

## Board Statement:

The full board would like to make a statement due to the nature of the previous comment. We do not take lightly allegations against our character, collectively or individually.

First, we want to emphasize that the actions of this board have been bipartisan and unanimous. To single out anyone individually is misguided and unfair.

Further, we feel compelled to underscore that this board has acted at all times in what it believes to be in the best interests of the students and families, after thorough analysis and careful and extensive debate and deliberation. To suggest anything to the contrary is irresponsible and slanderous. The prior writer may not agree with every decision we have made, but it doesn't make those decisions wrong. Relying on snippets of email without consideration of nuance or context is deeply misleading and irresponsible. Conversations and meetings prior and subsequent to such communications complete the picture. As a board, we welcome questions and concerns from members of the town, and we are always happy to find time to discuss key issues coming before us, as we have done for example with so many of you who called during COVID to explore the schooling scenarios. The prior writer has had every opportunity to engage directly with members of the board, but prefers to attack us publicly. This is not productive.

Regarding FOIA, we wish to set the record straight. The prior writer asserts, ironically and seemingly without a modicum of self-awareness, that the Board is wasting taxpayer money by responding to his requests through counsel. That couldn't be further from the truth, and the claim betrays an ignorance of school matters and administration. We use counsel to respond to legal complaints filed by the previous commenter and also when we have questions regarding his requests. Our e-mails, notes and documents sometimes require consultation with attorneys because they often contain privileged and/or confidential material – personnel matters, SPED data, student-specific information, disciplinary actions, and attorney-client-privileged communications – none of which can be released publicly. The writer has made 91 – 91! – requests over the last year covering thousands of pages of documents. We take our FOIA obligations seriously, and to appropriately discharge our FOIA duties is enormously time-consuming and, without the additional resources of counsel, would require crippling commitments by members individually. Of note, we have never once complained about the volume of FOIA requests made nor the amount of time and energy spent in responding to them – largely by school staff who are taking time away from student and district responsibilities to attend to these voluminous requests. That said, we will take the opportunity now to advise the previous commenter that if he has even the slightest actual concern for taxpayer resources, he will reconsider his approach and find more constructive ways to engage with the school.

Finally, the seven of us feel compelled, not as board members but as parents and residents, to express our concern with the accelerating decline in civil discourse in the community. Grandstanding by the loud, angry few threatens to drown out the reasonable many, and public character assassinations risk the destruction of volunteerism and governance in Weston at a time when we need to pull together. Especially in a small town like ours, civic participation is essential.