

CITY COUNCIL E-MAILS

ADDENDUM

Received: May 28, 2020 (after 11:00 a.m. – June 1, 2020 (1:00 p.m.)

June 1, 2020 Council Meeting

New content Begins:

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Nicole Hopley ([nhopley@sau52.org](mailto:nhopley@sau52.org)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:00:38

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address: 56 Alehson St Rye NH

comments: Dear City Council,

As a teacher in the city of Portsmouth I urge you not to make budget cuts within the school district. In the wake of Covid-19 we are at a severe disadvantage with even more social, emotional, educational and technological needs. Students require more support now than ever. Teachers in Portsmouth began the arduous task of switching to remote learning in 2 days. This transition requires different needs than a typical year. We now need funding for site licenses, 1-1 computer use, and teacher training. Not to mention upon the return of school it is recommended to have smaller class sizes and cleaner facilities. A budget cut at this time would not support these guidelines and the safety of our students and staff. Again I implore you to look elsewhere to make budgetary cuts.

Thank you for your time,  
Nicole Hopley  
1st grade teacher  
Little Harbour School

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Alice Carey ([alicemcarey@gmail.com](mailto:alicemcarey@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:08:36

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address: 236 Hillside Drive

comments: Greetings Council Members -

I am writing to emphatically urge you not to entertain any of the requested reductions to the school budget, and instead to uphold or increase the current budget as it was presented and accepted earlier this year. I am a parent of three children, two currently enrolled at Dondero Elementary. Right now--when teachers and administrators continue to move mountains to educate our children remotely-- is NOT the time to put programs or personnel in jeopardy in our school system. I have seen what our educators do with the budget that they have under normal circumstances, and it requires assistance from unpaid volunteers, our PTAs, and other sources. Before COVID-19 upended our worlds and dramatically altered our educational delivery methods, the need for adequate funding was already an issue in order to live up to the reputation of Portsmouth Schools. In no way should we be considering cuts to the budget. On the contrary, it is INCREASES in funding to schools that will get our educators and families through this crisis, along with the on-our-feet thinking that is already occurring. What message do we send our teachers, after the upheaval they have recently experienced, when we cut their positions or access to resources that help them do their jobs? Alternatively, what message might we choose to send our enrolled families by declaring NO REDUCTION (or dare I suggest an increase) in funding to schools during these unprecedented times? Respectfully, I plead you to reconsider this exercise in futility that has been requested of the School Department, and choose instead to stand for our families and children in Portsmouth, and the good people that dedicate their lives to educating them.

includeInRecords: on

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Jana Goldstein ([janakgoldstein@gmail.com](mailto:janakgoldstein@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:09:11

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address: 170 F W Hartford Dr

comments: The requested school budget cut is far too high. If we do not make children and school programs a priority now, especially in this unsettling time, we will be faced with the impacts in the future for years to come. Children need support, guidance, and security now more than ever, and with cuts such as the ones suggested, there will be many kids that fall through the cracks in a variety of ways in addition to lack of meeting students potential for so many.

This is simply put, about keeping the existing quality of our schools, and in order to do that, we need to be mindful of how much we are willing to compromise our school budgets.

Please, as a long-time Portsmouth resident of 41 years (born and raised) as a parent of school-aged children, and as an elementary educator I beg the city council to reconsider their request.

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Kelly Cioe ([kelly@whalenpr.com](mailto:kelly@whalenpr.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:10:36

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address: 44 Melbourne Street

comments: Dear Councilors,

We are facing an unprecedented event in our lifetimes. We understand the budget restraints that cities and towns, as well as families, across NH are faced with. However, we challenge each member of the city council to explore other solutions to this coming budget shortfall, rather than ask our children to sacrifice even more than they already have or to put our dedicated educators out of work. If that means we must temporarily raise taxes for those in our very fortunate city who can afford it, so be it. A friend shared some numbers with us, based on John Tabor's analysis of homes in the North Mill Pond neighborhood where the average home is valued at \$685,000 which would mean a \$442 average increase to close the 2020 shortfall. For a few, that may be a significant sacrifice and we should calibrate as well as we can to avoid burdening that increase on those who cannot afford it. For many others, fortunate to live in our growing city, it would not be so much to ask for on a temporary one-time basis in the face of the global pandemic - especially if that small price saves the jobs of many of our dedicated and heroic educators and supports our children who will need additional services, not less.

We truly believe that achieving fiscal responsibility through education cuts, which as it was, was already insufficient, is inappropriate, and will set a generation of students behind. Air quality in our school (New Franklin) is poor, kids are being taught in closets, and teachers are already being asked to do more with less. Raising revenues through such a short-term/one-time tax increase from those who can afford to cover the education budget gap, combined with appropriate cuts to other services rendered unnecessary due to the need for social distancing would be acceptable, as would a short term bond that we could cover through future growth we know is coming to our city. Another option could be a future credit on taxes paid in 2020 to pay back those who sacrificed to get us through this crisis. We are sure experts could generate whole lists of creative options of what else we could do.

We have not yet heard the City Council discussing these sorts of possibilities. We would bet any day of the week on Portsmouth's ability to grow and come back stronger than ever. We'd like to see other options on the table for discussion and consideration, as much as continually asking Steve and George to come back with what else or who else they can cut. Amputating our schools and putting the educators of our children out of work at this time is the wrong choice. Cutting programs, when we need them the most is the wrong choice.

If necessary, now is the time to ask those who have already received and succeeded on the basis of their own public educations, to sacrifice a little more, so be it. It is our collective responsibility to help at this moment. We should not be making these cuts on the backs of our children who have not yet been given the chance.

Thank you again for your consideration.  
Kelly & Scott Cioe  
44 Melbourne Street

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Dmitry Dragilev ([demka55@gmail.com](mailto:demka55@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:13:07

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address: 282 Rockland St., Portsmouth

comments: Hello,

I am a Portsmouth resident and am a father of two kids, I know that today's meeting is to determine/talk about \$1.8 million in school budget cuts.

I ask you to think back to when you were a parent and had young kids in school - how important was it to you to make sure teachers they had have proper supplies and a paycheck? That they have a good education? If you never had kids - think of your friends who had them.

To me it's scary to think that right now, during this time ... the teachers my kids depend on will get less funding than they are getting currently. You will agree with me I think when I say education is THE MOST important part of the taxes we all pay - investment in our children, the next generation.

School teachers are already earning next to nothing, the supplies/budget for public school is stretched insanely thin. If we cut any more budget off schools right now we will have a VERY hard time coming back to school from COVID when things reopen.

This is the time when we need to show support for the school system, make sure they AT VERY LEAST have the minimal funding they had before to come back strong in September and give our kids the education they deserve.

If we cut funding to school, we're telling our kids - you will have a tougher time coming back to school in the future, your teacher might not be there because they were let go, you might not have school supplies you had the year before.

Please I urge you to think about this from a perspective of a young parent with young kids, think back to when you were in our shoes.

Thank you!  
-Dmitry

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by anka Vidacic ([anka.vidacic@gmail.com](mailto:anka.vidacic@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:14:40

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address: 8 dunlin way

comments: Hello City Councilors,  
It is my sincere hope that you would find a way to minimize the budget cuts to the school. I know this is the first thing that comes to mind during times like this and I'm imploring you to put education toward the top of your priority list. Good quality education is a right not a privilege!! Thank you.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Meg Bohne ([megbohne@gmail.com](mailto:megbohne@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:15:15

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address: 65 Wentworth Street

comments: Dear Councilors,  
Please do not balance Portsmouth's budget on the backs of our schools. Doing so is a short-sighted answer to the problem. Portsmouth's families are counting on you to advocate for and protect our education system - something nearly all Councilmembers promised to do when they were elected this past fall. Please stay true to your word and explore other ways to find or raise revenue. Our schools and community are well worth the investment  
Thank you,  
Meg Bohne

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Catherine Craig ([catherinedcraig@gmail.com](mailto:catherinedcraig@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:17:02

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address: 175 State Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801

comments: Please do not cut the school budget. There is no doubt that is pandemic has shaken us all and made changes to life both temporary and permanent. Let it not make us question who we are as a community, though. As we begin to look outside, exit our homes, and reenter life, our commitment to our children should be one thing that has not changed in this new world. How will the kids we are raising remember what we did today? I'd like to be seen as the community that chose renewal, hope, and an unwavering commitment to the education and support of our children. How would you like to be remembered?

The biggest tragedy would be to tie the hands of our school system further when COVID-19 is doing that so effectively. The children of the Portsmouth community are the minds of tomorrow. We must protect their future.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Caroline Berlibg ([Cberling2029@sau52.org](mailto:Cberling2029@sau52.org)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:17:29

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address: 117 Ash Street

comments: My name is Caroline Berling and I am a 3rd grader at LHS. I was really sad to hear you might be cutting money from our schools because kids deserve a break from core academics. I really love my special teachers and classes and hope that they will not get cut because they really enjoy their jobs. I hope you will not cut money from our schools .

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Mark Stebbins ([Mstebbins@proconinc.com](mailto:Mstebbins@proconinc.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:22:16

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address: 117 Bow St unit 201

comments: I was disheartened to find that the City Council is proposing a cut in the budget at a time when our children need our support the most. The 2021 school year will probably be the most important year of this generation's school life. After the pandemic took months of in class learning away from our children they deserve more help, support and resources to get them back on track. I would ask that the City Council reconsider their position as these children are "our future" and compromising their education compromises "the future".

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Gail Collins ([gailmcollins@outlook.com](mailto:gailmcollins@outlook.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:23:20

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address: 64 Blue Heron Dr., Portsmouth

comments: I strongly oppose the school budget cuts and instead support the budget that was presented in May by the City Manager. The return on investment in our youth is immeasurable!

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Claudia Bartolini ([Claudiabartolinister@gmail.com](mailto:Claudiabartolinister@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:23:34

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address: 25 Cabot Street

comments: I don't support the 1.8 mil proposed budget cuts for the sau52 school system Claudia Bartolini

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Bryan Marble ([bryan.marble@gmail.com](mailto:bryan.marble@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:24:10

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address: 226 Marcy St

comments: The idea that, in the middle of a health crisis we would cut the budget for the most pervasive public service in the city is absolutely ludicrous. Schools are the front-lines of any public health response.

Now is not the time to do-more-with-less. If anything, now is the time to ensure that our schools have everything they need to be able to weather an uncertain landscape going into the next year.

During this time of crisis, we have nothing better to do than to pay attention to who is watching out for our community. I know I'm not alone in saying that voting to cut school budgets will activate an already rabid voting block, and your choice will be on campaign signs come the fall. Choose wisely.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Bill Douglass ([billandsage@yahoo.com](mailto:billandsage@yahoo.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:24:47

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address: 96 Cliff Rd

comments: Portsmouth has always celebrated its strong commitment to its schools! Whether in Academics, the arts, or in athletics the budget has reflected its support in all areas. As stated time and time again by each administrator (proud of their respective schools and programs), each school offers something for everyone...strong academics (with appropriate supports in place for those in need), wonderful specials (library, art, music, PE, computer), enrichment opportunities and extra-curricular activities (Arts, band, chorus, theater, athletics and many clubs) .

Budget cuts mean cuts to programming...this is not something Portsmouth should be considering! We have celebrated for years Portsmouth's success in Academics, the Arts, and Athletics alike. If we want to continue to be a "great school (system)" we need to continue to support the efforts financially.

Trimming a budget of some supplies and holding off on potential improvements (that are in the current budget) is one thing...suggesting that we need to cut program offerings to our students (given historical success) is Ludicrous!

As a parent of 2 children in school (Kora gr.3 and Evy gr. 8) and a former teacher and administrator in public schools for over 20 years I fully understand the budget process. Our schools are not the place to target! When we made the decision to move to Portsmouth 8 years ago, we did so with an understanding of Portsmouth's commitment to education and it's youth.

Given our current pandemic now more than ever we need to have "something for everyone"! A connection to school with purpose and a "hook"! This is different for every child and therefore I do not support cuts of any type! All kids should be afforded the same great education and extra-curricular activities that has been offered in Portsmouth for a long time...and I hope for longer!

William K. Douglass

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Abbie & Lee Frank ([abbiecp@gmail.com](mailto:abbiecp@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:24:55

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address: 169 Madison Street, Portsmouth

comments: Asking the superintendent to cut the budget by \$1.8 million dollars demonstrates a lack of understanding about what matters the most in this community. If we as a community believe in taking care of one another and continuing to live in a city that is a welcoming, open-minded place we need to educate our children and provide the added supports that many of them may not be able to access in other places. Though we recognize that sacrifices have to be made in this historically challenging time, we believe that they should come from other departments/services and not from our already underfunded school department. The programs and activities that hard-working, caring, passionate teachers and staff have created to provide opportunities for students are vital to the academic and emotional growth of students. Participation in these programs will help these students grow into Portsmouth's next generation of empathetic, community-minded citizens. We urge you to consider this as you make decisions about the budget.

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Amber and Ken Buttermore ([amberpeacock@hotmail.com](mailto:amberpeacock@hotmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:31:45

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address: 545 FW Hartford Drive

comments: Dear City Council, Manager and Mayor, I am writing again to implore you to not make such drastic budget cuts to our schools. Our children, families, teachers, and administrators have been asked to do the unthinkable and we are now taking more from them? At the exact time when we need all the help we can get? At the time when we are feeling the most loss? These budget cuts will create a flood of loss for years. It will take years to get back to what we've had. If we want our children back in schools someday soon we will need all the resources we have now and more. Schools are the backbone of our city at this point. Our kids and families are holding on by a thread. We need our elected officials to realize that. We need all those citizens in Portsmouth who don't have children right now to understand we need help more now than ever. Studies will show that remote learning is impacting students' growth, especially those that are low income, at risk, and those in special education. Even children who don't fall into those categories are disconnected, depressed and anxious. There will be a lot to do and take care of when this is over.

We reap what we sow. Let's take care of our children. They are our only future. They are watching ALL of us.

Thank You!

Sincerely,

Amber Buttermore

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Sophia van epps ([Svanepps2025@sau52.org](mailto:Svanepps2025@sau52.org)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:31:49

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address: 209 miller ave

comments: Dear Counsel Members,

I have concern about the cuts being considered. The current cuts would mean we would not have sports and extracurricular activities which would potentially lead to many kids in our school getting into trouble if they don't have a reason to stay after school. It also means a threat to music and performing arts which would be a loss for so many kids that participate.

Clubs like the pride club give kids a sense of belonging, voice and promotes diversity. Extracurricular activities and sports are big things that holds a school together & keeps kids engaged. As a student, these cuts make me feel unvalued.

I don't understand why these cuts would even be considered versus looking at other ways to make up the gaps. These choices are directly impacting the next generations.

Please reconsider these actions.

Kindly,  
Sophia Van Epps  
7th grader @ PMS

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Jennifer Wiggin ([Jenwiggin14@gmail.com](mailto:Jenwiggin14@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:32:04

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address: 30 Harding Rd.

comments: Dear City Counsel members,  
I urge you to please reconsider the proposed 1.8 million dollar budget reduction for Portsmouth Schools. These children are our future, they need and deserve all the resources we can give them, especially in these unprecedented times. I don't envy your jobs, with the proposal of no tax increase I understand cuts will have to be made somewhere. Can you find a way to keep this from having a negative impact on our children and educators? Thank you for your consideration.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Ashlie Peters ([Peters3@comcast.net](mailto:Peters3@comcast.net)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:32:59

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address: 104 Odiorne Point rd

comments: I support the budget proposed by the city manager on 5/21 and have serious objections to the suggestion of 0% budget for school district. I agree with Steve's comment that would be an amputation not a belt tightening. All students would suffer for years from cuts that significant. If Portsmouth wants to continue to benefit from families moving into the city, their tax dollars, their spending dollars, and their desire to build our community, we CANNOT gain the reputation and set the precedent of devaluing education. That is a huge mistake.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Christina Dubin ([christinadubin@gmail.com](mailto:christinadubin@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:33:17

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address: 336 Miller Ave

comments: I have two children in the Little Harbour School system. Although I understand that not all taxpayers in the city of Portsmouth have children, I, like many, would argue that our schools are a pride of the City and a selling point for people looking for a place to live in New England. This is a moot point however in the case of the City Manager's plan proposed on 5/21 to keep the increase from last year at 3.59% (a



decrease from the original plan) since it would not cause the tax rate to go up. I support this plan and consider it a win-win. The non-union and non-contractual positions and support that we would lose are especially what we will need on the heels of this crises which is impacting our children more than probably even realize.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Erica Wygonik ([ericaforportsmouth@gmail.com](mailto:ericaforportsmouth@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:33:49

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address: 319 Lincoln Avenue

comments: Thank you so much for your leadership during this stressful time.

Please maintain the school budget as the school department initially proposed.

The school needs the resources they have to try to provide an adequate education amidst a time of great change and uncertainty. The impacts of this virus and its related stay-at-home guidelines will affect the children of this generation for their entire lifetimes. More kids are going to need academic or emotional intervention to process the impacts of this time, and it is not the time to reduce the resources the schools have to address those concerns.

Maintaining the school budget and doing our best as a community to support our children is not just our legal and ethical responsibility, it makes financial sense. It is more cost-effective to educate and support children than to deal with the consequences of not doing so. Further, a strong school district is necessary to retain property values, which directly supports our city budget.

I hope you will consider this information when you decide on the school budget, and in doing so, I hope you choose to protect the school budget as initially proposed.

Kind regards,  
Erica

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Kirsten Mahoney ([kirstenmahoney@gmail.com](mailto:kirstenmahoney@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:35:18

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address: 27 Austin Street

comments: I support the budget the City Manager proposed at the May 21st meeting. Please do not cut the school budgets! Our youngest residents need support now more than ever. With the move to remote learning and the possibility of some type of remote learning continuing into fall, our children's education and wellness has taken a serious hit. Now is not the time to cut the school budget! Many students will need academic and emotional intervention and extra support next year to mitigate the impact of the pandemic. Please do not make our students suffer any more than they have already; as it is, the challenges posed by remote learning will present setbacks to many challenge for months and possibly years to come.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Kerris Parkington ([kerrisparkington@gmail.com](mailto:kerrisparkington@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:37:24

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address: 592 Dennett St

comments: Hi. I'm a student at Portsmouth Middle School and I hope I can make a difference. I think it's crazy how the students might have to have important things taken away from us at school, like Unified Arts. It's what sometimes really makes school exciting and different how we can have the opportunity to learn new things every day, and not just in math, social studies, English, and science. Even if you need to cut the budget, please consider the kids who love and benefit from these programs. Thank you for reading this short letter, and I hope that I and the other kids who go to PMS will make a difference.

includeInRecords: on

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Michelle Anderson ([ANDERSON.MICHL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ANDERSON.MICHL@GMAIL.COM)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:48:36

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address: 236 Cate St

comments: Dear Councilors: I implore you to rethink your request to cut 1.8 million dollars from the school budget. This is not a reasonable request. I have 2 children in the school system. Parents, PTAs and other parent groups fund raise for basic supplies, field trips and many "extras". The City pays for salaries and programs. What does the council propose the school's cut? Should we cut art and gym class? Maybe we should cut foreign language? What about music? These programs are essential parts of a well-rounded education. As a taxpayer and a voter, the school should not be a target here. The Council should instead focus on keeping the City from further unnecessary and expensive lawsuits.

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Margaret Flaherty ([maggie.flaherty@gmail.com](mailto:maggie.flaherty@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:50:06

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address: 860 Maplewood Ave

comments: To Portsmouth City Council:

I am writing in utter dismay that our city council is looking at such a drastic budget cut for our schools. I am especially surprised after watching the last meeting focused on this issue and hearing the support and concern of many councilors.

While Portsmouth teachers and staff have made herculean efforts to educate our students remotely, it is widely acknowledged that there will be regression of skills due to the current health crisis. Understandably, teachers are not able to replicate the richness of learning that takes place in a classroom environment on a daily basis. Our children's health and education should be the highest priority for our city's elected officials. A fully funded school budget demonstrates the commitment of the city council to overcome the educational losses caused by Covid-19 and support academic and social emotional growth of our students.

Now more than ever, parents and caregivers are aware of the educational needs of their children. We have interacted frequently, sometimes daily, with teachers and have seen our children engage in instruction. We have cheered on their progress and tried our best to support them in their struggles. We are better able to recognize the gaps in their learning as well as the skills they have mastered with confidence. Our children's education will be further impacted by budget cuts that result in a loss of programs and/or teaching staff. At the elementary level, our children already have limited access to 21st century skills without a world language program, robust STEAM instruction, and inquiry-based learning. Further, small class sizes are essential to allow teachers to adequately provide differentiated instruction to meet the diverse needs of students. Our most vulnerable student populations, including special education students, who are already under-served, would suffer di!

sproportionately from cuts to the special education budget.

I would like to thank the administration and faculty of Portsmouth Public Schools for all of their hard work and innovative thinking during remote learning. The Portsmouth City Council must not detract from their formidable efforts by making costly cuts to the school budget.

Sincerely,  
Margaret Flaherty

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Allison Dudas ([Willsoal@gmail.com](mailto:Willsoal@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:50:26

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address: 32 Monteith Street

comments: Now, more than ever, our schools need our support. And that means our money. The education of our children should be a top priority- particularly now, in this time of crisis.

Our school district is one of the top reasons people move here. So from an economic standpoint, failure to invest in them will cost us greatly.

Our children need art, music, STEM and more. We need teachers who are skilled at instruction. We need paraprofessionals who are trained to support our classrooms. We need better facilities. My children attend New Franklin School and it is literally busting at the seams. Nothing should be on the chopping block! If anything, we should be talking about how to better support our schools during this time and as we move forward.

Please do not make cuts to our schools, as a parent, I beg you. My children’s education is paramount— don’t undervalue it.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Cyrus Beer ([Cyrusbeer@hotmail.com](mailto:Cyrusbeer@hotmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:54:05

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address: 64 Mount Vernon St

comments: Please support our teachers and students at this critical time. Please do not cut the school budget. Our teachers and students need support now more than ever

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Duncan Craig ([duncancraig@gmail.com](mailto:duncancraig@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:54:21

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address: 175 State Street, Portsmouth, NH 03801

comments: Please do not tie the hands of our school system further when COVID-19 is doing that so effectively. Funding is needed now more than ever to support our schools as they navigate this crisis and meet the challenge of today.

I grew up in the Portsmouth school system and came back to start my family and found my business here. Our school system and community supported and guided me throughout my life, and at each step gave me a

foundation upon which I could build, grow, and give back to that community in whatever ways I could. Portsmouth made an investment in me and thousands like me and I am enormously grateful.

Investment is really the word, right? We sometimes think of these city budgets as a hard cost, something that's a necessary but irritating expense, like roof repair. But education is an investment, even if it can be hard to connect the points between the spend and its payoff. In some ways it's not as simple as looking at the cost to repair roads, or waste management, or fixing crumbling infrastructure because you can't always see the immediate impact. But it's there: in every lightbulb moment where the ability to read clicks in a child's mind; in every word for which a child with a speech delay finds their voice; in every class where a teacher helps a bullied student see their own value; in every year where that child that might have been lost is found and put on the path toward greatness.

Which of these moments would you cut? Which child would you let down? In ten years, what will our graduating classes look like and who will we be sending into the world? What do we want our investment in our children to say about us? I want it to say that when we faced the worst crisis of our generation, we in Portsmouth stood tall and firm to inspire and grow the next leaders of our community, our state, and our country.

So let us meet the challenges we face, not with fear, but with great resolve and a commitment to build an even stronger foundation than the one we have today. Education is the key to that. As our children develop their intellect, problem solving and social abilities, we must show them who we are not only when times are good, but also when times are difficult. Let us not forget that as we show them who we are in this moment, we are also showing them who they can grow to be.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Laurianne Schlosser ([Lpowers25@hotmail.com](mailto:Lpowers25@hotmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:54:28

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address: 167 Lincoln Avenue

comments: I am writing in support of the school budget proposed by City Manager Karen Conard during the May 21, 2020 City Council workshop meeting. The cuts to existing programs and services that would have to be made to accommodate the \$1.8 million budget cut proposed by the City Council would negatively impact the delivery of services, especially to those students who are already most at risk. The programs and positions that would most likely be eliminated are those that are aimed at leveling the playing field in a city where inequity has been identified as a major obstacle to success. It also appears that special education support staff - those folks who don't fall under collective bargaining agreements, or whose positions are not guaranteed from year to year through teacher contracts - would be at risk. Obviously, as a Portsmouth taxpayer, I applaud the efforts to avoid a tax hike, in a city where property taxes are already staggering, but I think the true cost of this budget cut is not one we as a community should be willing to accept.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Mark Alip ([malip@outlook.com](mailto:malip@outlook.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:56:19

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address: 425 Middle Street

comments: Let me first start by saying I understand the last couple of months have created some financial uncertainty that the upcoming budget must address.

At the same time, it's also very laudable that, given the same financial uncertainty for our citizens and local business owners, the town is making every effort to not increase the tax rate at this time.

My family and I moved to Portsmouth from Chicago two years ago, and the quality of the Portsmouth schools played a large part in that decision. Every teacher and administrator we've met are dedicated to the kids in the community and to providing them with the best educational experience possible.

As this pandemic is still ongoing, and with all the budgetary challenges that have been and will need to be addressed, it becomes even more critical to continue funding the Portsmouth schools so as to enable the same level of educational experience - in fact, the pandemic and the ensuing online learning framework brings its own challenges to our teachers and administrators, as engagement becomes an even bigger factor than usual.

So I ask you to please re-consider the proposed budget cut, or whatever portion can be, relative to the inflationary costs that are also being addressed in the 2021 budget. Understanding that there are gaps to address given the pandemic challenges, let's do what we can to reduce the impact to the kids in the community.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Tim Keaveney ([timkeaveney@yahoo.com](mailto:timkeaveney@yahoo.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:56:58

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address: 69 Elwyn Avenue

comments: I ask that you take a hard look at trimming a percentage of all budget line items if possible without cutting programs for kids. Also what other ways can the town increase revenue beyond counting on taxes? Sponsorships for example? Tax free donations? Food for thought.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by aimee raymond ([aimeefarrell@comcast.net](mailto:aimeefarrell@comcast.net)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:57:12

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address: 293 Wibird St

comments: I am very concerned about the proposed budget cuts to the school department listed for over \$1M. While I understand that this is a lean time of belt tightening, this is not the time to undermine the department to the point of them not being able to provide services to our children. Our school children have suffered, as we all have, during this pandemic. They're not learning new concepts at the rate they would have if they were sitting in a classroom. To put a further burden on the school department, in my opinion, would be devastating. I implore you to please look elsewhere in the vast city budget to find the cuts you need to make. I appreciate that this is not an easy task, and I thank you for your service to the city of Portsmouth.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Jeff Dyer ([Jeffreyndyer@gmail.com](mailto:Jeffreyndyer@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 10:59:18

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address: 140 Sherburne Ave

comments: The idea of cutting the budget for the schools at anytime let alone during the times that we are in right now is very upsetting. Our children are already at a disadvantage when it comes to the latest developments with COVID-19, to think that we would entertain the idea of cutting budget is crazy. Our teachers deserve and need every dollar that is allocated to the school budget in order to give our students the chance to succeed in this new environment of learning. DO NOT CUT THEIR BUDGET. As a city resident i would much rather see cuts to other areas of the budget then to the future of our society.

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by CJ Fleck ([cj.fleck@gmail.com](mailto:cj.fleck@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 11:00:17

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address: 6 Rockaway Street

comments: You should not be pushing for drastic budget cuts right now. Cuts made in haste have lasting consequences.

I would ask that you follow the advice of Tony Coviello in his post here...

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/unofficialPortsmouthNH/permalink/1011334632602297/>

To quote:

The school budget has and continues to be the most challenging job as a city councilor. No one wants to short change kids their education, but the costs continue to rise at an unsustainable rate. This year's budget is even worse. On top of the steady increases dictated by contracts we are left to deal with the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic. The school board and city council should create a working group to recommend long-term contractual goals that bring the cost of budget increases in line with inflation. This will take time to implement. In will not be done over the next month as will be required to pass the current city budget. Trying to solve this problem in one budget cycle, in this time frame, under these conditions, will result in nothing but long term damage to the education of the most in need of these services.

I suggest the council approve the school budget as requested. Under normal years, I'd advocate for a budget in line with inflation. This is not a normal year. Our schools will likely be required to do more in the next year. For example, there might be longer school days to spread out classrooms. We do not know the impact or the cures at this point in time.

I also feel for those that have been financially impacted by the pandemic. That is why I propose that the city offer up to \$1.8M in relief to taxpayers that can demonstrate a financial hardship from this event. We have been building the reserve fund for years under the good stewardship of City Managers Bohenko and now Conard. This is a rainy day fund. It's raining! If ever there was a time to use it, it's now.

Use this fund for some relief this one time. Allow those of us that can afford the normal tax increase to pay our fair share. Allow those that can't to get some relief. Allow our kids the education they deserve. However, work without haste on a long term plan as a team with the school board to bring their budget in line with the reality of the incomes of our residents.

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Mollie Mulligan ([mmulligan@gmail.com](mailto:mmulligan@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 11:00:38

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address: 130 Thornton St

comments: Dear Councilors,

I have already written once asking you to be wise and thoughtful about cutting the Portsmouth School District budget. I am writing again, now, to implore you as a resident, tax payer, parent and professional to maintain the School Districts budget.

I have heard - and understand- the Councilors argument that they want history to look back at them as having been fiscally responsible. However, as a voting taxpayer, I would also like to have a City Council who has the foresight to understand that slashing a budget now would cost us more in the long run as we triage the loss to our students. It is some of our most vulnerable residents who are at stake. Losing the supports of staff and programs designed for those residents would be short-sighted at best. Research is clear that positive school experiences leads to lower rates of crime, social service needs such as welfare and mental health support. Conversely, it increases higher rates of civic engagement, employment, and financial stability.

To slash staff and programs which provide our children the resources to grow into strong and thoughtful citizens threatens our community in the near future and long-term. I hope that our City Council has the foresight to act accordingly.

Our City Council has largely run on a premise of preserving the integrity and character of our City. What character are we preserving if we do not support our students during the time of greatest uncertainty and need than a global pandemic? Furthermore, what character and integrity will exist as these students become voting adults - and possibly City Councilors themselves- if we consider them expendable now?

The reality is that our City is very well situated to weather this storm right now. It is essential that we focus on the big picture and not cutting excessively out of fear.

Thank you for your time and consideration, Melinda (Mollie) Mulligan

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Zang Garside ([zang@garside.net](mailto:zang@garside.net)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 11:01:05

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address: 212 Park Street, Portsmouth

comments: I strongly oppose cutting the school budget in this time of crisis. There are many ways we can address the economic aspects of the current situation without undercutting the efforts of our educators to meet the changing needs of this pandemic. This council must not use the virus as a pretext for making cuts solely where they want to make them but should (as always) be responsive to the wishes and needs of the community.

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Shannon Palace ([Shannonpoulin@gmail.com](mailto:Shannonpoulin@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 11:01:18

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address: 35 Elwyn Avenue

comments: I am writing because I am alarmed that the school budget is slated to be cut. This pandemic has been an incredible and stressful transition to remote learning And we would be completely lost without the efforts of the teachers, staff and administration of our schools. We may still have to do remote learning in the future and I cannot imagine what that would be like if we had less resources and staff. Our kids would certainly suffer academically and that is not in the best interest of anyone. What hope do the more challenged kids have if there aren't resources to support them? How are we going to regain the ground we've lost to this phase of remote learning if we don't have the staff and financial means necessary to do so? The schools are vital to our community and these school budget cuts are not what we need in this time of upheaval.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Diane Schaefer and Mitch Shuldman ([dschaefer7@comcast.net](mailto:dschaefer7@comcast.net)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 11:04:30

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address: 620 Lincoln Ave, Portsmouth NH 03801

comments: As parents who no longer have children in the schools, we believe it's important to "pay it forward" and urge you to accept the proposed budget as is. It's especially critical at a time when teachers and support staff are spending more time than ever to educate our children on-line. We also support Tony Coviello's idea to create a special committee to look at ways to restrain the budget going forward. For example, if the unions were willing to forego their raises for one year, and extend their contract by one year, that could help us through this crisis.

Sincerely,  
Diane Schaefer and Mitch Shuldman

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Patricia Burke Edwards ([triciabedwards@outlook.com](mailto:triciabedwards@outlook.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 11:05:25

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address: 23 Willard Ave

comments: Please support the city managers proposed budget on 5/21 of a 140k reduction, NOT a 1.8 m reduction. I have four children in the Portsmouth School District and work in SPED. Our students need as many supports and programs moving forward as possible. We need to continue to invest in our future and our students and staff deserve a range of programs.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Jocelyn Philbrook ([jocelyn.philbrook@mac.com](mailto:jocelyn.philbrook@mac.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 11:07:55

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address: 89 Odiorne Point Road

comments: Dear City Councilors,  
2020 has already been a very hard year for children and teens. The disruption to their lives as a result of the global pandemic will likely be felt for years to come. These young people are our future and essential to a vibrant healthy community.

I strongly encourage the City Councilors to be thoughtful about changes to the school budget. The way contractual increases are handled needs to be planned out. We can't say that we will reduce the current programs to keep our obligations to these previous commitments.

As a taxpayer, parent, and long time resident, I appreciate the need manage contractual obligations that put pressure on overall spending levels. At the same time, those discussions should not impact the education and programs that our youth receive. If we want to revisit retirement funds, healthcare, etc., we need to separate that from the overall school budget and analyze the options.

Many of us live in Portsmouth because of its outstanding school system. We need to at least maintain the current level of programming - if not strive to improve it. Children learning in closets, parents asked to fund classroom supplies, no language programming for elementary school kids, lack of science fairs, etc. These are things we should improve not ignore and focus only on the top-level number.

A reduction of \$1.8 million to the proposed school budget would have a significant negative impact on school programs. This comes at a time when our youth need more support. It seems reckless and tone-deaf to push for this reduction at this time.

I know our City Council cares deeply about the health of our community and its future. Let's not make decisions without fully understanding the City's revenue picture, what our youth need, and what would happen if we reduced the school budget.

Thank you for your consideration.  
- Jocelyn Philbrook

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Jacqueline Lucas ([jacqueline\\_lucas@rocketmail.com](mailto:jacqueline_lucas@rocketmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 11:33:50

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address: 61 Jones Avenue, Portsmouth, NH 03801

comments: Good Afternoon,  
I am writing in response to recent press coverage of the Portsmouth school budget and potential cuts being considered. I am writing as a Portsmouth home owner and parent to PMS and PHS students, to strongly urge you not to make any cuts to our school budgets at this critical time. Now more than ever, with a great deal of uncertainty on our horizon - our school administrators, teachers, support staff and students need all the resources that we can possibly allocate to ensure continuity in the quality of education provided to our students. Our schools are the foundation of our community and the greatest asset Portsmouth can provide to families here. Please take whatever steps are needed to avoid cuts to the school budget as you continue to assess the financial future of our community and our students' wellbeing. Thank you.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Tracy George ([tracyelizwhite@yahoo.com](mailto:tracyelizwhite@yahoo.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 11:37:01

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address: 41 Topaz Place

comments: Please do not cut the school budget. The resources cannot be further limited. So many kids will be struggling due to the pandemic.

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by maria sillari ([msillari14@gmail.com](mailto:msillari14@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 12:50:53

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address: 171 Jones Avenue

comments: Dear Councilors,

I understand that many citizens are struggling financially right now, and that some will find it difficult to pay their property taxes. That said, I am writing to ask you to support the budget that the city manager set forth last Thursday, 5/21 and not implement further cuts to schools's budget.

While a reduction in the budget may result in reduced property taxes, the impact is minimal in comparison to the harm that would come from a cut to the school budget. As an example, a 5% reduction in our family's property taxes would result in a savings of about \$480. That still leaves us \$9,200 that needs to be paid. I understand that every penny counts when things are financially difficult, but feel that a cut to the school budget is shortsighted.

Our schools already get by and do a lot without adequate funding for all that they do. Teachers buy their own supplies and spend their own funds to help and support their students.

During these difficult times it is not a time to be reducing personnel or programs from our students. In fact, I would argue it's a time to do more, not less, and at a MINIMUM maintain the current level of staffing and services for our students.

Our school budget should be thought of as an investment in our children, our collective future, and the future of our city. Now more than ever, our students NEED and DESERVE a holistic, fully rounded education that includes a range of programs that includes academics, wellness, arts, music and athletics.

Further, our strong schools and robust city services are a key reason for Portsmouth's successful real estate market and thus our strong residential and commercial tax base. To chip away at services, particularly the schools, would be short-sighted and something Portsmouth taxpayers would pay for long after the pandemic has passed.

Please support the City Manager's May 21st budget.

Thank you

Maria

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Michael Derhammer ([hagusmd@yahoo.com](mailto:hagusmd@yahoo.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 12:56:42

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address: 280 Thaxter Rd

comments: I am strongly in support of the current school budget as written and strongly oppose any cuts made to the proposed budget. My family moved to Portsmouth 22 years ago specifically because of the schools and are very proud of the children this district produces. We support any tax increase the budget creates as we can not skimp on our students especially at this time. They are going to need all the help and support they can get.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Kirsten Barton ([kirstena.barton@gmail.com](mailto:kirstena.barton@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 13:09:16

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address: 49 Ridges Court

comments: Hi City Council,  
Please know that no matter what we cut or try and save on there is just no way to save in education. The budget is always thin and state funding is also lacking. During this time when our kids need us most, please do not scrimp on funding the bedrock of our community. The School Department is more than educators - they are conveners. Think of all the outreach during the pandemic that was only possible because our schools know our families. Please fully fund the schools.  
Thanks for considering.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Scott J Marcus ([RCSoftware@aol.com](mailto:RCSoftware@aol.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 13:14:44

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address: 240 Buckminster Way

comments: Dear City Councilors,

I've been a property tax payer in Portsmouth for over 30 years. For over 20 of those years I was paying property taxes and did not have children. At that time I was always happy to support our school system and was proud to live in a city that had a great school district and provided fantastic opportunities for its children.

I understand that Covid-19 has destroyed countless businesses, led to 20% nationwide unemployment and made municipal budgeting quite difficult.

As a parent and Portsmouth resident my very strong preference would be to maintain the current level of school funding rather than a amputation, harming the future of our children and changing the character of our city.

I love the Portsmouth Indoor Pool, my daughter is a member, I've donated money to SIPP, but if we need to reduce pool hours and budget to maintain the schools, by all means, do so.

I love the Fire Department. When my mother fell in my house and couldn't get up, the fire department arrived in minutes and provided compassionate quality care for which I will always be grateful. But if we have to cut the fire department to save the schools, it is unfortunate but necessary.

My strong preference is to cut everything else but the schools. Cut the Public Works, Police, Recreation, IT, Library. Charge us for trash bags, let the Tax Collector charge us an extra \$20 for vehicle registration.

But please, don't cut our school budget by \$1.8 million. Please protect the future of our children.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Scott Marcus

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Ben Pohopek ([bpohopek93@gmail.com](mailto:bpohopek93@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 13:25:09

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address: 303 Cabot St., Portsmouth, NH 03801

comments: I am writing today to voice my opposition to the proposed School Budget Cuts. While I understand that we need to find ways to limit spending in these trying times, school funding should not be a consideration. Education is far too critical and these proposed cuts, if implemented, would have long lasting effects. Thanks, Ben

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Nicole Outsen ([nicole@garside.net](mailto:nicole@garside.net)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 13:32:09

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address: 212 Park St Portsmouth NH 03801

comments: Dear Councilors,

I am writing as a Portsmouth resident, a parent and an educator.

The possible reduction in the school budget for the 2020-2021 school year greatly concerns me. I have seen first hand, in my work and in my home, the effects that the COVID-19 crisis has had on children. What we know is that many children have not been able to access the educational experiences for a variety of reasons and we also know that this has had an adverse effect on the mental health of children. That is what we know.

We DON'T know how lasting the shock of such an abrupt move to remote learning will be, either academically or mentally. And we DON'T know what school will look like next year. This is not the time to cut the school budget.

We need to support our children right now, including all their needs: academic, mental, physical, artistic and social. We need to be ready to continue to support them next year as well and I do not believe that will be possible if you cut the budget. I ask that you pass the budget set forth on May 21st.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Christina Wilkinson ([tinaandkeith@gmail.com](mailto:tinaandkeith@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 13:33:55

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address: 62 Winter St

comments: I am writing to communicate my support the budget that the city manager set forth last Thursday, 5/21. The school committee and administrators have taken the budget process seriously, and weighed the cost of the programs and the success of the children. I do not support the further cuts in the budget that will further reduce programs and support personnel for our students.

With this current pandemic, now more than ever, our children are at risk. This is the time for us to be investing in our children and ensuring they have the supports in place to ensure we will not be funding additional services in the future for remedial education and mental health services associated with this pandemic.

I know there are many in the city that are concerned about the tax burden associated with the schools, especially those that currently do not have children in the schools. I have owned property in the city for 20+ years, but have only had children in the schools for the last 3. I understand the financial concerns with how we finance education in NH, which puts a significant burden on tax payers. Unfortunately, as a city, we cannot change how schools are funded. However, we can ensure the children in our town are supported, and we do not reduce expenses today, only to be burdened with a larger group of children that need special services in the future.

Sincerely,  
Christina Wilkinson

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Brian Ratay ([2cupsofjoe@gmail.com](mailto:2cupsofjoe@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 14:14:36

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address: 139 Willard Avenue

comments: Regarding the proposed school budget cut, I would like to go on record as extremely concerned and skeptical that more financial resources can't be found elsewhere and thus ease the burden on an already tight school budget. A significant population of this city has elementary and Primary school aged children. In fact, for that very reason, Portsmouth is such a special place. The schools, teachers, supporting and administration staff and leadership, facilities are amazing. And private, family support in terms of time and donations are impressive. And yet, the level of required private funding is highly indicative of an existing budget that is too small. Surely some things can and may need to be cut, on either side. However, 1.8M, if my numbers are correct, seem in major opposition to well being of our children and perhaps most important in dictator of the health and well-being of our town, environment and legislation. Thank you.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Susan Dewhirst ([sdewhirst04@gmail.com](mailto:sdewhirst04@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 14:37:39

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address: 44 Cliff Road

comments: Dear Councilors -

Thank you for serving! In this tough time, supporting public services is more important than ever especially education. A huge part of the reason we have stayed in Portsmouth and contributed to the community and been civically engaged is because of the great schools for our daughters and the benefits our schools bring to all of Portsmouth. Please support the City Manager's Budget recommendation and do not cut the school budget.

As Benjamin Franklin said, "An Investment in knowledge pays the best interest".

Thank you for making education a top priority in Portsmouth. I trust you will do the right thing.

With appreciation, Susan Dewhirst

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Kristen Shiner ([kristen9379@gmail.com](mailto:kristen9379@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 14:56:38

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address: 1511 Elwyn Rd

comments: Hello,

I am writing to express my concern with the proposed school budget cuts.

There are many great things about living in Portsmouth. For me, the excellent schools are certainly at the top of that list. The teachers, staff, resources and special programs are crucial to making the school community what it is. I am consistently impressed with the hard work, dedication and thoughtfulness shown by our schools and the district.

I understand that there may sometimes be a need to make cuts, but taking away from our kids is a mistake. I can't imagine that I would support such an extreme budget cut under any circumstances; however, the current pandemic and remote learning environment make this proposed cut even more intolerable. This is a time our kids are going to need more accommodations, mental health services, and resources, not less.

Thank you for listening to a concerned citizen.

Best regards,  
Kristen Shiner

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Ruthie Spiero ([Ruthie.spiero@gmail.com](mailto:Ruthie.spiero@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 14:57:45

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address: 396 Leslie Drive

comments: Although I understand that passing a budget during these difficult times is a real challenge, I think it behooves us to remember that cutting school funding is the worst thing we could do right now. These children are our future and will have to deal with many difficult decisions that we absolutely need to be preparing them for. Cutting the school budget would mean robbing children of critical resources that they have no control over.

includeInRecords: on

Engage: Submit

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by missy ([cowgirl77777@gmail.com](mailto:cowgirl77777@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 15:31:19

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address: 17 weald rd

comments: i dont think the budget should get cut cause a lot of sundents n teacher will not be happy n i think also students that have iep's wouldn't help the help them need

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Ben Otis ([Botis8102@comcast.net](mailto:Botis8102@comcast.net)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 17:20:07

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address: 46 mcNabb court Portsmouth

comments: Please do not cut the school budget! Now is the time to invest in our youth and children and provide more services for their developing minds and bodies.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Linda Daley ([linda.c.daley@gmail.com](mailto:linda.c.daley@gmail.com)) on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 18:24:48

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address: 126 Spring Street, Portsmouth, NH

comments: Please!  
Support the budget that the city manager set forth last Thursday, 5/21 and do not cut into the schools'™ budget further.  
It is not a time to be taking away personnel or programs from our students.  
We need to be investing in our future and our children now more than ever.  
We believe that our students deserve a holistic education that includes a range of programs: academics, wellness, arts, music and athletics.  
In this time of uncertainty, it is even more important to invest in our children!

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Robin Vogt ([robin.w.vogt@gmail.com](mailto:robin.w.vogt@gmail.com)) on Friday, May 29, 2020 at 06:44:08

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address: 10 Blue Heron Drive

comments: If you make cuts to Special Education in the City of Portsmouth School System, then be prepared.

Our Special Education ESP's and Teachers are not just essential to our community. These individuals provide 1:1 LEGAL services protected under Federal Law. I am not too sure if you understand this, and please correct me if I am mistaken.

These cuts are not just devastating to the City. No, these cuts are devastating to the families of those who require IEP & 504 services in their child's daily education curriculum. If you think saving a little bit of money is more important than a child getting the critical services necessary to their success in life, then I'd like to formally introduce myself.

My name is Robin Vogt of 10 Blue Heron Drive here in Portsmouth, and someone you better get to know very fast.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Gerald Duffy ([Gduffy44@gmail.com](mailto:Gduffy44@gmail.com)) on Friday, May 29, 2020 at 07:16:07

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address: 428 Pleasant St., Unit 3

comments: Dear Mr Mayor and Councilors:

During this time when you are scrutinizing the budgets of various City departments and asking their heads to propose substantial “what if?” cuts, I would ask you to apply the same fiscal ethic to the financial ramifications to taxpayers of the emerging proposals for the McIntyre Project.

As the subcommittee prepares to approach the public for input on the proposed revisions to the existing plan, it’s essential — in the interest of transparent, honest government — that you spell out the likely financial cost to residents of this proposal, so they can make considered choices. They may choose less development and more open space and they may agree to trying to subsidize a relocated Post Office. But they should know the price tag.

You’ve already run up quite a tab. To date, the (in the view of many Portsmouth citizens completely unnecessary) litigation costs triggered by your January 28 vote to reject the ground lease now total over \$100,000, about 80% of that going to outside counsel. This estimate includes an allowance for the time spent by City legal department staff.

If the project proceeds in the direction it seems to be headed, the City’s taxpayers will incur costs associated with:

- Creating and processing the survey itself
- A new raft of architectural drawings (maybe shared with the developer) for a revised design
- Revenue losses from reduced property taxes, profit sharing, and possibly ground lease (totaled, these may well amount to millions of dollars over time)
- The cost to subsidize the return of the Post Office to downtown (\$100,000+ a year?) — (recognizing that it seems impossible that the USPS In its current state of flux would even consider such a move, even if it were free)

There may be other costs I haven’t reckoned with it.

You’re now at the point where the project can hopefully emerge from its black non-public box and see the light of day. The residents of Portsmouth are entitled to an honest presentation of the revised project — its proposed benefits alongside an estimate of the real costs to taxpayers. They can decide whether the benefits are worth the cost.

I am confident you’ll do the right thing.

Warm regards,  
Gerald Duffy

includeInRecords: on



Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Chris Brown ([chrisbrown.nh@gmail.com](mailto:chrisbrown.nh@gmail.com)) on Friday, May 29, 2020 at 08:28:44

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address: 45 Pleasant Point Drive

comments: Respected Councilors,

As our local and national economy faces the largest disruption since the Great Depression, I urge you to stand firm when negotiating budgets with City staff.

There can be no scared cows in our present economic climate. We need to compassionately discuss which cuts will be made, rather than if cuts will be made.

As a citizen I regret the necessity for any cuts in personnel or services. But in this unprecedented time I know that is a selfish and unreasonable position. I am willing to accept the temporary effects of cuts until the economy recovers.

The impact of this economic moment is captured in a recent Portsmouth Herald AP online article posted on 5/28/2020 (US mortgage rates hit all-time low):

"Bleak economic data, meanwhile, continues to pour in. A government report Thursday showed the U.S. economy shrank at an even faster pace in the first three months of the year than initially estimated. Economists expect a far worse outcome in the current April-June quarter.

The government also reported 41 million Americans have applied for unemployment benefits since the outbreak intensified in March, though not all are still unemployed. An estimated 2.1 million filed for benefits last week despite the gradual reopening of businesses around the country." (END)

These unprecedented times must be reflected in the City budget. I urge you to hold the line on increases and be judicious in determining where cuts must be made.

Respectfully,  
Chris Brown

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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**Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Andrew Bagley ([Acbagley@yahoo.com](mailto:Acbagley@yahoo.com)) on Friday, May 29, 2020 at 08:50:30**

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address: 40 Chauncey Street

comments: Is it possible to expedite permitting for outdoor seating? How can that be achieved? How many restaurants remain interested in getting this permitting that have not already? How many are engaged in the pipeline that have not gotten a permit yet? If not, why? Are there bottlenecks or was it an upfront rush that caused delays? Were there delays or just normal processing time? Does a need remain today to expedite permits for outdoor seating?

Is it possible to have an Agenda item if lane/road closures are possible to create outdoor dining space? How many restaurants in the city are/would be interested in this? What steps need to be taken to do this? For instance to close Pleasant street near Market Square?

Best,  
Andrew Bagley  
includeInRecords: on

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Donald Tydeman ([don@salt-cellar.com](mailto:don@salt-cellar.com)) on Friday, May 29, 2020 at 15:21:37

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address: 126 State St., Portsmouth

comments: As a city resident and retail store owner I am encouraged to see that Nashua has mandated the wearing of face masks in all public areas including stores and other public areas. Compliance to mask wearing in Portsmouth is spotty at best. We are requiring customers who wish to enter the Salt Cellar to wear a mask (among other CDC recommended rules). This puts undue burden and potential danger on our employees who must enforce this policy. But it just makes common sense and will make people feel Portsmouth is about trying to curb the COVID-19 pandemic. I urge the City Council to mandate face mask wearing in City of Portsmouth stores, streets and public places.

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Jane Zill ([janezill@comcast.net](mailto:janezill@comcast.net)) on Saturday, May 30, 2020 at 09:30:52

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address: 27 Shaw Road Portsmouth

comments: Dear City Councilor,  
This is FYI only, no need to respond. I'm sharing this Op-Ed, ". 'Polluted Air' Could be Important Cause of Wuhan Pneumonia," because it provides another example of how environmental factors can be monitored to curb infection transmission of COVID-19 and guide community response to changing environmental circumstances. I found this research to be amazing, out-of-the-box thinking.

Best,  
Jane Zill

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/01022020-polluted-air-could-be-an-important-cause-of-wuhan-pneumonia-oped/>

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

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Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Dan Rigterink ([dan.rigterink@gmail.com](mailto:dan.rigterink@gmail.com)) on Sunday, May 31, 2020 at 11:14:27

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address: 615 Lincoln ave

comments: Hello, as a life long cyclist, I'm writing in support of removing the bollards and peculiar lane striping along Middle st. I feel that this experiment has not improved the traffic flow for cars and bicycles nor has enhanced any safety issues. In fact I feel that there have unforeseen issues in regards to line of sight issues regarding turning on to Middle st (vehicles parked in designated areas blocking views) and decreased lane width have vehicles crossing the center lines. This can be noted in area of the former Shell auto station. I have seen large vehicles, vehicles with trailers, police vehicles and fire vehicles cross the center line to negotiate this bend. In fact the striping has been worn away at this bend. Please vote to remove this bike lane experiment on Middle st. Thank you for consideration of this issue. v/r Dan Rigterink

includeInRecords: on  
Engage: Submit

