

Chris O'Brien

From: Sarah Wasel <swasel@msn.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 29, 2025 8:25 PM
To: House Finance Committee
Subject: HB 5749

Categories: Yellow category, Red category

Dear Finance Committee Members,

My name is Sarah and I live in East Greenwich. My state rep is Justine Caldwell. I am writing in support of HB 5749, which would add categorical aid for our schools in EG that are struggling significantly with an \$800,000 gap in state funding this year.

The gap in funding is significantly impacting the educational experiences of my two sons, one who is a sophomore at East Greenwich High School, and the other who is a seventh grader at Cole Middle School. We moved to East Greenwich 10 years ago, specifically for the school system. The impact of these loss of funds will impact both of my sons.

My husband, Ken and I are very involved in our schools and community by coaching, volunteering at school events, and fundraising. Ken is also on the Board of Directors of the East Greenwich Academy Foundation, a member of the Juvenile Hearing Committee and on the . Board of Directors at the Samaritans of RI, he uses his life experiences, professional experience, and passion to advocate for mental health awareness and suicide prevention in the East Greenwich High School health classes each year.

We believe it's critical to offer a safe and well maintained environment, a well rounded curriculum with a variety of extra curricular activities to support the diverse interests of our students.

My son, Ryan (7th grade), has been looking forward to trying out and playing for the Cole Middle School soccer team when he's an 8th grader since he saw his older brother plan on the team. Ryan's passion is sports, it is what gets him out of bed in morning. I cannot imagine telling him the middle school soccer team has been cut.

My son, Aiden (10th grade), has been dismissed early on several occasions due to plumbing issues in the school bathrooms. There are regularly leaking ceiling with buckets collecting water. As we visit other high schools around the state, the comparison is jaw dropping. For example our neighboring town, North Kingstown not only has a beautiful high school (circa 2000) but all the extras....they even have a ticker symbol screen in the lobby! There are no buckets collecting water from a leaky ceilings. East Greenwich High School feels like a dungeon compared to North Kingstown High School. It is dark, dreary, and depressing throughout the entire building. If I took a tour of the high school 10 years ago, I would have moved to a different town.

Please consider funding our schools and ensuring East Greenwich students are provided with a safe and well maintained environment, with a well rounded curriculum and extra curriculars that give all students an opportunity to explore their interests.

Sincerely,
Sarah Walsh (concerned mom)