Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget Preparation Schedule which included the Board of Education presenting its proposed Education Budget to the Town Council on February 26, 2025.
- 1/21/2025 - Special Joint Work Session – Town Council and Board of Education - at which the Town Council asked the Board of Education for additional information to provide transparency and to obtain a better understanding of the needs of the proposed Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Education Budget. (see attached Minutes).
- 2/6/2025 -Town Council letter to Board of Education Chairman Favry requesting the information discussed at the 1/21/2025 Special Joint Work Session Meeting be provided. (Board of Education, Superintendent Hartling, BOE Assistant, Town Council, and Mayor Allyn, III BOE Finance Director, Town Finance Director were copied on the letter via email).
- 2/6/2025 – School Superintendent Hartling email- response acknowledging the receipt of the Town Council's 2/6/2025 letter. (Board of Education, Superintendent Hartling, BOE Assistant, Town Council, Mayor Allyn, III, BOE Finance Director, Town Finance Director were copied on the email).
- 2/18/2025 – Chairman Favry's email acknowledging the Town Council's 2/6/2025 letter and stating that the requested information would be provided by the end of the week. (Board of Education, Superintendent Hartling, BOE Assistant, Town Council, Mayor Allyn, III, BOE Finance Director, Town Finance Director were copied on the email).

- 2/20/2025 - Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher email to Superintendent Hartling requesting the Board of Education's Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget presentation to include with the Town Council's February 26, 2025 Agenda packet on the meeting portal. This was administrative, as in past years Town Council Office Staff has worked with the Board of Education Central Office; and the presentation was provided to be displayed during the Town Council meeting. (Chairman Favry, Finance Committee Lamb, Executive Assistant Kristen Chapman; and Chairman Rodriguez were copied on the email.)
- 2/20/2025 - Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher Zoom Invite regarding the Town Council's February 26, 2025 Meeting (sent to the Town Council, Board of Education, Superintendent Hartling, and others.)
- 2/20/2025 -Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher distribute Granicus Meeting Portal Agenda regarding the Town Council's February 26, 2025. 2025 (sent to the Town Council, Board of Education, Superintendent Hartling, and others).
- 2/20/2025 – Chairman Favry email stating that the Board of Education could not attend the Town Council's February 26, 2025 meeting because the Superintendent would be out of town. The Board of Education did not mention in any of their prior communications that they would not be able to attend the Town Council's February 26, 2025.
- 2/21/2025 Chairman Rodriguez telephone conversation with Superintendent Hartling to coordinate an alternate date for the Board of Education to present their Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget to the Town Council.
- 2/24/2025 – Town Council letter to both Superintendent and Chairman Favry to reschedule the Board of Education's Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget to the Town Council.

The Town Council appreciates the incredible amount of time and work that goes into preparing a \$40,667,242 education budget. As stewards of our taxpayers dollars the Town Council must perform its due diligence to ensure that we provide transparency, and that money entrusted to town was accounted for; and being spent responsibly.

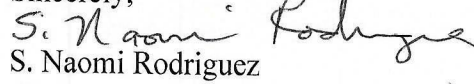
With the Board of Education's budget being 70% of Ledyard's expenses, cooperation to maintain open communication, respond to requests in a timely fashion, and efforts to jointly work on important initiatives such as the Annual Town Budget was not only essential to provide critical services to our community, which includes education for our children and public safety for our residents, it was necessary to move the town forward.

The Town Council strongly agrees that all of our time would be better spent fostering a stronger relationship between both governing bodies as we share common goals and objectives.

We look forward in hearing back from you with some alternate dates that the Boad of Education will be available to present its proposed Fiscal Year 2025/2026 Budget to the Town Council. Please note the following Town Council meeting dates are available March 12, and March 26, 2025.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions regarding this request.

Sincerely,


S. Naomi Rodriguez
Chairman

Attachments:

Board of Education Draft Budget Prep Timeline Fiscal Year 2025/2026
Joint Finance Committee Minutes 1/21/2025
Town Council letter dated 2/6/2025
Superintendent Hartling email dated 2/6/2025
Chairman Favry email dated 2/18/2025
Chairman Favry email dated 2/20/2025
Town Council letter dated 2/24/2025
Chairman Favry email dated 2/24/2025

cc:

Town Council
Mayor Fred Allyn, III
Board of Education Members
Finance Director
Treasurer
BOE Director Finance

was for six math teachers that residents found that it made more sense. Mr. Lamb stated that the Board of Education would look into Councilor Buhle's request.

Councilor Garcia-Irizarry stated in reviewing the Board of Education's Budget last year that she would see Paraprofessionals listed for a school on one page and then see Paraprofessionals listed again for the same school on another page. Therefore, she stated it would be helpful to know that one budget line was for Special Needs Paraprofessionals and that the other budget line was for Regular Paraprofessionals. Superintendent Mr. Hartling explained the Munis Financial System Account Line Number indicated location, department, program etc., noting that it gets very granular and that was the reason they would see budget lines come up in the same location in different ways.

❖ **Guidance for Negotiation and Execution of Contracts**

Councilor Saccone noted that the *Committee to Review the Budget Process* provided some recommendations, and he questioned whether the Board of Education or the Mayor has looked at trying to implement the suggestions.

Superintendent of Schools Jason Hartling stated for Certified Staff Contracts that the Board of Education has traditionally asked that the Town Council send a Liaison to attend the negotiations. He stated that he believed the Chairman would continue this practice, noting that where it was required by State Statute that the Board of Education would provide notifications.

Chairman Rodriguez stated when the Twenty-seventh Town Council was seated on December 4, 2023 that the Ledyard Education Association (LEA-Teachers) Contract had already been ratified/voted on by the LEA, noting that it was forward to the Town Council for action at their February 14, 2024 meeting. Mr. Hartling stated that the Board of Education had two Non-Certified Bargaining Unit Contracts (Secretaries and Custodians) that were up this year. Chairman Rodriguez stated that she could attend the negotiations. Mr. Hartling stated that he would talk with the Negotiation Committee about what they wanted to do, noting that the State Statues pertained to Certified Staff Contracts.

❖ **Budget Format Development and Communication.**

Councilor Ryan, Committee to Review the Budget Process Chairman, noted that Board of Education Member Joanne Kelley worked on this area of Report, noting that the recommendation included some additional information be added to the Budget Booklet Handout. Board of Education Member Joanne Kelley stated in the Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Budget Booklet Handout that they added a lot more pages to provide additional background information.

Mayor Allyn, III, noted that additional information was included at the front of the Budget Booklet Handout that included a Summary that provided some narratives and graphs and charts. He stated it provided a five-page snapshot of the Annual Budget.

Ms. Kelley questioned whether they received any feedback from residents regarding the additional information that was provided in the Budget Booklet Handout. Mayor Allyn stated that he did not receive any feedback from the residents.