

The Scarsdale High School PTA Executive Committee and Budget Study Chair appreciate the efforts of the District Administration and Board of Education in preparing a budget that is fiscally responsible, while facing the complexity of stewarding our schools throughout the past 2 years faced with a pandemic. We thank the members of the Board of Education for their dedication and for giving us this opportunity to comment on the proposed 2022-2023 School District Budget.

We understand that the Board of Education needs to identify those items and expenses that should be prioritized over others while keeping the tax cap and other fiscal limitations in mind. We, as a SHS PTA EC, would like to advocate that the following items that impact the daily lives and education of our High School students remain a priority for the District.

Mental Health Resources - As we mentioned during last year's budget study process and again at the BOE meetings in February and March, the pandemic has left its mark upon the well-being of our high school students and faculty. Health experts have identified an alarming, increased incidence of mental health disorders, including anxiety, depression, substance abuse and post-traumatic stress disorder. Parents in the community were concerned about Mental Health Resources prior to the pandemic, and those concerns are only heightened now. We encourage the BOE to maintain appropriate resources for the high school to address the increased demand on our Mental Health professionals. We see it a priority to create a budget that allocates adequate human and financial resources to both address the immediate needs of students struggling with mental health *and* enable the delivery of school-wide programs and services aimed at fostering growth and resilience for the future. We believe this is best achieved with the current draft budget that identifies 2 new district employee Mental Health hires as well as maintaining the Youth Outreach Worker program, which we see as two separate and distinct roles.

Auditorium: We would also like to take this opportunity to once again urge the District and the Board to keep the continuation of the high school auditorium renovation at the forefront of future budget planning until it is fully completed as envisioned. The Auditorium has taken a back seat for far too long. While we are delighted to see so much of the renovation completed, there is still much that needs to be done.

Safety Concerns -

- We believe that the lack of/weak Wifi in and around the building is a huge safety and security concern. While we appreciate the funding in the budget to bring better Wifi into the building and to complete a heat map, we feel strongly that Wifi needs to be extended to the SHS fields and parking lots for the safety of our students. We encourage to BOE to maintain this as a priority in future budgets.
- During heavy rain storms which often occur without advance warning, the overflow from the Brewster Road creek bed floods and has caused thousands of dollars worth of damage to the cars parked by the creek lots. This has been going on for many years. Students and staff are forced to quickly leave school when notified of a flooding creek. This causes stress and unproductive class time. It's not just the time needed to move the cars but time spent looking for alternative parking as well. It is also a safety concern with so many harried drivers trying to back out of a flooding lot. Though not for this

year's budget, we would like the administration to do a study on how to remediate the flooding and consider adding this to a future budget.

Once again, we appreciate the time and attention taken to create this year's budget and appreciate the opportunity to participate in the process. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions about our priorities.

Thank you

Joey Silberfein, President

Vanessa Stoffels, President-elect

Chris Marks, Budget Study Chair & VP Membership and Events

Julie Zhu, VP Programming and Volunteers

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