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**Regarding cuts to the 2025-2026 school budget**

1 message

**Marcia Jones** <jonesm@newhtfd.org>

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To the Board of Education members who presently sit on the Board of Education of this school year, 2024-2025

My name is Marcia Jones. I live at 298 Ramstein Road, and have lived in New Hartford for 40 years. I have seven grown children who all attended New Hartford schools and Northwestern Regional 7, and I am currently raising a granddaughter who is 9 years old, in 4th grade at Antolini School and part of the Special Education program. I am also the Instructional Assistant at Bakerville School and New Hartford Elementary School, and have held this position for 14 years.

I am writing this letter to express my deep regret, disappointment, frustration and anger at the latest news of cuts being demanded and considered for the upcoming school budget process. While I certainly understand the need for fiscal responsibility and applaud your efforts, I also certainly understand the need for educational responsibility, providing the very best education for the children of New Hartford. Their needs are enormous and varied, and our teachers and staff are constantly striving to provide guidance and support for their students.

My position in the schools as the Instructional Assistant is a para position that directly supports the teachers by providing all their curriculum needs so they can move seamlessly from lesson to lesson without the worry of whether they have all the materials required. I work tirelessly producing massive quantities of work for all of my teachers, thereby keeping them out of the workroom and in the classroom where they truly belong. I work closely with Heather Mathes, our curriculum director, making sure all materials are prepped in a timely manner, and with the constant evolution of our math and ELA curriculums, it is a monumental task to keep my teachers up-to-date and supported. My strengths lie in multi-tasking, organization and time-management, specific requirements for the job I do, as I can produce unlimited amounts of materials and support in my allotted time. I know without hesitation that I am a valued asset to the teachers, administrators and students in the two schools in which I work. The teachers depend on this position to support their teaching and allow them the time they need to support their classrooms and their students. I am personally aware that many school districts hold New Hartford in very high esteem for continuing to fund this position, as it directly supports and affects teachers and students in a supremely positive way.

Throughout the course of a day I am also always willing and available to cover any necessary duties, and am called on often to do so. I am also one of only two substitutes for the Administrative Assistants at the primary schools and am readily available to them whenever they need me, whether it's monitoring the offices when they are called away from their desks, filling in so they can leave for an appointment, or

covering full days for any reason. I am well-versed in Power School, phones and security, and am fully capable of managing it all.

I ask you, as a Board, to consider very carefully how much needs to be cut, and where those cuts will come from. As a long-time resident, taxpayer and voter, I will not support cuts that I feel will negatively affect the education and well-being of our students and teachers or take anything away from our ability as a district to address the educational and emotional needs of any of our students. My position is invaluable to the teachers in keeping them running smoothly and therefore able to concentrate on their teaching and mentoring. Eliminating it would put enormous pressure on the teachers and negatively affect their time and energy, resulting in a negative effect on the students of New Hartford.

Respectfully,

**Marcia Jones**

Marcia Jones  
298 Ramstein Road  
New Hartford Connecticut

March 11, 2025

Dear New Hartford Board Members,

I am writing on behalf of the teachers at New Hartford Elementary and Bakerville Schools to express our concerns regarding the potential elimination of Marcia Jones' position. We would like to ensure you are fully aware of the significant impact this decision would have on both our students and staff. We are firmly in support of maintaining the Instructional Assistant position, which has been an integral part of our schools for over two decades, and has been held by Marcia Jones for the past 14 years. Without her dedicated help and support, the successful implementation of our most recent curriculum would not be as effective, nor would it reach its full potential.

The work Ms. Jones has done has greatly enhanced the quality of education our students receive in New Hartford. She has been instrumental in supporting classroom teachers to create a well-organized, high-functioning classroom environment, allowing students to fully engage with the instructional programs and resource materials available to them.

Over the past four years, we've adopted several new programs, including EL modules, Skills Block, IM Math, RULER and Mystery Science. These programs require extensive preparation and the creation of resources to support student learning. One of the most noticeable aspects of the new EL program has been the sheer amount of preparation needed—things like game boards, word cards, vocabulary cards, puzzle pieces, booklets, charts, and many other



curricular items. When we first transitioned to the EL program, the volume of work required to implement it was overwhelming... but we had Marcia!

To effectively carry out the mandated curriculum with the required rigor, the support of the instructional assistant is essential. Below are just a few examples of the many ways Ms. Jones has supported both students and teachers in New Hartford.

- Collaborates with teachers to help plan modified materials.
- Creates modified materials for IEP students for example, enlarging text, creating modified templates, modified paper, etc.
- Creates materials for our EL block such as making copies of books, flash cards, word sorts, sentence builders, etc.
- Creates math activities for our centers by sorting manipulatives, making game boards, creating pieces to the games
- Prepares materials for ALL curriculum so teachers can spend time learning, implementing and carrying out what we need to teach.
- Creates materials for climate committee initiatives
- Supports collaboration between two schools by transporting materials and creating shared materials for classroom use

Teachers consistently go above and beyond, arriving early, staying late, and working from home during the week and on weekends to meet the diverse needs of our students. We dedicate ourselves to learning new curriculums and preparing each night for the lessons ahead. Marcia plays a vital role in allowing us to focus on what truly matters—such as reading, planning, addressing the individualized needs of our students,



and analyzing data. The materials she prepares are essential in helping us implement the curriculum as intended. Marcia's contributions are invaluable to our staff, and losing her would have a profound impact on our students and our school community.

Thank you for considering our input in your decision regarding Marcia's position. Marcia plays a crucial role in creating the materials that enable students to engage in the hands-on experiences at the heart of our curriculum. Her contributions are integral to the success of our educational goals.

Respectfully submitted,

The Teachers of New Hartford Elementary and Bakerville Schools

