

[Read the Herald e-Edition](#)

[Read the Daily Coronavirus Briefing](#)


Share 0

Palisades School Board pleads for priority public school funding

CLIFF LEBOWITZ Thu, May 28, 2020

Noting it is "already underfunded by the state," the Palisades School District has formally appealed to the state's General Assembly to "prioritize public education in the Commonwealth's 2020-2021 fiscal year budget and, at a minimum, maintain its current level of education funding."

The action was taken in the form of a resolution that was passed unanimously at the May 20 remote, public-by-phone school board meeting. The resolution noted that the "global pandemic will cause a shortfall in revenue for the commonwealth's upcoming 2020-2021 fiscal year budget," but that "failure of the General Assembly to maintain its current level of education funding would irreparably damage the students of Palisades School District and the entire Palisades community."

Already-existing underfunding was especially noted as failing to keep pace with the rising cost of mandated special education for students with disabilities, and "to provide adequate resources for career and technical education (CTE) pathways for students." The resolution is to be distributed to the district's Assembly representatives, as well as to its state senator and the governor.

Also at the May 20 meeting, Treasurer David Haubert announced that in spite of expected revenue shortfalls in general, the fiscal committee was recommending a no-tax increase budget for 2020-2021, while warning of a possible need for an increase for the following year.

With a significant deficit already showing in the budget process so far, Haubert said the no-tax increase would be "so hard to do, but we could do it because our previous boards and administrations put us in the position to be able to hold the line, through their savings and fiscal responsibility."

District tax increases have been about 1 percent the last few years, after no increase the few years before that, in spite of major, continuing increases in the public district's costs for private charter schools, which could not be as accounted for by previous boards, as they could for expected increases in pension costs.

Public school district officials have lobbied loudly for many years for both pension and charter funding reform, while the private charter industry, among many other private industries, has lobbied for its own private interests, while also claiming to be acting in the public interest.

The organization March On Harrisburg has called for lobbying reform.



NEWS