



EAST RAMAPO CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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"A Unified Community Educating the Whole Child"

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April 21, 2017

Mary Ellen Elia
Commissioner of Education
State of New York
89 Washington Avenue, Room 111
Albany, N.Y. 12234

Dear Commissioner Elia,

I want to thank you for approving the proposed 2017-18 budget submitted to you on March 31, 2017.

On April 19, 2017, the Board voted to approve the budget and send it to the voters in May.

During the budget presentation by Superintendent Dr. Wortham at that meeting, Assistant Superintendent for Finance Valter Paci noted that the line item for transportation included restoration of five days of non-mandated transportation for non-public school students.

Although the public school students receive transportation for 180 days per year, there are approximately 14 days, primarily due to religious holidays and conflicting schedules with the public school calendar, that most nonpublic schools students do not receive transportation to school. This has caused a great health and safety concern, and has been an on-going conversation with the nonpublic school community since 2011 when these days of transportation were cut from the budget. The Superintendent has made commitments to the nonpublic school community during budget presentations for the last two years to find a way to at least partially restore these days and provide parity in transportation between public and nonpublic school students. With 73% reimbursement from the State for transportation, these five days would only cost \$135,000.

After the meeting it was brought to my attention by State Monitor Chuck Szuberla that, although the budget prepared by Dr. Wortham and presented to you on March 31st included the funds for non-mandated transportation days in the transportation line, the specific details of those proposed expenditures were not provided to you at that time, and that your approval of the proposed budget did not include approval the days of non-mandated transportation.

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I will post this letter on the District website to make clear to the community that the proposed budget does not include non-mandated days of transportation for non-public school students, and that if the Board wishes to include any such days, it must re-submit a budget for your approval.

I appreciate your support toward moving the District forward, and look forward to our continued collaboration.

Sincerely,



Yehuda Weissmandl
President, Board of Education

cc. Chuck Szuberla
John Sipple
Alison Bianchi