



PRESTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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February 3, 2015

Re: H.B. 5085

Dear Legislator,

It is well-established in the State of Connecticut that the role of a Board of Finance is to oversee the design of fiscal policy in a manner intended to meet the diverse needs of the community. Toward that end, Boards of Finance are expected to request annual departmental budget estimates, prepare a budget and recommend a budget to the Town Meeting. Additionally, Boards of Finance are required to set the tax rate for the forthcoming fiscal year following adoption of the budget, publish the Annual Town Report, and select an independent auditor to conduct the annual municipal audit.

Now comes H.B. 5085. In its present form, H.B. 5085, an Act authorizing oversight over non-educational expenses in school budgets by municipal Boards of Finance, proposes to expand upon that authority by allowing said boards to supersede the authority vested in Boards of Education (see Connecticut General Law Section 10-222) to manage their approved budget.

As previously noted, Boards of Finance possess ample opportunity throughout the annual budget process to amend, alter, reduce and otherwise change departmental requests, including non-educational expenses. Consequently, legislating additional oversight following adoption of the budget relative to those expenditures is simply unnecessary.

In conclusion, absent any compelling evidence that the present statutory scheme requires modification, I oppose the adoption of legislation that will impede the ability of a Board of Education to do the job it, rather than the Board of Finance, was elected to do.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John J. Welch".

John J. Welch, Ed. D.