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Jonathan P. Raymond, Superintendent

# Dear Colleague

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March 11, 2022

Dear Colleague,

This week, I presented a first draft of our school district budget to our Board of Education. While work on the budget began many months ago, this was the start of the public portion of the process. The first iteration of the budget was informed by conversations with school leaders and included many of our priorities in terms of increased staffing and new initiatives we would like to undertake.

Following the presentation, Board of Education members made comments, asked questions, and provided feedback about school district revenues and expenditures. We are now working to address their questions and will present a revised version of our draft budget proposal on Tuesday, March 22. As you well know, this is a work in process that will continue until the budget vote on May 17.

This year, however, is not a typical budget year. As I write this, we know levels of stress among families and in our community are high given the rising costs of goods and services, such as food and gasoline. We know there is exhaustion after two years of dealing with the global pandemic. And, yes, uncertainty in Europe and throughout the world with the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the corresponding global response.

As we continue our proposed budget revisions, we will meet with our principals and will develop new options for the Board of Education to consider at its next meeting. I am confident that we can craft a budget that addresses unfinished learning, promotes wellness, and helps us to attain our academic, social, and emotional priorities for the students we are privileged to educate. Please share any ideas you might have either in response to this email or via this address [2022\\_2023budgetquestions@nredlearn.org](mailto:2022_2023budgetquestions@nredlearn.org).

In closing, I want to share these thoughts and a photo from Principal Michael Galland. I believe he's captured the essence of what we are seeing and feeling in our schools, and what makes this work so meaningful, powerful, and important.

"Almost two years to the day from when schools closed in 2020, our cafeteria was finally filled, and full, with joy and children. What struck me as I stood in the middle of the noise and laughter was that THIS is what kids – and perhaps all of us – really lost more than anything. The ability and safety to just gather and be together. We focus correctly on learning loss and how to adapt instruction. We focus correctly on helping kids manage stress and trauma. I also want to focus on gathering, and nurturing togetherness in all corners and big spaces within our school." - *Michael Galland*

Sincerely,

Superintendent of Schools

New Rochelle High School • Albert Leonard Middle School • Isaac E. Young Middle School • Henry Barnard Early Childhood Center  
Columbus Elementary School • Daniel Webster Elementary School • George M. Davis Jr. Elementary School • Jefferson Elementary School  
Trinity Elementary School • William B. Ward Elementary School

