

April 5, 2010

Board of Finance
Avon Town Hall
60 West Main Street
Avon, CT 06001

RE: STATEMENT FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:
Cuts to Avon Schools' Budget will Hurt Our Community's Kids

My name is Lori Angelbeck, and I am one of three secretaries at Roaring Brook School. I'm also a member of CSEA/SEIU Local 2001, which represents the educational support staff and paraprofessionals here in Avon Public Schools.

With a student population of 700, we all have many duties and responsibilities including, answering phones, greeting visitors, maintaining student records, recording attendance, doing daily dismissal lists of students being picked up or attending after-school programs, scheduling meetings, arranging substitutes, typing monthly reports, doing state reports, registering and withdrawing students, taking attendance during fire drills and other emergency evacuations of the building, and on and on.

The paperwork is endless, however, we all **consider our utmost priority the safety and security of our students -- your children.**

The three of us at Roaring Brook School have over 40 years of school experience and we do have a fairly clear division of duties in the office. However, when it comes to matters of safety, we work as a team.

We are all mothers and we know exactly how a mother feels when she is waiting at a bus stop and her child does not get off the bus. One of us will get the call from a panic-stricken mother; one of us will immediately contact the child's teacher; and the other will contact DATTCO to have them check all the buses.

The child is always found -- either on the wrong bus -- or asleep on their own bus. Sometimes the child has stayed for an after-school program and the mother has

forgotten, but we always find a missing child -- usually in a matter of minutes -- all the while with one secretary on the phone keeping the mother calm.

Staff -- including administrators -- who have witnessed this process in our office have called our team "a well-oiled machine." It's a compliment we appreciate, but this is what we do.

The Board of Education has proposed cutting one education support staff in each of Avon's K-thru-8 schools. I am truly concerned for the safety and security of our students with this limited staffing. Currently when one secretary is absent, the other two are incredibly busy; but if we are cut to a staff of only two and one secretary is absent -- we will be down to one. Teamwork would out of the question, and our "well-oiled machines" could break down.

That's why Avon's support staff are standing up for the board's proposed budget increase of 6.91%. Avon students and parents have come to expect and deserve better.

Lori Angelbeck

Education Secretary, Roaring Brook Elementary School
Member, CSEA/SEIU Local 2001

cc: Members, Avon Board of Education
Members, Executive Council, CSEA/SEIU Local 2001

LA:dmo